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Race to celebrate healthy teen and young adult dating brings light to darkness

What: No Fear in Love Race

Where: Gonzaga University, 502 East Boone Avenue, Spokane Washington 99202

When: Saturday, March 02, 2019 at sunrise, (6:29 a.m.)

Why: To celebrate healthy dating relationships

How: To register and for more information, <http://nofearinloverace.org/>

SPOKANE, WA – Teen and young adult dating relationships, whether they are healthy or unhealthy, “sets the pattern for life,” one teen told Karen Bontrager, founder and organizer of the 8th Annual No Fear in Love 6-Mile Race at Gonzaga University.

While Bontrager admits the impetus of the race was in part the murder of Yeardeley Love, rather than dwell on the tragic, the No Fear in Love Race is designed to celebrate healthy dating relationships and to teach teens and young adults how to avoid unhealthy ones. Race time is at sunrise on March 2, signifying movement from darkness to light.

“There has never been a race to celebrate healthy dating relationships in 16- to 24-year-olds,” said Bontrager, an apostle for the promotion of healthy dating relationships in teens and young adults. “As I have been told many times: ‘They teach us don’t, don’t, don’t, but they don’t tell us what to do.’”

The No Fear in Love Race is part of Bontrager’s efforts to stimulate conversations about healthy relationships. Research indicates that as many as one out of four teens and young adults aged 16 to 24 are involved in violent dating relationships. Bontrager wants the three out of four to teach the others.

“The 16- to 24-year-olds who are doing it right can talk to those who aren’t – and they’ll listen because they’re the same age,” Bontrager said. “It’s boys and girls working together, trying to solve teen dating violence.”

The No Fear in Love Race will give them a voice about something that they care about: the promotion of healthy dating relationships.

Bontrager hopes to raise \$3,000 from the No Fear in Love Race, enough to pay partial tuition at area universities/colleges for a dating abuse survivor. A youth council will choose the recipient.

“I have been on both sides,” Bontrager said. “If we can bring one person from darkness to light, it will be a life saved.”

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