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AmCan teen selected diabetes ambassador

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Shelby Corey seems like a typical teen, but next month she'll be doing something extraordinary. Shelby, 14, will be one of seven youngsters ages 9-18 from around the Bay Area selected by the Juvenile Diabetes Research Fund to serve as an ambassador for 2013 Walk to Cure Diabetes.



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Born and raised in American Canyon, the ACHS freshman was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes when she was only two years old.

Type 1 diabetes is an auto-immune disease that strikes children and adults suddenly, and can be fatal. Until a cure is found, people with the disease have to test their blood sugar and give themselves insulin injections multiple times, or use a pump, every day of their lives. And even with that intensive care, insulin is not a cure, nor does it prevent its potential complications, which may include kidney failure, blindness, heart disease, stroke, and amputation.

"I have a continuous glucose monitoring system and an insulin pump. These things make me able to be the dancer, actress, singer, and everyday teen that I am," Shelby was quoted in a press release.

In an interview this week, Shelby said she doesn't see her diabetes as an obstacle.

"I can do pretty much anything," Shelby said.

Currently, Shelby is in the high school marching band color guard and performs during half-time celebrations.

Liz Corey, Shelby's mom, said she and her husband, Scott, encourage their daughter's can-do spirit.

"We've never said: 'You can't do that,'" said Liz Corey, Shelby's mom.

Although her twin brother, Alex, is free of the disease, recent tests revealed Scott, who works for the city of Suisun City, shows some warning signs. Liz Corey said since they caught it early, doctors can closely monitor progress of the disease and have a better chance of keeping it in check.

Although she's participated in walks for a cure since 2002, this is the first year she will be an ambassador. Shelby met with her counterparts recently in a kick-off get-together.

"It was cool to hear the other (ambassadors') stories," Shelby said.

Shelby and her team — family and friends — will be walking at Fort Mason in San Francisco, Oct. 27.

Organizers expect more than 5,000 walkers representing local corporations, families, schools, and other organizations are expected to participate in walks throughout the month of October in four locations across the Bay Area: Pacific Grove, Oakland, Santa Clara and San Francisco.

The public can follow the ambassadors on jdrfbayarea.org/news; on facebook.com/JDRFBayArea; and on twitter.com/JDRFBayArea to hear from them as they blog about their public roles and tweet about living with type 1 diabetes. The public can learn about the walk and the ambassadors and find out how they can help fundraise by visiting jdrfbayarea.org/Walk.

This story was updated to change the number of expected participants.

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