Carter Christopherson, a member of the Alaska Rush 02B Nike Tiempo team, was born with a heart murmur that required only monitoring for the first 10 years of his life, though nobody would have even guessed that he had a heart problem. In September of 2011, his doctor informed the Christopherson family that it was starting to negatively impact his valves so they went to Portland in October for open heart surgery to repair it. The surgery was 100% successful and Carter was back to his normal active self after about 2 1/2 months.

As a family, the Christophersons have walked in the Alaska Heart Run in prior years, but after Carter's open heart surgery last October, they decided to step it up and try and get more friends and family members involved. To this aim, the Christopherson family set up Team Carter and are inviting all friends and family members to join them in the run/walk where the money raised goes to the American Heart Association.

The Alaska Heart Run is one of the largest (if not the largest) foot race in Alaska with the 2011 edition featuring over 5,800 participants. It is a family fun day that unites serious runners and casual walkers in the fight against heart disease and stroke.

This year's race is on the morning of April 28, 2012. The Alaska Heart Run starts and finishes on the UAA campus with two options being available for participants, a) 9:30am start for the timed 5k or b) 10:00am start for the 5k non-timed run/walk or 3k walk. Some members of Team Carter will be doing the 3k Heart Lite (walking) while other team members will be running the 5k (some timed and some untimed). Currently Team Carter has 17 members on the roster with commitments for an additional 10-15 more and have raised about $1,800 as of April 9, 2012. Team Carter consists of some of Carter's soccer teammates and friends from school while his sister has a number of her friends joining along other family members and friends. Team Carter is going to have a good mix of runners and walkers. Last year, Sebastian Szweda-Mittelstadt (Seabass to the soccer teammates) placed 3rd in the males under 15, and 70th out of all males with a time of 20:13 for the 5k.

More information on the Alaska Heart Run, please visit http://heartrun.kintera.org. To join Team Carter, go to the website and find the participant registration link and choose the Join a Team option when prompted. The team name is "Team Carter". If someone can't make the event that day, the site also accepts donations to the Heart Association. If someone decides to donate, the price ranges from $5 to $35 per person depending on options.

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