

CELEBRATE

Haliburton Highlands Secondary School in Canada hopes to double their original goal of \$6,000 during the school's first ever Relay For Life. "It shows how cancer affects everyone and how it's important to come together to support this cause," Jordana Jennings, a Grade 12 student said. "It's great to see our school community be a part of something that can make an impact. Relay is a great learning opportunity for students and brings more awareness to cancer, more than what most kids know about. It shows how much people are affected by cancer."

REMEMBER

Survivors are at the heart of every Relay and on the first Sunday in June we celebrate National Cancer Survivor's Day. This international observance honors millions of cancer survivors worldwide and raises awareness about the physical, emotional and financial challenges they face. The globally accepted definition of a survivor is anyone with a history of cancer, from the moment of diagnosis for the rest of their lives.

FIGHT BACK

During 2026 **Bermuda Relay For Life**, Bermuda Relay for Life Global Hero of Hope, Karen Pearman, highlighted how healing from disease continues after treatment formally stops. "By living a lifestyle rooted in nutrition and physical activity, we give ourselves the best chance to thrive, not just survive." "My story is not only about survival, it's about transformation, about taking control of my health and about inspiring others across the globe to live stronger, healthier and more empowered lives every single day."



The CANSA Relay For Life East Rand in South Africa brought cancer survivors and supporters together in an emotional revival of the event after a gap of several years. Chairperson Anand Gounden explained that organisers intentionally kept this year's Relay smaller as they focused on rebuilding awareness and reconnecting with the community. "We decided to have a smaller Relay so that we could reignite awareness around cancer prevention and the different types of cancer," Anand said. He added that while the weather affected turnout, the heart of the event remained unchanged. "For us, the number of people does not matter as much as the quality of the event and the message behind it."

Among the evening's most powerful moments was a heartfelt testimony by Justine Harvey, a cancer survivor of five years. She reflected on her diagnosis during the Covid-19 pandemic and the life-changing lessons that followed. "Cancer changes you," she said. "The treatments, the waiting rooms, the emotional strain; but you also begin to appreciate ordinary moments in extraordinary ways. You learn gratitude, resilience and the value of people over possessions."

Justine added "Behind every survivor is a network of people who carry them through the difficult days – family, doctors, nurses, colleagues, friends and communities like the one gathered here tonight. One of the beautiful things about Relay For Life is that it does not pretend cancer is easy. It recognizes the pain and struggle, but it also celebrates survival, progress, research and the incredible strength of the human spirit."



Relay For Life Greater Niagara, New York hosts a Paint the Town Purple event a few weeks before the main Relay to draw awareness to all types of cancer and the hope for a cure.

Lynn Marston Dingey, Relay For Life co-chair says, "I love the whole idea of 'Paint the Town Purple.' A cancer survivor's journey is not easy. Painting the town purple is just our way of showing them the community's support. During the event the Town Commons was decorated with purple ribbons to offer a symbol of hope to cancer survivors.

The committee also sold doughnuts and purple ribbons to raise funds for Relay For Life. The Relay also holds an unusual fundraiser – lawnmower races. The day starts with a Memorial Walk and is followed by a car/truck and bike show. Then the lawnmower races start at Noon kicking off with a kid's race. The event also includes a flag burning, a quilt raffle, face painting, and a grab bag raffle. All proceeds from the day will be donated to Relay For Life.



Community spirit was on display at the National Cancer Society Malaysia (NCSM)–**Biocon Relay for Life 2026**. The event was held at the National University of Medicine (NUM) and included a community run, cancer screenings and games promoting a healthy lifestyle, early detection and collective action against cancer.

Organizer Ainul Farhana Abdul Razak expressed pride, saying, "Being a Relay For Life venue partner reflects our commitment to community engagement and health advocacy." She commented on the educational value of the Relay For Life event, and said it provided students and staff the opportunity to better understand real-world health challenges while fostering empathy, professionalism and collaboration, enriching the overall educational experience.

Ainul Farhana who is also a lecturer at NUM also explained how Relay For Life aligned closely with the university's mission to produce excellent doctors and graduates who are compassionate, skilled and socially accountable, "By hosting and engaging in community health programs, we deliver high-quality learning experiences that extend beyond the classroom while addressing the needs of our students and the health landscape,"

Acting dean Dr Vivian Andaya Verbo, who launched the community run, stressed the importance of cancer awareness and early detection and said "Raising awareness about cancer screening is essential, as early detection significantly improves patient outcomes, allows for less invasive treatments and reduces the burden on the healthcare system.

Community outreach initiatives helped reduce health inequalities and supported emphasis on preventive care. Encouraging screening empowers patients to take a proactive role in their health rather than relying solely on reactive treatment. Such initiatives help students develop communication skills, cultural sensitivity and a deeper understanding of population health challenges in Malaysia," added Dr Vivian.