

Where the
impossible
becomes
possible.

Make-A-Wish®
EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA

FISCAL YEAR 2021 ANNUAL REPORT
Serving the Triangle to the Coast.

*I wish to
have a
playset*

Gavin, 8
Wake County
congenital
heart disease




*“I never could have imagined
this for him. I love it! His smile
and giggles are still warming
my heart.” – Mary Beth, wish mom*



Letter from the *President*

Wishes are granted here. Wishes are granted in our neighborhoods across the Triangle, throughout Eastern North Carolina, and all along the Coast. From Corolla to Roanoke Rapids, from Durham to New Bern, from Sanford to Emerald Isle, our wish community changes the lives of wish children and their families every day. This amazing community is comprised of volunteers, Board members, donors, medical advisors, staff, wish alumni, and most importantly, wish children and their families. They come from cities and small towns, suburban neighborhoods and farms – all linking arms across our chapter in a unified effort to grant wishes.



In this past year, this community never stopped granting wishes, to the tune of **100 wishes in total!** To make that happen in an entire year consumed by a global pandemic, we witnessed relentless demonstrations of commitment, creativity, and courage. Our donors remained faithful to the mission, displaying extraordinary commitment to the life-changing importance of wishes. Our volunteers, medical advisors, and Board reached deep into their creativity to ensure that every granted wish was safe and spectacular. Our staff embodied courage in confronting every challenge with grace, humility, and determination. So yes, it very clearly took a fully engaged and diverse community to grant these 100 wishes.

Also exemplifying the devotion of our wish community was all of the work that led to the creation of Stargaze – our five-year strategic plan. We spent most of the past 12 months building a vision of our future

that energizes us all. The centerpiece of the timeline was a two-day summit designed to dream about what Make-A-Wish Eastern North Carolina might look like five years from now. Remarkably, 43 members of our wish community, from all constituencies, participated throughout those two days. Stargaze is a truly collective, community-led strategy that will carry us to an even better tomorrow.



This is now my third Annual Report in my time at this post. Even after three years, it is hard for words to capture the sublime beauty that lives within each granted wish. My gratitude grows for the impact all of you have with each additional wish. I have the unique opportunity to witness what happens when the stars align and deliver hope. You are those stars! You harness commitment, creativity, and courage as members of our wish community.



Last year in this letter, I thanked you for being part of the magic. Allow me to amend that and thank you for being the magic. **You, our wish community, are the magic.**

Sincerely,

Chris Winter
President & CEO, Make-A-Wish®
Eastern North Carolina





Making the impossible possible takes commitment.

When children are battling a critical illness, their normal childhood is taken away from them. A wish gives kids the opportunity to look outside their illness and restores a sense of childhood back to the child and normalcy back to the family. Each wish experience isn't just a single moment in time, but an entire experience created specifically for each wish child. *Creating that experience requires an incredible amount of brainpower, creativity, time, and generosity that wouldn't be possible without the commitment from members of our wish community like you.*



VISION

To grant the wish of every eligible child in our chapter area.



MISSION

To create life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses.

DESIRED OUTCOME

Make-A-Wish® shines a light of hope for children fighting critical illnesses when they need it most. A wish helps a child replace fear with confidence, sadness with joy, and anxiety with hope.



Gavin



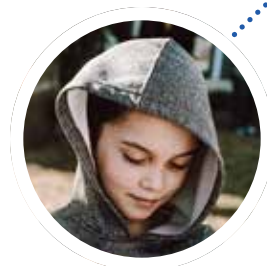
Maggie



Peyton



Grace




Maddox

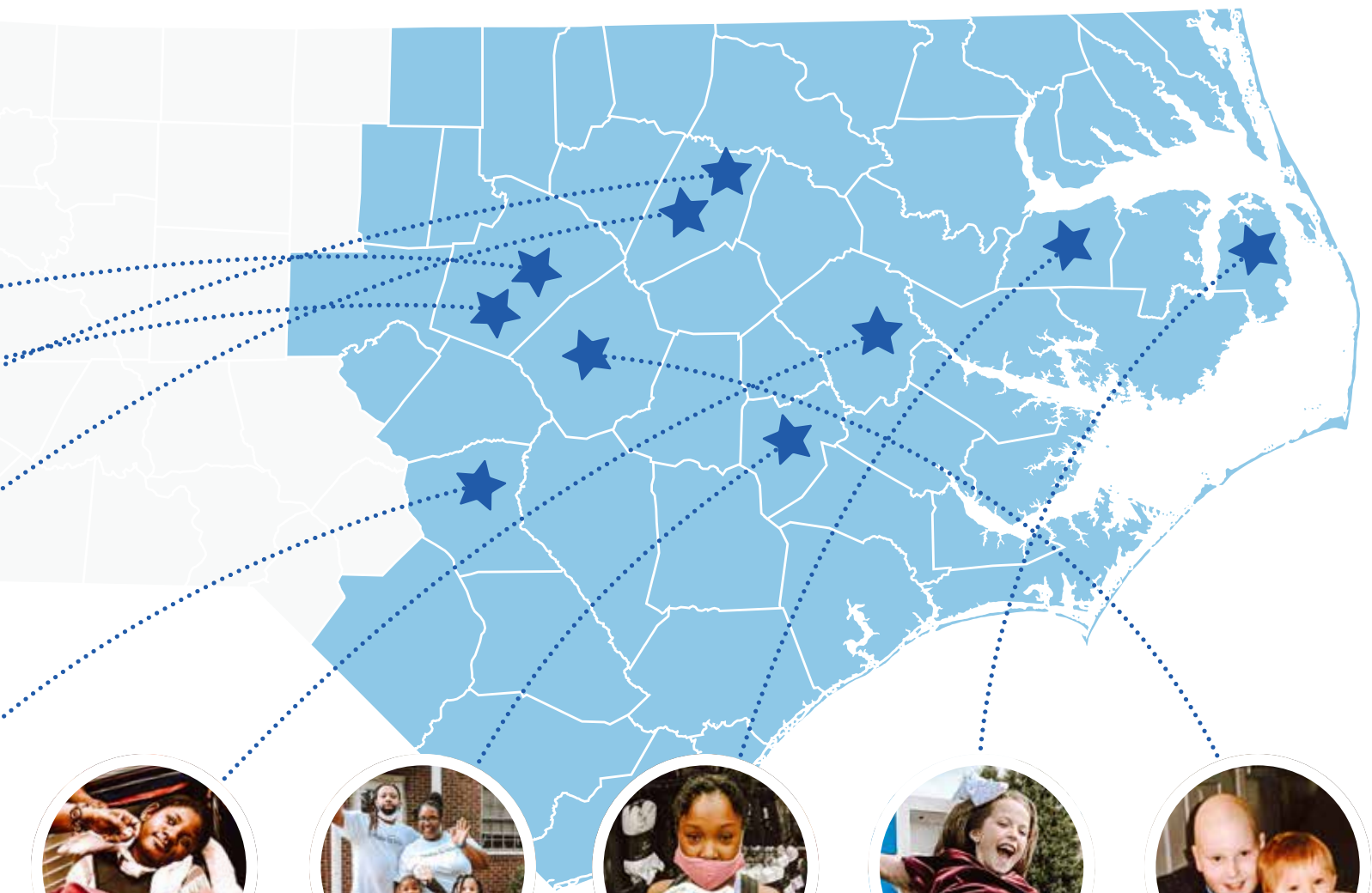


35 years of wishes coming true.

For 35 years, Make-A-Wish Eastern North Carolina has served medically eligible children who reside in the 49-county chapter area east of the Orange/Alamance county line – serving the Triangle to the coast. Our goal is to reach every eligible child in our chapter area and grant their wish. Since our inception in 1986, the organization has granted more than 4,000 wishes, at zero cost to the families we serve. We operate solely through generous donations of individuals, corporations, organizations, and foundations, as well as with the help of more than 350 volunteers, including our Board of Directors.

To be eligible to receive a wish, the child:

- ★ Must reside in our 49-county chapter area
 - ★ Must be diagnosed with a critical illness such as a progressive, degenerative, or malignant condition that has placed the child's life in jeopardy
 - ★ Must be between 2½ – 18 years of age at the time of referral and have not received a wish from Make-A-Wish OR another wish-granting organization
- 



Tynasia



Emoni



Jalexia



Boston



Sam

Making the impossible *possible* takes **creativity**.

Maggie's Mermaid Adventure

Six-year-old Maggie lives in Wake County and has always been an active, healthy child — she especially loves being outdoors playing soccer or swimming. One day Maggie came home from soccer practice with severe pains, a moment that would forever change her world. As she began a difficult journey with cancer treatment, she had to take a break from many of these activities that she loved.

Maggie has always loved the magic of mermaids, using her creative mind to envision a world below the sea where there are lots of adventures. As Maggie was recovering from her treatments and in better health, she was spending lots of time outdoors and practicing her swimming again. She immediately knew what her wish would be. **She wanted to go on a mermaid adventure!** Maggie and her family were able to take some much needed time away at a beach house in the Outer Banks...*a location rumored to have mermaids!* One morning during their vacation, Maggie and her family walked out onto the beach and found Mermaid Shannon ready to spend the day with her!

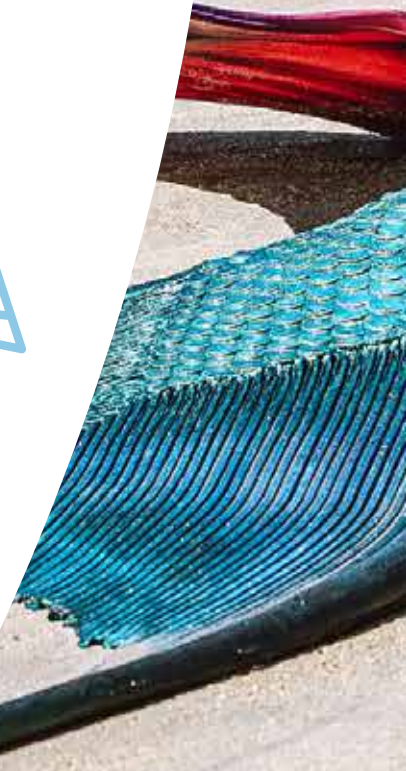
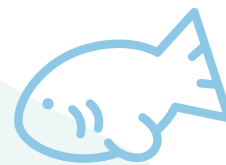
Mermaid Shannon presented Maggie with her very own mermaid tail, bringing her into their now-shared special mermaid world, and they spent the morning on the beach together splashing in the water and playing in the sand. In the afternoon, Mermaid Shannon met Maggie back at her beach house for a mermaid pool party including a mermaid make-up session (hint: always include lots of glitter), a custom mermaid cake, and an opportunity to practice swimming in their mermaid tails! Maggie is now officially a mermaid after her wish day, and she and her family will always cherish the memories of their week at the beach together.

“Maggie is just something special. I think we’ve always known that.” — Martha, wish mom

“To see and to know a child’s dream is coming true is just incredible... Maggie has brought so much joy and creativity to our family. That’s what makes her so special, and lets her light shine so bright!” — Kellen, wish dad

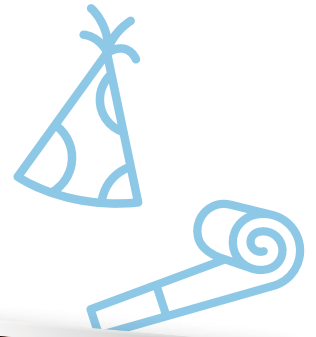
I wish to go on a mermaid adventure

Maggie, 6
Wake County cancer





Making the impossible *possible* takes **celebration**.



A Look Back at 2021

Here are some of our own favorite moments from this past year that we want to celebrate with you all – the community that made them possible.



OUR VERY
FIRST WISH:
Benny
Strickland

1

We celebrated 35 years of granting wishes



Benny Strickland was an eight-year-old boy from Roanoke Rapids, NC suffering from leukemia when he became the very first wish recipient for Make-A-Wish Eastern North Carolina in 1986. Benny wished to meet his favorite wrestlers – Magnum T.A. and tag team the Rock 'N Roll Express. So, before a show, Magnum T.A. visited Benny in Duke University Medical Center, and the following weekend Benny and his family traveled to Atlanta for a taping of a wrestling show at WTBS where he met the Rock 'N Roll Express!

Benny's wish came roughly six months after the chapter was founded, laying the groundwork for now more than 4,000 wishes for children in eastern North Carolina.

2

We elected our first Make-A-Wish alumni on our board!

Rashawn King was an all-star athlete in high school. But in June 2010, he was diagnosed with leukemia and spent the next three months in UNC Children's Hospital fighting for his life.

After being released from the hospital, Rashawn returned back to school for his senior year. To give back to his school community and the people who supported him during his cancer journey, he decided to use his wish to feed his entire high school Chick-fil-A for lunch one day.



3

We granted our 4,000th wish: a sport court for wish kid Luke

16-year-old Luke has autism and has always enjoyed the structure and fun of sports, time spent with his family, and the opportunity to be outdoors. But in 2019, Luke was diagnosed with leukemia. The diagnosis and chemotherapy treatments changed life drastically for Luke and his family, as Luke hates needles and likes routines. Going through treatment limited Luke's activities, and in 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic further limited the activities he could enjoy.

When Luke's medical team told him about Make-A-Wish, he knew he wanted to have a sport court in his yard so he could stay active and play sports with his siblings! Make-A-Wish Eastern North Carolina partnered with Carolina Sport Court to build a custom, multi-purpose sport court in Luke's yard where he can play basketball, tennis, volleyball, and other sports safely at home.

Luke's wish marked an important milestone for our chapter, as it was our **4,000th wish!** We brought together members of our wish community, our new friends from **Carolina Sport Court**, and Luke's family to enjoy an afternoon of socially-distanced fun on Luke's new court. Donors **Steve** and **Sofia Wiley** also attended! Luke and his brother shot baskets and our community cheered every time he made a shot. Luke's enthusiasm and joy was visible to everyone there, and we know he'll enjoy his sport court for many years to come.



Today, Rashawn is a father of one, an employee at NC State University, and a business owner of his own nonprofit. This past year, he became the first Wish Alumni to join our board!

“I am forever grateful to Make-A-Wish Eastern North Carolina for all they have done for me. Make-A-Wish is my family and will always be my family. I’m honored to serve on the Board of Directors now as a Wish Alumni and give back to an organization that gave so much to me.” – Rashawn

Make-A-Wish
WISH
ALUMNI
EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA

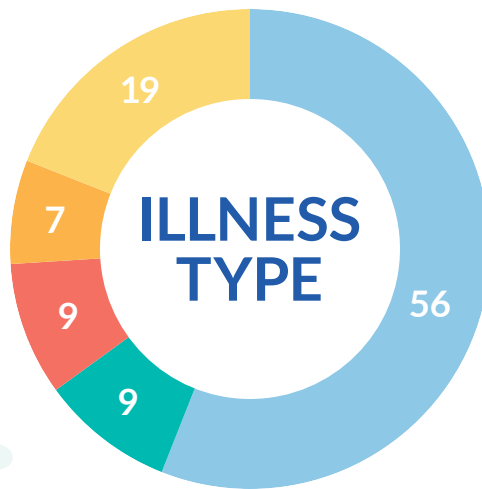
Speaking of Wish Alumni, we also launched our **Wish Alumni Program** this year — a meaningful way to stay involved with our wish families continuing their wish journeys!

Making the impossible *possible* takes **courage**.

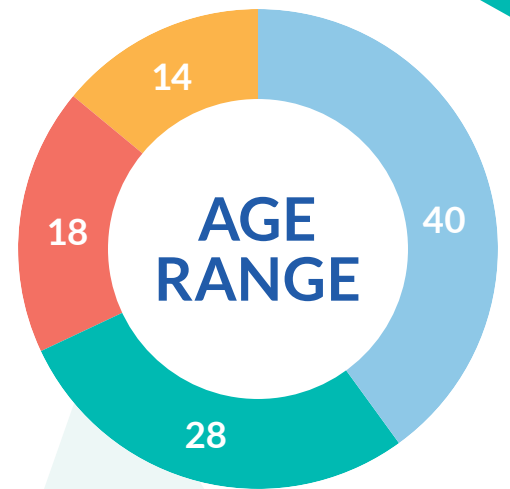
Throughout our 35 years, Make-A-Wish Eastern North Carolina has granted **more than 4,000** wishes to children with critical illnesses throughout our chapter area at zero cost to the child. We are inspired by the courage of each of those 4,000 kids and families — and by your courage to give even when times are tough. This year we reached **100 local children** with the hope and joy of a wish come true.



- Shopping Spree
- Travel-Regional
- Computer
- Playhouse/Playset
- Camper
- Electronics



- Cancer
- Blood disorder
- Nervous System disorder
- Kidney Disease
- Other

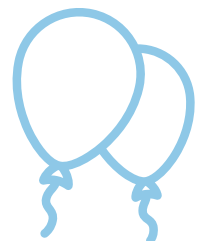


- 16+
- 11-15
- 6-10
- 2.5-5



I wish to have a shopping spree

Emoni, 4
Lenoir County
cancer



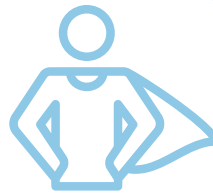
FY2021 FINANCES

TOTAL
REVENUE
\$2,448,000

Public Support (Cash)	\$ 1,667,712
Public Support (In-kind)	\$ 212,000
Investments/Grants	\$ 568,288

TOTAL
EXPENSES
\$2,067,000

Wish Program	\$ 1,281,540
Fundraising	\$ 413,400
Management and General	\$ 372,060



FY2021 WISHES GRANTED

100

wishes granted
in 2021

\$7,500

average cost of
granting a wish

4,062

total wishes over
organization's
history

*I wish to
have a
camper*

Boston, 9
Dare County
cystic fibrosis



Making the impossible *possible* takes **community**.



At Make-A-Wish Eastern North Carolina, we know the last 35 years would not have been possible without the creativity and the commitment of countless donors, partners, volunteers, and champions of our work. This year we are humbled to have partnered with new supporters and to have continued our meaningful relationship with existing partners in our mission of creating of life-changing wishes. **With you, the impossible is possible.**

7,492

Donors

358

Volunteers

11

Corporate
Partners

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Tynasia's Shopping Spree from SpeedDee



Tynasia is a 13-year-old from Greenville, NC who has had a respiratory condition and health problems since birth. Because of the pandemic, she wasn't able to get out much but was in need of new clothes and furniture for her bedroom. So, she wished to have a shopping spree! Thanks to a donation from SpeedDee Oil Change & Auto Service Centers, her family enjoyed a limo ride and shopping spree at the Carolina Outlet Malls in Smithfield.

SpeedDee Oil raised \$7,500 to fund Tynasia's shopping spree wish. Owner Garland Moore wanted to align their fundraising efforts to impact a local child in the Greenville community where their employees and customers live and work. Tynasia will enjoy her shopping items for years to come, and her family will always cherish the memories of her special day!

“When I was looking to start my own business, I wanted to be able to give back to my community in a big way. Sponsoring Tynasia's wish is the fulfillment of a goal, and I can't wait to do more.”

— Garland Moore, owner of SpeedDee Oil Change & Auto Service Centers

I wish to have a shopping spree

Tynasia, 13
Pitt County
respiratory
condition



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

From Wish Kid to Wish Partner

Sam was 11 in 2008 when his wish was granted to have a laptop computer. As a child fighting cancer, his wish gave him back a piece of his childhood and a way to connect with his friends. Now as a TrialCard Brand Ambassador, Sam is helping to inspire others to give back to the mission that gave him something to look forward to during a difficult time.

“My wish gave me something to look forward to, something tangible that my kid brain could comprehend. When it seemed like time couldn’t go any slower and it felt like I would be in the hospital forever, I could remember that if I just held on I could have my wish. It was a magical experience.” – Sam Chase, Associate Program Manager at TrialCard

Not only has Sam given back, but his efforts have encouraged other TrialCard team members to get involved and support granting wishes. We’re grateful to work with community partners, like TrialCard, to make wishes come true.



I wish to have a laptop computer

Sam, wish granted 2008
Johnston County cancer



“After hearing Sam’s story and knowing him personally, I’ve realized that Make-A-Wish does so much more than just granting wishes. They inspire and motivate sick children to keep fighting. What an amazing gift of hope!”

– TrialCard team member

NATIONAL PARTNERS



SUBARU



LOCAL PARTNERS



We are inspired by the courage our wish kids and families demonstrate every day. *Their courage and your commitment are what motivate us to keep going.*



I wish to have a puppy

Maddox, 8
Cumberland County
cancer



I wish to have a shopping spree

Jalexia, 14
Washington County
blood disorder



Making the impossible *possible* takes **you**.



Commitment, creativity, celebration, courage, community...**you**. That's what it takes to make wishes come true. As we embark upon the next 35 years, we are so grateful for the way our Make-A-Wish community has rallied around families of eastern North Carolina — and we are so excited for what lies ahead. Here's a sneak peek into a few events in 2022 that we're looking forward to!

A LOOK AHEAD: **2022**

Visit wish.org/eastnc to learn more!

- 1. Wish Upon a Chef is back!** We are excited to return in-person for this delicious evening highlighting coastal area chefs in January 2022.
- 2. Wish Ball: a celebration of wishes!** Wish Ball is scheduled for June 2022 and you are invited to join us as we celebrate the incredible impact of a wish come true.
- 3. Trailblaze Challenge:** It's not a race, it's a journey. Sign up yourself or start a team for this endurance challenge in the Spring of 2022.



*I wish to
have a room
makeover*

Peyton, 4
Nash County
respiratory disorder

*I wish to
have a
playset*

Grace, 14
Nash County
nervous system
disorder



*Thank you for helping us make
the impossible possible every day!*

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Client Services Manager
Connecture

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