

# FRIEND TO FRIEND

*While we may be remote, Friends of Kids with Cancer remains resilient to help kids with cancer... be kids!*



# WHO WE ARE

## OUR TEAM

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Brandy Bimslager, Executive Director  
Valerie Kennedy Lang, Program Director  
Margie Sedlack, Program Coordinator  
Diane Voigt, Finance Manager  
Mary McKee, Communications Specialist  
Morgyn Mount, Volunteer & Events Coordinator  
Sharon Roth, Office Coordinator

## OUR MISSION

Friends of Kids with Cancer is devoted to enriching the daily lives of children undergoing treatment for, and survivors of, cancer and blood-related diseases. Our mission is to be an advocate for these special kids and provide them and their families with the Educational, Emotional and Recreational support needed as a result of the long hours of chemotherapy, illness and isolation.

## OUR PROGRAMS



Our Educational Programs engage our patients' minds and enhance their self-esteem.



Our Emotional Programs instill confidence in our patients and help form therapeutic relationships, which assist in releasing built-up emotions.




Our Recreational Programs keep smiles on our kids' faces every day despite their illnesses.

## CONTACT US

 Friends of Kids with Cancer

 @FOKWC

 Friends of Kids with Cancer

16 Sunnen Drive | Suite 161 | St. Louis, MO | 63143 | (314) 275-7440 | friends@friendsofkids.com



## FROM THE DESK OF...

### BRANDY BIMSLAGER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

During these uncertain times, I find myself reflecting on the pillars of Friends of Kids with Cancer and what makes this organization so special. This charity is many things for sure, but fundamentally it is how we have always found a way to keep the patient families we serve front and center.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented tremendous challenges for so many individuals in our community, especially our patient families. Gratefully, we have been able to lean into the relationships of our hospital partners as well as our community to persevere. At Friends, we have had plenty of "reinventing the wheel" this year. From transitioning our staff to remote working, virtual fundraisers, and multiple program adjustments to ensure we are reaching families who are more isolated than ever - it has been busy and a privilege.

The support of our mission-driven donors has been sensational and thus, Friends of Kids with Cancer is able to meet the needs

of nearly 1200 families in our community who have heard the devastating words; "your child has cancer". We want these patient families to know that we have the dedication of tremendous volunteers, donors, board of directors and staff who are determined to make a difference in their lives.

Never have I seen this heartfelt devotion shine more than right now! We can never say thank you enough to everyone who supports Friends, whether it has been with your time, talent and/or donations. YOUR loyalty, kindness and encouragement over the past 28 years has ensured Friends of Kids with Cancer will succeed in our mission today and in the future.

Gratefully yours,



Brandy Bimslager  
Friends of Kids with Cancer,  
Executive Director



## A VIRTUAL SUCCESS

### 1ST EVER VIRTUAL BINGO NIGHT RAISED \$7,600!



At the beginning of the year, the FOKWC team accepted the challenge of going virtual for a fun way to bring our community together while raising funds to help kids with cancer... be kids!

Hosted by the best father son duo: **Rick and Ryan Lommel** (Rick is a dedicated board member and both co-chair the FOKWC Golf Tournament), BINGO Night was a blast! Nearly 170 Friends supporters joined us via Facebook Live to play our first ever virtual BINGO.

The winners for each of the 10 rounds received Amazon gift cards and the interaction from participants was very awe inspiring!

A special thanks to the Lommel family and all our friends that participated. We hope everyone enjoyed the evening and we are so grateful for continued support!

### DID YOU MISS OUT ON OUR FIRST BINGO EVENT?

You're in luck! We plan to host another fun night of BINGO in January. Please continue to follow our social channels for updates.



## FROM THE DESK OF...

### MORGYN JOHNSON, VOLUNTEER & EVENTS COORDINATOR

Being the Volunteer Coordinator during the COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging at times. Back in March we made the difficult decision to suspend all volunteer activities until further notice with the hope of keeping our staff and our wonderful volunteers safe. With the staff working remotely, we weren't able to have volunteers in the office as normal. The restrictions set in place by the treatment centers we serve also changed delivery schedules drastically. We have remained dedicated to working with our hospital partners and willing volunteers to ensure that our patients and their families receive our programs and services to the best of our ability.

As many of our events transitioned to a virtual setting, we didn't have the high need for volunteers as we have had in the past. This has allowed me to be even more hands-on with our fundraisers. Learning more about our virtual bidding platform and our programs has

given me a deeper love for this amazing charity that goes above and beyond to connect the community to our ever-amazing mission.

It has been, and remains to be, my top priority to make sure we continue keeping our volunteers safe while supporting the special families we serve. As more guidelines and safety precautions have been set by our board and the help of the CDC, our staff has transitioned back into the office and we have begun to resume regular volunteer activities with restrictions in place. I am very happy to have our wonderful volunteers back as each and every one of you are irreplaceable!



If you or someone you know is interested in helping with volunteering, please contact me at:

[morgyn@friendsofkids.com](mailto:morgyn@friendsofkids.com)

*Morgyn Johnson*

Morgyn Johnson,  
Friends of Kids with Cancer,  
Volunteer & Events Coordinator

## VOLUNTEERS ARE LOVE IN MOTION..

### VIRTUAL ART FROM THE HEART

*"Cancer can change your life like Night and Day. One moment it is normal, and the next you are thrown into the unknown. A cancer diagnosis changes everything very drastically and suddenly. Not only for the patient, but it also impacts the entire family. Throughout the disarray of cancer there is a beauty that can come out of it. I wanted to paint the huge impact that cancer brings. If you focus on the negative, it will just bring you down. My family kept up our positive perspective on life. I painted the Night, and my twin sister, Kate painted the day. My family and friends are the Light in the Dark." - Ryan & Kate, patient artists*

Kate and Ryan along with 38 talented artists participated in this year's [virtual] Art from the Heart. While we were worried about transitioning this event fully online, it worked out better than ever expected!

**With the help of our local supporters and Mungenast Lexus of St. Louis, we raised over \$35,600 for our art therapy program!**





## Resilience, strength, courage and determination...

### FOKWC GOLF TOURNAMENT RAISES OVER \$200,000

**Resilience, strength, courage, and determination**, these are some of the many amazing qualities found in the brave boys and girls battling childhood cancer in our local St. Louis area. Now more than ever, we as a community must take these qualities to heart. 2020 has been a trying year to say the least. Yet, here we stand, proud to continue our mission and **help kids with cancer... be kids!**

YOUR support during the 22nd Annual Golf Tournament & Auction has allowed us to continue our programs and services not only in the present, but far into the future.

*"During this time of instability and confusion, building self-esteem and creating moments of joy and laughter for the entire family is the*

*upmost priority. From transitioning our art therapy, educational tutoring, crisis intervention and counseling programs to be virtual as well as increasing meal deliveries and gift cards, we have been busier than ever! Thank you for your continued support."* - **Brandy Bimslager**, Executive Director

This year's tournament will certainly be remembered for having to postpone not once but TWICE, first due to COVID-19 and then the threat of storms and rain flooding the course. Despite these challenges, **Rick Lommel, Bob Nuelle, Matt Biffignani, Ryan Lommel**, our wonderful golf chairs, remained dedicated to leading a successful event. For the first time ever we were able to bring a part of this much anticipated tournament to non golfers homes through the use of our virtual online giving platform. By transitioning to this type of technology we have been able to connect with donors from around the world.

### Thank You to Our TITANIUM SPONSOR



Through all of the changes, YOU helped us raise nearly \$205,000 to support kids with cancer and their families!



### OUR 23<sup>RD</sup> GOLF TOURNAMENT IS FAST APPROACHING DON'T FORGET TO...

- ★ Save the date for May 17, 2021
- ★ Include your sponsorship while planning your 2021 budget

## THANK YOU TO OUR MAJOR SPONSORS



Contact the planning committee at **314.275.7440** or check us out at [https://www.friendsofkids.com/golf\\_tournament.html](https://www.friendsofkids.com/golf_tournament.html) for more information about sponsorship options and rates.





## 'WALK WITH A FRIEND' SUNRISE CELEBRATION TRANSITIONS TO A VIRTUAL RACE

*Walk towards the good in life and one day you will arrive - Atticus*



On April 18th more than 850 walkers and runners joined us for a historical day to virtually walk/ run in honor and memory of the brave kids and their families during their battle against cancer!

Maybe it was a run around the block or a stroll in the backyard; regardless of the distance between us, we found a way to gather together and support our patient families in need! Over 850 participants joined us throughout the day from all over the world including Germany and New Zealand. Puppies and kittens also gathered to help support their favorite hoomans! All in all we were blown away from the success of this virtual event and we have you, your friends, and your family to thank for it.

**Over \$330,700 was raised** for our 30+ programs and services with donations. Participants walked/ ran their hearts out and we are overwhelmingly grateful for each and every one of them, especially during these uncertain times.



**Thank you to the continued support of our patient family teams!**

30 Strong | B's Birthday Bash | Caleb vs Cancer | Butch's Buddies | Cole's Crew | Delaney's D Squad | Edwin's Peeps | Elite Hockey School Cares | Emily's Ride | Favor 4 Asher | Fight for Ellie | Harper Strong | Harper the Brave | Josh's Pit Crew | Joy for Jordan | Kicking Cancer to the Curb | Leukemia 24-7 | Mackenzie's Lucky Charms | Road Runners | Russo & Friends | Ryan's Heroes | Spread Ari's Light | Team Adam | Team Alec Forever | Team Ashlynn | Team Bri Strong | Team Brynn | Team Delaney | Team Hazel | Team Porzel | Team Syd | Tom's Team | Wishes with Wingss

Friends of Kids with Cancer is committed to keeping patient families, staff, volunteers and our community safe. The members of our FOKWC Family are among the most vulnerable and compromised cancer patients and survivors, researchers, healthcare workers, and doctors who are on the front lines of this crisis.

In light of everything happening we wanted to remain positive and upbeat! Which is why the race had to go on... virtually of course ;)!

## THANK YOU TO OUR MAJOR SPONSORS





BECAUSE OF YOU....

WE DID IT!

\$158,388

RAISED DURING OUR GIVING CAMPAIGN

**WE DID IT!** We are so thrilled to report that we met our goal and it is thanks to YOU!!

We knew that replacing our in-person Fashion Show & Boutique with a 7 day Giving Campaign & Auction would provide challenges, but that didn't stop us because our families battling cancer need us now more than ever!

The Friends of Kids with Cancer Giving Campaign brought in an astonishing \$158,388 in 7 short days!!! This has been such a challenging year and we cannot thank each of you enough for joining us on our mission to help kids with cancer... be kids!

On behalf of our staff, board, and especially the kids and families we serve, THANK YOU for your dedication and unwavering kindness to Friends of Kids with Cancer.

A special "thanks" to the following match sponsors as well as the generous small businesses that contributed to our virtual online auction



### MEET THE MEISENGERS

*"Everyone in the world right now is getting a glimpse at what families who are dealing with childhood cancer go through," said Kurt Meisinger, whose daughter Hazel was diagnosed with kidney cancer right before age 2. Social distancing, mask wearing, and avoiding getting sick, that's just part of the game when you have a child with a compromised immune system. "Sometimes you have to take life one day at a time,*

*sometimes it's 10 minutes at a time. It helps to have the support of an organization such as FOKWC" Down the road, when you get exhausted from going through months of treatments, you realize how much you need organizations like this," Kurt's wife, Lindsay said. From snacks, meal and gas gift cards, to Christmas parties, picking out toys from the toy closet and mom's nights out, we as family are forever grateful for this amazing charity and their donors.*



**Want to know more about Hazel's journey? Visit our YouTube channel to learn more!**



Mark and Kris Arneson | Marty and Tim Farrell | Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital | Molly and Rick Henry | Karen and Bruce Korn | Tom and Dee Dee Murphy | Dr. Kurt Soell | ESCO Technologies | Lee and Gene Deutsch | Alice and Bill Lawrence | Kathy Manganaro | Donna Strobe | Captiva Marketing | West Newsmagazine | Hubbard Radio

Ginger Bay Salon and Spa | Erica Fridlin Photography | Walnut Grill | OC by Mandie | GLOW Candle Co. | World Wide Technology | Keough Custom Creations | Collections by Joya | Restore Hyper Wellness and Cryotherapy | 2LU | ND4SPD Car Club | St. Louis Cardinals | St. Louis Blues | Party Favors by Val H | Webster- Kirkwood Family Dental | Companion Bakery | Peacemaker Lobster & Crab | C & M Interiors | Tru Candle Studio | Series Six Company | Story Seven STL | Grace Your Tables | C Shell STL | Avani Derm Spa



## FROM THE DESK OF...

### VALERIE KENNEDY-LANG, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

The pandemic has taught us all a great deal about many aspects of our lives- how we prefer to socialize, the value of a homecooked meal AND a meal served, the home projects we would like to prioritize, how far we can stretch our creativity and tolerance...the list is endless. It has also exposed the realness of social isolation and all consuming worry, something families and caregivers of children with pediatric hematology/oncology diagnoses have been familiar with long before COVID-19.

The prioritization of continuing programming at FOKWC with necessary modifications and adaptations during these challenging times, has been with the wellbeing of patients, siblings, caregivers,

volunteers, donors and hospital partners at the forefront. Keeping programs like support groups functioning and socially distanced, drive-thru parties links us all together as people in need of connection, smiles and fortitude on the most lonely of days. For our patients, siblings and caregivers, feelings of isolation and aloneness are not new. The programming at FOKWC is not new either, just different, and will continue to help kids with cancer...be kids, no matter what the circumstances.

Gratefully yours,

*Valerie Kennedy Lang*

Valerie Kennedy Lang, MSW, LCSW, OSW-C  
Friends of Kids with Cancer,  
Program Director



## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

### A "NO JUDGEMENT ZONE" - SUPPORT GROUP BRINGS LIGHT TO A DARK TIME

If it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a village plus a team to raise a child with cancer. The team is made up of professionals, doctors, nurses, social workers, counselors, your family (parents, siblings, relatives) and friends who will become family. They will, at times, think they are professionals and know what you need better than you do. That's OK, just let them.

**Your support system will be made up of those who are going through, or already have gone through what you are going through now.**

- ★ They will teach, advise, suggest and, most importantly, care.
- ★ They will let you know you are OK when that is the last thing you feel like.
- ★ They will teach you that everything you are feeling and thinking is normal.
- ★ They will get you to smile and laugh even though you don't think you have anything to smile or laugh about.
- ★ They will let you know it's OK to smile and laugh and even cry all at the same time.
- ★ They will understand when no one else has understood that day, that week or since diagnosis.

This part of your team is your support system and can be found in the support groups of Friends of Kids with Cancer.

*"IT KEEPS ME  
FROM SPIRALING  
DOWN TO THE  
DARK PLACE"*

*"This is the only place I can say  
ANYTHING and they get it"*

*"This is a group of people you can lean on"*

*"The group validates  
what you are feeling"*

*"THIS GROUP MEANS  
THE 'WORLD'  
TO ME"*





## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT



### A {VIRTUAL} TWIST TO OUR MOM'S NIGHT OUT

FOKWC tries to schedule several mom's night outs a year as an opportunity for "cancer moms" to get together to do something fun and most importantly to be in the company of other mom's who "just understand."

*"It doesn't matter that we all have different stories, different back grounds, different politics or different religions. Cancer is not selective. So we all come together having an understanding that everyone at moms night out knows and gets it!! You come to have a fun evening away so there is no requirement to talk about your situation but it is also a place where if you want to talk you can and will be understood. We have moms with children just starting treatment, moms with children out of treatment, and moms who have lost their children too. Its a very special group of*

*loving, most over stressed, most amazing group of women ever.* - **Lori Zucker, Mom's Night Out Coordinator**

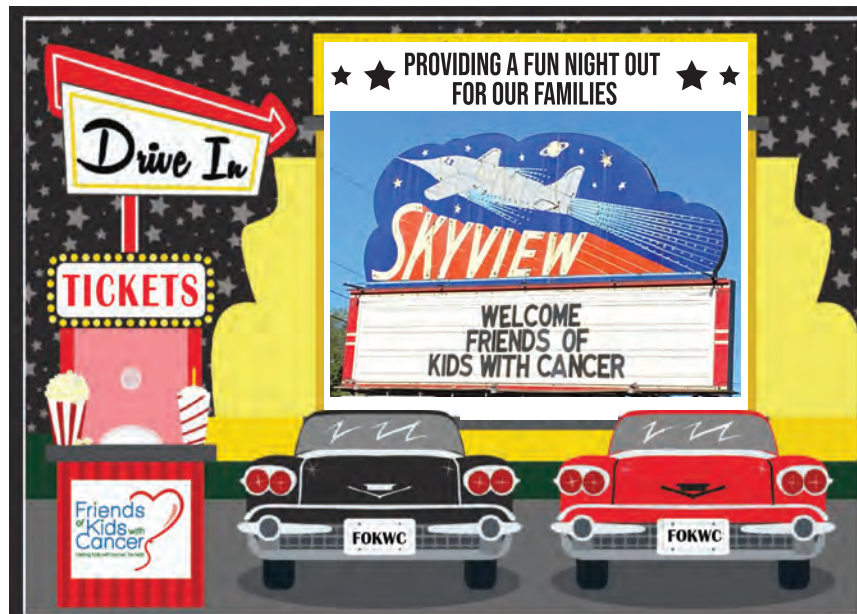
Even though the most recent event was hosted virtually, making it an enjoyable evening despite being "in" was the goal. Food was sent to each of the families' homes to help with dinner, activities for the children were delivered to give moms the chance to relax and focus during the event, and the event was hosted on three separate nights to accommodate various schedules.

After everyone logged on, the moms chatted for a bit. Some told stories about all the arrangements they had to make to get a few moments to zoom and others talked about how much this means to them to be here. One of the most amazing things that happened as a result of

transitioning to a virtual event was the accessibility for moms living further away or spending time in the hospital and being able to still join the event!

Once the moms settled in, the painting commenced thanks to the help of **Elizabeth Moreland** painter and art teacher. Elizabeth had two cameras set up so we could see her and her painting. *"We stopped to share our progress and ask questions as we went along. The results were amazing, I dont think any of the moms would call themselves painters and yet everyone ended the evening with a beautiful painting."* - Lori

*"Thank you for all that you did in putting together the parents paint night. We are blessed to have such an amazing foundation that helps to support and bring joy to the kiddos and the family members."* - **Jennifer**, patient mom



### DRIVE IN MOVIE NIGHT CREATES A FUN TIME FOR PATIENT FAMILIES

It's no secret, FOKWC knows how to go all out and throw a fun party for our patients and their families. We were eager to find a way to provide a safe environment but also allow everyone to gather together. After a few restless nights, our program coordinators decided to throw it back and host a fun DRIVE IN MOVIE NIGHT!

It was complete with all the snacks you could ever want and fun board games to play until the sun went down. With over 300 families expressing how great this event was... we decided to host it TWICE providing double the fun over the long, hot summer.

*"We just got home from the drive in event and wanted to thank you all for such a fun night! It was great to get out of the house while still staying safe. Thank you for all FOKWC does for our family."* - patient mom



## FEATURED ARTICLE



### A NEW PROGRAM MAKING A BIG DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OUR KIDS...



#### Music therapy is important...

Music Therapy is the clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program.

It has been shown to be an efficacious and valid treatment option for medical patients with a variety of diagnoses which is why we were so eager to fund this program for our special kiddos AND their siblings.

Research results and clinical experiences attest to the viability of music therapy even

in those patients resistant to other treatment approaches. Music is a form of sensory stimulation, which provokes responses due to the familiarity, predictability, and feelings of security associated with it.

*"Music can heal and bring hope to a child. And sometimes it feels like one song can change your whole life. Music is a language which connects us all."* said Friends of Kids with Cancer's new music therapist **Christy Merrell, MT-BC**

**Through a planned and systematic use of music and music activities, Christy provides a wide range of opportunities for our kiddos including:**

- ♪ Anxiety and stress reduction
- ♪ Nonpharmacological management of chronic pain and discomfort
- ♪ Positive changes in mood and emotional states, thereby improving communication and enhancing memory
- ♪ Promotes positive patient participation in treatment and physical rehabilitation
- ♪ Relaxation for the entire family causing meaningful time spent together in a positive, creative way



**Christy Merrell, MT-BC**

**"MUSIC CAN HEAL THE WOUNDS. THAT MEDICINE ALONE CANNOT TOUCH." - DEBASISH MRIDHA**

## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

### HELPING FAMILIES AFFECTED BY CANCER IS ALWAYS ESSENTIAL

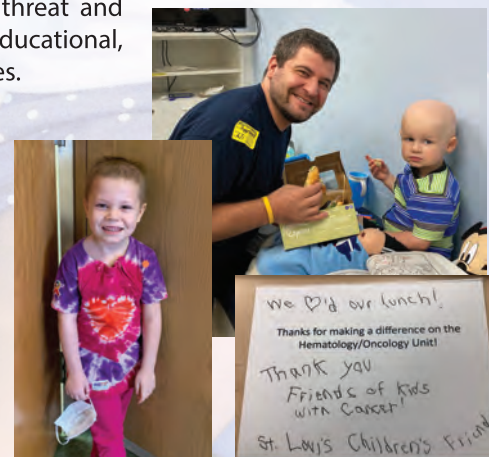
The impact of the physical and social isolation in recent months has had a profound impact on the general population. As difficult as the time has been for all of us, we must remember that families affected by childhood cancer have been navigating this life since diagnosis.

The patients and families we serve face the everyday fear associated with the common cold, flu and similar illnesses that are otherwise "a nuisance and inconvenient" in a way the general population does not typically need to be concerned. The detection and spread of

COVID-19 has given these families yet another threat and and reaffirmed how essential it is to provide Educational, Emotional, and Recreational programs and services.

#### We've been extra busy with...

- ★ Delivering snacks and meals from local restaurants to support the community and the treatment centers we partner with.
- ★ Back to school drive through providing giftcards to shop for new supplies to help with virtual and in person learning.
- ★ Virtual art therapy sessions to help even when patients are further away and not visiting the clinics as often





# FOKWC SPOOKTACULAR DRIVE THROUGH HALLOWEEN PARTY

*"We just wanted to send you and your team at FOKWC a big thank you for the Halloween fun. We all enjoyed the people who participated and the families that were able to come. It was different for such a challenging time but it was great for the kids."*  
**John Rensing**, patient family



October usually means gearing up for Halloween fun with candy, costumes, trick-or-treating and most importantly the FOKWC party at Grant's Farm. This year we had to get creative as gathering restrictions and closures limited our options. We came up with the idea to have a drive-thru Halloween experience at our loffice at the Sunnen Complex of Maplewood and it was better than we ever expected!



We decorated the parking lot of our complex with lights, decorations, and Halloween blow ups. While all of it was pretty Spooktacular... nothing compared to the "trunk or treat" tables that each of our partners tricked out for the occasion.

Some of the tables included: **St. Louis Blues** (even **Louie** joined in on the fun), **FOKWC Board of Directors**, our **Young FOKWC Board**, **Ari's Light**, **Leukemia 24/7**, **Camp Rainbow**, and **Mercy Children's Hospital staff members**. There were special guest appearances from **Elsa and Anna from Frozen**, **Superheroes**, **Trollz**, **Adopt a Pet**, and the **Shriners Clowns** and so much more!

Our patients and their families received, candy, food, games, stuffed animals, and pumpkins to take home and carve/decorate. **Josh Boyer**, patient father also donated his musical talents and was our DJ for the entire night playing all of the Halloween essentials as the families drove through.

It was such a great turn out and all the families had such a great time. We were so thankful we could do something safe and fun for them during such a hard time. Thank you to everyone that has helped keep the FOKWC traditions and mission alive and well during the holidays.



A Sincere Thank You for the  
Generous Gift for Simon.

The timing could not have been  
any better, as today he started  
to lose his hair.

This lifted his spirits and we  
appreciate what you do for  
the kids.

## MORE THAN A GIFTCARD...

The financial stressors of caring for a child with cancer are great and have only increased as the global economy has shifted and suffered in recent months. Friends strives to ensure families are staying connected and feeling meaningful moments of relief. Simon and so many other kids have been excited to receive gift cards, care packages, and toys during treatment.



## Be a Friend Forever Today!

Every child with cancer deserves a life filled with fun, laughter, support, and days that feel just plain normal. By joining the Friends Forever giving club you can make a difference in the life of a child during their fight against cancer. All donations stay in St. Louis providing direct support and services to children battling cancer in local hospitals.

Visit us at  
[www.FriendsOfKids.org](http://www.FriendsOfKids.org)

*"No chemo, no needles, no pain... just a child playing and being 'a normal kid' for a day. It was such a wonderful blessing for her." (Patient Grandmother)*

With nearly 300 new patients diagnosed every year, Friends is there to ease the emotional and financial burdens that arise during the family's fight against cancer. Friends of Kids with Cancer gives back something medicine alone cannot. Educational, Emotional, and Recreational programs build self-esteem and provide moments of joy and laughter to the entire family!

## Helping kids with cancer... be kids!

### Smile Maker: \$10/month

Provides a year's worth of toys for a newly diagnosed patient.

### Battle Booster: \$29/month

Provides a special gift for a child beginning treatment.

### Family Friend: \$60/month

Provides six therapy support sessions for the patient, parents, and siblings.

### Ambassador of Hope: \$92/month

Brings added hope to a patient that has relapsed through a series of special gifts and memories.

### Memory Maker: \$140/month

Creates "forever" experiences such as sporting events and concerts.

### Bell Ringer: \$220/month

Provides end of treatment celebrations for the patient, family, and friends.



## Friends Forever Benefits

When you join the Friends Forever giving club, you become part of a special group of people devoted to helping children and their families as they fight one of the toughest battles of their lives.

As a member, you will enjoy the following:

### Stories from the Heart

Read heartwarming stories about courage, strength, and character.

### First Look Access

Get a "First Look" at everything happening with our events and programs... plus special access to Friends apparel.

### Friends Forever Keychain

Receive an authentic Friends Forever Keychain to show your support for the Giving Club.

### Special Recognition

Your name will be published in the FOKWC Newsletter, Annual Report, and other publications.







## HOSTING A 3RD PARTY FUNDRAISER

**Did you know???** There are more than 100 ways you can help kids with cancer! Some of the most popular ways include:

### 1. Hosting a 3rd Party Fundraiser.

A third-party fundraising event is conducted by an individual, group or organization in the community with proceeds to benefit FOKWC. Popular events include bake sales, golf tournaments, dine out events, rare alcohol raffles and so much more!

### 2. Hosting a Toy Drive.

Our hospital providers rely on our toy drives to fill their toy closets. When kiddos are having a bad day of treatment they often times to visit the toy closet to brighten their day! Toys must be new and in their original packaging.

### 3. Hosting a Gift Card Drive.

Gas cards, grocery shopping, and restaurant gift cards help alleviate the pressures parents often feel while their kid is in treatment. For example: Easily grabbing food on the way home rather than worry about cooking and assisting with travel.

Friends of Kids with Cancer

# HATS ON DAY

The fun, easy way for your school to make a difference!



## WHO WE ARE

Friends of Kids with Cancer is devoted to enriching the daily lives of children undergoing cancer treatment by providing Educational, Emotional, and Recreational programming for the entire family.



## HATS ON DAY

Est. in 1995, Hats on Day is more than a fundraiser! It is a symbol of the fight and struggle of all kids who battle the devastating effects of cancer.

During this special fundraiser, kids with cancer are not alone... friends and classmates rally together to show their support for these brave kids.



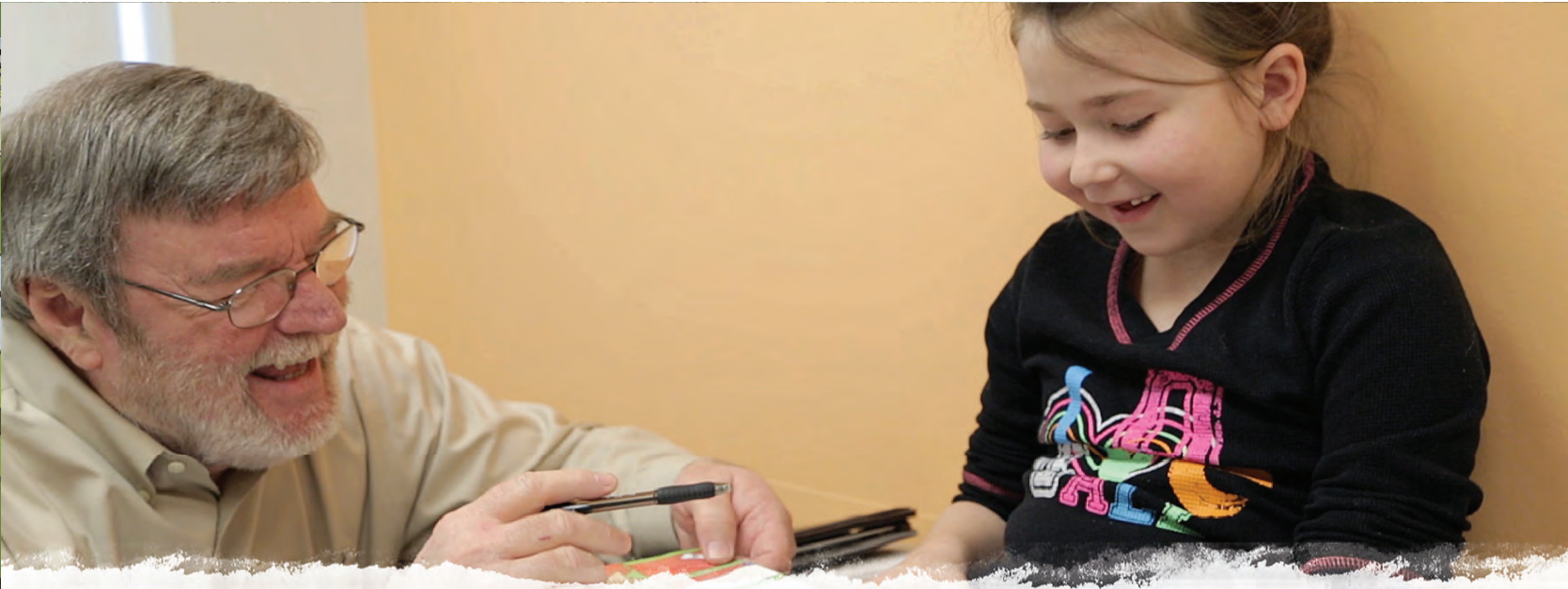
## FREE TOOLKIT

IT'S EASY TO HELP! WE PROVIDE EVERYTHING NEEDED.

Hats On Day stickers, a guide with fun ideas and posters to advertise. Just pick a date, collect the money, and have fun! (Virtual options available)

Helping kids with cancer... be kids!





# LEAVING BEHIND A LEARNING LEGACY

## CELEBRATING THE MEMORY OF "TOM THE TUTOR"

For 28 years, Friends has been delivering hope and happiness in a time of so much despair. As 2020 continues to bring unimaginable challenges for everyone, it has been vital to push our mission forward to the fullest. At the core of our mission, and one of the very first programs, is our **Educational and Motivational Assistance Program (EdMAP)** with our beloved **Tom the Tutor**. However, this summer we were faced with another very emotional and difficult challenge. Due to his own battle with cancer, **Tom Mulvihill** retired, and very soon after, passed away, surrounded by his beautiful family. Tom leaves behind an incredible legacy at Friends. His larger than life personality and way with children is irreplaceable. His incredible attitude and spirit throughout his battle to continue supporting families was inspirational. Most of all, we are in awe of the incredible bond Tom and these amazing kids formed as they motivated each other.

Tom owned and operated the **Webster Groves Learning Center** for over 30 years, providing one on one academic enrichment to local grade school and high school students primarily focused on



reading, writing and math. His patented educational philosophy was rooted in building confidence in his students and helping them uncover a belief in themselves, to which countless former students can attest. This experience and philosophy made for the perfect fit to work with pediatric patients who miss countless days in school due to treatment. Tom had a very special way of disguising time in the hospital, and learning, as FUN. He was such a gift to Friends and to every child he met.

Tom created EdMap to provide academic support for patients and their siblings. Making daily visits to the pediatric oncology centers at Mercy and Cardinal Glennon Hospitals, his main goal was to bring a smile to the face of kids battling this terrible disease. He not only did that; he brought a true sense of comfort and joy to kids and their families when they needed it the most. In addition to the hospital visits, he would use his office in Webster to work with kids in outpatient care, survivors of cancer, and their siblings. In 2016, he was the first and only non-Cardinal Glennon employee to earn the **Ambassador Choice Award for Exceptional Service**.

*"Our Kids were in the best of hands with 'Tom the Tutor,' and we miss him dearly. He could connect with the kids to make each one feel uniquely special. The Kids loved to be with Tom and looked forward to his tutoring sessions. He had a gentle, kind way, always positive, reassuring and supportive. And at the heart of any interaction, Tom was not only tutoring but also building the self-esteem of each and every kid. Tom's contribution over many decades has been far-reaching for our Kids and not to be forgotten." ~Kathy Manganaro, Board Member and Friend*

FOKWC moved to a new office in 2018, which presented the opportunity for Tom to work with patients in a special room designed for his tutoring sessions. Friends was profoundly honored to designate this room to his memory. "Tom's Room" will carry on his learning legacy as we continue the EdMAP program for years to come. Additionally, Friends wished to honor his life by recognizing these dedications in his loving memory:

**Established by board member Kathy Manganaro, Tom's Fund designates funding to Friends of Kids with Cancer's Educational Programs with emphasis on tutoring, educational supplies and scholarships.**

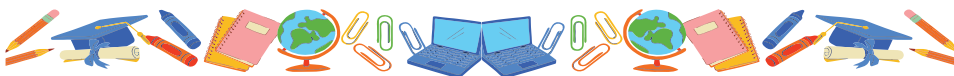
**The Friends of Kids with Cancer's Scholarship was renamed The Tom Mulvihill Young Survivors Scholarship Program, which celebrates pediatric cancer survivors for their bravery and perseverance.**







## A TRUE "FRIEND" FROM THE BEGINNING



"When Friends of Kids With Cancer "Friends" first began in 1992 our focus was solely on providing young cancer patients a diversion from all the medical treatments they were enduring. "Friends" provided games and books, movies and toys, all the things that delight children and capture their attention.

Thanks to all our amazing volunteers and the well-established generosity of the people of St. Louis, "Friends" was able to fulfill the all toy needs of the major pediatric cancer treatment centers. After five years of success the cry we began to hear was for assistance with the educational needs of the patients too.

Being diagnosed with cancer at a school age is devastating for a child. Not only are they subjected to frightful and sometimes painful medical treatments but their appearance changes, everything revolves around their illness, and they can miss lots of school. Friends of Kids with Cancer resolved to help.

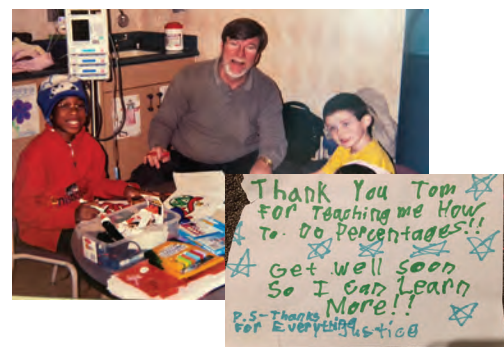


**The Mulvihill Family During the Unveiling of "Tom's Room"**

Tom Mulvihill was identified as an ideal educator to help us establish a new program to address this need. In 1998, we approached Tom, already successfully running his own private learning center, with our hope that he would join with "Friends" to provide this important assistance. Luckily Tom agreed and established a program that has become a signature service for FOKWC

Tom's gift is his ability to connect with children and gain their trust quickly and gently. He has provided top quality assistance with their educational needs but where he really shines is his ability to make children really want to learn and grow. It provides a sense of hope for children to realize that life will return to normal someday and they must not fall behind their friends. Tom Mulvihill realized this and is almost solely responsible for developing our Educational and Motivational Assistance Program (EdMAP) over the course of the last 22 years.

Tom Mulvihill, the big man with the big voice and the biggest heart on our planet,



"Friends" and every child he has helped owes him a debt that can never be repaid. "Friends" will continue to provide top quality assistance to pediatric patients with the help of Tom's ideas and practices but the Tom the Tutor will be forever missed.

*Molly Henry*

Molly Henry  
Co-Founder of Friends of Kids with Cancer





## OUR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS GROUP



We are young professionals with the joys of childhood still fresh in our minds, we support Friends of Kids with Cancer in exciting and unique ways.

Our mission is to provide an enthusiastic and energetic base of young professional supporters and future leaders for Friends of Kids with Cancer.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Katy Breen, President  
Ryan McKillips, Vice President  
Jamie Ebel, Internal Vice President  
Joe Reinberg, Treasurer  
Kirsten Jones, Secretary  
Gary Haas, Emeritus  
Morgyn Mount, Friends Liaison

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Kirsten Jones  
Laura Saettele  
Leah Coady  
Maureen Cunningham  
Morgyn Mount  
Natalie Condon  
Ryan McKillips  
Tim McFarland  
Woody Theis

## BECOME A YOUNG FRIEND TODAY!

Young Friends of Kids with Cancer continues to dedicate their time and enthusiasm to make 2020 a successful year. While they might not have been able to host their annual events, they have remained resilient assisting the big board and staff, as well as raising awareness for our virtual fundraisers.

**Interested in being a part of this extraordinary group of young professionals??**

As a member of Young Friends, you receive the social benefit of leadership, networking & volunteer opportunities. If you have a unique skill or ability you would like to share with one of our committees, please let us know!

**Communications & Marketing:** Get the word out.

**Development:** Attract sponsors and network with the community.

**Events:** Plan fundraising events.

**Membership:** Recruit passionate young professionals to aid in our mission.



## A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT, KATY BREEN

One of the main attractions at Friends of Kids with Cancer is our amazing toy closet. We send toys to our treatment centers every single week, so we go through these toys quick!

Due to the safety concerns revolving around COVID-19, our Young Friends board has had to rethink many of our fundraising efforts and make adjustments which unfortunately at times meant canceling some of our favorite events.

We continue to meet as a board virtually and find ourselves brainstorming new ways to continue supporting the charity and give back to the kids that mean so much to us.

This past July our Young Friends of Kids with Cancer Board hosted a huge toy drive to fill the toy closet. With the help of Amazon Wish list, toys were delivered right to the office making it safe for staff and donors.

We were blown away by the support and are incredibly thankful for the community in St. Louis who always rally around these kids and

the organization. Young Friends will be planning a new virtual event for 2021 so stay tuned for that!

Thanks for helping kids with cancer... be kids!

Katy Breen, Young Friends President

## DID YOU MISS OUT ON OUR CHRISTMAS IN JULY TOY DRIVE??

Friends of Kids with Cancer accepts new toys all year long. Baby toys, Gift Cards, Barbies, Legos, Action Figures, Race Cars all go quickly!

All new toys can be delivered to our office at  
16 Sunnen Drive, Suite 161  
St. Louis, MO 63143



## PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

### LEUKEMIA 24-7, A LIKE MINDED ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO HELPING CANCER FAMILIES

Leukemia 24-7 is a non-profit organization founded by **Todd Zick** in 2005. Todd named the organization Leukemia 24-7 because of the relentless nature of the disease, impacting its victims 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Todd passed away in 2010, but we press on in our efforts to resist leukemia, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We are a grassroots, all-volunteer organization focused on helping leukemia patients in three primary ways:

- ★ Our organization helps grow the national bone marrow donor registry, which gives current leukemia patients better odds for a second chance at a cancer-free life.
- ★ We help to support patients and their families; trying to make their lives a little more normal with educational, emotional and recreational support.
- ★ We strive to raise awareness and contribute resources to support the global effort to find a cure for Leukemia and all forms of cancer.



We do this by hosting family friendly events, bone marrow registry drives, and by supporting partner organizations and patients.

**In 2020, L247 held 2 events to raise awareness & funds to benefit those affected by blood cancers.**

- ★ Our Virtual Bandana Bash was held on September 9th. Bringing our annual outdoor festival into a virtual setting was a unique experience, which featured a live auction and live DJ.
- ★ This October, we hosted our annual Todd Zick Golf Classic, and were blessed with beautiful weather as well as a record team turnout.

**Together, our two events raised over \$37,000 to benefit our partner organizations** – Friends of Kids with Cancer, DKMS US, Leukemia & Lymphoma Society – Gateway Chapter and the Siteman Cancer Center.



### WHY WE PARTNER WITH FOKWC

*"Leukemia's partnership with FOKWC is a no-brainer. Our organizations are like-minded in that we are committed to helping those affected by cancer live better lives. That could be directly impacting the patient's outcome, patient families or the community. We couldn't be happier with the partnership and camaraderie we've seen over the years with the FOKWC team."*

FOKWC's Walk With A Friend or L247's Bandana Bash. Together, we're able to raise awareness, drive up the bone marrow registry and increase the likelihood of positive outcomes for patients – from kids to teens to adults.

We look forward to years ahead in partnership with FOKWC. Our two teams bring creativity and commitment every day and we're excited to bring more hope and support to those who need us most.

**Thank you Leukemia 24/7 for helping kids with cancer... be kids!**





## HONORARY & MEMORIAL DONATIONS

### MEMORIAL DONATIONS : (January - October 2020)

**Virginia Guitteau**

Jim and Suzanne Rosenauer

**Jessica Gullet**

Kevin and Donna Perkins

**Howard Handelman**

Peter and Gisela Cohen

**Amber Hardester**

Delta Kappa Gamma Intl Society

**Brett Haubrich**

Bishop DuBourg High School

**Brynn Haun**

Valerie Bolinger  
Shannon Mahaffey  
Judy and John Ross  
Kathy and John Solodar

**Ellen Henry**

Kathy Manganaro

**John H. Henry**

Kathy Manganaro

**Kiara M. Holden**

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Jill Turec  
Eric Vogel  
Diane Voigt  
Jason Williams

We strive for accuracy and your donation is very important to us. If any of the listed names contain errors, please call our office at 314.275.7440 so we can correct our records. THANK YOU for your support of Friends of Kids with Cancer!





16 Sunnen Drive  
Suite 161  
St. Louis, MO 63143

## 2021 EVENTS

JAN	TBD	FOKWC BINGO NIGHT VIRTUAL ONLINE EVENT	JULY	ALL MONTH LONG	YOUNG FRIENDS- CHRISTMAS IN JULY TOY DRIVE HELPING FILL THE FOKWC TOY CLOSET
FEB	26	FOKWC: TRIVIA NIGHT & RAFFLE VIRTUAL ONLINE EVENT	SEPT	TBD	FOKWC: 12 <sup>TH</sup> ART FROM THE HEART LOCATION DEPENDANT ON THE SAFETY GUIDELINES ASSOCIATED WITH COVID-19
APRIL	TBD	FOKWC: WALK WITH A FRIEND 5K RUN   1MILE WALK LOCATION DEPENDANT ON THE SAFETY GUIDELINES ASSOCIATED WITH COVID-19	NOV	TBD	FOKWC: 28 <sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL FASHION SHOW & BOUTIQUE LOCATION DEPENDANT ON THE SAFETY GUIDELINES ASSOCIATED WITH COVID-19
MAY	17	FOKWC: 23 <sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT WHITMOOR COUNTRY CLUB	DEC	ALL MONTH LONG	FOKWC: ADOPT A FAMILY HELPING PATIENT FAMILIES IN NEED DURING THE HOLIDAYS

COVID -19 continues to alter life's plans. Safety is at the upmost priority, therefore, we must plan our annual fundraisers accordingly. We are closely monitoring the CDC guidelines and will determine dates/ locations accordingly. Please continue to follow our social channels for updates and feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns!



## CORPORATE SPOTLIGHT

### THE HOME LOAN EXPERT - 6<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CLIMB FOR THE KIDS

Since 2015, **Ryan Kelley** and **The Home Loan Expert Team** have been climbing mountains to raise money for Friends of Kids with Cancer. Ryan and his team have been so moved by their experiences and meeting the kids and their families, that they once again climbed to raise money for our mission.



*"Being a business owner is about more than bottom lines, it's also about giving back to the community. I was taught this years ago and I try to improve on it every year. From my initial trip to Friends of Kids to meeting #TeamAlec and visiting SSM Health Cardinal Glennon I saw firsthand just how many children and their families are affected by cancer, heart disease, and other diseases that a child and their family should never have to experience. That is why I have decided to climb mountains to raise money for Friends of Kids with Cancer." - Ryan Kelley*

This year Ryan and his team completed their **6th Annual Climb For The Kids!** We climbed 4 incredible mountains in 4 days raising dollars and awareness for children battling life-threatening diseases and their amazing and supportive families.



*"Each year there are moments when our bodies are tired and you feel like you've reached your limit. In these moments you think about what the kids and their families are going through and how they keep pressing forward even in the toughest times. We climb for those kids and families." - Ryan*

#### Where did they climb?

**Mt Massive-14,429'**

**Mt Elbert-14,439'**

**Maroon Bells- 14,156'**

**Pyramid Peak-14,026'**

## \$5,000 FOR MY 50TH

### "Everything you needed to know in life, you learned in Kindergarten."

As a former Kindergarten teacher of 20 years, **Robert Fulghum's** quote above has become a mantra for our special shout out supporter, **Theresa Bartoni**. Theresa claims Kindergarten teaches us all of what is important in life and we consider ourselves lucky to know she finds our charity to be a pretty big deal for kids battling cancer.

This year Theresa really wanted to do something special for her 50th birthday. Knowing that September is Childhood Cancer Month, she decided to run a ½ marathon in honor of her great-niece, Vivian to celebrate 3 amazing years of remission.

*"Running is something I enjoy to stay in shape and it also allows me to set a goal. This year I ran with a goal in mind to help Friends of Kids with Cancer. I feel so blessed that my great-niece is healthy, and during her fight, was able to try to be 'just a kid' because of the organization FOKWC. I am grateful that they were there to help her and others going through their own fight against childhood cancer." - Theresa*

Theresa set out on a goal to raise \$5,000 but with the help of her family and friends, she was able to exceed all expectations and raised an astonishing \$6,176 for kids with cancer!



**Thank you Theresa for donating your time and helping kids with cancer... be kids!**



## FROM THE DESK OF...

### MARY MCKEE, MPA, COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

As we begin to close out this tumultuous year that has been 2020, I thought it would be a good time to connect directly. You have viewed my posts across your social feeds, read my emails updating you on our event transitions, and updates from our organization. However, I wanted to talk with you on a more personal level and thank you for your continued support.

**Cancer doesn't stop for a pandemic and neither does Friends of Kids with Cancer.** As a childhood cancer survivor, I can personally attest that there is no organization quite as amazing as FOKWC. Serving as the Communications Specialist these past few years has been a dream come true. Not only do I get to give back to an organization that changed my life and the lives of hundreds of other children battling cancer, but I get to use my talents to then share those moments of joy and laughter with the community that works so hard to support us.

While we may be remote, we remain resilient in our mission of helping kids with cancer.. be kids. Thousands of you have joined us

throughout this tenacious and uncertain year. In reading this newsletter it's nothing new to say we have had our share of amazing accomplishments despite the challenges the world is currently facing. Thank you for your kindness, selflessness and support as we transitioned events to an online format. There were mountains to climb and learning curves along the way, but you helped make it a smooth transition by remaining patient and understanding throughout it all.

I also wanted to remind you all that my inbox is open to suggestions and feedback regarding the stories we share and the social channels we use. It is truly my passion to help connect the community to our programs and services, so do not hesitate to reach out.

Finally, I would like to thank each and every one of you for all of the ways you contribute to making the Friends of Kids with Cancer community the best nonprofit that I have ever had the pleasure of being part of. In these dark times, you are our



light. Please continue following our social channels for updates on all the wonderful things coming your way in 2021.

*Mary McKee*

Mary McKee, MPA  
Friends of Kids with Cancer,  
Communications Specialist  
[mary@friendsofkids.com](mailto:mary@friendsofkids.com)

# Happy Holidays!

"MAY YOUR WALLS KNOW  
JOY, MAY EVERY ROOM HOLD  
LAUGHTER, AND EVERY  
WINDOW OPEN TO GREAT  
POSSIBILITY."

*Friends of Kids with Cancer*





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