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## PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Madison County boy's playset wish comes true**

*Make-A-Wish® Central New York grants 9-year-old Collin's wish thanks to the generous support of Bristol Myers Squibb*

**(Aug. 4, 2021)**—Bristol Myers Squibb is celebrating its five-year partnership with Make-A-Wish® America with a \$500,000 contribution to help grant more wishes for children with critical illnesses. The funds, given annually to Make-A-Wish since 2017, will continue to help grant wishes for children like Collin, a 9-year-old Madison County boy with leukemia.

In 2019, Collin quickly went from his happy, playful self, to feeling fatigued, achy, and feverish. Over the course of one weekend, he developed symptoms that worried his family.

"He was so tired and sick he was unable to walk," recalled Collin's grandmother, Victoria Durant. "We knew something was seriously wrong. When we took him to the hospital, we had to pick him up and carry him to the van."

After visiting a local healthcare center, bloodwork results pointed to a serious condition. Collin was referred to Upstate University Hospital in Syracuse, where physicians confirmed his diagnosis: b-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Collin would need to begin treatment immediately.

"When he was admitted, we scrambled to get what we needed," Durant said. "We ended up staying there a month."

Since then, Collin has received ongoing treatment, including chemotherapy, which he'll need for a total of three years. During treatment, Collin's doctors referred him to Make-A-Wish Central New York for a once-in-a-lifetime wish.

"When we found out he was approved for a wish, all I did was cry," Durant said. "But they were happy tears!"

As Collin thought about what he would want, he insisted it be something he could enjoy with his four siblings. Ultimately, he decided on a backyard playset.

On Wednesday, July 28, 2021, Make-A-Wish Central New York surprised Collin with his wish-come-true - a white cedar playset by Bears Playground featuring two slides, a bridge, a climbing wall and climbing net with lots of room for family and friends!

"It's wonderful," Durant said of the playset. "This will keep him busy for a long, long time!"

"Partners like Bristol Myers Squibb are the reason we can grant life-changing wishes to children with critical illnesses in our community," said Diane Kuppermann, president and CEO for Make-A-Wish Central New York. "Now more than ever, hope is essential to our wish families who are some of the most vulnerable among us. This generous donation will help us bring joy back into the lives of kids like Collin."

Make-A-Wish Central New York continues to find creative ways to deliver ongoing hope through experiences like outdoor adventure equipment, bedroom makeovers, customized golf carts, and backyard playsets. Make-A-Wish employees and volunteers are committed to granting every possible wish that is safe to complete.

"As a long-standing supporter of Make-A-Wish, we have seen first-hand the power of a wish granted for a child facing cancer and their family," said Adam Lenkowsky, senior vice president and general manager, U.S. Cardiovascular, Immunology, Oncology, Bristol Myers Squibb. "We are proud to support the incredible work of the Make-A-Wish team in bringing joy and renewed hope to families at a time when it is needed most."

Bristol Myers Squibb's cumulative charitable donations totaling more than \$4 million have enabled hundreds of wish kids to experience hope and healing through the power of a wish. There is still a great need for support to grant waiting wishes. To learn more and find out how to get involved, visit [www.cny.wish.org](http://www.cny.wish.org).

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#### PHOTO & CAPTION

Nine-year-old Collin Morgan, of Oneida, recently received a backyard playset from Make-A-Wish Central New York. His wish came true thanks to funding support provided by Bristol Myers Squibb.

#### About Make-A-Wish Central New York

Make-A-Wish Central New York is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization dedicated to granting life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses throughout the central portion of New York State. Part of a global wish-granting organization, the chapter was founded in 1985 and has granted nearly 2,000 wishes for children throughout its 15-county footprint, which includes Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Cortland, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, Otsego, St. Lawrence, Tioga and Tompkins counties. With nearly 200 wishes in process, the organization needs the support of generous community and corporate partners more than ever before. To lend support or learn more, visit [cny.wish.org](http://cny.wish.org), email [info@cny.wish.org](mailto:info@cny.wish.org), or call 315-475-WISH (9474) | 800-846-9474.