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Family, friends run for Lindsey

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Mark and Kathleen Bonistall greeted and cheered hundreds of friends, relatives and supporters who turned out on this chilly fall morning for a 5K benefit in their daughter's memory.

"It doesn't come off easily," Mark Bonistall said of the second annual 5K Lindsey Run at Court Sports Westchester One Club in Greenburgh.

The 5K benefits the Lindsey M. Bonistall Foundation PEACE OUTside Campus. Bonistall, a 20-year-old University of Delaware sophomore from White Plains, was killed in her off-campus apartment in Newark, Del., on May 1, 2005.

"Every day is a tough day to get out of bed," her father said. "But you get up for everything else, and if you can do things that are positive -I keep telling the (foundation) board, keep your eye on the prize."

That prize is the chance to spare another family from becoming victimized by violence, he said.

Court Sports Westchester One has staged the event for 20 years, but it was the idea of personal trainer Glenn Staub to dedicate it to Bonistall's memory.

More than 500 people registered in advance and many more signed up yesterday. More than \$15,000 was raised last year.

"She was just one of the most fantastic girls you could ever have known," said Beth Flood of Emerson, N.J., Kathleen Bonistall's cousin.

Many extended family members came to take part, said Flood, who was impressed by the community turnout.

Cheerleading squads amped up the crowd beforehand, a nod to Bonistall's days as a cheerleader at Good Counsel. One of her teammates now coaches at Harrison High School, and 24 girls from that squad took part yesterday.

"We came out to show support for her family and for the cause," sophomore Michelle Henderson said.

"And because you want to feel safe when you go away to college," teammate Alyssa Coppa added.

The foundation has worked with law enforcement officials to establish safety standards for off-campus housing, Mark Bonistall said. That offers a degree of reassurance to parents of students going off to college, he said.

"When I took Lindsey to Towne Court before she died, it was quiet and safe-looking," he said of the apartment complex where she lived while studying journalism at Delaware.

Other events, including a spring golf outing, support the foundation, but the run is significant because Lindsey was so athletic and because it is an opportunity for many people to get involved.

Newark, Del., police officers, including one who Mark Bonistall said had a hand in apprehending the man accused of killing his daughter, participated in yesterday's walk-run.

Jury selection will begin Jan. 23 in the trial of James Cooke Jr., who was charged with first-degree murder in the slaying.

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How to help

The mission of the Lindsey M. Bonistall Foundation is to promote safe living conditions in off-campus housing in college communities across the country. For more information, go to www.rememberlindsey.com.

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