

Media Release

For Immediate Release

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Positive Attitude Helps Brain Tumour Survivor

Melissa Martin has found strength in the friendships she's made by volunteering for Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada and connecting with other brain tumour survivors, offering friendship and support, and receiving the same.

Martin was 18 when she was diagnosed with a brain tumour – a low grade astrocytoma. Her unique sense of humour comes through when she says, "If you're going to get a tumour that's the one to get."

The tumour was partially removed with surgery and Martin underwent radiation that she says, "Luckily did its job." She also started attending Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada support group meetings in her area.

After her recovery, Martin moved to London, Ontario, where she enrolled in the radio broadcasting program at Fanshawe College. She was surprised to find that she tired easily and found it a struggle to keep up with the course workload.

She went to the doctor and was diagnosed with Neurofibromatosis, a genetic disorder of the nervous system that primarily affects the development and growth of nerve cell tissues, and is attributed to the growth of tumours in the body. Martin says her doctors felt this might be the reason for her brain tumour.

She started a club at Fanshawe for students with disabilities to provide and receive support from others who were also dealing with learning disability issues. After graduation, Martin returned to Windsor and was diagnosed with two additional tumours. Doctors were able to completely remove both tumours, "A very good sign," says Martin, who is currently recovering from the surgery.

"I heard about Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada's Spring Sprint but learned that nobody had volunteered to organize an event in Windsor," says Martin. So last year she organized the first sprint in Windsor, bringing out 150 participants who raised \$15,000. "

On Sunday, June 10th, 2007, hundreds of other people in Windsor, Ontario will join the thousands across Canada who will don their sneakers to participate in Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada's annual Spring Sprint. Last year, in 18 cities, Spring Sprints raised over \$750,000 for brain tumour research and to support the estimated 55,000 Canadians currently living with a brain tumour. Each year, an additional 10,000 are newly diagnosed.

The Windsor Spring Sprint features 2.5 or 5 km route through Riverside Sportsmen Club. Participants raise pledges that are used to bring hope to people affected by brain tumours and to fund research. Each step is one closer to imagining a cure.

Martin says that throughout her diagnosis, treatment and recovery she has had lots of support from family, her boyfriend and from other brain tumour survivors who willingly share their coping strategies.

"It's all about your attitude. You have to think positive and keep your sense of humour," says Martin. "You've got to be patient, have fun and enjoy life."

Event: Windsor Spring Sprint
Date: Sunday, June 10th, 2007
Location: Riverside Sportsmen Club, Windsor
Time: Check-In 10:00 a.m., Start Time 11:00 a.m.

About Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada

Bringing hope for over 25 years, Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada is celebrating its ability to positively impact the lives of people affected by brain tumours across Canada. The Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada provides information through a free, comprehensive Patient Resource Handbook, live and web-based annual education events, and support through a Canada-wide, toll-free 1-800 line, website (www.braintumour.ca), and national support groups that meet monthly in many communities. The Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada also supports brain tumour research through annual grants-in-aid program. Please visit Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada's website at www.braintumour.ca.

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For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact:

Melissa Martin, Windsor Spring Sprint Coordinator

519-252-2755

E-mail: 2melissa.martin@gmail.com

or

A. Paul Mitchell

Community Relations Officer

Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada

519-642-7755 x 32

1-800-265-5106 x32

E-mail: pmitchell@braintumour.ca

Website: www.braintumour.ca