



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LEARN TO CLIMB, SCALE THE WALLS AND FIGHT OVARIAN CANCER
Minnesota Ovarian Cancer Alliance Joins the HERA Foundation for their REI Road Tour

Minneapolis, MN – The HERA (Health, Empowerment, Research, Advocacy) Foundation is teaming up with Minnesota Ovarian Cancer Alliance (MOCA) and REI for the 2005 Climb for Life Road Tour, a 4-month event visiting 6 cities to raise awareness of ovarian cancer and funding for research. The tour kicks off its stop in the Twin Cities at REI's Bloomington Store located at 750 West American Boulevard on Wednesday, April 13th at 7 PM. MOCA board member Sarah Noonan, a 33-year-old ovarian cancer survivor, will speak at the event about the symptoms of ovarian cancer and the importance of women taking control of their health.

The event is open to climbers of all abilities. For those who've never climbed but are interested in supporting ovarian cancer research, it's an opportunity to learn to climb. For a \$20.00 registration fee, which is donated to HERA, participants receive a t-shirt, gift bag, passes to local participating climbing gyms and their personal challenge book. Climbers will track their progress, earning a point for every foot they climb. They can set a personal goal and collect sponsors based on that goal. On Wednesday, April 13th from 7-8pm world-class climber Kitty Calhoun and Katie Cavicchio will be at REI giving a free climbing clinic to participants. On Wednesday, April 27th at 7pm prizes will be awarded to top finishers in each age and ability category as well as to the top fundraiser.

Alpinist Kitty Calhoun began climbing at the age of 18 on the crags of her native South Carolina. Soon afterward she turned her attention to the Himalayas, focusing on small teams and committed objectives. Since then, Kitty has climbed several Himalayan routes, as well as routes in South America and Alaska. Kitty is a mom, earned an MBA from University of Washington, works for Patagonia, and is a storyteller. Climber Katie Cavicchio has long been interested in women's issues. She was a Women's Studies major in college. Currently, she works as a public relations professional at Backbone Media in Carbondale, CO, where one of her clients includes Black Diamond. Katie is an avid rock climber and is pleased to have the opportunity to take part in the HERA Climb for Life REI Road Tour.

Raising awareness in the Twin Cities is crucial, as 60% of women in the U.S. believe their annual Pap smear tests for ovarian cancer, but it doesn't. Currently, there is no consistent reliable, accurate screening test to detect ovarian cancer in its early stages. Women and members of the medical community often don't know the symptoms, which can lead to late diagnosis. A recent study showed 97% of women diagnosed in early stages had recognizable symptoms of the disease. When detected early and treated properly, survival rates increase to over 90%.

The HERA Foundation is increasing awareness of ovarian cancer symptoms and detection methods through their national Climb for Life events. Ovarian cancer's symptoms include abdominal pressure, bloating, gas, a feeling of fullness, unexplained weight loss and unusual fatigue. When these symptoms persist and grow worse, women should ask their doctor for a CA 125 blood test, transvaginal ultra sound and a pelvic rectal exam.

ABOUT HERA

The HERA Foundation is a non-profit organization empowering women, the medical industry and communities in their fight against ovarian cancer. Founded by ovarian cancer survivor and avid rock climber Sean Patrick, HERA awards research grants to scientists involved in cutting edge research, provides financial assistance directly to women and families suffering with the financial burden of cancer treatments and raises awareness of ovarian cancer.

ABOUT MOCA

Minnesota Ovarian Cancer Alliance was founded in 1999 by a small group of ovarian cancer survivors. The mission of MOCA is to fund ovarian cancer research in Minnesota, raise awareness of the disease, and provide support to women with ovarian cancer and their families. This year, MOCA has awarded \$300,000 in research grants, bringing its total awards in the past five years to close to \$1 million.