

Name: Katrina Bugge

Inspire A Golden Journey: Childhood Cancer

The Minnesota Department of Health estimates that 1 in 390 children, before the age of 15, are diagnosed with cancer in Minnesota. I am a 19-year childhood cancer survivor of Wilms' Tumor ~ my Golden Journey began at the age of 4. Ample attention is put on childhood cancer research so children can have less toxic treatments to ensure they live longer, healthier lives. I strongly believe we need to bring more attention to the children of Minnesota that have heard the horrific words "you have cancer". As these children, our future leaders of Minnesota, fight for their lives, they need us to create an encouraging cancer journey. A journey where they feel safe, brave and inspired to fight while undergoing challenging and often scary treatment programs. A journey where they are encouraged to dream of their future. A journey where children can be children. A journey to a celebration of survivorship.

Many times, I have asked myself why I was diagnosed with cancer. Today I can answer that question with confidence. I was diagnosed with cancer to be the role model of hope for the children and families faced with cancer. As a childhood cancer advocate I am helping children and families realize that even though they may have little control of their disease, they cannot let it define them.

Inspire A Golden Journey focuses on the child's cancer journey from diagnosis to survivorship. I have and will continue to accomplish this through advocacy and charitable fundraising. *Inspire A Golden Journey...*

- Collects in-kind donations needed by the Child Life programs to promote communication through age appropriate play. Talking about fears will help them to overcome their fears.
- Supports Kamp KACE to provide a memorable camp experience for children with cancer and their siblings.
- Allows me to share my golden journey and be the role model of survivorship to inspire hope not only to the children but also to the families.
- Encourages communities to find ways to support childhood cancer (e.g. gas cards, meals, bill payments).
- Partners with schools, hospitals, cancer foundations, businesses and organizations to bring Childhood Cancer Awareness to Minnesota. Through awareness I reduce the stigma around childhood cancer, encourage limited exposure to cancer risks, promote screening and preventative care and urge research efforts.

I raised \$8,290 for the Thief River Falls Infusion Center to purchase chemotherapy chairs. With the assistance of surrounding communities, I made 50 activity kits for the Oncology Child Life Unit at the Minneapolis Children's Hospital. I painted the community of Thief River Falls Gold with gold balloons, ribbons and posters to raise awareness of childhood cancer. I spoke at the National Lions Convention about my social impact and how I have used my experience to positively impact children facing cancer. I have used voice, social media, local media and wearables to market my social impact.

With the support of the Miss Northwest Organization, I along with my supporters, will motivate organizations, groups, and individuals to continue supporting our children battling cancer along with inspiring children to fight their courageous battle. Together we will empower young men and women to pursue their dreams. Every day when I see the scar on my stomach, I am reminded of how fortunate I am to enjoy the new adventure each day brings. Cancer did not define me nor will it define me in the future. However, it is an important part of my life and has greatly impacted the person I am today. I would be honored to share my Golden Journey with others knowing I am making a difference in the lives of those facing childhood cancer!

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