

Annual Buddy Walk is Saturday

Get your walking shoes on for the Down Syndrome Association of Greater Cincinnati's sixth annual Buddy Walk.

The Down Syndrome Association of Greater Cincinnati's Buddy Walk (DSAGC) will be at 9 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 15, at Newport on the Levee, a local family entertainment complex. It is a one-mile walk and the community is welcome to participate in this event.

This year, there is a new partner in town walking for awareness and fund raising for two research scholarships.

International Mosaic Down Syndrome Association (IMDSA) will partner for the first time with DSAGC and walk under the name "Team Mosaic." IMDSA is a non-profit organization designed to provide support, information and research to those touched by mosaic Down syndrome. Mosaic Down syndrome is a rare form of Down syndrome where a percentage of cells have the extra 21st chromosome that causes Down syndrome and the remaining cells are unaffected. About 100 to 200 individuals are born in America each year with mosaic Down syndrome. Because of the rarity of this birth defect, there is very little known about it or how it can affect an individual.

"Since our members are spread across the world, it is difficult for us to have a large fund-raising event. The best idea seemed to be to collaborate with an organization that already had an established fund raiser. Since the research we will sponsor also benefits those with Down syndrome, we looked to DSAGC and its well-known Buddy Walk," said IMDSA research chair Kristen Lipscomb Sund.

"Our goal is to raise money for two \$500 scholarships to support master's level research projects on mosaic Down syndrome/Down syndrome," she said.

Last year alone, more than \$6.5 million was raised nationwide for local and national education, research and advocacy programs through the Buddy Walk program.

IMDSA invites everyone to become a part of Team Mosaic. For more information on how you can become a walker for the team or become a "Virtual Walker," visit IMDSA's Web site www.imdsa.com and click on Buddy Walk or give IMDSA a call at: 1-888-MDS-LINK. All financial donations are tax deductible and can be sent online or by mail to: IMDSA, P.O. Box 1052, Franklin, TX 77856.

IMDSA will give a portion of all donations to the DSAGC for their generosity in letting them join the walk. For more information on the 2007 DSAGC Buddy Walk go to buddywalk.kintera.org