

Hospital hopes to break \$500,000 in this year's Run for Southlake



Last year was a record-breaker for the Nature's Emporium Run for Southlake, with community members lacing up to raise more than \$460,000 for local health care.

Now that the countdown is on for this year's run on April 26, organizers are hoping to raise more than \$500,000 through the event but they can't do it without your help.

Community leaders gathered at Nature's Emporium's flagship Newmarket location on Monday afternoon to formally launch the countdown to the 2026 Run for Southlake.

Jennifer Ritter, President and CEO of the Southlake Health Foundation, said last year's event saw more than 1,650 participants running, walking, dancing on Davis Drive to support the local hospital and she hopes these records will be broken in the spring.

"We know that this year is going to be a record-breaking year," said Ritter. "Without the support of our community running, walking, and raising critical dollars to support leading-edge patient care, we wouldn't be able to look after all the members of our community."

"Last year, we raised \$460,000 the highest we have raised. The bar is set. We want to blow past half-a-million dollars this year. We're on the path [to] turning this into a million-dollar investment in the health of our communities and I know the community can do that. I have the utmost confidence that we will build towards that goal and get there together because I know how we all value the health and wellbeing of one another."

These values were underscored by Steve Hollingsworth of Nature's Emporium, the grocery store that has been the title sponsor of the Run for nearly 15 years.

Hollingsworth said he had the chance to participate in the Run last year with his daughter and said the value it continues to bring the community is clear.

"Southlake Health is where our loved ones go to get the care they need," he said. "It's a very special place and it's obviously something that we want to continue to support and ensure that everybody has access to the life-saving care they need. As community members, we have the opportunity with this event to show up for one another in a time, quite frankly when technology, which is intended to bring us all together, seems to continue to push us apart. There's not that many events like this that give us this

opportunity to show up for each other, so we're very excited to continue to support an event that does that.

?We're grateful to be part of something that brings so many people together. We know we're going on 14 years now as a partnership and we look forward to continuing to grow that, to continuing to help provide leading-edge care that's close to home in our communities for years to come.?

For more on the 2026 Nature's Emporium Run for Southlake, including how to register or pledge your support to a team or individual, visit runforsouthlake.ca.

By Brock WeirEditorLocal Journalism Initiative Reporter