

WishMaker

FALL/WINTER 2025

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How a
Wish Lifted
Hailyann's
Heart



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Wish Journey and Community Engagement



Leadership Letter

DEAR FRIENDS AND FAMILY,

Thank you kindly. Make-A-Wish North Dakota has had a wonderful year from having the founder of our organization, Linda Pauling, in Fargo to honor our chapter's 40th birthday to successful events like the ones listed on page 9 to utilizing new data to help us reach every eligible child to philanthropically friendraising enough to grant 57 life-changing wishes to children with critical illnesses.

Such milestones don't just happen. Our team makes magic possible with their strengths of executing, influencing, relationship building and strategic thinking. We are deeply dedicated to our mission and committed to collaboration. Even in times of pressure and looming deadlines, we keep our eye on our "why," work together, and get things done (having fun in the process). Our board culture is just as driven, passionate and fun. The chapter leadership, including our new Directors on page 2, and staff discovered our CliftonStrengths Top 5 over the last year and together, we will:

- know and intentionally use our unique talents and strengths;
- know and appreciate each other's strengths; and
- combine our strengths to achieve success for those we serve.

While we have achieved a great deal in Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25), we are embarking on year two of our three-year Chapter

Strategic Plan aligned with these pillars:



Some of our first-year highlights include: this year's new study providing much-needed data and information about the incidence and prevalence of medical conditions qualifying for a wish. For the first time in more than a dozen years, we have dynamic chapter-specific data to help us reach every eligible child. It indicates that, each year, there are approximately 66 North Dakota children who may qualify for a wish. This is resonating with medical professionals, in particular, who have referred children in record numbers over the past year.

Another highlight is our Board involvement in peer-to-peer fundraising during our Summer Wish Hero campaign. Our statewide leadership split into two teams, Dream Makers and Wish Warriors, for a "Battle for Hope." For the month of July, they invited friends, family, and coworkers to help us exceed our overall \$25,000 goal!

And one more mention of our year one goals: elevating our office in Fargo that

we affectionately call The Wishing Place. We are excited to open the doors to our newly remodeled space – a reflection of our mission, vision and values. The refreshed design creates more opportunities for wishing, connection, and meaningful impact. Every detail from the wish closet filled with toys to a quiet reflection space was crafted with all of the steps of our wish journey in mind. When you walk through our doors, we believe you will feel the soul of who we are, what we do, and why it matters.

Our wish families, donors, and volunteers deserve no less. As we wrap up our 40 Years of Impact, please know YOU are also a piece of our history and commUNITY. We were founded to grant wishes, help families heal, and make lives better for everyone involved. As long as there is a need, you can count on the whole team at Make-A-Wish North Dakota to bring hope, strength and joy to children for 40 years and beyond. I hope we can count on you, too. Thank you for your part and your heart.

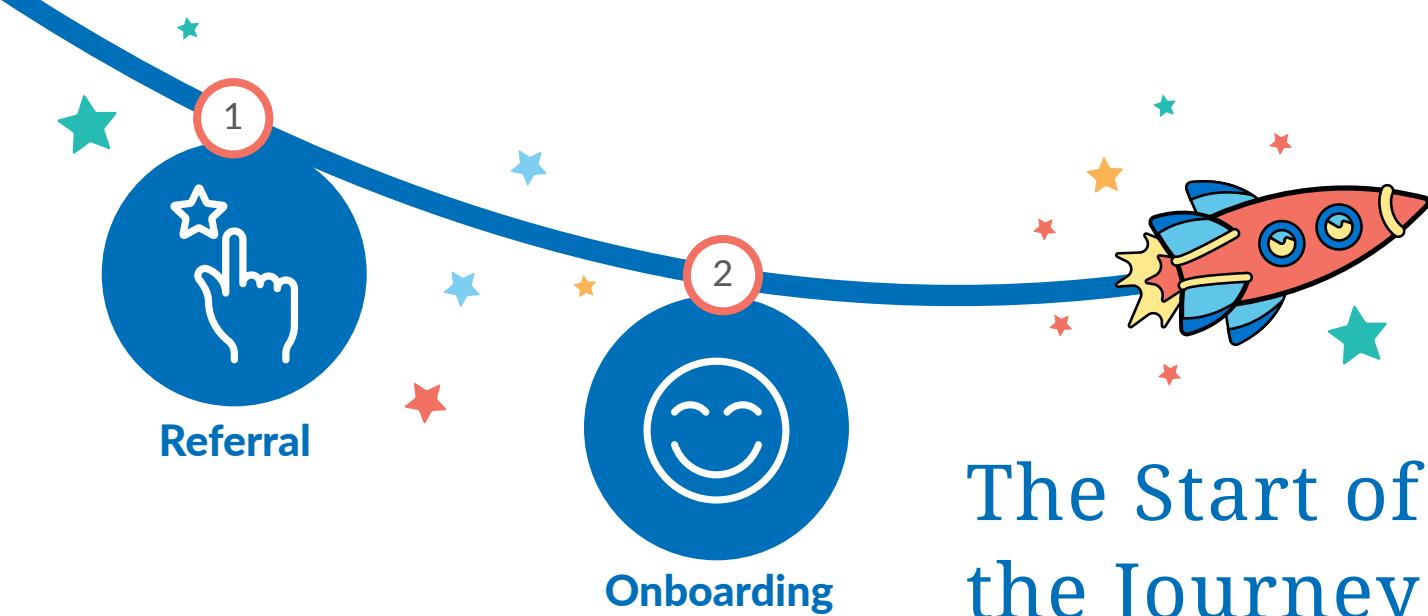


WishMakers,

JOSH AND BILLI JO

"When people go to work, they shouldn't have to leave their hearts at home."

~Betty Bender



The Start of the Journey

Every wish begins with a single referral: a moment of hope that sets a child and their family on a path toward joy and possibility.

This year, thanks to generous funding, the Make-A-Wish America partnered with The John Dawson Foundation to conduct the Incidence & Prevalence Directional Study. This groundbreaking research revealed that approximately **66 children** in North Dakota are diagnosed with a wish-eligible condition each year, an increase from our previous estimate of 49. The study also showed that, in past years, as many as **17 eligible children** may not have received the opportunity for a wish. Determined to close this gap, Make-A-Wish North Dakota expanded our team in September of 2024 to include a dedicated Medical Affairs Coordinator. We welcomed **Kelli Just**, whose passion and expertise have been instrumental in connecting with medical professionals statewide.

One of the invaluable connections Kelli has made is with **Bryana Kaiser**, wish mom and Registered Nurse in Pediatric Cardiology at Sanford Health in Fargo. Bryana's journey with Make-A-Wish began when she joined the pediatric cardiology team in January 2020 and was asked to help with a wish referral for a patient. Her connection deepened when her own son was granted a wish after being diagnosed with cancer. "Forming this partnership was a no-brainer for me," Bryana shares. "I know how impactful these wishes are as I got to see it firsthand with my son. I don't want any eligible child to miss this."

Bryana has implemented a proactive process at Sanford Health: she reviews patient schedules for qualifying conditions and makes notes to discuss Make-A-Wish with families during visits to ensure she is not missing children who may qualify for the hope, strength and joy a wish provides. Recognizing the importance of education, Bryana advocates for all nurses and providers to meet with Kelli to discuss eligibility and the ease of making referrals, helping to extend the reach to other pediatric specialties.

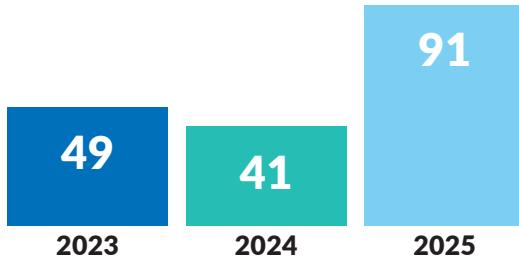
For clinics and providers who may not have the capacity or resources to implement such a process, Bryana recommends starting by familiarizing themselves with qualifying conditions and reaching out to leadership or their local Make-A-Wish chapter for support. "Even in general pediatrics, the referral doesn't have to come from a child's specialist. Some kids could be missed if their specialist is in a different state than where they live," she notes.

Bryana also offers practical advice for providers: when completing a referral, have the diagnosis and the family's permission ready. Additional medical record information may be needed later in the process, but the initial step is simple and accessible.

Together, we are committed to reaching every wish-eligible child—because every journey deserves a magical beginning.

Medical Outreach

Fiscal Year to Fiscal Year
Comparison of Qualified
Wish Kids:



Top Referral Sources of FY25:

Bryana Kaiser, RN

Fargo Sanford Cardiology

Wendy Iwerks, CLS

Fargo Sanford Oncology

Out of State Medical Professionals

Kaye Wetzstein, RN

Bismarck Sanford Cardiology

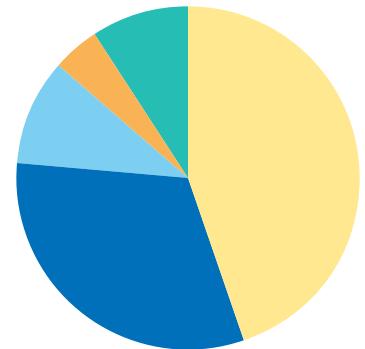
Mariah Marsh, RN

Dickinson Sanford Pediatrics



Diagnosis Breakdown by Specialty Area:

- Cardiology – 40
- Hematology and Oncology – 28
- Neurology – 9
- Nephrology – 4
- All others:
 - Gastroenterology – 3
 - Genetics – 3
 - Endocrinology – 1
 - Rheumatology – 1



These are some of the wonderful connections Kelli has made over the last year. Thank you to the teams and individuals who have taken the time out of your busy schedules to learn more about our mission. If you're interested in hearing more about how to be a champion referral source, please contact Kelli at kjust@northdakota.wish.org or by calling 701.280.9474.

The Magic of Wish Discovery

A child's wish journey starts at their referral, but the magic becomes a more concrete idea during the wish discovery phase of a child's journey. Our wishes fall into five different categories: **a wish to meet** (Emma, at right), **a wish to be** (Jane), **a wish to have** (Lawren), or **a wish to go** (Jayce), and a newer wish type of a **wish to give**. The wishes our wish kids dream up are unique and one-of-a-kind (you can find more examples of wishes on pages 12-14).

Much time, effort, and attention goes into wish discovery. Internally, those efforts are spearheaded by Angie Leier, Lindsey Wagner, and Melissa Lehr, but empowering the magic of a wish is a team effort.

Volunteers play an integral role in our wish granting process – in fact, wish granting is a role all on its own in our volunteer network! Volunteers are the chapter's boots on the ground; they meet with a wish child to help them dream as big as they can about their one true wish.



Volunteer of the Month

JUNE



AMY NEPEH - Fargo

JULY



MARY KING - Fargo

AUGUST



ADRIANNE SWICK - Fargo

SEPTEMBER



HEATHER DROBNICK - Williston

OCTOBER



NIKKI HILL - Fargo

NOVEMBER



SOPHIA JANSSEN - Bismarck

Volunteers throughout the state dedicate their time to Make-A-Wish in various ways including:

- Airport Greeting
- Office Support
- Events
- Wish Granting
- Speaker's Bureau
- Skill-Based Volunteering.

Whether you can dedicate one hour a month or 2 hours a week, there are various options to help uplift the magic of wish discovery for our wish kids.

In addition to our volunteers, community partners are vitally important to helping wishes come true. Our team works closely with businesses and individuals throughout the state to help procure in-kind donations of goods and services that drastically help reduce the cost of a wish. In-kind donations take many forms: it may be a reduced rate on a pontoon, a donation of time for a construction



Scan here to volunteer!

Partners

We extend heartfelt thanks to our Adopt-A-Wish partners who donated \$7,500 or more to fully fund the average cash cost of a wish. Your generosity makes wishes come true.

Bakken BBQ
Ben Aslesen
Countyline Barn Dance
Cullen Children's Foundation
Dakota Community Bank & Trust
The Dendy Family
Dickinson Noon Lions
Flint Group
Isabell Dabbert Endowment
Latt Family and Pioneer Seeds
Lincoln Community Club
Marathon
MDU Resources Foundation
MHA Systems / Makes Cents
Neil Bartelson

Steven and Wanda Uran-Nelson Charitable Fund
Sweet & Salty Sisters
Tom and Frances Leach Foundation
Vogel Law
Williston Basin Chapter of API



3

Wish Discovery

project, or even fully donating goods and services.

Over the past year, ByteSpeed has provided much financial support through in-kind donations of gaming systems, computers, and overall gaming setups.

As we look ahead to another season of hope and joy, we are reminded that every wish granted is made possible by the dedication of our volunteers, the generosity of our community partners, and the dreams of our wish kids. Together, we create moments of magic that last a lifetime. Thank you for being part of our mission—whether you volunteer, donate, or simply share our story, you help make wishes come true across North Dakota and beyond. Let's continue to transform lives, one wish at a time.



ByteSpeed is one of our incredible wish partners who believe in the magic of a wish. They've helped us grant several life-changing wishes and are on their way to granting even more! For each wish they've contributed to, they've done their best to give our wish kids everything they need to have the perfect gaming experience.

94 WISHES WAITING

Wish In-Kind:

FY23: \$5,691.25
FY24: \$4,910.00
FY25: \$5,799.73

27

New Volunteers in FY25

190

Active Volunteers

Volunteers by region:

Fargo/Moorhead: 84
Bismarck: 31
Devils Lake: 7
Dickinson: 16
Grand Forks: 13
Jamestown: 7
Minot: 6
Wahpeton: 12
Williston: 14



Meet the wish team!

This dynamic team of four help create the magic behind every wish. From left to right: Kelli Just, Angie Leier, Melissa Lehr, and Lindsey Wagner

FISCAL YEAR 2025

Financial Recap



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

At Make-A-Wish, our mission begins with the word Together. It truly takes a village to grant every eligible child's wish—medical referrals, family support, volunteer energy, and financial generosity all play vital roles in the wish journey.

We are deeply grateful for every individual, business, and organization that made a financial impact in FY25. Every donated dollar brings us closer to changing a child's life forever. Thank you for being a WishMaker!



\$1,446,359
TOTAL DOLLARS RAISED



43.7%
DONOR
RETENTION RATE



2,415
TOTAL
DONORS



57
WISHES
GRANTED



\$9,224.99
AVERAGE WISH COST (CASH)



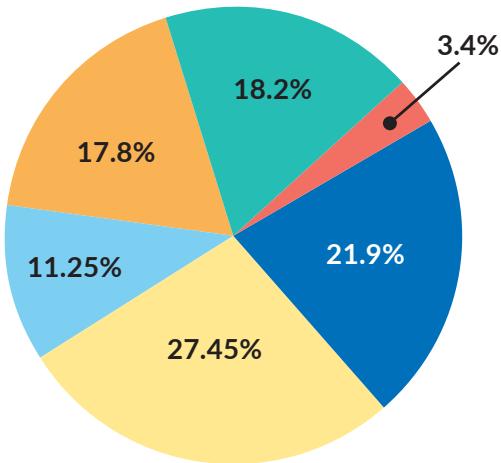
Meet the development team!

The development team works in tandem with the wish team to ensure the chapter can financially grant each incredible wish. From left to right: Abby Crowley, Jazzy Lara, Kayla Pederson, and Amanda Godfread

Financial Recap Continued

- Individual Giving
- Major Gifts/
Planned Gifts
- Corporate Giving
- External Events
- Grants
- Internal Events

Total: \$1,446,359



Community Events & Fundraisers

Thank you to the many businesses, organizations, and individuals who hosted fundraising events in support of Make-A-Wish North Dakota this past year. Each event built joy and community, helping us bring the power of a wish to every eligible child in our state. Due to their efforts, **\$437,145** was raised to help grant more wishes in FY25!

- Arby's Register Campaign (Fargo)
- Bakken BBQ (Dickinson)
- Benedictine Living Community (Dickinson)
- Boo at the Zoo (Fargo)
- Breakfast at the Bowers (Waubun, MN)
- County Line Barn Dance (Grace City)
- Detailing Division (Mapleton) (in-kind toy drive)
- Dickinson Noon Lions Benefit (Dickinson)
- Gary Spicer Santa Claus Activities (Grand Forks)
- Glik's Register Campaign (Dickinson)
- Hunt Oil Christmas Party (Minot)
- Leela & Lavender (statewide)

The funds raised this year reflect the collective effort of individuals, corporations, event participants, and all WishMakers in between. As shown in the chart, every avenue, from planned gifts to internal events, played a part in driving our mission forward.

Internal Events

In addition to our annual galas in Bismarck and Fargo, we added new events in Williston, both of which occurred in FY25. A special highlight from this year's internal events included welcoming Linda Pauling and her husband, Gene, to Wine & Wishes in Fargo. Linda is one of our national founders. Her son, Chris Greicius, had his wish to be a police officer in 1980, after which Linda and other amazing individuals created Make-A-Wish in his honor. We were also blown away to work with the Williston Basin International Airport to host a plane pull where teams competed to see how fast they could pull a Sun Country Airlines 737-800 passenger jet.

Internal Event Fundraising Net Totals:

- World of Wishes - \$94,684
- Wine & Wishes - \$105,440
- Fly-In Movie - \$13,936
- Plane Pull & Fly-In Event - \$19,587

- Memory Fireworks (statewide)
- MHA Systems / Makes Cents Golf Tournament (Bismarck)
- Prairie Riders Motorcycle Club (Cooperstown)
- Purse Bingo (Wahpeton)
- Puzzle Competition (Wahpeton)
- Roughrider Ink & Iron Expo (West Fargo)
- Sandy's Donuts (Fargo)
- Sausage Fest (Moorhead, MN)
- Shrimp Boil (Wahpeton)
- St. John's Catholic Church Religious Education Students Bake Sale (Georgetown, MN)
- Suite Shots (Fargo)
- Sunflower Shindig (Emerado)
- Swishes for Wishes (Devils Lake)
- Taters for Tots & Lots of Wishes (Hatton)
- The Arc of Dickinson Round-Up Campaign (Dickinson)
- The Starving Rooster (Minot)
- Tommy's Car Wash (Fargo-Moorhead)
- Trick or Treat Wish Walk (Fargo)
- Wish Upon a Pie Cow Pie Bingo (Tyler)

PINNED BY POSITIVITY:

How a Wish Lifted Hailyann's Heart

For many, senior year of high school is a bittersweet farewell to childhood and a launchpad for future dreams. For student-athlete Hailyann, it was supposed to be her final wrestling season – a chance to chase a championship and lay the foundation for a collegiate career.

But after fainting spells and seizures, her plans were sidelined by a diagnosis: Long QT Syndrome (LQTS), a heart rhythm disorder that made competition unsafe.

LQTS causes fast, chaotic, and irregular heartbeats which can be life-threatening if not managed correctly. As an athlete, this diagnosis was daunting to Hailyann: Would she be able to compete in her senior season? What about her dream of a collegiate career?

The first of her fears was confirmed when her doctor pulled her from her senior season, citing that it would be unsafe for her to compete until her condition was better managed.

During all the uncertainty surrounding her athletic dreams, Hailyann was given something to look forward to thanks to a referral to Make-A-Wish North Dakota. When she discovered she would receive her wish come true, she immediately started brainstorming wish ideas; Hailyann



went so far as to create a PowerPoint of ideas for her first meeting with her volunteer wish granters!

Thanks to her PowerPoint, Hailyann decided on her wish easily: she wanted to visit Hawaii to bask in the warm weather, take in the scenery, and visit major landmarks like the Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam military base and Manoa Falls.

With her dream destination solidified, Hailyann thought all she needed to do was wait for her wish to be granted. Little did she know she had more to look forward to: her doctor gave her the okay to compete during the Western Dakota Association tournament! Despite having only a few hours of practice, Hailyann managed a sixth-place win. Even more exciting? Her collegiate athletics career was back on, leading her to sign with the Bismarck State College (BSC) Mystics.

While Hailyann was reinvigorating her athletic dreams, we were hard at work finalizing her perfect trip to Hawaii. Once things were set in stone, Hailyann's wish granters decided to go all out to reveal that her wish was officially coming true.

To do this, they planned a surprise party with the help of her new BSC wrestling coach, her family, and friends to shower her with support and get her excited for her trip. They brought the spirit of Hawaii to the college gym, decorating the space with Hawaiian themed decorations and giving her some of her favorite things to bring on her trip.



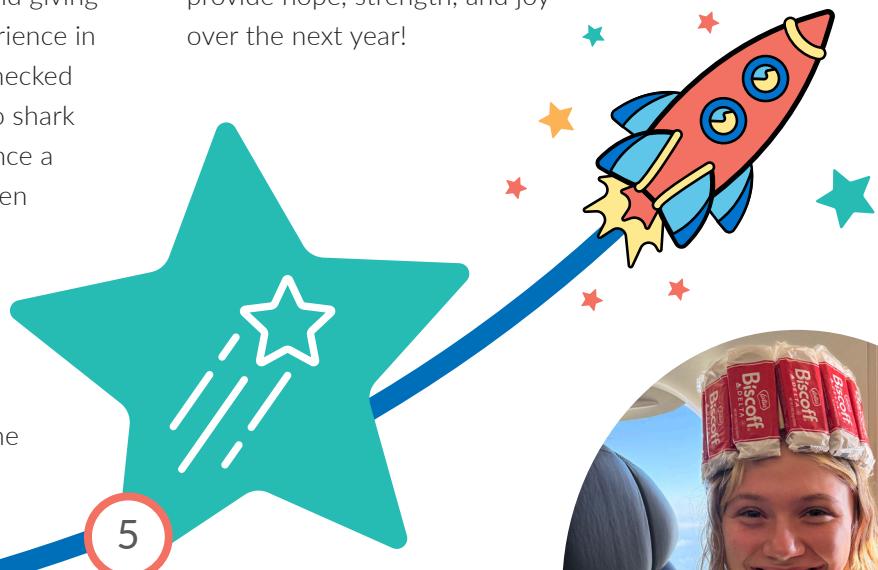
"In that moment, I became more than just an observer to my own surprise. I became a participant in something bigger than myself," said Hailyann. "Make-A-Wish events hold a powerful meaning in American society. They represent more than just travel or gifts; they capture the idea that every person deserves moments of happiness, no matter what challenges they may face," she continued.

Hailyann's wish came true in August of this year and her experience was exciting from start to finish. This trip was Hailyann's first experience travelling on a plane, and Delta went above and beyond to make her feel special, letting her make PA announcements during the flight and giving her time to explore the cockpit. The actual experience in Hawaii brought even more firsts: she not only checked off everything on her wish list, but also got to go shark cave diving, snorkeling, and even got to experience a Luau! The Luau was made even more special when Hailyann was invited on stage where the Mauka Warriors celebrated her as a wish kid and presented her with a gift that she'll cherish forever.

Through every challenge, Hailyann discovered the strength of her dreams and the support of those around her.

Her wish trip to Hawaii wasn't just a break from worry; it was a celebration of hope, resilience, and new beginnings. As her mom, Nicole, shared, "She learned, she grew, and she recharged." Hailyann's story reminds us all that happiness and hope can shine through even the toughest times.

Hailyann is now in her freshman year at BSC and is hard at work training for her debut season as a Mystic. This will not be the last we see of Hailyann, though. Her siblings, Adriana and Ervin, were both diagnosed with LQTS last year and are currently waiting for their wish come true. We look forward to continuing on the journey to provide hope, strength, and joy over the next year!



Wish Granted



Wishes

Wishes granted between

May 1, 2025 - September 30, 2025

Adlee, 13

heart condition | Dickinson

"I wish to have a husky"

Wish Granters: Bonnie Goldsberry, Meagen Powell and Hope Sticka



Lucas, 18

lymphoma | Fargo

"I wish to have saxophones for college"

Wish Granters: Alka Singh, Jamie Hansen, and Lindsey Wagner



Taegan, 17

respiratory disorder

"I wish to go to the San Diego Zoo and do a behind the scenes tour"



Niya, 14

lymphoma | Bismarck

"I wish to explore Seoul, South Korea"

Wish Granters: Heather Nelsen and Kelli Just



Nathan, 4

cancer | Turtle Lake

"I wish to go to Diggerland"

Wish Granters: Tonya Gieser and Melissa Ahonen



Parker, 6

cancer

"I wish to go to Walt Disney World®"



Clint, 13

neuromuscular disorder | Soden

"I wish to have an adaptive gaming space"

Wish Granters: Amber and Joe Aldred



Elizabeth, 3

brain tumor | Bismarck

"I wish to have a playroom"

Wish Granters: Angie Leier, Melissa Lehr, and Lindsey Wagner



Hailyann, 18

heart condition | Bismarck

"I wish to go to Hawaii"

Wish Granters: KrisAnn Norby-Jahner and Kim Weismann



Braxton, 7

congenital heart disease | Fargo

"I wish to have a beach experience"

Wish Granters: Jamie Hansen, Devin O'Hara, and Lori Abbott



Jayce, 15

nervous system disorder | Grand Forks

"I wish to go to a Vikings game"

Wish Granters: Bruce Vold and Cassidy Mindeman



Easton, 12

cancer | Fargo

"I wish to meet Jesser"

Wish Granters: Amy Nephew and Jamie Hansen



Madelyn, 6

cancer | Kenmare

"I wish to have a farm themed playhouse"

Wish Granters: Dawn Roness and Tara Hart



Kaisley, 3

cancer | Dunseith

"I wish to see the princesses at Walt Disney World®"

Wish Granters: Tara Hart and Carlee Thomson



Amelia, 12

congenital heart disease | Mandan

"I wish to go to Hawaii"

Wish Granters: Ivy Pokorny and Tiffany Ahmann



Chet, 9

kidney disease | Williston

"I wish to have a camper"

Wish Granters: Heidi Guetzkow and Ali Lass

Elizabeth, 14

congenital heart disease | Fargo

"I wish to meet Ryden and Andy"

Wish Granters: Adrienne Swick and Maret Kashmark



Emery, 11

heart condition | Cannon Ball

"I wish to have a gaming space"

Wish Granters: Melissa Ahonen and Maret Kashmark



Kayden, 16

congenital heart disease

Menoken

"I wish to have a golf simulator"

Wish Granters: Allison Taylor and Deb Stoltman



Annley, 5

respiratory disorder | Bismarck

"I wish to have an Annley Oasis"

Wish Granters: Sara Pic and Whitney Deterding



Noah, 13

nervous system disorder

Bismarck

"I wish to have a camper"

Wish Granters: Amanda Godfread and Laney Herauf



Aubry
10/20/2011 - 6/30/2025
Elizabeth
6/3/2022 - 8/28/2025
Emily
3/13/1992 - 9/16/2025

Cooper
3/28/2014 - 5/30/2025
Elsie
12/27/2017 - 6/5/2025
Boy*
2/29/2008 - 6/15/2025

Additional Wishes

GIRL, 13* – heart transplant

"I wish to go to Hawaii"

MICHAEL, 18 – kidney transplant

"I wish to go to New York"

BOY, 14* – rare disease

"I wish to swim with the dolphins at Discovery Cove"

GIRL, 5* – leukemia

"I wish to go to Walt Disney World®"

GIRL, 8* – heart condition

"I wish to go on a girl's trip to San Diego"

Wish Granters: Ryan Campbell, Eric Ewoniuk, and Nicole Ewoniuk

BOY, 18* – cancer

"I wish to have a jet ski"

Wish Granters: Tate Hovland and Anne Keller

GIRL, 5* – cancer

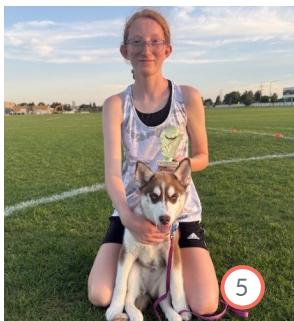
"I wish to go to Walt Disney World®"



6 Alumni and Family Engagement

Unwrapping 12 Gifts of Joy

Each of our wish kids is a gift. This holiday season, we are reflecting on a few of the amazing gifts we celebrated over the past few years, as well as recognizing where it all began 40 years ago.



1. **M**adelyn, age 6
I wish to have a farm themed treehouse
2. **A**melia, age 12
I wish to go to Hawaii
3. **K**ayden, age 16
I wish to have a golf simulator
4. **E**li, age 4
I wish to have a pirate themed playset
5. **A**dlee, age 13
I wish to have a husky
6. **W**eston, age 3
I wish to meet Cody Johnson
7. **I**zzy, age 4
I wish to go on a train ride to Seattle
8. **S**taley, age 3
I wish to go to Dign'n Zone in Tennessee
9. **H**ailyann, age 18
I wish to go to Hawaii
10. **N**oah, age 13
I wish to have a camper
11. **D**awson, age 18
I wish to have a fish house
12. **★** For our 12th gift, we want to recognize the shooting star that started it all in North Dakota:
Chris, age 7
I wish to have a VCR
Wish granted 1985



MAKE-A-WISH FOUNDATION® OF NORTH DAKOTA

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Find us on:



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NORTH DAKOTA



7 A transformed life, off to change the lives of other children - many of whom will grow into adulthood.

Below are a few of the opportunities to give back this holiday season. Learn more at wish.org/northdakota.

SHARE THE LOVE

Help spark hope and transformation for a child with a critical illness this holiday season during the 2025 Subaru Share the Love® Event. From November 20, 2025, through January 2, 2026, with every new Subaru purchased or leased at one of more than 630 participating Subaru retailers nationwide, Subaru will donate \$250 to the customer's choice of charities*, including Make-A-Wish. See your local Subaru retailer for details or visit Subaru.com/share.

Subaru of America, Inc. and its retailers have donated more than \$320 million to charity through 17 years of the annual Subaru Share the Love Event. Since 2011, Make-A-Wish® has received more than \$38 million of those funds, transforming the lives of more than 3,900 wish children.

* Purchasers/lessees must make their charity designations by January 12, 2026. The four national charities will receive a guaranteed minimum donation of \$250,000 each. See your local Subaru retailer for details or visit subaru.com/share. All donations made by Subaru of America, Inc.

WISHES IN FLIGHT

Make-A-Wish accepts donations of unused airline miles to help our wish kids explore the world while offsetting travel costs. Donations from United and Delta airlines are accepted. ndmilesforsmiles.wish.org

WAYS TO GIVE

Every donor makes a difference when it comes to granting wishes for North Dakota children with critical illnesses. We see this through the generosity of lemonade stands and \$10 gifts on Giving Hearts Day, coupled with five- and six-figure gifts given through IRA distributions and estates, as well as corporations and grants. How do you wish to help? The sky's the limit! wish.org/northdakota/planned-giving

