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Boesing to speak at chapel

By [Derek Kramer](#)

February 23, 2011

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Sarah Boesing, junior and founder of Break the Grey, works to bring color into the grey lives of children with cancer through parties at children's hospitals.

Next Tuesday, March 3, Sarah Boesing, junior nursing major, will be speaking in chapel about an organization called Break the Grey.

On Tuesday, Feb. 15, Break the Grey had its annual party on the fifth floor of Riley Children's Hospital in Indianapolis to hang out with children fighting cancer.

As the party started, a 13-year-old girl sat alone in the corner with a plate of food.

"I went over and showed her that we had gifts for her and that there were crafts and other things to do," said Boesing, founder of Break the Grey. "Later, she was sitting at a table with a whole group of people playing with her."

At the end of the night, Boesing walked her back to her room with hands full of extra food and her gifts, and as the young girl pushed her IV pole through the hallway, she turned around with a huge grin on her face and said, "I feel special."

Moments as big as this or as simple as watching a 5-year-old crack herself up by bouncing around on a bouncy ball show the power of Break the Grey as they strive "to share the love and hope of Jesus Christ by serving, supporting and encouraging families facing childhood cancer or other life-altering illnesses."

"That's our mission statement," wrote Boesing in the organization's blog, "our guiding principles behind why we do what we do."

While Boesing has never had cancer, her journey has allowed her to see "a slight glimpse" of what these kids have to go through.

She was born with a terminal kidney disease, and she spent a lot of time at the Kosair Children's Hospital in Louisville, Ky., on the seventh floor, which was shared with the cancer unit.

"I grew up around childhood cancer," said Boesing, who received a kidney transplant when she was 11, "and once it occurred to me what childhood cancer was, it just blew my mind. No one I knew was really trying to do something about it, so I decided to take matters into my own hands and do something."

Break the Grey started in 2005, while Boesing was still in high school.

"When I first learned that childhood and cancer occur in the same sentence, I was 15 years old," wrote Boesing in her blog.

"Now roughly six years later, it still sickens me."



Kyla Metzger, junior and Break the Grey volunteer, helps Gisele, a 5-year-old cancer patient with crafts.

Currently, Break the Grey is known for its annual parties at Riley Children's Hospital and Kosair Children's Hospital in the winter months of January and February to try and "break the grey" of hospital life.

Bundles of toys are given to the patients, gift baskets are given to the parents and games and toys are given to siblings as well.

“We try and meet families at these parties and try to support them throughout the year,” said Boesing, “whether that’s bringing them dinner in the hospital or calling to check up and hang out with them.”

Break the Grey has also been able to partner with a few families in fundraisers.

“We partnered with a family that had a son who needed a bone marrow transplant,” said Boesing, “and we were able to raise \$11,000 for his transplant. This past summer, we met a family with a daughter with cancer in the ICU and did a fundraiser called Hoops for Hope.

“We shot free throws and raised about \$1,000.

“We were able to give half of that to the family and used the other half to buy Bibles to put in the parents’ gift baskets for the parties that we throw.”

Boesing has many high hopes and future aspirations for the organization.

“Right now, we’re not an official non-profit organization,” said Boesing, “so we’re working on that, but it’s a really long process.”

She envisions in the future to have an effort similar to the Ronald McDonald House.

“It would be a place for families that come from out of town for treatment to come and stay,” said Boesing. “They wouldn’t have to worry about things like housing, food or transportation. It’d be a group of apartments that could help big families.”

Boesing’s four younger siblings often would not be able to make the trip when she had to go to the hospital for long stretches of time.

“I know that’s the case for a lot of families that are getting treatment for their child,” said Boesing.

She’s hopeful to have it become a type of community center that can take away some of the stress of every day life.

Break the Grey is holding its annual party in Louisville, Ky. on Friday, Feb. 25.

More information about the organization can be found at breakthegrey.org and hopeunswerving.blogspot.com.

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