The Well Wisher
Please Support
Summertime Wishes

★ 130+ Wishes to be Granted by August 31
Including the following — and more!

- 45 Theme park visit
- 15 Cruise
- 10 Hawaii
- 43 Other travel

★ Average age of wish children: 11 years old
★ Most prevalent qualifying conditions: Cancer, neurology-related, congenital anomalies

★ Estimated volunteers who will assist with granting summertime wishes: 350+
★ Amount of every donated dollar going directly to wishes: 77 cents
★ Average cost to grant a wish: $10,000
★ Who can help make all of these wishes come true: YOU!

Support summertime wishes today at massri.wish.org/summer or call 617.367.9474 to donate.
Dear Friends,

We set an ambitious goal of granting life-changing wishes for over 400 children this fiscal year. We believe this is an important moment of opportunity to move the agenda forward toward our ultimate goal of fulfilling every eligible child’s wish. Wish granting brings together a unique team of volunteers, donors, partners, staff, and the community throughout Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Serving more children and getting to the next level of growth and impact requires that we have the infrastructure, capacity, and resources in place for years to come. Central to this effort was our move this past January to a new Boston headquarters (see page 5). Our new space will enable greater productivity, collaboration, employee engagement, and ultimately, mission success. We hope you will visit us if you are in the neighborhood!

This year so far has been filled with so many amazing wishes — shopping sprees, special birthday parties, meeting celebrities, attending special events, and visiting places near and far. We are also gearing up for summer — our busiest season of wish granting — as it’s the ideal time for many children and families to experience the unique joy and memories that travel to a special place brings.

Our ability to expand our reach is built upon the generosity of supporters like you. We hope you are inspired by the stories of impact in this issue and consider the many ways you can continue to ensure each child has a transformative wish experience.

With gratitude,

Charlotte A. Beattie
Chief Executive Officer

Jay Mattie
Chair, Board of Directors

“In my approach to caring for the whole person, referring a child for a wish demonstrates that I truly care about my patient’s emotional health and quality of life.”

- Alicia Casey, MD
Boston Children’s Hospital
Embracing Hope and Possibility

Wish mom Jennifer reflects on her son Alejandro’s wish

Since he was four months old, Alejandro, known as “Alejo,” has been hospitalized for months at a time, surrounded by doctors and nurses, watching sick people struggle like him. His wish was the first time he enjoyed a really playful, happy experience.

Alejo is noble and resilient. He enjoys going to the park, painting, and dancing. He always tells us he loves us. He gives me every flower he finds and is eager to help us, even becoming our doctor when we are sick.

As an infant, Alejo was diagnosed with Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome, a rare genetic disorder that impacts immune system function. It has been a very hard road. After a failed bone marrow transplant in 2016, Alejo received a second transplant in early 2018.

Our son is still fighting for his life. Due to his medications and chemotherapy, he developed inflammation in his brain and spine, reducing his mobility. Last December, doctors discovered he had a dangerous airway obstruction. He is receiving treatment and improving. As he endures so much, we as parents have to summon the same courage he has, and we must continue fighting as a family until Alejo fully recovers.

We were very happy when our social worker, Jorge Fernández at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute / Boston Children’s Hospital, referred Alejo for his wish. Alejo chose a trip to Walt Disney World® Resort. We scheduled the trip for the end of the first year post-transplant, and this made Alejo’s wish a great motivator. He knew he must be even stronger and take his medicines in order to recover and be with all his favorite characters, especially Mickey Mouse and Pluto.
Alejo was fascinated by the limo that picked us up and the big planes at the airport. We loved that each theme park had a different magic. When we met Mickey and Pluto, it was fantastic. Alejo absolutely believes they are real. He embraced them, kissed them, and laughed with a special emotion. The happiness on his face was indescribable.

Make-A-Wish gave us as parents a unique energy recharge. For four years, we did not rest. We have felt the highest levels of stress, anxiety, and sadness, facing the possibility of our only child’s death and the loneliness of not having all our loved ones close. Yet it has also been enriching, because we are surrounded with angels who have listened, wept, and rejoiced with us. As parents, we can never give up and we have to always have faith.

Alejo’s wish was a victory; a celebration of his first year after transplant and we will never forget it. You all are part of our recovery process and are family now. You provided our son with the opportunity to dream and learn that anything is possible. On behalf of our family, thank you.

“I'm a dad of four boys...I'm a kid at heart, so I thought by becoming a volunteer, I might be able to help a wish kid smile at the very least. I love Make-A-Wish because we bring a bit of normalcy to families like Alejandro’s who are in and out of hospitals and treatment.”

– Wish-granting volunteer Brian Herlihy

Pictured directly above with Alejandro

Wish Families: Wish It Forward!

As we strive to grant every eligible child’s wish, we are partnering with wish families like Alejo’s who have experienced a wish firsthand! Wish families who have expressed an interest in staying connected to Make-A-Wish Massachusetts and Rhode Island are:

- Sharing their stories
- Volunteering their time
- Referring children for wishes
- Helping us raise funds

Together, we are confident we will reach our ultimate goal of granting every eligible child’s wish. If you are a wish family member who would like to learn more about supporting this initiative, please contact Julie Abel, Outreach Director, at 617.367.9474 or jabel@massri.wish.org.
Honoring the Infinite Power of a Wish

At the Make-A-Wish National Conference last fall, Make-A-Wish® Massachusetts and Rhode Island received the Infinite Wish Award! The award recognizes a wish that sparks widespread and meaningful community participation and exemplifies the vision of Make-A-Wish that people everywhere share the power of a wish.

We received this award together with Make-A-Wish® Alaska and Washington for creating a memorable wish for John, the young history buff who traveled with his family from Alaska to Massachusetts in April 2018 to participate as a drummer in the Patriots’ Day Revolutionary War reenactments. John also took part in our Make-A-Wish Gala a few days before his wish. Despite a nor’easter that forced the official cancellation of the reenactments, his wish so deeply inspired the reenactment community that they continued on with the events amidst freezing rain and temperatures, “for our boy John.” We are forever grateful to all of the local participants who made John’s incredible experience possible.

The Infinite Wish Award is an inspiring testament to the outstanding passion and dedication of our team and the collective strength of our community. Congratulations to you, our supporters, and thank you for being part of our Make-A-Wish family!

The power of John’s wish truly endures

In the year since John’s wish, he has kept in close touch with many individuals involved in it. John and his parents, along with Steve Crosby, captain of the Acton Minutemen here in Massachusetts, attended the national Make-A-Wish conference in Phoenix to share their story. And, John and his family welcomed “Captain Steve” to Alaska in February to help fulfill his lifelong dream of traveling there!

John continues to drum and with his brother, Daniel, has created a small drum and fife corps. This was made possible through the gift of a colonial rope-tension drum, custom made for John by Loyal Drums, and a wooden fife given to Daniel by the Audette family, members of the Acton Minutemen. At the invitation of the Acton Minutemen, John is returning to Massachusetts for the Battle for Newbury this season. What’s more, his parents, Brian and Jackie, and sister, Jeannie, are now volunteering with Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington, providing warm airport welcomes to families traveling to Alaska for wishes. Jeannie is also interning with the Alaska and Washington chapter this summer. John’s story is an inspiring example of the enduring power of a wish!

Highlights from John’s wish:
massri.wish.org/revolutionarywish
Moving Toward the Future:
Boston Headquarters Relocates

Our children's wishes are full of imagination and so, too, is the process of fulfilling each unique wish — requiring tremendous creativity, resources, time, and also space. As we look to the next decade of wishes, a relocation of our primary mission-serving headquarters became critical to our overarching plan and anticipated growth. In January, we moved to our next level headquarters at 133 Federal Street in Boston. Our new home will serve as the heart of our mission — bringing together teams of staff, volunteers, medical professionals, wish families, and supporters throughout the community. The space allows for hosting larger meetings, and offers multiple areas for collaborating, developing ideas, and engaging anew in fulfilling our mission together.

This important transition was made possible by many valued partners who stood with us and invested in the powerful possibilities of the future including: AIS, The Barnes Family, Brown Brothers Harriman, Clarke Living, The Heslam Family, The Timothy O’Connell Foundation, Melissa and Andrew Rees, Joan and Steve Clark, Make-A-Wish Massachusetts and Rhode Island Volunteers as well as the past chairs and present chair of our Board of Directors, including: Hedy Whitney, Ken McGraime, Drew Lawton, Steve Barnes, Greg Gailius, Bob Paglia, and Jay Mattie. Thank you for playing a vital role in building our inspiring legacy of wish granting as we reach higher to impact the lives of more and more eligible children.

104.8 Miles for Wishes

Team Make-A-Wish ran a collective 104.8 miles in this year’s Boston Marathon, carried by determination, hope, and a deep commitment to our mission. This tenacious group was made up of (pictured clockwise from top left) longtime Make-A-Wish donor and wish cousin Bill Murphy, wish cousin Lynn Pinto, Make-A-Wish volunteer and wish dad Tony Sampaio (see page 7 to meet Tony’s daughter, Julia), and our chief operating officer David Hanson. Together, they raised more than $50,000 to grant five wishes! We thank everyone who supported these runners, each of whom truly put their belief in the power of wishes into action as they ran from Hopkinton to Boston.

We are very grateful to the John Hancock Non-Profit Program, which made this opportunity possible.
First-of-Its-Kind Wish Impact Study

We have known anecdotally about the transformational power of a wish, and now a first-of-its-kind study is opening the door to possibilities of medical and financial benefits. Nationwide Children’s Hospital in Ohio examined quality of life and health care utilization among patients who received a wish and a control group who did not. The study found patients who were granted a wish were more likely to have fewer unplanned hospital and emergency department visits. Research like this Dr. Patel Wish Impact Study can inspire doctors to use a wish as part of their treatment plans for patients, because wishes can give their patients hope, build compliance with care, and potentially give their patients a better chance at reducing time spent in the hospital.


Wish Children Need Your Support this Summer

Have you seen the snapshot of upcoming wishes at the beginning of this issue? We’ve got more than 130 children who are counting on us to create memorable wish experiences for them this summer. And we’re counting on your support during our busiest wish-granting season of the year! Your donation in any amount will provide our summer wish children immeasurable inspiration, joy, and hope.

To donate: massri.wish.org/summer or 617.367.9474

Subaru Shares the Love Again

During the 2018 Share the Love event, Subaru of America, Inc. donated $250 for every new Subaru vehicle sold or leased to the customer’s choice of one of four national charities, including Make-A-Wish. Make-A-Wish Massachusetts and Rhode Island was thrilled to partner again with local dealers Bertera Subaru of West Springfield and Subaru of Wakefield this year. Both dealers chose our organization as their “Hometown Charity of Choice,” which generated over $100,000 for wishes directly in Massachusetts and Rhode Island!
My Life Now: Julia Sampaio

Nearly 20 years after her wish, Julia continues to give back – and her father does, too!

Make-A-Wish brought light into my family's life after my leukemia diagnosis. My wish to go to Disney World was granted in 2001 when I was five. The trip gave me the strength to keep going throughout my two-and-a-half year treatment protocol.

I remember the limo ride and how beautiful Give Kids the World was, where we stayed. I had my special button to be first in all the Disney lines. I felt like a little rock star and all the characters took pictures and danced with me! We saved everything — my Mickey ears, button, souvenirs, and photos.

Make-A-Wish has touched my family's life in so many ways and it's inspired us to give back. We have held many fundraisers for wishes. My dad, Tony, has been a wish-granting volunteer for 18 years and also volunteers at events, and I have shared my story at events. My dad was on the Falmouth Road Race team in 2018 and I helped him fundraise when he ran the 2019 Boston Marathon in honor of me and all the wish children he's worked with. It was amazing, especially because he was in a bad accident in 2016 and we worried he'd never walk again. Now he's completed his first marathon!

Being a wish recipient has shaped me into a well-rounded person who gives back. I am thankful for the many blessings I've had, including the wish-granting volunteers and Make-A-Wish staff who still check on me to this day.

Now, I'm 23 and live in East Providence, RI. I'm studying to be a nurse and hope to work at Miriam Hospital. I'm excited to see where life takes me from there!

“My daughter is amazing in every way, and my hero!”
- Wish dad and Make-A-Wish volunteer Tony Sampaio

Read more from Tony at massri.wish.org/tony

Volunteer Trainings Now Offered Online

It just got easier to become a Make-A-Wish Massachusetts and Rhode Island volunteer! We are excited to now offer our New Volunteer Training Session online. With the addition of these live sessions to our onboarding process, we seek to reach a larger audience of talented volunteers throughout our two-state territory to help meet the needs of our wish program. In addition to the training, our online platform — as well as newly-developed monthly volunteer engagement calls — will offer and encourage open communication and idea sharing between our staff and volunteers.

Visit massri.wish.org/volunteer for upcoming training opportunities.

Bilingual talent and individuals with professional experience in the creative and skilled trade industries continue to be priority volunteer needs.
Make-A-Wish Gala
Illuminates the Journey

Nearly 500 guests gathered in April for the 2019 Make-A-Wish Gala. The event, held at the InterContinental Boston, highlighted wish children’s stories — from adventures in Hawaii to shopping sprees, a wish for a pedal harp, and an experience cooking with professional chefs — and celebrated the generous community of supporters who help make wishes come true. Rob Gronkowski, New England Patriots legend, was presented with the 2019 Wish Hero Award for his outstanding work as a wish granter. The memorable evening raised over $900,000 to grant wishes for nearly 100 children with life-threatening medical conditions in the coming months. We thank all of our sponsors — in particular, our Presenting Sponsor, Steve and Deborah Barnes together with Bain Capital Community Partnership — as well as our event participants, guests, volunteers, and in-kind donors for joining with us to “illuminate the journey” for our wish children!

Full event recap and more photos: massri.wish.org/gala2019
Swish Night Nets 17 Hope-Filled Wishes

Swish Night, now in its eighth year and co-chaired annually by Phil Glynn, MD, (pictured) raised over $175,000 for wishes through a festive evening in Longmeadow, MA.

“I’m happy to be here to help raise money so other kids like me can have their wishes and forget about being sick for a little while,” said wish recipient and event volunteer Lila (far left, with her sister, Ava) to a crowd of over 230 guests at Swish Night 2019. Her mother, Melissa, shared with the audience that Lila’s wish "was a therapeutic treatment of the spirit for the entire family."

Full event recap and more photos: massri.wish.org/swish

Dates to Remember
Join us for these official Make-A-Wish Massachusetts and Rhode Island events!

July 8: Make-A-Wish Golf Tournament
Salem Country Club | Peabody, MA
Limited sponsorships remain:
massri.wish.org/golftournament or 617.367.9474

October 4: Wine and Wishes
City Winery | Boston, MA
massri.wish.org/wineandwishes or 617.367.9474

November 16: Evening of Wishes
Omni Providence | Providence, RI
massri.wish.org/eveningofwishes or 401.781.9474

April 4, 2020: The 2020 Make-A-Wish® Gala
InterContinental Boston | Boston, MA
massri.wish.org/gala or 617.367.9474
More Ways to Give

Donate Airline Miles
Every mile donated helps wish kids and their families travel to dream destinations around the world. Once donated, your miles will never expire. Visit massri.wish.org/miles or call 617.367.9474.

Wheels For Wishes
Change a child’s life by donating your car, truck, motorcycle, RV, or boat to Wheels For Wishes. Donors can receive a tax deduction and free towing. Visit massri.wheelsforwishes.org or call 877.431.9474.

In-Kind Donations
Donations of in-kind goods and services allow a larger percentage of monetary donations to go directly to our children's wishes. Our “wish list” includes wish enhancements like limousine transportation and restaurant gift certificates, and auction items and raffle prizes such as hotel stays or tickets to sporting events and other attractions. Call 617.367.9474 to discuss your in-kind donation.

I wish to go to Atlantis Resort
Erik, 12
Burkitt’s lymphoma