PHOTOS COURTESY OF CARLA PEARSON

Bakersfield Mayor Karen Goh speaks during the Walk Like MADD/MADD Dash event in the Park at River Walk on Saturday morning.

A group of kids waits near the finish line during the Walk Like MADD/MADD Dash event at the Park at River Walk.

MADD event a walk — and run — in park

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Around 1,000 people came out to the Park at River Walk on Saturday to run for a cause.

The annual Walk Like MADD and MADD Dash, sponsored by Chain | Cohn | Stiles, raised money for the Kern County office of Mothers Against Drunk Driving. The event included a 5K and 10K run as well as a kids' fun run.

The event raised more than $80,000 for the Kern County MADD office's educational programs and victim services, as well as to raise awareness about the dangers of drunken driving.

"This event keeps growing each year, which shows that Kern County has had enough. Our local residents want safer streets," said Carla Pearson, victim services specialist for MADD Kern County. "We hope Kern County will continue alongside us for the next 365 days as we work to prevent this 100-percent preventable crime, and ultimately end drunk and drugged driving."

A runner closes in on the finish line.

The event opened with statements from representatives from MADD, Assistant District Attorney Scott Spielman, Bakersfield Mayor Karen Goh and Councilman Andrae Gonzales. It also included words from some victims of DUI crashes.

Following the opening ceremony, the kids' fun run was held, presented by the Bakersfield Active 20-30 Club. Timed 5K and 10K runs were held after that, with medals given out to the top runners in each age category. There was also a walk specifically for survivors of DUI-related accidents and their families.

For a full listing of the award-winners, please visit bakersfieldtrackclub.org.

Awards were also given out to the top fundraisers of the event. Prayers for Jourdan won Top Friends and Family Team. The top individual fundraiser was Todd Farnsworth. The Kern County District Attorney's Office won the Law Enforcement Challenge. Lastly, the Kern Schools Federal Credit Union won the corporate challenge.

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