



# CommUNITY JOY

the POWER of

*I wish to go to Walt Disney World®*  
Sutton, 4 neurological disease

Make-A-Wish®  
NEBRASKA 5130-5123123  
4 (four)  
2025 ANNUAL REPORT





**Dear Friend of Make-A-Wish Nebraska,**

Each and every wish is a testament to the strength of our community. That strength is found in the unity of our supporters, whose collective compassion and commitment bring joy, hope, and comfort to children and their families when it matters most.

Thanks to your unwavering generosity, our Chapter reached a remarkable milestone this past fiscal year by granting a record-breaking **133 wishes**. This extraordinary achievement was made possible by

the dedicated network of physicians, social workers, wish granters, volunteers, and donors like you, all working together to ensure every eligible child receives a wish uniquely tailored to them.

The true spirit of a wish lies in the joy we create together. None of these life-changing experiences would be possible without our Make-A-Wish community coming together to create hope for children and families across Nebraska.

**Thank YOU for your continued support of our mission.**



Brigette Young  
President/CEO



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



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## Refer A Child!

At Make-A-Wish Nebraska, we grant wishes to children throughout Nebraska who have been diagnosed with a critical illness and are between the ages of 2-1/2 and 18 years old.

To refer a child you think might qualify for a wish, please contact us at 800-760-WISH (9474).

# Liz

## MEDICAL PRO/ REFERRAL

I work as a medical social worker in the outpatient Hematology/Oncology clinic at Children's Nebraska. At Children's Nebraska we take a multidisciplinary approach with our patients' care. I work closely with providers and nurses to help families navigate a oncology diagnosis or chronic hematology condition. My day-to-day role includes meeting with families to assess needs or barriers - connecting our patients with resources, mental health support, counseling, and referrals.

But my favorite role is being a referral source - connecting our patients to Make-A-Wish Nebraska. **I feel incredibly honored to play even a small role in such a magical process.** I have the absolute privilege of sharing this opportunity with them and explaining what Make-A-Wish is all about. Every single time, I'm met with raised eyebrows, wide eyes, and the biggest toothy smiles. Sometimes even a scream of excitement!

I introduce the family to the wish concept, let them know they are eligible, and submit a referral with their approval. Referrals are important because they allow Make-A-Wish to receive accurate information directly from the medical team that qualifies a child for a wish.

Make-A-Wish does an amazing job connecting with the family and helping the child dream BIG. I love catching up with the kids and hearing about what they're dreaming up and getting excited about with their wish. It gives us something joyful and hopeful to talk about during clinic visits - something that isn't focused on treatment.



I've seen how having a wish brings light into really hard seasons, offering families a sense of hope, normalcy, and something positive to look forward to.

Each wish is unique to the child. Some of my favorite wishes that come to mind include: "To create music - taking lessons for soprano sax, drums, and electric guitar," "To create a gaming unit with a famous YouTuber," and "To attend the National Finals Rodeo and meet a professional rodeo cowboy."

Another wish that has especially stayed with me is "Be a zookeeper at the Omaha Zoo for a day." I knew the many challenges this child faced, not only during chemotherapy, but also outside of their diagnosis and treatment. This wish reflected something deeply special to them.

**I truly believe wishes make a meaningful difference in a child's outlook on their treatment and care.**

Knowing they have a wish, even before they decide what it will be, gives them something positive to look forward to. While the kids I work with are incredibly resilient, a wish adds an extra layer of strength and hope. A wish is such a beautiful way to honor both the child and their family and recognize everything they've endured.

# Dawn

## WISH-GRANTER

I have been a volunteer with Make-A-Wish Nebraska for over 20 years. I was initially introduced to Make-A-Wish by my mother, who had a friend that was a long time Wish Granter. I began volunteering on the Greater Nebraska Friends Council to help with raising funds to support wishes. Very quickly I decided I also wanted to help grant wishes so I got involved as a Wish Granter. In recent years, this involvement has led me to join the Board of Directors and represent the Greater Nebraska region.

It is hard to put into words the impact being involved in Make-A-Wish has had on me and my family. After becoming involved, I had a cousin receive a wish to go to the NCAA Men's Basketball Final Four in 2007. This wish made everyone in my family realize the magnitude a wish can have on the medical journey of a child. So much so that many in my family including my dad, husband and son have joined alongside me as Friends Council members and additionally, my husband has become a Wish Granter too. It is truly a family affair!

Whether it is to have a music studio in their home or to get to see sea turtles up close, every wish is completely different and unique in its own way. Initially, many wish families



*Dawn [right] with wish kid Isaiah*

start the wish journey feeling they are not deserving of this generosity. Gradually, families come to see that a wish serves as a bright spot, offering them a much-needed

break from the challenges they're facing—a moment of genuine relief amid difficult times. Being able to be part of making a family's wish come true and seeing them realize that a wish is more than just a moment in time brings me so much joy.

Make-A-Wish has profoundly shaped my life, and I find myself sharing its mission with everyone I know. Each wish family faces challenges

that no parent should ever have to experience, and being able to walk alongside them—even in a small way—feels like a true privilege. Their resilience inspires me, and I am honored to help bring hope and joy to their journey.

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*“Make-A-Wish has profoundly shaped my life and I find myself sharing its mission with everyone I know.”*

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# Backyard Playworld

**DONOR**

Wishes don't come true by luck or chance. They come true because of our supporters. From small donors to big corporations, from caring, everyday individuals that provide us with in-kind support. We grant each and every wish because of their continuous commitment and support to a cause bigger and more important than themselves.

For over 25 years, Backyard Playworld has been building dream play structures for our wish kids. By building and installing playsets right in the wish family's own backyard, Backyard Playworld provides children with a safe, accessible place to play while creating a lasting reminder of their extraordinary wish experience. These play structures have become some of our most cherished and requested wishes, allowing kids to experience the joy of a park without ever leaving home. We are deeply grateful for our partnership with Backyard Playworld, whose generosity and expertise help us deliver not only fun and adventure, but comfort, hope, and treasured memories for wish kids and their families.

**"We provide a product to bring families closer together and to create lifetime memories.**

Just knowing that a wish child can't easily go to the park and play like every other kid is heartbreaking," said Jon Simons, owner of Backyard Playworld.

"To be able to provide that for a wish kid is beyond fulfilling! Plus a play set provides many years of memories for not only the wish child but their family too!"



**I wish to have a play structure**  
**Grant, 4**  
**nervous system disorder**



*Jon Simons, owner, Backyard Playworld*

Throughout his 25 years of working with Make-A-Wish, Jon has seen around 120 Nebraska wishes come true. Not only does he help grant wishes, Jon and his team also support our Annual Blue Jean Ball with the donation of a play structure or item such as a trampoline or basketball hoop to the event's live auction.

One of the most memorable wishes he helped with was wish kid Grant whose wish for a play structure was granted in 2013.

"Upon arrival, Grant and I shared a bowl of cheerios on his porch before we got started with the install. At the time, Grant could not really communicate verbally but he could communicate with his smile," said Jon. "Grant has made a few visits to our store over the years and to see his development is truly amazing! While he still has day-to-day challenges, he is no different than any other kiddo. One time when he came to visit, he was doing flips on our trampolines! It was amazing!"

Thank you Backyard Playworld for not only providing a safe place for our wish kids to play, but for providing HOPE to them and their families!

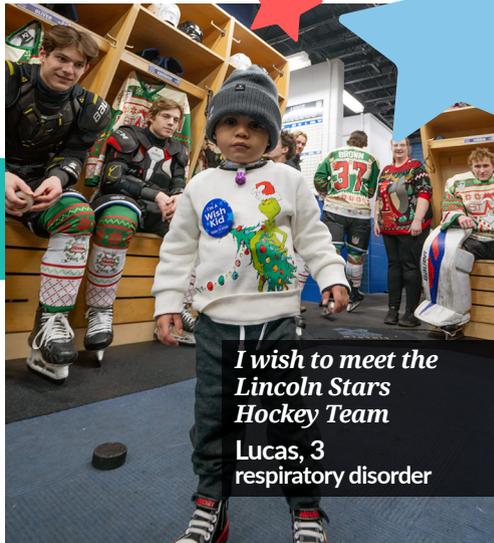
# Lucas & the Lincoln Stars

## CommUNITY Partners

Wish kid Lucas was born at 24 weeks gestation. Since birth, Lucas endured many health-related issues as a result of his respiratory diagnosis including lung problems, slow growth and developmental delays. He also has a trach and is fed primarily through a g-tube. He requires life-saving medical equipment at all times and a community of individuals to assist or help when needed.

Lucas is obsessed with Mickey Mouse, loves being outside to explore and see what is lurking in the dirt. He loves to watch sports, with hockey being his favorite. Unfortunately, due to his condition, a wish to go somewhere wasn't a possibility. After some thoughtful consideration about what would be a meaningful wish to him, Lucas landed on a wish to be a Lincoln Stars Hockey Teammate due to his love for the game of hockey.

The joy Lucas's wish provided was everything his family had wished for. He was beyond excited to be among all the players and participate in the puck drop. The Lincoln Stars players went above and beyond to make Lucas feel extra special and make him feel like he was a part of the team – a team or community he would never otherwise have the opportunity to be a part of.



*I wish to meet the Lincoln Stars Hockey Team*

**Lucas, 3**  
respiratory disorder

**"This wish gave all of us a chance to have a fun night and celebrate the things he has accomplished. Things that may be small accomplishments to most are large milestones for us. It gave us a night to not think about tomorrow and all the hospitals and the doctors we otherwise think about everyday," said Samantha, Lucas's mom.**

Every fulfilled wish represents a unique collaboration between our wish families, medical professionals, volunteers and supporters/donors, like YOU. We are powered by each and everyone's passion and depend on their talents. This embodies the essence of our MISSION that *Together, we create life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses.*



# Thank you to our generous Donors & Supporters

Make-A-Wish Nebraska is funded entirely by private contributions. Every gift is important to the Foundation and our ability to carry out our mission to grant wishes. Due to space limitations, only gifts of \$1,000 or more are listed in this report. This report is also available on [wish.org/nebraska](http://wish.org/nebraska). For more information or to report an error, please contact Make-A-Wish at 800-760-9474. The following generous donors contributed monetary or in-kind gifts during our fiscal year, Sept. 1, 2024 to Aug. 31, 2025.

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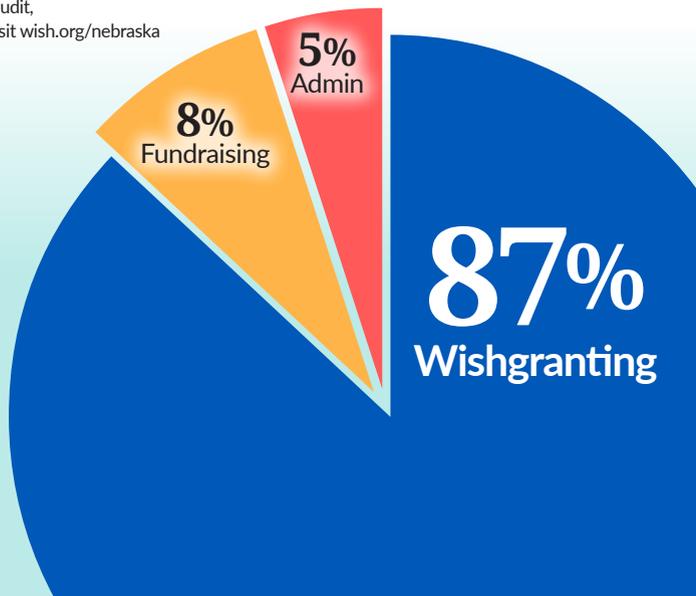
*Certain donors prefer to maintain their anonymity and, thus, are not included in this list. If you or your organization contributed within the last year and find your name absent, we sincerely apologize for any unintentional omission.*

# Financial Statement

Audited financial statement for Fiscal Year 2025 (September 1, 2024 – August 31, 2025)

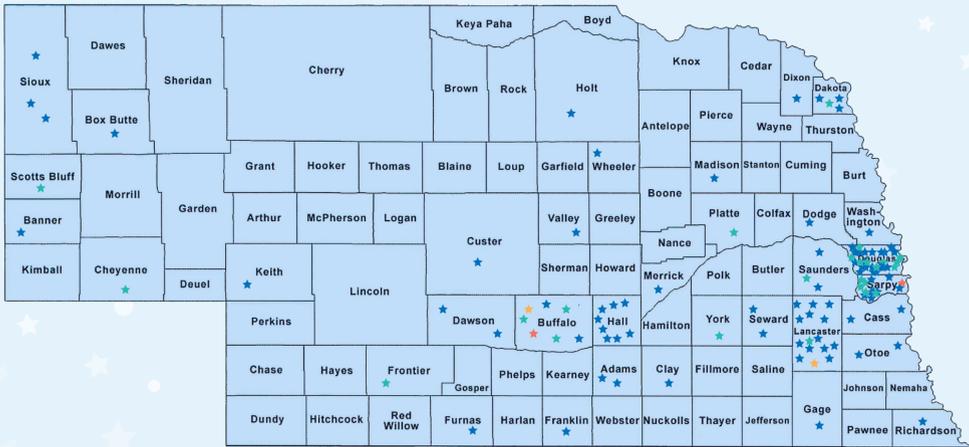
	<u>TOTAL</u>
Revenues, gains, and other support	
Public Support	
Contributions, Cash	3,632,633
Contributions, Donated Goods & Services	4,776,116
Grants	490,057
Total public support	<u>8,898,806</u>
Internal special events, Cash	1,290,905
Internal special events, Donated Goods & Services	6,350
Less costs of direct benefits to donors	<u>(262,636)</u>
Total internal special events	<u>1,034,619</u>
Investment income (Loss), net	1,036,518
Other income	2,250
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>0</u>
Total revenues, gains, and other support	<u>10,972,193</u>
Expenses	
Program services	
Wishgranting	<u>7,460,175</u>
Support services	
Fundraising	677,275
Management and general	461,049
Total support services	<u>1,138,324</u>
Total expenses	<u>8,598,499</u>
Change in net assets	2,373,694
Net assets, beginning of the year, as adjusted	<u>13,861,650</u>
Net assets, end of the year	<u>16,235,344</u>

If you would like a copy of the full CliftonLarsonAllen audit, please contact the Make-A-Wish Nebraska office or visit [wish.org/nebraska](http://wish.org/nebraska)



# Your Support Has Statewide Impact

## Together, We Granted 133 Wishes Across Nebraska



★ I wish to be     
 ★ I wish to meet     
 ★ I wish to have     
 ★ I wish to go

Make-A-Wish has the power to spark hope and launch a child onto a journey filled with exciting possibilities; creating a turning point in their treatment and recovery. This type of impact can only be found in a wish. Last fiscal year, we were able to grant 133 wishes due to the generous support of our loyal **commUNITY** of supporters.

Our work doesn't end there. At this time, we have 150+ wish kids waiting for their wishes to come true. Along with the large number of

children being referred and/or waiting for their wish, we have also seen an increase of 25% in the cost to grant wishes since COVID. We have been fortunate to never turn down a child who deserved a wish or place them on a waiting list until funds are available, and we hope we can continue this into the future. To fulfill our vision of granting the wish of every eligible child, we must continue to meet the capacity needed to grant the wishes of all critically ill children who are now able and ready to go on their wish.

A special thank you to those who gave to Make-A-Wish in recognition of loved ones

### In Honor of

Mike Abramson  
 Travis Clark  
 Nicholas Foxworthy  
 Julie & Paul Maass  
 Amy Pfingsten  
 Kenny & Kip Svejkovsky

### In Memory of

Karen Beck  
 Cassie Borneman  
 Brinkley Chandler  
 Del  
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 Jesse Peetz (Wish Child)  
 Timothy Alden Reigle &  
 Michael Scott Reigle  
 Jerry "Wingnut" Straube  
 Justin Svejkovsky  
 Mark Ugland  
 Thelma Wise

This Annual Report is dedicated to our Wish Kids who passed away during the fiscal year.  
*Forever in Our Hearts.*

**Fiscal Year 2025** was an outstanding year for granting wishes throughout the state of Nebraska. We were able to grant a record 133 heartfelt wishes for children with critical illnesses

**Name, Age, Hometown, Illness**

**Wish**

Liam, 12, Papillion, brain tumor	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Trenton, 15, Omaha, brain tumor	I wish to see sea animals at the zoo
Lucas, 13, Ashland, lymphoma	I wish to go to Disneyland®
Savana, 4, Omaha, leukemia	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Creighton, 11, Omaha, cystic fibrosis	I wish to go to Hawaii
Sawyer, 12, Lincoln, chronic kidney disease	I wish to go to Walt Disney World® and Universal Studios®
Jimai, 7, Lincoln, cystic fibrosis	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Brady, 11, Omaha, cystic fibrosis	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Wyatt, 9, Ericson, cystic fibrosis	I wish to go deep sea fishing
Ariah, 14, Grand Island, cystic fibrosis	I wish to go to Hawaii
Emily, 16, Franklin, cystic fibrosis	I wish to go to Oahu
Cage, 8, Bellevue, neuromuscular disorder	I wish to have a playset
Lela, 15, Lincoln, nervous system disorder	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Emily, 9, Omaha, cancer	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Breklyn, 6, Harrisburg, cystic fibrosis	I wish to go to Discovery Cove®
Rianna, 18, Omaha, congenital heart disease	I wish to go to a Taylor Swift concert
Blake, 13, Omaha, brain tumor	I wish to go to Hawaii
Skylar, 17, Omaha, end stage renal failure	I wish to go to Walt Disney World® and dress like Rapunzel
Paul, 7, Omaha, leukemia	I wish to meet an astronaut and go to Kennedy Space Center
Emerson, 4, Lincoln, nervous system disorder	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Tate, 5, Omaha, congenital heart disease	I wish to go to Walt Disney World® and meet Mickey Mouse
Benjamin, 14, Falls City, nervous system disorder	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Troy, 9, Walton, cystic fibrosis	I wish to go on the "Icon of the Seas" cruise
Alex, 18, Omaha, endocrine disorder	I wish to go to Costa Rica
Madeline, 9, Blair, cystic fibrosis	I wish to go to Aulani® Resort
Briar, 5, Omaha, nervous system disorder	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Sophia, 17, Lincoln, cancer	I wish to go to Japan
Paola, 18, Omaha, cancer	I wish to have a shopping spree
Josephine, 4, Omaha, cystic fibrosis	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Lucas, 3, Lincoln, chronic respiratory failure	I wish to meet the Lincoln Stars
Ryker, 8, Panama, leukemia	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Viviana, 8, South Sioux City, respiratory failure	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Hayden, 4, Omaha, nervous system disorder	I wish to have a wheelchair accessible travel trailer
Shaeden, 18, Garland, nervous system disorder	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Gabriel, 17, Bellevue, heart transplant	I wish to meet Dak Prescott
Everest, 7, Adams, nervous system	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Samantha, 15, Bennington, cancer	I wish to go to Maui
Grayson, 5, Bellevue, heart failure	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Emma, 12, Omaha, intestine transplant	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Luna, 4, Lincoln, lymphoproliferative disorder	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Frederick, 2.5, Omaha, cancer	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Yermando, 14, Omaha, cancer	I wish to have a shopping spree
Carter, 12, Kearney, lymphoma	I wish to be a St. Louis Blues Hockey Player
Colton, 18, Union, cystic fibrosis	I wish to go to New York City
Kase, 8, Cambridge, brain tumor	I wish to go to Hawaii
Zoe, 9, Papillion, chronic kidney disease	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Wesley, 9, Omaha, cystic fibrosis	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Cade, 6, Sutton, lymphoma	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Harley, 8, Doniphan, brain tumor	I wish to go to Walt Disney World® and meet princesses
Evallee, 9, Bellevue, cancer	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Charolotte, 6, Kearney, lymphoma	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Emersyn, 11, Grand Island, brain tumor	I wish to go to Hawaii
Hunter, 10, Raymond, congenital heart disease	I wish to go to Walt Disney World® and stay at Art of Animation Resort
George, 7, Omaha, brain tumor	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Betty, 7, Omaha, cancer	I wish to have a party with my family
Isabel, 12, Omaha, end-stage kidney disease	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Elias, 5, Arnold, cancer	I wish to go to Walt Disney World® and meet Mr. Incredible
Lexee, 14, Grand Island, cancer	I wish to go to Hawaii
MadisonRose, 16, Bennington, end-stage kidney disease	I wish to go to Hawaii
Jaxon 13, Omaha, heart transplant	I wish to go to NYC and learn about fashion
Angelena, 7, Lincoln, lymphoma	I wish to go to Walt Disney World® and meet princesses
Joalie, 6, Omaha, heart condition	I wish to go to Walt Disney World® and sing with Ana and Elsa
Boone, 18, Gothenburg, leukemia	I wish to go to the Men's NCAA Final Four basketball tournament

this year. Wishes ranged from the ever-popular trip to Walt Disney World® Resorts, Hawaii, to going on a shopping spree, and to meeting their favorite celebrity.

**Name, Age, Hometown, Illness**

**Wish**

Caleb, 15, Union, cystic fibrosis	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Arianna, 14, Ogallala, cancer	I wish to go to Hawaii
Nikolai, 3, Lexington, cancer	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Fayth, 14, Omaha, cystic fibrosis	I wish to go to Hawaii
Clair, 15, Kearney, heart condition	I wish to go to Cancun
Charlie, 14, Hastings, neuromuscular disorder	I wish to go to Wrestle Mania
Rose, 9, Jackson, leukemia	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Kash, 10, Bellevue, cystic fibrosis	I wish to go to Hawaii
Joshua 7, Lincoln, lymphoma	I wish to go on a Disney Cruise Line®
Jackson, 18, Lincoln, cystic fibrosis	I wish to have a shopping spree
Abiel, 3, Omaha, cancer	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Connor, 7, Gretna, neuromuscular disorder	I wish to have a hot tub
Samuel, 9, Omaha, leukemia	I wish to go to Hawaii
Joshua, 18, Gretna, leukemia	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Tyler, 16, Fremont, end-stage kidney disease	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Damian, 17, Grand Island, cystic fibrosis	I wish to go to Walt Disney World® and Universal Studios®
Zanessa, 17, Alliance, cancer	I wish to go to Hawaii
Taylor, 10, Glenvil, leukemia	I wish to go to Hawaii
Lester, 8, Omaha, congenital heart disease	I wish to go to Disneyland® to see the Cars and Marvel attractions
Calvin, 7, Doniphan, nervous system disorder	I wish to go to Walt Disney World® to see the Lion King characters
Selena, 4, South Sioux City, genetic disorder	I wish to go to Walt Disney World® and meet princesses
Lina, 5, Madison, leukemia	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
G'henai, 18, Bennington, nervous system disorder	I wish to have a hot tub
Gisselle, 8, Gering, blood disorder	I wish to have a camper with my name on it in grey, black, pink & white
Jason, 18, Omaha, lymphoma	I wish to go to Hawaii
Carleana, 10, Omaha, leukemia	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Victor, 7, Chapman, leukemia	I wish to go to Walt Disney World®
Lexi, 4, Lincoln, cancer	I wish to go to Walt Disney World® and meet Mickey Mouse
Taytem, 11, Kearney, genetic disorder	I wish to meet Kane Brown
Noah, 18, Bellevue, leukemia	I wish to have a shopping spree at Mall of America
Liam, 4, Concord, congenital heart	I wish to go to the San Diego Zoo
Nicolas, 11, Columbus, brain tumor	I wish to have a shopping spree in Omaha
Anna, 5, Omaha, nervous system disorder	I wish to have a hot tub
Fiona, 15, Papillion, lymphoma	I wish to take lessons for soprano sax, drums and electric guitar
Greyson, 17, Bellevue, heart transplant	I wish to go to the aquarium in Atlanta, GA
Gage, 17, Nebraska City, cancer	I wish to go to Hawaii
Angel, 6, Grand Island, genetic disorder	I wish to have Maltese puppy
Raegan, 16, Ord, kidney disease	I wish to go to Nashville, TN
Jessica, 12, Martell, liver transplant	I wish to go to Walt Disney World® and make a Light Saber
Oliver, 4, Bellevue, congenital heart disease	I wish to have a backyard playset
Ronin, 5, Omaha, cystic fibrosis	I wish to go to the beach
Alaina, 9, Ashland, nervous system disorder	I wish to have a UTV
Beckett, 2, Lodgepole, bone marrow transplant	I wish to have a backyard playset
Franklin, 6, Kearney, leukemia	I wish to have a backyard playset
Trenton, 17, Omaha, cancer	I wish to have a labrador retriever
Cesar, 16, Curtis, neuromuscular disorder	I wish to have an all-terrain track chair
Cayleigh, 13, Omaha, vascular disorder	I wish to go to Walt Disney World® and to Harry Potter World
Jayce, 17, Omaha, nervous system disorder	I wish to have sensory toys
Eddison, 9, Lincoln, heart condition	I wish to stay in a cute house near the beach on 30A in Florida.

# 133 Wishes Granted!

133 Wishes were granted across the State of Nebraska in fiscal year 2025

Walt Disney World Resort/Land.....	53
Domestic Travel .....	20
Hawaii .....	18
Shopping Spree.....	9
Play Structure/Hot Tub .....	8
Celebrity .....	5
International/Cruises .....	5
Camper/ATV .....	4
Animal .....	2
Other .....	9

**Total Wishes in FY25.....A record 133!!!**

# Make-A-Wish®

NEBRASKA

[wish.org/nebraska](https://wish.org/nebraska)

800-760-WISH (9474)

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Omaha, NE 68114

**Lincoln satellite office**

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Lincoln, NE 68512

**Kearney satellite office**

412 East 25<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite D  
Kearney, NE 68847

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