



Veronica Appia/Metroland

Christ the King student Lauren Harrison is organizing this year's Relay for Life fundraising event, with the help of her friends and peers.

COMMUNITY

Christ the King student heads cancer fundraising event Relay for Life

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For Grade 12 student Lauren Harrison, life is busy.

Between finishing up her final semester of high school, preparing for university, working part time, being a part of her school play, mentoring students and studying for a Royal Conservatory of Music practical music exam in flute, it may seem as though she has a full schedule, but Harrison has taken on another substantial initiative this spring: spearheading a Canadian Cancer Society Relay for Life event in her community.

At the time of Halton Catholic School Board's recent decision to ban donations to charities they feel do not align with Catholic values, Harrison says she was in the midst of beginning to plan this year's Relay for Life at Christ the King Catholic Secondary School in Georgetown.

It would have been the school's eighth year participating in the initiative and Harrison's fourth year on the committee.

"I am Catholic, but at the same time, I've been impacted a lot by cancer," she said. "I see what the Canadian Cancer Society has done for so many people. Obviously they fund cancer research, but they also help those who are living with cancer."

Upon hearing the news, Harrison decided that she was going to organize the initiative herself. Her teachers could not participate as it would be considered a conflict of

interest, so she joined forces with her peers and friends who were interested in helping the cause and they contacted the Canadian Cancer Society and began the planning process.

"We got the support from the entire society, which is really great," she said. And despite the school board decision, Harrison was still able to secure the field at Christ the King as the venue to run the event.

On May 1, as part of Youth Week in Halton Hills, Harrison received the Maggie Connolly Award for making a positive impact on young people through a number of initiatives, including the work she has done over the past few years fundraising for cancer.

Harrison says she has been working between 20 to 25 hours a week on Relay for Life and attends about five meetings per week, checking in with the entire committee and with each of the sub-committees that are working on individual projects for Relay.

This year, the event currently has 150 registered participants and has raised \$6,660 so far.

The committee has also received a number of donations from the community, as well as sponsorships from Carney Electric, Superstore and Halton Window & Door.

"It's important to us," Harrison said. "We just want to show everyone that we do care about this."

The Relay for Life event will take place on June 2 from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. For more information, visit relayforlife.ca/georgetownyouth.

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