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## Benefit to assist woman stricken with brain cancer

**SIOBHAN MCANDREW**

RENO GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Posted: 9/15/2006

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Kayla Nebeker should be in Los Angeles today. Nebeker, 23, should be unpacking and buying books for next week's first day of class in a master's program in nutrition at UCLA.

Instead, Nebeker is battling Glioblastoma multiforme, an aggressive type of brain cancer.

"It was all pretty sudden. I had some headaches which I just attributed to the stress of saving of money to go to graduate school," said Nebeker, who had a seizure at work in July.

She was rushed to the emergency room and later diagnosed with the terminal brain cancer. She has started radiation and chemotherapy after doctors said her tumor was inoperable.

"Today I'm having a good day but it's been a really bad few weeks," said Nebeker, who has lost motor skill on her left side and has vision problems now.

Nebeker graduated in December with a bachelor's degree in nutrition from the University of Nevada, Reno, and planned to start school again this semester.

She was working at Washoe Medical Center for two months and was not covered by insurance when she first was diagnosed.

"The worst part was being sick and not being able to do or plan my treatment," said Nebeker. "I'm a type A person, and that was the hardest part, just waiting for insurance to be figured out."



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Nebeker was diagnosed four years ago with colon cancer when she was 19. She made a complete recovery and believed her medical problems were behind her.

"The two aren't related in any way," she said. "It's so rare for this to happen to one person, especially someone my age," she said.

Friends and family of Nebeker have rallied to help her, something she said has touched her.

"Some of the things they are doing I don't even know about until they tell me where to be," she said.

Nebeker said she is trying to keep a positive attitude. She recently got engaged to her long time boyfriend and deferred graduate school until January.

"I'm trying to just focus on getting better," Nebeker said.

Tonight, Washoe Medical Center will host a dinner to raise money for Nebeker's medical expenses.

Emily Plumb is one of the registered dieticians at Washoe Medical Center who has helped organized tonight's event.

"She is such a sweet and positive person," Plumb said. "When we feel down about it, she makes us feel better."

Nebeker is now covered by Medicaid and Social Security, but has more than \$100,000 outstanding from when she was first diagnosed.

"She also is undergoing treatment, so she can't work now," said Meghan Spencer, a friend hoping people come out to support her and help her get through this rough time."

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