

CHILDREN'S HEROES

NEWS AND STORIES *about YOUR IMPACT on our kids!*



Your generous support is helping Sophia fight cancer.

You're Behind Sophia's Second Chance

If you met Sophia, her sparkling personality might rub off on you — literally! She loves glitter so much, she always seems to have sparkles on her face, her head, her hands, and even the bottoms of her little feet.

The 6-year-old loves life. She's glad to have you fighting alongside her as she battles cancer.

Sophia and her family don't live close by, but they came to UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh "Because they're the best," her mom Alyssa says. "Words don't express the gratitude that we have."

She recalls when Sophia's hair began to fall out from chemotherapy — a scary time for any cancer

patient, but especially a child.

"Her hair was thin and sticking out," Alyssa says. One of the nurses, Sam, knew just how to help. He offered to cut Sophia's hair and promised that, in

Sophia and her mom Alyssa are grateful for donors like you.

return, Sophia could cut his. She got her haircut, and Sam, in an act of solidarity, did too!

Through chemotherapy, surgery, and physical and occupational therapy, Sophia's care team has done everything they could to help her stay healthy,

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**INSIDE
THIS ISSUE**

See how your gifts give Julien a brighter future.



You Stand Beside Leading Experts in Cancer Research

We have so much work to do to save every child diagnosed with cancer. But here's exciting news: Pittsburgh is home to one of the largest and most productive brain tumor science programs in the country. World-class, cutting-edge work is underway to study the development and treatment of various brain tumors.

And recently, The Mario Lemieux Foundation and the UPMC Children's Hospital Foundation teamed up to create a new pediatric cancer research institute. The institute will help advance research programs and generate new scientific breakthroughs and clinical trials, and translate that research directly to young patients. We are proud to elevate our capability to treat and cure children with cancer.

Thank you for your continued support. You're joined by the best and the brightest cancer researchers!



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You're Behind Sophia's Second Chance

happy, and strong.

Alyssa is forever grateful and knows you're behind it all. "When donors give, they can help Sophia survive. And not just Sophia. They can give all these kids the lives they deserve."

Your donations are making a difference. Thank you for all that you've done — and continue to do — to save kids' lives.



Julien was born with a rare heart defect. You made sure world-class pediatric care was just minutes away.

Your Gifts Give Julien a Brighter Future

Mandy and Jake will never forget the day their newborn son had open-heart surgery.

Julien was only 4 days old. He was transferred to UPMC Children's Hospital to repair a rare and complex heart defect. After the surgery, his tiny body was surrounded with wires, medical tape, and machines. Mandy and Jake were overwhelmed by the sight.

"You can't prepare yourself for that," Mandy says.

But as terrified as the worried parents felt, they were also filled with hope. They were grateful to have access to world-class pediatric care right in their hometown.

Right away, they watched Julien make a rapid recovery. He defied his doctor's best expectations, moving from a feeding tube to a bottle with ease.

Mandy hopes that continued research will make Julien's future even brighter. She counts on the generosity of donors like you to keep powering new breakthroughs.

"The research has been such a blessing for him," she says. "It's amazing what the doctors can do now. We feel lucky."

Thank you for supporting the research that will help tomorrow's innovations arrive in time for today's patients, like Julien. Your generosity helps save lives.



Today, Claire's cancer is in remission.
You helped her fight for her life!

A Grateful Mom Shares Why Your Donations Matter

The last thing Claire's family expected to hear was the word "cancer."

It was the night before Claire's mom, Jordan, was scheduled to be induced. She was hours away from giving birth to Claire's baby sister. When 3-year-old Claire spiked a fever and started limping, they rushed to the Emergency Department at UPMC Children's.

"They did bloodwork, and it was very obviously apparent that Claire had leukemia," Jordan says. "During the height of COVID and everything else, we had to immediately make a plan. I was hysterical with emotion."

Through your support, you helped her see a light at the end of a dark tunnel.

Claire was admitted for treatment. The hospital was even equipped to navigate Claire's complex medical background, having previously cared for her to repair a congenital defect and perform spinal surgery. They began chemotherapy treatments right

away. When the first type of chemotherapy didn't work for her, they changed course. Now, Claire is in remission.

You helped Jordan see a light at the end of a very dark tunnel.

Jordan knows your support is behind it all.

"I'm very passionate about donating to help these kids," she says. "It really makes an impact. If the new drug hadn't been developed yet and wasn't available to her, where would we be right now?"

She adds, "We're just very thankful for Children's because literally they've saved her life so many times." So have you. Thank you for caring about kids like Claire.



Your Gifts Provide Hope and Answers

Dr. Brian Martin

Dear Friend,

Thank you for reading the enclosed stories. Because of you, Sophia, Julien, and Claire have brighter summers ahead of them, filled with the promise of sunny days and fun with their families.

But so many children are facing a summer filled with tests and treatment. They're hoping for new cures that will help get them out of bed and back outside.

You can help make their futures bright. Please make your next gift now to power the research and breakthroughs kids need. You'll bring hope and healing to another child.

Thank you!

Gratefully,

Brian Martin, DMD, MHCDS
Vice President, Medical Affairs
UPMC Children's Hospital
of Pittsburgh

Breakthroughs in Research:

You're Behind New Discoveries in Healing

First, the skin becomes shiny, swollen, and taut. Then, it thickens and hardens. Scar tissue can develop in internal organs such as the kidneys, heart, lungs, muscles, joints, and gastrointestinal tract. The disease progression can threaten a child's life.

When a child is diagnosed with scleroderma — a rare autoimmune disorder that causes thickness and tightening of the skin, decreased joint motion, and organ inflammation — their family searches for hope and answers. Thanks to your support, they can find it at UPMC Children's. New research is bringing hope for patients with this painful condition.

Dr. Kathryn Torok is an international expert on scleroderma, and part of a team piloting the first autologous stem cell transplantation (ASCT) study for pediatric patients with treatment-resistant systemic sclerosis. Recently, Dr. Torok was able to help a patient named Caleb reclaim his life.



Thank you for powering research that helps patients like Caleb.

Caleb turned to UPMC Children's new stem cell program after suffering symptoms including lung dysfunction. He underwent a stem cell transplant — a day he now calls his "re-birthday" because he feels so much better! He's been able to enjoy a happier, healthier life ever since.

Researchers, clinicians, and patient families are thrilled by the possibility that ASCT could be a promising treatment.

Thank you for breaking barriers in pediatric medicine, and supporting the research that leads to hope and healing.

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My Gift to Help Sick and Injured Kids

Please accept my gift of \$_____ to provide lifesaving care for critically ill and injured children.

I have enclosed a check (payable to UPMC Children's Hospital Foundation).

Please contact me about naming UPMC Children's Hospital Foundation in my will, trust, or long-term financial plans.

Please charge my credit card.

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