

# **Run for Lungs, Run from Vapes Speech**

**Date:** March 22, 2026

**Speaker:** Shreya Madan

Good morning everyone!

My name is Shreya Madan, and I'm a junior at BASIS Shavano. I'd like to extend a warm welcome to all of you who took the time to join us today for the 3rd annual *High Schools for Health 5K*.

Today is about something we do every second without thinking — breathing.

Most of us don't question it. But for many people with respiratory illnesses, it's not that simple.

And right now, more and more young people are putting their lungs at risk — often because vaping is marketed as harmless.

The reality is, we don't fully understand the long-term effects yet, since modern e-cigarettes have only been widely used for less than two decades.

And that's exactly why this event matters.

Today, we're incredibly fortunate to have experts here who can help us better understand lung health: Dr. Holly Keyt, a pulmonologist and Medical Director of the Lung Transplant Program at University Health Transplant Institute, and Dr. Tarak Patel, a pediatric pulmonologist at Texas Pediatric Specialties and Family Sleep Center. These physicians see the impact of these issues every day, and we're very grateful they've taken the time to be here with us.

Before we hear from them, I'd like to take a moment to thank the people who made this event possible.

Ms. Vikki Deleon — thank you for being the driving force behind this entire operation. Your energy and dedication have truly shaped this event. And that giant, over-the-top inflatable arch you'll see at the start? That's all her.

Ms. Veronica Reyna — thank you for keeping everything organized and for printing what felt like a million and five pages of my biology notes.

Ms. Hunnicutt — thank you for being a constant source of support and guidance. I don't think this event would exist without your encouragement — or your patience with my constant messages.

Dr. Hitchman — thank you for sparking my interest in biomedical science and for mentoring me beyond the classroom in transplant immunology.

A huge thank you as well to the Mayor of Shavano Park, Mr. Bob Werner, for taking time out of his busy schedule to be here and speak to all of us today.

And thank you to UT Health San Antonio, University Health, and the City of Shavano Park for sponsoring and supporting this event.

And of course, to our incredible ambassadors and volunteers — you are the backbone of this event. From organizing and outreach to showing up early this morning — and yes, to wearing those ugly, *UGLY* vests for yet another year — you've made this all happen. Thank you for sacrificing both your time and your fashion sense for this cause.

Our ambassadors this year are: Arpita, Kiera, Mairin, Mehar, Presha, Shalini, Suhavi, Seren, Zubaer, and Saanvi, who have been doing outreach across their schools.

Special thanks to Presha for working closely with me and BASIS HOSA, and to Arpita, Anisha, Mehar, Shalini, and Suhavi for going above and beyond to spread the word and bring in participants.

Last but not certainly least, thank you to my family for being a constant source of support in planning this event.

And with that, I'd like to welcome our first speaker, Dr. Keyt, to share a few words.