

*I wish to attend the
Grammy Awards*

Natalie, 15
lymphoma

Natalie on the red carpet
with mom and luncheon
co-chair, Michelle



Make-A-Wish®
ALASKA AND WASHINGTON

**WISH
HEROESSM**

Wish Heroes Table Captain Toolkit 2026

Welcome, *Wish Hero*!

Thank you for joining our Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington® *Wish Heroes* community — **our loyal supporters who bring everlasting hope to children and families when it's needed most.**

This toolkit is designed to help you achieve success and expand our heroic community, turning more wishes into reality.

It's our chapter's **40th anniversary year!** The *Wish Heroes* luncheon is a great time to celebrate the incredible people and organizations who have joined forces to create life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses.

Thank you for being part of our heroic team of helpers. Your commitment and enthusiasm can inspire others to create hope, making transformational wishes possible.

Let's help kids dream and smile again!

*-Your Friends at Make-A-Wish
Alaska and Washington*



Need help or have questions?

Contact Jessica Quijada at
jquijada@akwa.wish.org or 206-588-8959



TOOLKIT CONTENT

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"Wishes are important because they open up kids' eyes to the possibilities and give them a chance to dream. When so many things are taken from them, when they are sick, it gives them that opportunity to dream again."

- Malissa, Wish Mom



Wish Heroes Overview

LUNCHEON DETAILS

- Friday, October 16, 2026
- Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue
- Check-In / Socialize & Sip: 11:30 a.m. – 11:55 a.m.
- Lunch & Inspiring Program: 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- **This year's theme: *the healing power of music***
- Free parking for guests at the Meydenbauer Center.

KEY LINKS

- [Chapter webpage](#)
- [Tickets & tables](#)
- [Calendar link](#)
- [Donation page](#)
- Donation page QR code:



IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

TIMELINE	ACTIVITY
July – October 2: GUEST REGISTRATION	Please reserve a table on our registration website . You can either enter guest information or send your guests a link to fill in their contact information and meal preference. See below for more details.
September 11 and 25: TABLE PROGRESS CHECK-IN	Jessica will check in on your table progress. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to support!
October 2: RSVP DEADLINE	Make sure all your guests are registered. If you will not be filling a full table, let Jessica know.
October 5 and October 15: EVENT DETAILS EMAIL	You and your guests will receive an email with all the information you will need to know for the day-of the event.
October 16: WISH HEROES LUNCHEON	Celebrate your impact on granting wishes with your guests, fellow <i>Wish Heroes</i> and Make-A-Wish at Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue at 11:30 a.m.

GUEST REGISTRATION

Reserve a table on the [registration website](#). Jessica will send you a link to your table's RSVP page.

There are 3 ways to register your guests.

1. Collect their contact information (name, address, email, phone) and dietary restrictions and enter this into your RSVP page.
2. Send the RSVP page to your invitees for them to fill out themselves.
3. Email their contact information (name, address, email, phone) and dietary restrictions to Jessica at jquijada@akwa.wish.org, and she'll register them.

For dietary restrictions, we'd like to know if the guest prefers a vegetarian/vegan meal instead of the standard meat entrée and any food allergies.

Table Captain Timeline



Use this checklist as a guide to fill your table and support your luncheon guests.

TODAY

- Read through the *Wish Heroes* toolkit.
- **Create your guest list.** Aim for 12-15 potential guests who'd be passionate about creating life-changing experiences for children with critical illnesses. Your goal is to fill a table of 10.
- Write your own invitation or use/personalize the **sample email template** provided on pages 7-8 of this toolkit.
- Send your personalized invitation to your network.
- [Add the luncheon to your calendar.](#)
- [Reserve your table.](#)

Ongoing

- Follow up with your network and confirm who will be joining you.
- Send the calendar link to your guests: [Add the luncheon to your calendar.](#)

3-4 weeks before the Wish Heroes Luncheon (September 18 – 25)

- Follow up with invitees to confirm. If someone is interested but unavailable to attend, consider asking them to [donate here](#) to help Make-A-Wish grant wishes to local children.

2 weeks before the Wish Heroes Luncheon (October 2)

- Please have your guests register by October 2 using your RSVP link. Or send guest contact information (name, address, email, phone) and dietary restrictions to Jessica at jquijada@akwa.wish.org.
- If you have changes to your guest list after October 2, email Jessica at jquijada@akwa.wish.org.

1-2 weeks before the Wish Heroes Luncheon (October 2 – 13)

- Let guests know you are excited to see them and share your table fundraising goal. Include a wish story video from the Make-A-Wish YouTube channel. See page 10 for a template.
- Encourage their social media involvement prior to and on the day of the luncheon. Find @MakeAWishAKWA on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).
- **All registered guests will receive a reminder email with event details on Monday, October 5 and Thursday, October 15.**

Day of the Wish Heroes Luncheon (October 16)

- **Get ready for FUN! Listen to your favorite music on your drive over to get you excited for the event.**
- Check-in begins at 11:30 a.m. Ballroom doors open at 11:30 a.m.
- Find your table and make introductions among guests. Locate your Table Captain packet.
- We'll sprinkle in thematic fun – relating to music/wishes – during the sip & socialize time 11:30 – 11:55 a.m.
- The program begins at noon and will end promptly at 1:00 p.m.
- Please consider a gift of \$200 or more (or a gift that is personally meaningful to you).
- Collect all donation forms and place them into the envelope on your table. A Make-A-Wish volunteer will collect these directly following the luncheon.

After the Wish Heroes Luncheon

- Thank your guests and feel good, knowing you helped wish kids. That's what heroes do!
- Make-A-Wish will send all attendees a thank you email.
- Everyone who donates at the luncheon will receive a thank you call within a few days of the event and a thank you letter (with tax receipt information) by mail.

Ideas & Tips

Childhood illness is unfair. You can help! Now more than ever, children with critical illnesses need the hope of a wish. Fundraising helps ensure wishes will be granted when wish kids need them most. Here are tips for asking for support during this critical time.

TELL YOUR STORY

Let your guests know why wish granting matters to you. **Your story is what they care about most.** Make it personal to make it powerful.

SET A GOAL

Set a fundraising goal of \$2,000 or more (\$200 per guest) for your table and invite your friends to help you reach that goal.

Ask your guests if they have an employer matching gift program so they can double their gift. Microsoft, Alaska Airlines, Boeing and many other companies have matching gift programs.

GUEST OUTREACH

Reach out to friends, family and coworkers individually, then follow up with a personal phone call or email to those who don't respond within a week.

If guests can't attend, invite them to [make a donation](#).

SHARE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Like or follow Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#). Share our posts about the luncheon with your friends and followers.

STAY OPTIMISTIC

Remember, you are asking your network to make life-changing wishes possible! Make-A-Wish is incredibly grateful for your support. Every message you share and every dollar you raise is meaningful.

*I wish to
be a superhero*

Joell, 8
heart condition



Expanding the Reach and Equity of Wishes

OUR MISSION AND CHALLENGE

Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington exists to bring hope and healing to all children with critical illnesses.

Right now, our chapter grants 390 wishes annually. But, we aren't reaching our full potential. A recent population and eligibility study indicates that we have the opportunity to grant approximately 550 wishes each year.

The **2025 John Dawson Foundation Study** allows us to move from **reactive wish-granting to proactive, equity-driven outreach** — strategically identifying under-reached diagnoses, communities and regions so every eligible child has the opportunity to experience the power of a wish.

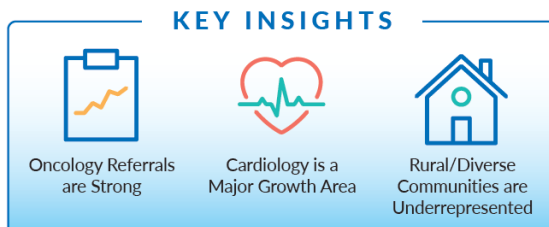
This study's insights show us where to focus to reach every eligible child:

- **Oncology** referrals remain strong because of deep hospital partnerships.
- **Cardiology** is our biggest untapped opportunity — many heart-related diagnoses automatically qualify, but few are referred.
- **Rural and diverse communities** remain underrepresented, often due to limited access, awareness or cultural barriers.

OPPORTUNITY AND IMPACT

To work toward granting 550 wishes annually, we are starting with a goal of **increasing referrals by 100 children per year**. One main area of focus is pediatric specialists in cardiology in Alaska. This would have a transformative impact on our community and it is within reach. Doing so requires an additional estimated **\$1.2 million annually**. That investment will expand access, deepen community partnerships and bring the joy of a wish to children who have never been reached before.

With your partnership, we can **close the gap**, change the way we deliver hope, and ensure that **every eligible child in Alaska and Washington** experiences the power of a wish.



Sample Luncheon Invitations - *Use these to fill your own table*



FRIENDS, FAMILY & COWORKERS

Subject: Join me for an hour of hope and impact on Oct. 16

[Insert a personal greeting],

I'd love for you to join me at the *Wish Heroes* Luncheon — a fun, meaningful, joy-filled hour where we'll share lunch, hear about the lasting impact of a wish and be agents of hope for local kids and families. It's Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington's **40th anniversary year**, so it's a great time to celebrate the heroic community who make wishes possible.

You won't want to miss wish alum Natalie share about her **wish to go to the Grammy Awards**, reflecting on the *healing power of music* — for all of us — and the healing power of a wish for kids fighting critical illnesses.

I support Make-A-Wish because *[insert your story]*. I'd be honored to have you join me as a Wish Hero, knowing you *[value helping kids and sparking hope]*.

Wish Heroes Luncheon

Friday, October 16, 2026

11:30 a.m. Check-in, Sip & Socialize | 12 – 1 p.m. Program

Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue

The program will inspire you! It has for **Molly Shen from KOMO 4 News**, who returns as emcee and will invite guests to make a meaningful gift, suggested at \$200 or more. I hope our table of 10 can raise at least \$2,000 — it's for the kids! With you there, I know we can do it!

You'll leave feeling great — maybe even singing your favorite song, knowing you've done something impactful with your Friday. Are you in? Let me know and I'll save your seat.

I hope you can be my guest!

[Insert your name]

P.S. If you can't attend, you can still be a heroic helper of hope by [donating here](#).

CORPORATE HOSTED TABLE

Subject: Join the *[company name]* table for an inspiring hour of hope on October 16

[Insert a personal greeting],

I'd love for you to join me for Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington's *Wish Heroes* Luncheon — a meaningful and uplifting hour to reconnect with colleagues, share lunch and create hope for local kids.

[Company name] is hosting a table with 10 seats available. In this power hour together, we'll reflect on the *healing power of music* as wish alum **Natalie shares about her wish to go to the Grammy Awards**. It'll be a memorable, feel-good experience and an opportunity to be a part of the heroic community who brings hope to children facing critical illnesses.

More than a lunch. It's our local chapter's **40th anniversary year**, so get ready to celebrate and have fun!

Wish Heroes Luncheon

Friday, October 16, 2026

11:30 a.m. Check-in, Sip & Socialize | 12 – 1 p.m. Program

Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue

Our table goal is to raise at least \$2,000. During the program, emcee **Molly Shen from KOMO 4 News** will invite guests to make a meaningful gift — suggested at \$200 or more — to make more life-changing wishes possible.

If you'd like to join, please let me know soon. Seats will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. And is there a better way to spend your Friday afternoon, knowing you've made a difference in just an hour? I hope you'll join me.

Let's show wish kids that *[company name]* is full of heroes!

[Insert your name]

P.S. If you can't attend, you can still spark hope for local kids by [donating here](#).



SPONSOR HOSTED TABLE

Subject: Join the *[company name]* table for an inspiring hour of hope on October 16

[Insert a personal greeting],

I'm honored to share that *[company name]* is sponsoring Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington's *Wish Heroes Luncheon*. **We have 10 seats available, and I'd love for you to join our table.**

In this power hour together, you'll connect with colleagues and hear about the transformational impact a wish makes in a child's journey with critical illness. It's our local chapter's **40th anniversary year**, so we'll have fun and celebrate the community of heroes who make wishes possible — a community you're invited into!

Music fans — you won't want to miss hearing wish alum Natalie share about her **wish to go to the Grammy Awards**, reflecting on the **healing power of music**.

Wish Heroes Luncheon
Friday, October 16, 2026
11:30 a.m. Check-in, Sip & Socialize | 12 – 1 p.m. Program
Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue

Our table goal is to raise at least \$2,000. During the program, emcee **Molly Shen from KOMO 4 News** will invite guests to make a meaningful gift — suggested at \$200 or more — to make more life-changing wishes possible.

If you'd like to join, please let me know soon. Seats will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. And is there a better way to spend your Friday afternoon, knowing you've made a difference in just an hour? I hope you'll join me.

Let's show wish kids that *[company name]* is full of heroes!

[Insert your name]

P.S. If you can't attend, you can still help make life-changing wishes possible by [donating here](#).

Sample Table Captain Recruitment

Use this to encourage others to host their own table

Subject: Help celebrate 40 years of wish granting – be a Wish Heroes table captain!

[Insert a personal greeting],

When I think of a *[natural helper]* who loves *[networking]*, you come to mind. I think you'd make an incredible table captain for Make-A-Wish Alaska & Washington's *Wish Heroes Luncheon*. I'm hosting a table this year and want to fill the room with more caring people like you. Would you consider gathering friends or colleagues to host a table of your own?

It's our local chapter's **40th anniversary**, so the luncheon will be both a celebration and a powerful reminder of why this mission matters so much. The need is still great and wish kids need heroes like **YOU** to create hope.

Music fans will love hearing wish alum **Natalie share about her Grammy Awards wish**. And, as table hosts, we get to invite people to join us for a fun, meaningful way to make an impact. Make-A-Wish makes it easy with templates, a timeline and personal support every step of the way.

I support Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington because *[insert your story]*. I'd be so grateful if you'd join me in this milestone year as we help more children experience the lasting hope of a wish.

Wish Heroes Luncheon
Friday, October 16, 2026
11:30 a.m. Check-in, Sip & Socialize | 12 – 1 p.m. Program
Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue

Table captains are encouraged to raise at least \$2,000 in table fundraising, with guests invited to make a meaningful gift – suggested at \$200 or more – to support life-changing wishes. Every table filled makes more wishes possible.

If you want to join me as a table captain, let me know and I'll connect you with the Make-A-Wish team. They'll provide you with everything you need to get excited and expand our local heroic community. It's for the kids!

I hope you'll join me!

[Insert your name]

P.S. If you can't host a table this year, you can still help make life-changing wishes possible by [donating here](#).

Sample Message to Your Confirmed Guests

Send 1 week prior to the luncheon, around October 9. Use this email to ensure your guests are prepared to help reach your table fundraising goal (you can adjust the fundraising goal below).

Include a link to a wish story video from the [Make-A-Wish YouTube channel](#). Choose your favorite video or choose a video unique to each guest to match their interests – Seattle Kraken, celebrities, superheroes, music wishes, Hawaii and more. Or use the music-inspired link in the email example.

Subject: Your hope-filled lunch hour is almost here!

[Insert a personal greeting],

Are you excited for the *Wish Heroes* Luncheon? I'm glad you're joining me. It'll be great to catch up in person.

Not only will you enjoy a catered meal, but you'll hear incredible wish stories and reflect on the **healing power of music**. Check out [Making of Ivy's Wish - I Wish to Be... in my own Music Video](#), and watch Ivy's beautiful music video at the end of the inspiring luncheon program!

My goal is for our table to raise at least \$2,000 to help grant life-changing wishes! That would cover domestic airfare for a family of four on a travel wish. If we raise more than \$2,000, our donations could also purchase items for an electronics wish or a musical instrument, for example. I know we can meet our goal and make a meaningful impact for local kids!

See you on the 16th at Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue! Make-A-Wish will send you details on parking and where to go.

Thanks for being a hero for wish kids!

[Insert your name]

Sample Social Media Posts

Share your excitement and passion for the Make-A-Wish mission. Explain how and why you are involved. Encourage others to join you and be inspired by courageous wish kids.

Here are a few templates for various platforms.

- LinkedIn event: <https://www.linkedin.com/events/7470942547385892864>
- Facebook event: [Wish Heroes Luncheon | Facebook](#)

OPTION #1:

This fall, I'm excited to be part of something truly special... Make-A-Wish Alaska & Washington's annual Wish Heroes Luncheon! ✨

Join me for an inspiring lunch where you'll hear powerful wish stories, connect with an incredible community, and see firsthand how we can bring hope to kids and families when they need it most. It's just one hour, but the impact lasts so much longer. ❤️

📅 Friday, October 16
🕒 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM
📍 Meydenbauer Center, Bellevue

I'd love for you to join me! Reach out if you're interested in sitting at my table, or visit wish.org/akwa/wish-heroes-luncheon to host your own.

OPTION #2:

Calling all friends, colleagues and community heroes! 🧑‍🤝‍🧑 ✨

I'm honored to serve as a [table captain / committee member] for Make-A-Wish Alaska & Washington's annual Wish Heroes Luncheon in October, and I'd love for you to join me! It's a chance to step away from the day-to-day, hear incredible wish stories and be reminded of the hope and joy we can create together.

📅 Friday, October 16
🕒 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM
📍 Meydenbauer Center, Bellevue

Join me at my table or host your own! Visit wish.org/akwa/wish-heroes-luncheon to join the fun.

OPTION #3:

As someone who deeply believes in the power of a wish, I'm honored to be a [table captain / committee member] for this inspiring event: Make-A-Wish Alaska & Washington's Wish Heroes Luncheon.

This luncheon offers a unique opportunity to hear powerful wish stories, connect with others who care deeply about our mission, and learn how we can bring hope when it's needed most.

Wish Heroes Luncheon:

📅 Friday, October 16
🕒 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM
📍 Meydenbauer Center, Bellevue

I'd love for you to join me! Reach out if you're interested in sitting at my table, or visit wish.org/akwa/wish-heroes-luncheon to host your own.

OPTION #4:

As someone who deeply believes in the power of a wish, I'm honored to be a [table captain / committee member] for this inspiring event: Make-A-Wish Alaska & Washington's Wish Heroes Luncheon.

This year's theme celebrates something we all love: Music 🎵. Like an uplifting song during a difficult time, you can give wish kids a voice and a choice to imagine a brighter future. Join us as we celebrate 40 years of wish granting and the healing power of music at this year's Wish Heroes Luncheon.



Friday, October 16



11:30 AM – 1:30 PM



Meydenbauer Center, Bellevue

Join me at my table or host your own! Visit wish.org/akwa/wish-heroes-luncheon to join the fun.

Tag Make-A-Wish Alaska & Washington in your posts!

- [LinkedIn](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#)
- @makeawishakwa
- Hashtags: #WishHeroes #WishHeroesLuncheon #MakeAWishAKWA

Frequently Asked Questions

★ **What are my responsibilities as a Table Captain?**

The success of this fundraising luncheon is based on Table Captains recruiting guests and providing Make-A-Wish with the opportunity to inspire them to give. Your role as a Wish Hero is to invite friends, family, or coworkers to your table, make sure guests register by the **October 2 deadline** and to welcome them at the event. We also hope you have fun along the way!

★ **How many people will fit at my table?**

Each table can be set for a total of 10 people. If you fill more than 10 seats, we will seat your additional guests at an adjacent table.

★ **When is the deadline for guests to RSVP?**

October 2. Registering on time provides the best experience for your guests and ensures that everyone has a seat, desired meal and a nametag when they arrive at the event.

★ **What if I can't fill a full table of 10 seats?**

We can fill empty seats with overflow guests from another table, or with people who registered independently. You can also share a table with another Table Captain. Please let us know as soon as possible if you are not filling every seat.

★ **How can I make a change to my guest list?**

For any help prior to the luncheon, please email Jessica at jquijada@akwa.wish.org. If you have a change on the day of the luncheon, please see Guest Services at check-in for additional assistance.

★ **What time should I arrive?**

Check-in begins at 11:30 a.m. Give yourself plenty of time to park and mingle in the foyer with your guests and find your seats. The program will start promptly at noon and last for an hour.

★ **Am I responsible for raising a certain amount of money?**

Make-A-Wish will not hold Table Captains to a fundraising minimum. However, we encourage you to communicate with your guests that a \$200 minimum donation is suggested. You can contribute to the success of this luncheon by recruiting guests with an interest and capacity to give. Make-A-Wish welcomes the opportunity to inspire them to donate.

★ **Who should I invite to the *Wish Heroes Luncheon*?**

Anyone in your circle of friends, family and colleagues who you think will connect with our mission of granting wishes for kids facing critical illness. The luncheon is a casual, inclusive fundraiser well-suited for individuals who are new to the Make-A-Wish mission.

★ **How do we give a gift at the luncheon?**

Table Hosts will distribute pledge forms to everyone at their table when cued during the program. Gifts can be made with a credit card, check, or cash. If you have a guest that can't attend, encourage them to [donate to the luncheon event](#).

As a Table Host, you are responsible for collecting your guests' pledge cards and securing them in the envelope on your table. These will be collected by Make-A-Wish volunteers immediately after the luncheon.

(continued on next page)

★ **How do matching gifts work?**

Corporate matching funds are an easy way to double the impact of a gift at no cost to you. Guests are encouraged to submit for a corporate match if possible. [You can check here](#) to see if your company matches. Please note Make-A-Wish cannot request matching funds from any employer; this can only be done by the employee.

★ **How can I learn about sponsorship opportunities?**

Sponsors are an essential part of this luncheon, allowing the funds raised in the room to go directly to the mission. Sponsorships are available from \$25,000 - \$2,500. If you know of a company or organization that would like to learn about luncheon sponsorship, please [contact Dawn Draves](#).

★ **How do I submit dietary restrictions or special requests for myself or my guests?**

Please indicate in the registration system or you may email jquijada@akwa.wish.org with any dietary restrictions or accommodations.

★ **Are donations to Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington tax deductible?**

Yes! Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and donations to support your *Wish Heroes* fundraising campaign are tax-deductible to the fullest extent permitted by the IRS.

★ **Can people donate by check, stock, charity account or Donor Advised Fund (DAF?)**

Yes, please mail checks to: Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington, 811 1st Ave, Ste 620, Seattle, WA 98104. Checks must be made out to "Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington" to be tax-deductible. Be sure to indicate it's for the *Wish Heroes* campaign and include your name.

Contact Lauren Martin to donate by stock or DAF – lmartin@akwa.wish.org or 386.748.2109.

