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Media Relations

UNH Relay For Life Turns Into Start Of New Life With Marriage Proposal

May 10, 2010

DURHAM, N.H. –As a senior at the University of New Hampshire, Jessica Keravich recently wrapped up her last stint as co-chairman of the UNH Relay for Life team. The 24-hour walkathon that raises money for the American Cancer Society is important to Keravich, who lost her mother to the disease when she was 12.

But there’s little chance she’ll forget her last Relay for Life as a UNH student; during this year’s event, Chris Forbes, her boyfriend of three years, proposed.

Keravich had just had her hair cut as part of Pantene Cut for a Cure that has people cutting their hair so it can be donated to make wigs for cancer patients. Keravich was supposed to be organizing the next donors when the DJ announcing the event called her over to his area.

When she got there, he made another announcement about the haircuts and then told Keravich someone was looking for her. She turned around and in walked Forbes. And he had a microphone.

“He told me he would miss my long hair, but it was for a good cause, and that it looked great. He went on to say that he knows Relay is a very special day for me and that he wanted to make it that much more special,” Keravich said. “I started freaking out—crying, smiling. Then he got down on one knee and asked if I would marry him. I had no idea that it was coming.”


Nor did she know until she looked around that her father and sister and members of Forbes’ family were there watching.


“He made sure they were all there,” she said.


It turned out, Forbes had gone to her father before he bought the ring to ask his permission. A 2008 UNH graduate, Forbes served in National Guard for six years and spent a year in Iraq.


“Chris knew it was an important day for my family, too,” Keravich said of Forbes seeking her father’s permission first. “I’ll always be involved in Relay for Life but this is one I’ll always remember.”

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling more than 12,200 undergraduate and 2,200 graduate students.

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