Five-mile charity run aids visually impaired

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Registration is underway for the fifth annual Epsilon Psi Epsilon Fun Run to support Pilot Dogs Inc. and the Vision Center of Central Ohio.

The five mile run, which will be held at 5 p.m. April 24, will begin at the south end of Ohio Stadium, wrap around campus, and end back at the stadium, said Kelly Carson, co-chairperson of the event.

Last year 135 runners took part in the fun run and raised $2,000 for the two charities, Carson said.

Gil Pierce, co-chairperson of the event said, "We chose to support these particular charities because the work they do is so beneficial to visually impaired people. It costs a lot to keep them going."

Pilot Dogs Inc., which can train one dog for about $3,000, gives the dog to a blind person free of charge, Carson said.

The Vision Center of Central Ohio, a United Way agency, helps people adjust to their blindness by teaching daily living skills, communication skills and help with job placement, said Richard Oestreich, executive director of the center.

The blind pay for some of the services, but almost everything is subsidized through some sort of outside funds, raised by events like the fun run, Oestreich said.

The run is divided into five age groups beginning with ages 14 to 19 years and going to 40 and over by four year intervals.

The fraternity is preparing for at least as many runners as last year to help them earn money for the two charities. Each runner is required to pay a $7 pre-registration fee, or an $8 race day registration fee, Carson said.

First and second place medals will be awarded to the over-all winners, as well as the winners in each age division, Carson said. Every participant will receive a pilot dog T-shirt.

About 25 members of the optometry fraternity are running in the five mile run.