

**FOR RELEASE**  
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## **Vaughan residents get set to run for improved health care**

*Marathon run Sunday, October 26 will raise funds for city's first hospital.*

VAUGHAN, ON – At 9.55 this Sunday morning, Mayor Mike Di Biase and Councillor Mario Ferri, along with other Vaughan councillors, will be tightening the laces of their running shoes. Five minutes later, they'll join hundreds of other local residents, as well as runners from across the GTA, at the starting line in the first annual Run for Vaughan. Ten kilometres down the road, they expect to have raised over \$100,000 towards the cost of the City of Vaughan's first hospital.

Currently, Vaughan is the largest city in Canada that doesn't have a hospital of its own. That's what prompted members of the city's Ahmadiyya Muslim Community to approach City Council early this September with plans for a marathon run to raise funds for a new medical facility.

Council responded enthusiastically, and the Run for Vaughan was born. The event is open to all professional and amateur runners and walkers. Participants have canvassed the community for pledges, and net proceeds will go to the Michael Di Biase Charitable Foundation Inc., a not-for-profit foundation established by the City.

"Even though we didn't have a lot of time to prepare, response from the community has been fantastic," says Basat Khalifa, the event's co-chairman. "Our corporate sponsors include Fortinos, Manulife, Bank of Montreal, Longo's, AGF Management, Oak Stair Limited, HSBC, Mount Sinai Hospital, The Vogue Development Group, Regency Heights Homes, TACC Construction, Royal Group Technologies, Royal Pine Homes, Norstar Building, Sunfield Homes, Vandebussche Irrigation, Farmusa Zuccaro LLP, Harvin Pitch & Teplitksy Colson, Canada Bread, and BMO Bank/Nesbitt Burns. Dozens of smaller local business have pledged their support, too."

What impresses Khalifa even more, however, is the grassroots response to the event. "The average person in Vaughan is really behind us on this," he says. "For example, every school in the City is actively participating."

Neither the run nor the benefits are for Vaughan residents only, Khalifa points out. While local residents will benefit from the new hospital, it will also have an impact on neighbouring communities. "People in Vaughan have to travel to Toronto and Richmond Hill for medical services now, putting an additional strain on their facilities at a time when medical funding is in such short supply."

No matter where you live in the GTA, it's not too late to take part. You can visit the event's website, [www.runforvaughan.com](http://www.runforvaughan.com), to sign up as a runner or sponsor, or to make a donation. Full details are available at the site, including registration forms and pledge sheets, and you can do it all online.

For more details, contact Basat Khalifa at 416-735-0847.