



**THE PINK  
INVITATIONAL**  
Gymnasts Unite

Immediate Release:

## Pink Invitational Raises Over \$125,000 for Breast Cancer Awareness and Support

West Chester, PA- March 15, 2010 The 2010 Pink Invitational~Gymnasts Unite competition hosted by AJS Pancott Gymnastics was a beautiful display of skill, dedication, and generosity among gymnasts, teams, coaches, judges, and volunteers. The collaborative efforts of the local and gymnastics communities helped raise over \$125,000 for women with breast cancer and their families.

On Friday, February 26, despite the raging storm and poor road conditions, gymnasts showed up early to be sure they could compete. Coaches, judges and parents braved the cold and snow because they believe in the cause. During the three-day event, the over 1,500 participating gymnasts wore a custom designed pink GK Elite leo as a show of unity. The Pink Invitational featured inspiring speakers, educational materials, and a special visit by Olympian Courtney Kupets. Local fan favorite, the Phillies Phanatic also made an appearance to entertain the gymnasts.

One of the highlights of the event for Sue Weldon, founder and president of Pink Invitational, was the opportunity to give back to the gymnastics community. In late 2009, the Gymnasts Unite Grant program was launched to assist female gymnasts who have an immediate family member that has been diagnosed with breast cancer. The grant was created to ease the emotional and financial burden experienced by gymnasts and their families. At the Pink Invitational, five recipients were each presented with a \$1,000 grant. This year, one of the grants was given in honor of Talya Vexler by Georgia Gym Dogs coach, Suzanne Yoculan. Talya is a former collegiate gymnast and breast cancer survivor who shares her amazing story with young athletes. The 2010 grant recipients are: Emily McLaughlin (Northern Elite), Courtney and Tracey Pearson (United Gymnastix), Darcy Young (Gym Dandy's), Jenna and Sydney Beard (Twisters), and Riley McGrady (Gym Dandy's).

The Pink Invitational also challenged teams to raise funds on their own as part of the Above & Beyond Team Challenge. Each participating team pledged to raise \$500 or more to donate to the Pink Invitational. This year, 22 teams took up the challenge and collectively raised over \$25,000. The Gym Dandy's club, from Washington, PA, received first place honors for donating \$6,500. Silvia's came in second with \$2,032.71, and third place went to New England Gymnastics for a \$1,571 donation.

There was a spirit of cooperation, commitment, unity and joy as gymnasts competed that weekend. And the funds they raised together will have a significant and lasting impact for so many.

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*"Our mission is to educate and empower young women and girls with a greater understanding of breast cancer, and to raise awareness and funds in support of breast cancer survivors and their families."*



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About the Pink Invitational:

The Pink Invitational is a fundraising and outreach event of Unite for HER, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting women affected by breast cancer and their families, and sponsoring events providing hands-on support and education. The funds raised at the event will finance a donation to Living Beyond Breast Cancer, awareness and educational materials for girls and young women, Gymnasts Unite Grants, and local Breast Cancer Wellness Days where patients will meet with medical, nutrition, massage, yoga, and acupuncture professionals to learn more about hands-on strategies that will support their health and wellness.

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