



Since our First Annual Bee Grateful Gala in November, The Willie Bee Foundation has had the opportunity to provide support to many local families who have a child battling a life threatening illness.

It is a privilege to be able to help families ease the burdens that a diagnosis like this places on their family, and how we ease that burden looks different depending on each family and their needs. We are grateful that our foundation has the flexibility to accommodate each family's needs, and we are humbled by the support we continue to get. Read on to meet two of our Willie Bee Families and to see what your support helps provide for families like theirs.

## EVAN CODY SHORT

We met Cody and his family in March of this year. I had asked our medical advisor to find a family we could do something special for around the time of Will's third anniversary and what should have been his fifth birthday. And she matched us up with the Short family.

Cody loved Sesame Street, especially Elmo, and we offered to provide tickets to the Sesame Street Live Show that was coming to Rochester. His mom did not want to accept at first. However, something told her she should, and she finally did. We ordered the best seats we could, and we saw there were also tickets to

the Pre-Show Experience so that Cody would be able to meet the characters beforehand. We went to Target and picked out presents to bring to him: various Elmo stuffed animals, figures, and toys.

Our Creative Director, Chelsea, used her sewing talents to make a big blanket of Elmo's face, and we dropped all of this off one evening and got a chance to meet Cody and his family. We watched this sweet warrior go through the bag and get excited as he pulled each present out. We met a family that had been through so much, and yet who still managed to be the epitome of love and selflessness when it came to their children. Cody and his mom attended the show on March 21st. His mom sent me the pictures you see here and said how much he enjoyed the experience. On March 28th, a week later, I received a text from Cody's mom. Cody was going home on hospice and was not expected to make it through the night. She wrote, "I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for a wonderful day out with him. It is a memory I will treasure."





Cody was born with Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia and then diagnosed with severe pulmonary hypertension. He needed a heart and lung transplant, two transplants he would never get. However, his life was filled with unconditional love and his mother and father made sure he lived the best life he could and received the best care possible.

We love Cody, and we love his family. They are an inspiration to our foundation and we will carry them in our hearts as we continue on our mission to make a difference in the lives of local families dealing with the unimaginable.

# NEVEAH ELLIS

Neveah is an amazing 11 year old who was diagnosed with DIPG, a form of brain cancer that has no cure. Neveah has a fun-loving, sweet, and courageous spirit, and she thinks of others before herself. She has begun the difficult task of preparing keepsakes for her family because she wants to do that for them. We wanted to do something for her to celebrate the end of her radiation treatments. We reserved a hotel room for her, her grandmother, and her best friend.



We filled their room with decorations, balloons, goodies and treats. We provided Neveah with gift cards to go shopping at the mall, to the movies, and to a couple local restaurants she had been wanting to go to. We supplied some crafts and fun activities for them to do, bought pajamas, a best friend's necklace for her and her friend, and a couple outfits to make Neveah feel like a princess. They enjoyed the pool, the hot tub, and then as a lover of Frozen, a friend and supporter of our foundation offered to make her a backpack, water bottle, various shirts, and a hat decorated with Olaf, Anna, and Elsa. Lastly, we arranged for Frozen princesses from Enchanted Princesses of Rochester to meet Neveah and spend some time with her at the hotel before their weekend getaway came to an end. We put a smile on Neveah's face, gave her and her grandmother some quality time together doing fun and normal activities that children her age should be doing. We don't know what the future holds for Neveah, but what we do know is that The Willie Bee Foundation will continue to support her, to be a presence, and to show this little girl and her grandmother that we care and that they are not alone.

In addition to what we have provided for Cody and Neveah's families, the following is just a small sampling of what the Willie Bee Foundation has been able to do in recent months for local families:



Provided paid time off for parents whose child was at the end of life

Aided in the creation of and paid for hand and footprint keepsakes with the help of Splatters Studio

Given out VISA gift cards to families travelling for treatment or to families who were in the process of losing a child

Delivered sub trays, fresh fruit, coffee, and breakfast foods to families who had lost their children

Provided 3 families with lawn care for the spring, summer, and early fall

Bought and delivered a leather recliner to a child who was bedridden and dreamed of having a comfortable lounge chair to lay in instead of a hospital bed in his living room

Paid for the nutrition services of a registered dietician nutritionist that specializes in real foods as well as bought a vitamix blender for those families being supported