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Bowl For Kids Raises Money For Big Brothers Big Sisters



CAPTION: Kurt Hauglie/Daily Mining Gazette

David Veasy of the Michigan Technological University Douglass Houghton Hall Council sends his bowling ball down the lane during the Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Western Upper Peninsula Bowl For Kids on Saturday.

By KURT HAUGLIE, DMG Writer

HOUGHTON — For many people, bowling is either a pleasant diversion or something taken more seriously, but on Saturday bowling was used as a means to a fundraising end for Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Western Upper Peninsula during the 16th annual Bowl For Kids at the Mine Shaft in Houghton.

Maggie Munch, BBBS program director, said 46 teams had signed up to take part in Bowl For Kids, which is the only fundraising event the organization conducts during the year. Munch said each participant in the event raised donations at flat rates, rather than an amount based on score or other criteria.

A \$35 minimum in donations allowed the bowlers to have two hours of bowling and a chance to get prizes during the day. Prizes include a \$100 gift certificate to a local restaurant for the team raising the most money as well as the winner of the College Challenge, a catered luncheon luau for the workplace team raising the most money, and a drawing for a scenic flight over the Copper Country for every participant who raised at least \$35. Participants who raised at least \$150 were eligible for a drawing for a remote car starter.

One of the teams taking part in the event was the Michigan Technological University Alpha Delta Alpha sorority, which sponsored the challenge to other college teams with a \$100 gift certificate prize going to the winner.

Krystel Killian, ADA civic chairwoman, said this was the second year for the challenge, and the prize last year didn't go very far. "We won our own challenge," she said. Killian said the challenge is meant as a way to stimulate participation in the event in the local community and among other Tech students. "We try to focus it more around the Tech and Finlandia communities," she said. "A lot of students create teams to challenge us." Munch said last year the college challenge raised about \$5,100.

One of the teams taking the challenge was the Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity, and TKE Vice President Jacob Ford said the fraternity has been participating in Bowl For Kids for about 10 years. "We like to do charity work," he said. "This is one we like to do every year." This year, Ford said 14 TKE members raised \$35 each and a couple members raised more.

Also taking part in Bowl For Kids was Earl Alexander, who said this was either his eighth or ninth year participating, and he became aware of it through the Goodwill Farm where he works.

Alexander said he raised about \$150 for the Bowl For Kids this year, even though he's not a regular bowler.

"I love this once a year," he said.

Munch said the Goodwill Farm is the sponsoring agency for BBBS in the western Upper Peninsula. Additional funding sources include the United Way, private donations and grants. The organization used to receive a grant from the State of Michigan, but because of the precarious fiscal condition of the state, that source isn't available now.

"This year we took a big cut," she said.

That cut amounted to about \$33,000, Munch said.

Because of the loss of that money, Munch said the organization is looking for alternate operating sources.

The money raised from Bowl For Kids funds about 25 percent of the organization's annual operating costs, Munch said.

"Every single penny that's raised goes for the support programs and services in the local community," she said.