Geltrude foundation hoping to go na

BY RICHARD DICKON
of Nutley Sun

The Mike Geltrude Foundation presented its inaugural benefit for education, awareness, and research of malignant melanoma on May 1, but according to Geltrude's son, Dan, this is only the beginning.

Dan Geltrude envisions the foundation as a national entity.

"We want to elevate to a national foundation," he said. "That is our ultimate goal."

The elder Geltrude was the force that brought soccer to prominence in Nutley. He was diagnosed with melanoma cancer in 2004 that soon became a struggle for his life, according to a tribute written by students and athletes.

"Yet when faced with his darkest hour, instead of asking 'Why me?' Mr. Geltrude asked 'How can we warn others?'" the tribute states. "Instead of panicking over his fate, he displayed a confidence that provided comfort to his family and friends. Instead of cowering to his disease, he fought back until his body could fight no longer."

The township board of commissioners officially renamed DeMuro Field in memory of Michael Geltrude, who died in February. The dedication was May 11.

Dan Geltrude said more than $50,000 was raised at the inaugural benefit, with more than 500 people at the event. Before that, his obituary asked for donations in lieu of flowers, and raised $50,000 in outright donations, Geltrude said.

"We're gearing our work toward awareness and education," he said. By the time the school year is done in Nutley, every student in every grade will have had an hour-long sun safety, skin protection and malignant melanoma presentation given by tion.

What's more, skin cation will become a curriculum of health Geltrude said.

"With the money working with the ment," he said, "we' hand out sun block wi form to every athlet have education progr parents and coache mandatory before p This is far-reaching."

Geltrude said if he kind of education, he saved his father's life.

"I want to tell pa learned," he said. "I sunscreen and they sa having family member moles where they ca selves."

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"He wouldn't beli Geltrude said. "First o nition dinner with then a park named did what he did beca it, not for recogniti would be very prou we're doing. His last 1 was an advocate. No has been silenced.

"This is a celebratio message, like the din continued. "Protect y in the shade. Go to a gist is a timely manner. lives has he had an in that have come out in