



Spring 2014

## UVMC FOUNDATION

# The Legacy Letter

### UVMC Foundation to Sponsor *Rachel's Challenge* to Combat Bullying

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THE LEGACY LETTER IS PUBLISHED BY THE UVMC FOUNDATION.

THE UVMC FOUNDATION IS A NOT-FOR-PROFIT FOUNDATION BENEFITING THE UPPER VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER HEALTH SYSTEM AND THE COMMUNITY.

In a health assessment of Miami County youth conducted by the Upper Valley Medical Center and the Miami County Health District, findings showed that bullying and cyber-bullying are as much a problem in Miami County as in the nation as a whole. According to Kathleen Scarbrough, President and Executive Director of the UVMC Foundation, "Data from the assessment indicated an issue with bullying, along with children feeling as if no one cared about them." She added, "Those feelings were expressed by a fairly significant percentage of students, in keeping with national data." Among middle school respondents in Miami County, 40 percent reported being bullied in the past 90 days. At the high school level, 31 percent expressed the same sentiment. The national average is 32 percent.



After reviewing the results of the health survey, the UVMC Foundation decided that something needed to be done for the community's children from a health standpoint. Scarbrough stated, "As research consistently indicates, the social connections that people have are as important to their overall health as is being active and eating nutritious food. If we don't start off with the social relationships, the other stuff doesn't matter. That was the impetus." The board decided to fund a program proven effective across the nation called *Rachel's Challenge*.

According to the Mission Statement of *Rachel's Challenge*, the organization is dedicated to creating safe, connected school environments where learning and teaching are maximized. Further stated in their Mission, "We motivate and equip students to start and sustain a chain reaction of kindness and compassion that transforms schools and communities."

*Rachel's Challenge* was born from the tragedy of the 1999 Columbine High School shootings in Colorado. The program is based on the writings and life of 17-year-old Rachel Joy Scott, who was the first of the 12 students and one teacher fatally shot at Columbine. *Story continued on page 3*

Shortly before her death, Rachel Scott wrote in her journal:

"I have this theory that if one person can go out of their way to show compassion, then it will start a chain reaction of the same. People will never know how far a little kindness can go."



## LEADING THE WAY

The UVMC Foundation is proud to underwrite the cost of bringing *Rachel's Challenge* to Miami County schools for the 2014-2015 academic year. It is so important for our children to feel safe going to school. As we all know there has been an escalation of school violence over the past fifteen years. Those of us who went to school in the 1950's through the 1980's didn't worry about school shootings or stabbings. Bullying was for the most part confined to teasing each other.

The UVMC Foundation Board was astonished to learn that 160,000 children per day in the United States are afraid to go to school. That is an alarming figure.

*Rachel's Challenge* is a high quality internationally recognized program approved by educators and health care professionals. It is positive in its approach. Its message is much deeper than just discouraging bullying. Rather than just talking to young people, it teaches and instructs their hearts. The program shows our youth how they can make a difference in other people's lives. It teaches the underlying basis of having healthy relationships - respect and concern for each other.

Each school system will have an evening Community Event this coming September and October that will be open to parents, grandparents and interested members of the general public. At those evening events, the attendees will be able to see and experience the *Rachel's Challenge* program that is presented to the middle and senior high school students. The dates and times of these events will be publicized later this summer - please watch the newspapers and the UVMC website for more details. We hope many of you will attend one of the events. The message is universal and is as meaningful for adults as it is for young people.



Sincerely,  
Kathleen Scarbrough  
President and Executive Director UVMC Foundation

## BILL AND RUTH MCGRAW CANCER AWARENESS SYMPOSIUM

### Interventional Oncology: Minimally Invasive Cancer Treatment

Learn about new advances and techniques in the treatment of inoperable or hard-to-reach tumors.

Keynote Speakers: Tarek M. Sabagh, MD, FACP and Shannon L. Kauffman, MD

**Thursday, May 29, 2014**

**5:15 - 7:00 p.m.**

**UpperValley Medical Center**

Physician Office Building - Lower Level Conference Rooms

5:15 p.m. Doors Open/Sign-In/Tours of Cancer Care Center

6-7 p.m. Presentation by Dr. Sabagh and Dr. Kauffman

7 p.m. Door Prize Drawing (Must be present to win)

**Free and open to all. Registration is required.** Seating is limited to the first 170 registrants. To reserve a seat, call The UVMC Foundation office at 440-7541 before noon on Tuesday, May 27.



**Tarek M. Sabagh, MD, FACP**

Medical Director/Cancer Liaison, UVMC Cancer Care Center; Hematology and Medical Oncology Division, Dayton Physicians, LIC.



**Shannon L. Kauffman, MD**

Interventional Radiologist, Radiology Physicians, Inc.

This program is sponsored by The UVMC Foundation and the UVMC Cancer Care Center and is made possible by a gift from the McGraw Family Fund of The Troy Foundation and a grant from The UVMC Foundation.

*Rachel's Challenge continued from page 1*

In introducing Rachel Scott and the program to educators from across Miami County, Dave Gamache of *Rachel's Challenge* said, "There are 160,000 students nationwide who do not go to school each day because they are afraid of being bullied, harassed or teased."

Gamache added, "During her short life, as evidenced by her journals and actions attested to by fellow students, Rachel was an advocate for kindness and compassion. She reached out to students who were new to her school and to those who were different and picked on by others." With Rachel's beliefs and life as an example, the planners of the program designed student-empowering strategies to combat bullying and address feelings of isolation through the fostering of kindness and compassion in everyday dealings.



Bullying is not the only issue for students. Pete Vargas, also of *Rachel's Challenge*, said, "The kids need to know they are not alone." The mental health related questions on the survey conducted by UVMC and the Miami County Health District attested to this issue. Approximately 10-12 percent of the students reported feeling sad and/or depressed three to four days a week. Twenty-five percent of the females and 15 percent of the male respondents reported being fearful one to two days



per week. Nearly nine percent of middle and high school students reported feeling lonely all the time and 10 percent felt hopeful about the future rarely or less than one day a week.

Educators from across the county received an introduction to *Rachel's Challenge* at a meeting held in December 2013. UVMC's Scarbrough reported, "Interest [in the *Rachel's Challenge* program] has been expressed by all the Miami County's schools, including the area's private institutions."

Scarbrough said, "*Rachel's Challenge* will be offered to Miami County students from elementary through high school [with age-appropriate curriculums]. The UVMC Foundation has made a multi-year commitment to the program beginning with the 2014-15 school year. Scarbrough added, "The funding is a significant amount and they will be looking for funding partners in subsequent years."

Planning is already underway for the Miami County *Rachel's Challenge* for 2014-15. Kickoffs at Miami County schools are being scheduled between September 2 and October 3.

Parents and members of the community can find out more about *Rachel's Challenge* by visiting [www.rachelschallenge.org](http://www.rachelschallenge.org).



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UVMC FOUNDATION

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Return Service Requested

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*Darcy, a CarePages member*

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