

Local youth raises funds for hospitals through Walk Club

By Brian Lockhart

Following in the footsteps of his father who is known for his charitable efforts, Rajvir Khanuja decided that he would start a campaign and raise funds for local hospitals.

Rajvir's dad, Dr. Raj Khanuja, is known in the community for his annual free dental day he offers at several clinics in the region, and Rajvir decided he could also help the community by raising donations for a good cause.

Rajvir started the 100kms Walk Club and challenged others to join him in a series of walks to raise funds.

The walks either started or ended at Headwaters Health Care Centre.

Rajvir got the idea of raising funds for hospitals after his grandfather became ill and had to be transported to one.

His grandfather has since recovered.

The walks took place on long weekends over the course of a year and ended up raising \$11,000.

"We did 10 walks in total, and they were all done during long weekends," Rajvir explained. "It started when my grandpa got sick, and I wanted to show appreciation."

Rajvir and his family couldn't visit his grandfather at the hospital due to COVID-19 restrictions at the time.

"From there, I was thinking about the healthcare workers and how everyone had to deal with COVID," Rajvir said. "We created a website and promoted it on social media as the 100kms Walk Club. Even if you didn't join us, you could just do the walk on your own. Each walk was 10 kilometres. Sometimes it was a little more, but never less than 10 kilometres. We raised around \$11,000, and donated to two hospitals."

The group, sometimes consisting of just three or four people, made the walk in all sorts of weather conditions.

"Once I started it, I was committed," Rajvir said, of walking in the bad weather, even when he was sick. "I still did it, otherwise I'd be lying to myself."

Sylvia Jones, MPP for Dufferin-Caledon, presented Rajvir with a certificate of recognition for his efforts at the Headwaters Dental office in Orangeville on Friday, July 26.