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## Cyclone swimmers named community leaders

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Mills College has hosted the WCRC's Swim-A-Mile for 17 years. (APER)

Swim season may be over, but cyclone swimmers aren't done bringing home wins. Mills College's swim team received the Community Leader award from Women's Cancer Resource Center (WCRC) for its yearly Swim-A-Mile event, which raises money for women's cancer research.

Mills helps the WCRC by allowing the organization to host Swim-A-Mile at the Trefethen Aquatic Center. According to Allie Fox, athletic compliance director at Mills College, over the past 13 years, donations made from the swim team and the Swim-A-Mile event have totaled over \$50,000. This past Swim-A-Mile, which took place on Feb. 24, Mills helped raise \$431,000 for the research center.

"Mills has proudly supported the annual Swim-a-Mile for Women with Cancer fundraising event over the past 17 years," President DeCoudreaux said in an email. "At Mills, we believe in creating independent thinkers who inspire action as leaders in their careers and in their communities, so I was honored to receive the Community Leader Award from the Women's Cancer Resource Center in recognition of our efforts."

The Mills College swim team participates in the Swim-A-Mile each year. Coach Neil Virtue thinks it is important for his swimmers to swim together for a common cause.

"The team and Mills have had a long-standing relationship with the Women's Cancer Research Center," Virtue said. "They do such great meaningful work, ... it is kind of [a] grass-roots like support for those navigating cancer."

Virtue helped coordinate swim clinics for participants to prepare for the Swim-A-Mile. In the clinics, he and the swimmers taught participants more efficient stroke techniques, flip turns and strategies for swimming a mile.

"If Neil was teaching people certain things, we demonstrated how to streamline or what he means when he tells them how to do a kick," Sophomore swimmer Ashley Young said.

According to Virtue, the team was impacted through their involvement in the Swim-A-Mile, not the award. The team was surrounded by participants who believed in the fight against cancer.

The swim team and its alumnae/i use the Swim-A-Mile as an annual reunion. Participants of the Swim-A-Mile come together and remember women they know that are diagnosed with cancer.

“It isn’t a race — not for time,” Virtue said. “[It’s] a powerful time to reflect on and be supported by many people who are honoring or swimming in memory of loved ones.”

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