

# South Miami news

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## Student's foundation raises funds for cancer awareness

BY ROBERT HAMILTON

Andrea L. Collins, a high school junior, started a foundation and is continuing its efforts to collect caps and hats for cancer patients, while raising funds and awareness about cancers.

The foundation, Caps4Cancers, was begun last year when Andrea was age 16 and a sophomore in high school in Miami. She had the idea when she was made aware of one of the side effects of cancer treatment, losing one's hair, and realized how that might impact the self-esteem of a patient. She decided to begin to collect caps and hats to donate to the patients for this reason and also as a protection from exposure from the sun and the damage that might create.

"These patients are going through so much fighting the cancer," Collins said. "And I wanted to find a way to make them feel better and not be embarrassed about their hair loss.

"My family, like many others, has been devastated by cancer, and this provides an opportunity to bring some additional attention to efforts to help those affected," she added. Collins' grandfather died at an early age from cancer, her cousin died from cancer when he was only 46 years old, and others in the family and close friends have suffered from this disease.

"My mother (Maria Kesti) started taking me to Rotary Club meetings at a very young age and I learned from these members and her to do what you can to help out in the community."



Andrea Collins, president and founder of Caps4Cancers, is pictured at the offices of WireMasters Electric Inc. with Kent Crook, president, as he donates caps and provides a monetary donation.

Earlier this year, the Ann Taylor store in Dadeland Mall hosted a fundraiser and awareness shopping event for Caps4Cancer. Also, Kent Crook, president of Wiremasters Electric Inc., donated caps and funds to Caps4Cancers. And recently, Collins volunteered and agreed to be a team captain for the Relay For Life event in Doral. She recruited others to join her team and solicited donations for the event held recently that raised in excess of \$118,000. She not only exceed her fundraising goal for the event, but managed a booth at the event for Caps4Cancers and had friends and family stay overnight with her. In ad-

dition, she had obtained a Barry Gibb autographed guitar for the auction to help raise additional funds.

"I greatly appreciate all of the time and efforts, and especially the donations, from so many, since I believe that we can make a difference," Collins said.

Caps4Cancers is a foundation developed to collect caps and hats for patients with cancer and to raise funding and awareness of cancers.

For more information, or to donate, contact Andrea Collins, founder and president, at 305-332-3367 or by email at <alc@caps4cancers.org>. Visit the website at <www.caps4cancers.org>.