

WISHES

Make-A-Wish® Illinois | Summer 2014



GRAYSON FINDS JOY IN FLORIDA

A fun-loving five-year-old from Chicago, Grayson has two brothers. In 2010, Grayson was diagnosed with acute lymphoid lymphoblastic leukemia which started his long road to recovery.

His parents contacted Make-A-Wish to see if he would qualify, and when he did, they were thrilled. Grayson chose to visit Walt Disney World for his wish, because he could experience many of his favorite things in that one beautiful place.

One day during his wish trip Grayson was named a Disney Train Engineer for the day. Part of his duties included ringing the train's whistle and shouting 'All aboard!' The family rode the train through the park with big smiles on their faces. "For the first time in a while, it was a carefree, worry-free experience," Grayson's mom Sara said.

"We will always have Make-A-Wish to hold onto because we don't know what's going to happen in the next few months...but we will always have the joy of those seven days."

Wish granters: Mark Javier and Sarah Wronkowiec
Adopted by: Carolyn Wangrow in memory of
Don Wangrow's 10th year of passing
Referred by: Grayson's Parents

REFER A CHILD

Each year, we estimate that nearly 1,200 Illinois children will be newly diagnosed with a life-threatening medical condition. The vision of Make-A-Wish is to reach each eligible child with a life-changing wish experience. A wish can help a child feel stronger, more energetic and more willing and able to battle their life-threatening medical condition.

Illinois children between the ages of 2½ and 18 (before their 18th birthday) can be referred. Out of respect for their privacy, children who may be eligible can be referred by:

- ★ Their parent/legal guardians
- ★ The child themselves
- ★ Family members with detailed knowledge of the child's current medical condition
- ★ Medical professionals (typically a doctor, nurse, social worker or child-life specialist)

Visit illinois.wish.org or call 800.978.9474 for information. If you are a medical professional, please contact us about how to access our secure online referral site.

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Letter from A Wish Family

Thank you so very much for such a truly amazing experience. It was everything we thought it could be, and better. The dolphins melted our hearts, the horseback riding was spectacular ... and on our whale watching excursion, we saw a whale breach 4 times in a row! All the old hands on board were just as excited as we were for the rarity of such a thing. You truly outdid yourselves on that one!

We still remember the day our child life consultant came into our room at Comer hospital to tell us we would qualify for Make-A-Wish and feeling such utter shock at the very idea. Was that really us? It was the coldest, bleakest, darkest, wettest, nastiest day in March 2010, and Maya was feeling so ill and her mood was so altered by chemotherapy we hardly even recognized the 8-year-old child she had been a mere month earlier. They asked her what she liked, and she answered that she liked animals, the only time she made eye contact with anyone that day. It seemed like we might never get out of that hospital room.

And then, three years later, there we were, on a beach, under a beautiful blue sky, splashing in waves, watching Maya learn to surf, of all things. She was feeling so well, and happy, and full of life. Her luxurious long hair was tied up in a ponytail, her cheeks were flushed with exercise, her skin lovely and smooth and full of healthy color. She's grown inches and gained pounds and felt like she could try anything. Do anything. She felt utterly free. We all did. We don't think a moment passed when we didn't marvel at that very direct connection, between that terrible shocking day in March 2010, and any given day in Hawaii, and realize that you had done so much to, quite simply, cheer us up...give us a moment to heal and be happy and let some of those bad things go. Almost like a direct swap, we emptied out at least some of that March 2010 we'd been carrying around within and filled that spot with a lot of December 2013. We don't know how anyone could give a proper thanks for that, but we'll try!



Nada, Michael, Maya, and Oliver

GIFTS
OF
JOY

LAST CHANCE FOR TILES

Gifts of Joy is a campaign to commemorate our office move with a whimsical mural that will hang in our new space for all to see. With a special one-time gift of \$1,000, contributors have the opportunity to customize a 3" x 3" tile within the 4' x 6' mural. Contact Linda Parck at 312.602.9420 or parck@illinois.wish.org for information.

Make-A-Wish® Illinois

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WISHES GRANTED

These and hundreds of other wishes were recently granted by Make-A-Wish Illinois.

For more wish stories, visit illinois.wish.org

Shopping Brings Ja'Nya Smiles

An outgoing, happy, loveable little girl from Peoria, Ja'Nya likes to play outside with her little sisters and loves her grandma's banana pudding. This 5-year-old dynamo was diagnosed with end stage renal disease and has had her kidneys removed. While she awaits a transplant, she's been spending quite a bit of time in the hospital and at dialysis appointments.

Ja'Nya wished to have a shopping spree for new toys. Make-A-Wish arranged for her to shop in style, transporting her to Toys R Us and Walmart by limo for shopping and to her very favorite restaurant, Golden Corral, for lunch. Throughout the day she picked out a beautiful doll house, a Barbie Cadillac Escalade, a tablet and X-Box for games and some new clothes.

"She's happy, she loves her toys and she got everything she wanted," her mom Crishawna said after the wish.

Wish granters: Kendric Cobb, Katie Sunstedt, Janet Glavin
Referred by: OSF St. Francis Medical Center



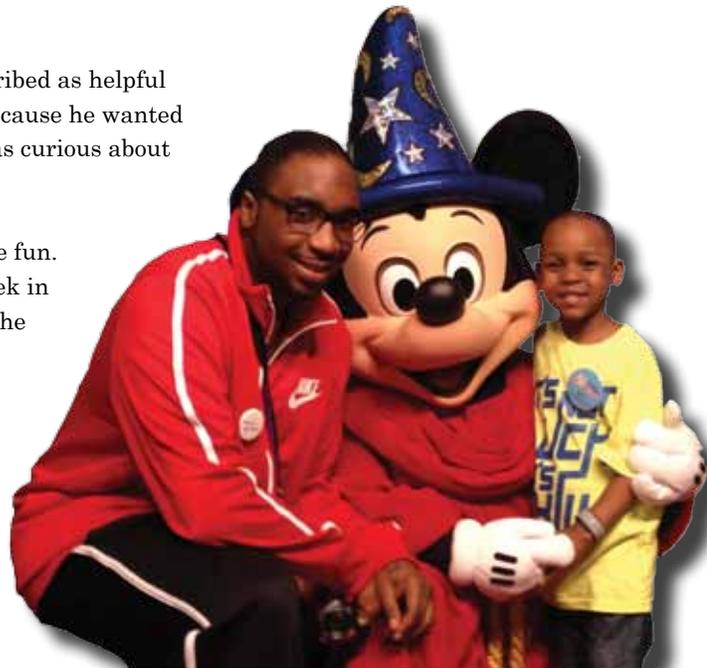
Jayshawn's Happy Escape

Jayshawn, 5, from Chicago was diagnosed with Leukemia in 2010. Described as helpful and playful by his mom, Jayshawn wished to visit Walt Disney World because he wanted to see where Mickey Mouse lives. He loves the Disney characters and was curious about the rides.

After a long recovery that included chemotherapy, he was ready for some fun. This spring, Jayshawn and his family enjoyed his wish with a sunny week in Florida. The highlight was meeting the big mouse himself. He also had the opportunity to meet many of his other favorite characters with a special breakfast at Cape May Café.

"He had the biggest smile throughout the trip," Jayshawn's mom said. *"[It] made my son so happy and joyful; he will never forget this trip in his life."*

Wish granters: Ryan Fergus, David Rogers
Referred by: Loyola University Medical Center



YOU HOLD THE TICKET TO A CHILD'S WISH

Many major airlines based in the United States allow members of their frequent flier programs to donate airline miles to Make-A-Wish. If you have air miles with Delta, US Airways, or United, you hold the ticket to a child's wishSM. Frequent fliers can learn more about donating their air miles today at <http://illinois.wish.org/ways-to-help/giving/airline-miles>.



CHICAGO • September 14, 2014
 CHAMPAIGN • September 27, 2014
 EDWARDSVILLE • May 16, 2015
 MOLINE • Spring 2015

Powered by wish families, volunteers, donors and friends, Walk & Run for Wishes is a Make-A-Wish® fundraising event that celebrates the thousands of wishes that have already been granted, while raising funds for future wishes. It's a great place to interact with the dozens of wish families who attend to reconnect with the magic of their child's wish experience. Join as an individual or team, wear your favorite costume to be a part of something special. This fall, participate in the family friendly walk and 5K run at Chicago's Montrose Harbor or Champaign's Hessel Park. **Registration for both events is now open at www.walkrunwish.org.**

For the third year in a row, Team Nicole will join the Walk & Run for Wishes Chicago event in an effort to raise \$6,000, the average cash cost to grant a wish. Nicole, now 23, had her wish to meet a favorite television celebrity ten years ago. Now all grown up, she and her family want to offer that opportunity to another child through Make-A-Wish.

This past May, a Walk & Run for Wishes event was held at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville. Raising more than \$25,000 and drawing 300 participants, this year was the most successful in the history of the southern Illinois event.



PHOTO: Edwardsville Walk & Run for Wishes Grand Marshal Cara with Xaivore, whose wish will be granted later this year.

WISH BALL: Where Wishes Always Win

Thanks to the many who helped us celebrate our most successful Wish Ball ever on Saturday, May 3 at Soldier Field! The evening was packed with excitement including a performance by NBC's Seth Meyers, honors for Chicago's professional sports teams, a drum line and many special touches related to our mission. In all, 940 guests helped to raise \$1.4 million to benefit our wish-granting efforts.

One of many highlights was a moving speech by Anna Ensign, parent to wish child James, whose wish was granted by the Blackhawks last year. *"The beautiful thing about a wish is that it brings hope for a lifetime,"* she said about looking back at how the wish had changed James and her entire family.

The signature fundraiser also honored Chicago's professional sports teams for their work in bringing hope, strength and joy to children with life-threatening medical

conditions through Make-A-Wish. Blackhawks Captain Jonathan Toews even sent a special video message to wish child James and his family.

A performance by Emmy winner and comedian Seth Meyers was a highlight of the evening, as well as the rare opportunity for attendees to dance the night away to live music on the 50 yard line of Soldier Field.

Thank you to all of our sponsors who made this evening possible, including Presenting Sponsor GATX; and Platinum Sponsors Advocate Health Care, the David and Teryl Schawk Family Foundation, UGN, Inc., Unum and Walgreens. Read the full list of sponsors at illinois.wish.org.

Wish Ball was ranked number seven in Biz Bash's listing of Chicago's Top 100 Events. This is the second year the event was ranked in the top ten.

PHOTOS: (from left to right): 1) Wish children with Seth Meyers, Amanda Babyar, Max Knipstein, James Ensign, Noah Stuart, Lucas Serrano and Alec Langtry. 2) Chicago Bulls former player Sidney Green, Chicago Bears Director of Community Relations Caroline Schrenker, Chicago Bulls former player Bob Love, former Chicago Cubs pitcher Dave Otto, Chicago Blackhawks Community Relations Manager Ashley Hinton, All Star and former White Sox third baseman Bill Melton, and Megan Flynn, Make-A-Wish staff. 3) Dr. & Mrs. Luke with Allison Rosati of NBC 5 Chicago. 4) Chris Rother, Chair of the Make-A-Wish Illinois Board of Directors with Bill Rother and Stephanie Springs, Make-A-Wish Illinois Chief Executive Officer.

