

Legacy of Wishes

WINTER 2024 wish.org/akwa



Fate or Chance?

How work and baseball intersected to change one Make-A-Wish staffer's life



When Trina Cottingham took her seat at the University of Washington's Workplace Giving Fair, she thought it was going to be just another day at work. She was wrong.

"That day changed my life," she said.

Assigned to attend this event on behalf of her department and report back, she sat up and took note when someone from Make-A-Wish began presenting. "They played a video about Ken Griffey Jr. granting a wish, and I was hooked."

An avid baseball enthusiast, not to mention a Mariners and Griffey fanatic, Trina was inspired! **Inspired to think more about her life and how she was spending**

her days. She wanted to make more of a difference, and that seemingly uneventful day altered her career trajectory.

I can give a more transformative gift through my will compared to what I can afford to give today.

She signed up to become a wish-granting volunteer and was hired soon after as a wish coordinator.

That was 24 years ago.

Now the Vice President of Wishes, she never thought she would have a career as a nonprofit professional (she wanted to be a pizza

maker when she was little!). But her degree in psychology and her interest in helping others is the perfect marriage of her skills and talents.

"I see the power of a wish every day," she said. That's a gift! And that incredible experience and knowing the impact it has was the reason **she and her husband decided to include Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington in their will.** "I don't have children, and in deciding what to do with our estate, I thought we could make a difference in that way for kids and families through our passing."

Most people don't have complicated finances, so

continued on back page

A Prescription for Healing *by Frank, wish dad*

Grab the tissues! Wish dad, Frank, recently shared how Make-A-Wish changed his family forever with the granting of his son's wish.

“We think your son has cancer.’ Those six words changed our lives in an instant.

The joy and laughter that once filled our everyday lives faded away, along with my 3-year-old son's trademark long hair as he lost it to leukemia.

For more than three years Phoenix battled cancer and we did our best to grab hold to the childhood slipping from his grasp. It's heart wrenching to witness your child in so much pain.

But through it all, we never lost hope. And, Make-A-Wish was a big part of that.



The wish gave us something to think about other than his fight against cancer. **Thanks to Make-A-Wish, Phoenix was reuniting with something his diagnosis had slowly stolen from him: his childhood.**

Before we knew it, the wish that had seemed like only a dream had arrived.

I can tell you about all the memories in our son's cancer fight...the ups and downs of his treatment, the sleepless nights, the fevers followed by the many trips to the ER. But if you were to ask Phoenix about his cancer fight, he will only tell you of what came because of his fight.

He will tell you about meeting the airplane pilot, he will tell you about the Make-A-Wish toy room where you can pick anything you want, he will tell you about meeting and hugging the characters at the park. He will tell you of the volunteers that brought him nothing but joy and laughter.



Phoenix will tell you this not because he doesn't understand the question, but because Make-A-Wish is bigger than just the wish itself.

It's the prescription that no doctor can write; it's a special type of healing that no treatment plan provides. It's not just the destination or the experience that is granted...it's the peace and hope that everything you have been through cannot and will not take away the joy of being a kid.

I'm so thankful that Make-A-Wish was there for my son and my family. Thank you for making wishes for kid's like Phoenix come true. **Your support matters!”**

Create a plan for your future

Did you know that your estate plan can protect the people, communities, and causes you care about? Everyone should have a plan in place, and many of our supporters even create charitable gifts in their plan to support the future of Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington. You can create a free will or revocable trust quickly and easily by visiting **FreeWill.com**.

Smart Ways to Give

You’ve worked hard for your money, so choosing the giving option that delivers maximum impact for you and the nonprofit you care about is important.



With so many different ways to give, it can be hard to decide what is the most advantageous. That’s why we have outlined a few popular giving options as each type has different unique tax benefits, allowing you to maximize your financial strategy. **Contact Lauren Martin at lmartin@akwa.wish.org with any questions about directing your gift.**

Donor-Advised Funds (DAFs) These are like your own charitable savings account. You contribute to the fund as frequently as you like and then recommend grants to nonprofits like ours, all while potentially earning immediate tax benefits.	Stock Gifts Donating appreciated stocks can provide substantial support to Make-A-Wish and potentially help you avoid capital gains taxes and claim a tax deduction based on the full market value of your stocks.
Qualified Charitable Distributions These are direct transfers of funds from your IRA to a nonprofit, counted toward your required minimum distributions for the year, without treating the distributions as taxable income.	Cryptocurrency Gifts Crypto donations are a new, tax-efficient way to give. By donating cryptocurrency, you potentially avoid capital gains tax on the appreciation and can deduct the fair market value of the asset on your tax return.

Wishes Coming True Soon!

Your gifts make wishes possible for kids in every corner of Alaska and Washington. Here are just a few!



I wish to go to Hawaii

Charlie, 12
Alaska
heart condition



I wish to meet my favorite celebrity

Madelynn, 17
Eastern Washington
respiratory disorder



I wish to go snowboarding in Lake Tahoe

Bentley, 11
Western Washington
respiratory disorder

Big News You Should Know!

It's the best time in a long time to consider the gift that pays you: **a charitable gift annuity.**

Payout rates went up again Jan. 1, 2024, and are higher than they have been in 16 years. Seize the moment by considering this amazing gift that provides you with stable, regular income—regardless of the economy.

After your lifetime, the remaining amount becomes part of your legacy at Make-A-Wish, allowing us to thrive far into the future.

How It Works: With a gift annuity, you make a donation using cash, marketable securities or other assets, and we, in turn, pay you a fixed amount for life. You'll receive reliable, predictable payments for your lifetime (and the lifetime of a loved one, if you choose).

Contact Lauren Martin if you'd like to take advantage of this opportunity today!

continued from front page

creating a will is pretty simple. It's also become even more accessible thanks to many online tools, including a free one offered by our partner Freewill. It's easy to use, on-demand and as the name implies, free!

Trina said **naming Make-A-Wish as a beneficiary in her will was not hard, and she feels great knowing “it's my last opportunity to support what I see transforms lives every day. I can give a more transformative gift through my will compared to what I can afford to give today.”**

Lauren Martin
Vice President of Advancement



Are we in your plans? We would like to know!

Most retirement plans assume no obligation to notify your beneficiaries of your election, whether you've named a nonprofit or a person as your beneficiary.

If you've named Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington as a beneficiary in your plan, **contact Lauren Martin at 206.623.5314 or at lmartin@akwa.wish.org, or send back the enclosed postcard.**

It would be our honor to thank you for your generosity and welcome you into the *Legacy of Wishes Society*.



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