

Hope Matters ²⁰²⁰



*I wish to have
a playset*

Luis, 4
digestive disorder

Make-A-Wish[®]
NEW JERSEY



President's Message

Thomas P. Weatherall
President & Chief Executive Officer

Dear Friends,

As we approach a new year, with renewed hope and optimism on the horizon, we leave behind a most challenging 2020. As you consider the many worthy causes to support with a year-end gift, my hope is that you'll consider supporting us again before the year is out.

Perhaps it was stories like Bethany's that prompted your gift in past years. Trust that we've been granting wishes throughout this pandemic, because we cannot cancel hope!

Bethany, age 11, and battling Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia (A.L.L.) had a wish to go to the Bahamas (pre Covid), what she called "the most beautiful place on earth".

Upon returning from their trip, Bethany's dad, Jim, called and told me all about how wonderful she looked and was feeling, smiling like the kid he remembered her to be before her illness. Then he asked, "How were you able to send my family on this trip, one that my wife and I could never have given Bethany and our family?"

I explained, "Donors care about a child and family such as yours. The reasons why they donate may vary, just as varied as "who" gives, as support comes from all types of sources each year." There are many people - and businesses - who contribute, and many ways to do so.

Jim seemed satisfied with my reply, and he closed the conversation with, "You've given me a lot to think about."

Later that night I received the following email from Jim:

"I feel it important to share the impact of the wish experience on my family. It was exactly what Bethany needed, and, for a marriage that has been challenged over the last two years, and for two siblings who have not had a vacation trip in more than 7 years. We feel like our batteries are re-charged! All we cared about was Bethany, but one day, sitting on the beach she said, 'For my wish, I just wanted to give you all something we could share and enjoy. Thank you for all you do for me.'

My wife and I were in tears, and my two daughters jumped into the water to cover theirs.

I used to think that we live in a rather cynical society, however, my little girl's experience has taught me many things and has humbled my wife and me, but mostly, it has challenged me to think differently. How could I continue to think that I live in a cynical society when you tell me that complete strangers helped my little girl, and our family, to do something that we otherwise would not have been able to do, during a time that was so painful and difficult for us? What does THAT say about a society, that donors to Make-A-Wish circle the wagons around my little Bethany? Cynical? No way! Humbling, giving, selfless, generous, caring? OH YES!"

If I've learned anything in my three decades in the nonprofit sector, almost two of those here at MAWNJ, it is this - people are often seeking deeper meaning in their lives. Isn't it part of the human condition then that we gravitate towards meaningful experiences in life, truly meaningful and powerful? I think so.

I can't think of many that are more powerful than helping bring hope and joy to a child and family who are facing a life-threatening illness! To see the world, to see life through their eyes, to be made aware of mortality - theirs and our own - is deeply humbling and profound. It can offer incredibly powerful perspective for our own lives.

Meaningful experiences change us. More and more meaningful experiences change us, more and more.

Here's wishing you and your loved ones a safe and healthy close to 2020, with hope and strength towards 2021, and with it, an abundance of meaningful and fulfilling experiences.

With deepest gratitude,

Tom Weatherall
President & CEO
Make-A-Wish New Jersey

OUR MISSION

Together, we create life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses.



Continuing To Deliver Joy In A Year Unlike Any Other★

In early March, just days before we would enter a state-wide lockdown due to the spread of the COVID-19 virus, one of the very last wishes for 2020 that would involve travel and a large gathering for any of our wish kids was granted to a Jersey City teen named Antonio.

From a young age, Antonio had set his sights on attending Duke University and becoming a member of their elite Blue Devils basketball team. Even a diagnosis of a brain tumor was not going to get in the way of that dream. When Antonio was asked to declare his wish, he knew immediately that it would be to see his Duke University Blue Devils in action, at a home game, taking on their historic rivals, the University of North Carolina Tar Heels.



Antonio's life-changing weekend at Duke University would include being the guest of honor at the team meeting prior to the big game, and a one-of-a-kind cherished moment – meeting Coach K himself and joining him in escorting the team into the arena by Coach K's side. Antonio's wish also included a powerful moment that all those in attendance will never forget, a crowd of 9,000 fans in the arena cheering Antonio's name as the team encircled him at center court to present him with the game ball following their win.



Fast forward from the moment of Antonio's wish, to wish-granting amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. As a team, we immediately began to find ways to pivot and continue bringing that same level of excitement and joy to other wish kids. One example - 10-year-old Neil of Bernardsville, who was born with a genetic condition, MECP2 Duplication Syndrome, and diagnosed with Moyamoya Disease a few years later.

Neil's medical condition has left him severely disabled and medically fragile, and his family found it harder and harder to safely move him from his wheelchair to a swing – his favorite thing to do, while watching the cars drive by in front of his home. Neil's wish was for a new, state-of-the-art swing that could accommodate him, while still in his wheelchair.

Once the swing was installed, we partnered with first responders from Bernardsville and surrounding communities, and delivered a surprise convoy of police cars, fire trucks, motorcycles and neighbors – over 200 vehicles - who drove past, holding up signs and cheering. Neil's family shared that there are very few things in life that bring Neil joy – but that day, joy was certainly delivered.



Looking Back On 2020

One of Riley's cancers doesn't have the greatest prognosis, but we will keep hoping and fighting. However, we don't want her to spend whatever time she may or may not have left cooped up inside our home. This playset has provided Riley with a safe space where she can get her energy out and just enjoy herself. Whenever we ask her, 'Should we go to Riley's Clubhouse?' her face immediately brightens as she runs for her socks and shoes.

- Jason & Nicole, Riley's Parents



I wish to have a playset
Riley, 3
brain tumor



I wish to have photography equipment
Sinclare, 17
blood disorder



I wish to have a gaming computer
Ian, 9
leukemia



I wish to have a movie room
Nesim, 9
leukemia



I wish to have a puppy
Brandon, 5
leukemia



8

I wish to have a safe backyard

Emmy, 4
pulmonary disease



7

I wish to have a guitar

Zakary, 12
cystic fibrosis



5

I wish to stay in a cabin with my family

Matthew, 19
cancer

6

I wish to have a playset

Isabella, 4
leukemia



9

I wish to be a New Jersey Devil

Reilly, 13
cystic fibrosis



10

I wish to have a Side-By-Side Team Dual Trike

Yanielees, 10
nervous system disorder

11

I wish to have a pool

Logan, 11
cancer



I wish to have an iPad Pro & Apple Pen

Liani, 15
cancer



During Liani's chemotherapy treatments, her digital art helped her get through her toughest days. As a result, she made a wish for an iPad Pro to support her art. It would also give her the opportunity to keep in touch through FaceTime

with friends and family she hasn't been able to see in person due to this pandemic. Liani's smile and joy were felt by all of us as we watched her open her gifts. We want to thank Make-A-Wish for the amazing gifts, their dedication, kindness, and support during these trying times. They gave us all a reason to smile.

- Natacha, Liani's mom



I wish to have a camper

Shawn, 7
neuroblastoma

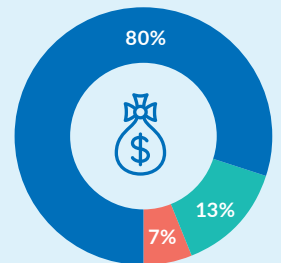
You make moments like these happen

Make-A-Wish New Jersey relies on the generosity of individual donors just like you to create life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses. Donations are essential to helping us create unforgettable wish experiences for children and families!

HOW YOUR GIFT IS SPENT

Fiscal Year 2019

- 80% Wish Granting & Program
- 13% Fundraising
- 7% Administration



Invest in Joy and Adopt a Wish

By fully or partially funding a wish, the Adopt-A-Wish® program provides a unique opportunity to make a direct and substantial impact on the life of a wish child, their family and entire communities. Now more than ever, the world needs the hope of a wish. For our wish children and their families, your support can make all the difference.

Learn more about the Adopt-A-Wish program at nj.wish.org/aaw.



Fundraising Reimagined

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, many community events have pivoted to virtual experiences. You can still raise important funds to help grant wishes by hosting a virtual event or online fundraiser. You can celebrate anything important to you – a birthday, anniversary, holiday celebration or company event. We will provide the website and tools to help you succeed.

Visit nj.wish.org/wishyourway to start your fundraiser today.



For more information on ways to give, contact our Development Team at 609-371-9474 or development@nj.wish.org.



GIVE THE GIFT OF A WISH

This holiday season, honor someone special with a donation in their name. Your gift will be a lasting tribute to your loved ones and make a difference in the lives of the children we serve.

★ Make your gift at nj.wish.org/donate.

I wish to have a puppy ★ Alexis, age 6 ★ leukemia



PUT YOUR DONOR-ADVISED DOLLARS TO WORK

Donor-advised funds (DAFs) have become popular vehicles for charitable giving because they can provide tax benefits and centralize philanthropic giving. You can help grant wishes for children with critical illnesses today and in the future through a DAF grant recommendation. Simply contact your financial institution or community foundation to recommend a grant to Make-A-Wish New Jersey.



Leave a Lasting Gift

Create a legacy that will make wishes possible for years to come. Deferred giving often allows you to balance your financial goals with that of your charitable interests and may allow you to achieve significant tax benefits. A planned gift in the form of a bequest in your will or trust, life insurance designation, or stock donation ensures your support for wish children well into the future.

★ Learn more about our **Legacy of Wishes Society** by visiting nj.wish.org/plannedgiving.

Double Your Donations

You may be able to make your donation go even further, with the help of your employer. Many companies encourage employees to donate to their favorite charities by matching their contributions. That means the impact of your gift may be doubled or possibly tripled!

★ Find out if your company participates at nj.wish.org/matching.

More Ways to Make a Big Impact

Give the gift of a wish by donating stock or securities. A gift of stock to Make-A-Wish New Jersey can benefit you in two ways: you may receive a charitable income tax deduction for the full fair market value, and at the same time you may avoid capital gains taxes on appreciated stock. This helps stretch your gift even further!

★ Contact our Development Team to make a gift of stock at 609-371-9474.

OTHER WAYS TO HELP



WHEELS FOR WISHES

Your unwanted vehicle can help make wishes come true! To learn more, visit newjersey.wheelsforwishes.org.



WISHES IN FLIGHT

Help wish kids take flight, once it's safe to do so, by donating your unused air miles today. Visit nj.wish.org/miles for more information.



Make-A-Wish® New Jersey

Samuel & Josephine Plumeri Wishing Place
1384 Perrineville Road
Monroe Township, NJ 08831

800-252-WISH (9474)
609-371-WISH (9474)
FAX: 609-371-8919
nj.wish.org
jersey@nj.wish.org



THANK YOU TO OUR 2020 PARTNERS!

Our chapter is proud to partner with companies on both the national and local level through innovative and customized sponsorship programs to help us continue to work toward our goal of granting the wish of every eligible child in New Jersey.

