UNCP. All the funds that were raised from the 2007 Relay For Life of UNCP actually went to the Relay For Life of Robeson County because we weren’t considered our own separate college/university event. For the 2008 Relay For Life of UNCP we qualified as a free-standing event, and were ranked among other college and university events within the South Atlantic region, so that was a very positive aspect in terms of growth for the event. I’ve definitely seen the number of teams and participants increase each year we’ve held the event. We’ve also been able to secure more corporate sponsorships as well and in-kind donations,” he said.

The theme for this year’s relay was 1 World 1 Hope. All of the teams represented a different country around the world to show that it is one world fighting against a common factor, cancer. The teams were composed of students, faculty, alumni and the surrounding area.

Students and community members came out for the event that lasted 24 hours. The teams and participants each took walks around the candle lit path.

The ceremony began with each Relay for Life committee member being recognized for their work this year. It was followed by cancer survivors walking around the path to “I Believe I Can Fly” by R. Kelly.

Next, all of the caregivers walked a lap. The caregivers are those that fight alongside people with cancer. After the caregiver lap, the teams lined up for the parade of nations. Each team announced what country they were representing and walked around the path.

Throughout the year events have been held to support Relay for Life. Student Housing held a Guitar Hero competition, Residence Life held a car wash, and many Greek organizations held fundraisers to raise money for the cause.

When the sun went down, the ceremony of hope was held at 9 p.m. A solemn mood was requested for the ceremony. There was a poem read and words spoken about the cause. The only lights on during this time were the luminaries that surrounded the track.

At night the luminarias, white paper bags that held candles in honor or memory of someone with cancer, were lit. Each luminaria had a name on the front that represented a loved one who has died of cancer or has survived. Along the path the luminarias for former UNCP Associate Vice Chancellor Dr. Collie Coleman was found. There were also luminarias set up on bleachers in front of the English E. Jones Health and Physical Education Center.

When the candles were lit, the word hope glimmered in the night. “I think that it is a very important thing to do because it affects everyone in some way,” junior Victoria Locklear said. “I plan to participate every year of my life,” she added.

Chavis said that the event was better than he hoped for.

“There was so much passion and dedication shown from students, faculty and staff. Everyone has a reason that they Relay, and it’s a wonderful feeling to see the UC Lawn and walkway packed with people all coming together for a common goal,” he said. “I think that says a lot in terms of the campus spirit that this event brings,” Chavis said.

The Relay For Life of UNCP committee has put in countless hours of behind the scenes work to ensure the success of this event, and I can honestly say that the hard work has paid off tremendously,” he added.

The event ended April 18 at 2 p.m. with a closing ceremony. Even though the lawn seemed to lose its campers, people still came out to support the event.

Relay For Life unites community and