

A Wish Come True®

Granting Wishes ✨ Embracing Families

# IMPACT REPORT



2024





# WHO WE ARE

A Wish Come True (AWCT) is the oldest wish granting organization in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Since inception in 1982, we have granted over 1,880 magical wishes to families with a child struggling with a life-threatening illness. In 2020, AWCT expanded its mission to “granting wishes AND providing resources to families before, during and after the wish”. These resources include the Meghan K. Duffy Hardship Fund, which has supported over 165 wish families and \$163,000 to families as they face financial instability due primarily to a loss of employment of one of the caretakers. In 2023, AWCT opened Nap’s Nook, a beautiful room at their office that allows families to bring their children to enjoy games and fun in a safe environment while the parents can take a needed break in the relaxation room. In 2023, we also expanded our services to Central Massachusetts and Eastern Connecticut.

In addition, we are working with ten wish families to document their stories of hope and inspiration in the first A Wish Come True book! Our goal is to distribute these to children’s hospitals for parents to know they are not alone.

There are four full-time staff members led by our Executive Director, Mary-Kate O’Leary. This talented team continues to bring magical wishes to life for our families. At an average cost of \$5,000-\$7,000, each wish is tailored to maximize fun for the entire family.

Our experienced professionals are focused on the “Plus One” effect—the one added feature that can make the adventure extra special. This requires in-depth knowledge of our Wish Kids and their families to determine what is most meaningful to them. The team takes the time to personally meet with each family and build a connection while designing their Wish Trip. They are also adept at finding savings where possible, serving as great stewards of the donated dollars we receive for the wishes.

The organization is fortunate to be located at 6 Jefferson Drive in Coventry, RI, the site of the corporate offices of Finetco. The office space, along with a designated play space for our families (Nap’s Nook), is rented at a significantly reduced cost thanks to the generosity of one of our Board Members, Bill Finnegan, and his family.

In total, the A Wish Come True Board of Directors is comprised of fourteen members and oversees the organization through three active committees: Governance, Finance, and Fundraising. Every Board Member is committed to supporting one wish per year.

Our budget in 2024 was \$1.5 million, which allowed us to grant 30 wishes with 10 on hold due to medical reasons—and we see exceptional growth ahead.





# GRANTING WISHES & EMBRACING FAMILIES

At the core of what we do is the granting of magical wishes to children that are struggling with a life-threatening illness. The average cost of the wish is between **\$5,000-\$7,000** and can vary depending on the type of wish and the size of the family. We have expanded our services to **Eastern Connecticut** and to **Central Massachusetts**, remaining in a 70-mile radius from the office in Coventry.

## MEET INDY

Just before her 4th birthday, Indy had brain surgery on May 30, 2024, and was diagnosed with high-grade glioma. She began a 6-week radiation plan in July, requiring sedation due to her age, and completed treatment on August 19. In September, Indy suffered a stroke caused by blood clots, leaving her nonverbal, with left-side weakness, needing a feeding tube. She underwent rehab in Boston in October and returned home for the holidays, even attending the Polar Plunge, the event that sponsored her wish trip. Sadly, her cancer returned, and she faced another surgery in April. Despite it all, Indy and her family have enjoyed several events with A Wish Come True including Disney on Ice, Santa's Workshop, the Polar Plunge, and her Disney wish trip.



*"Within all this darkness, AWCT has given me and my family a shining light, in granting my daughter the ability to fulfill her wish of meeting Cinderella and many others at the most magical place on earth, "Disney World". While there, I was able to watch my daughter laugh, play and gaze in amazement alongside her cousins and siblings."*

**ADAM,**  
WISH DAD





# GRANTING WISHES & EMBRACING FAMILIES

## Meghan K. Duffy Hardship Fund

As we know, the magical wish is a highlight of a journey that started as a nightmare. To hear those words that your child has a life-threatening illness and will be in a battle of their life is truly life-altering. It is traumatic. A Wish Come True wanted to embrace these families before, during and after the magical wish. It is what helps A Wish Come True stand out from other wish granting organizations.

The Meghan K. Duffy Hardship Fund was started in 2020 by Colleen and Frank Duffy. Their beautiful daughter Meghan lost her battle with cancer at the age of 11. The Hardship Fund was established to assist families when they were in financial

crisis. The Duffy's witnessed many families struggling to make ends meet during this difficult time. 1 in 4 families will file bankruptcy due to being behind in medical bills as well as normal bills such as rent, utilities, car repairs, etc.

If a family is unable to afford necessities, they certainly cannot afford birthday and Christmas presents. A Wish Come True hosts a toy drive for families, where they can come to the warehouse to "shop" for their children while our elves wrap presents for them. It helps bring back their dignity and self esteem as they are able to make their own children smile.

## Helping Wish Families Through Life's Toughest Moments

The Meghan K. Duffy Hardship Fund at A Wish Come True provides fast, direct support for families facing urgent needs—like rent or mortgage, utilities, car repairs, groceries, and gas cards.



*"I am once again overwhelmed by the support AWCT has been for our family during this rough patch."*

- Lynne, helped with electric, gas, and water bills.



*"It feels like the whole team is part of our family."*

- Mario, supported during the holidays with Santa's Workshop.



*"You just took the weight of the world off my shoulders."*

- Melissa, who found relief with help on her electric bill while working full-time and caring for her kids.

In 2024, this fund helped **over 37 families** through moments of crisis.

### Where your money goes:

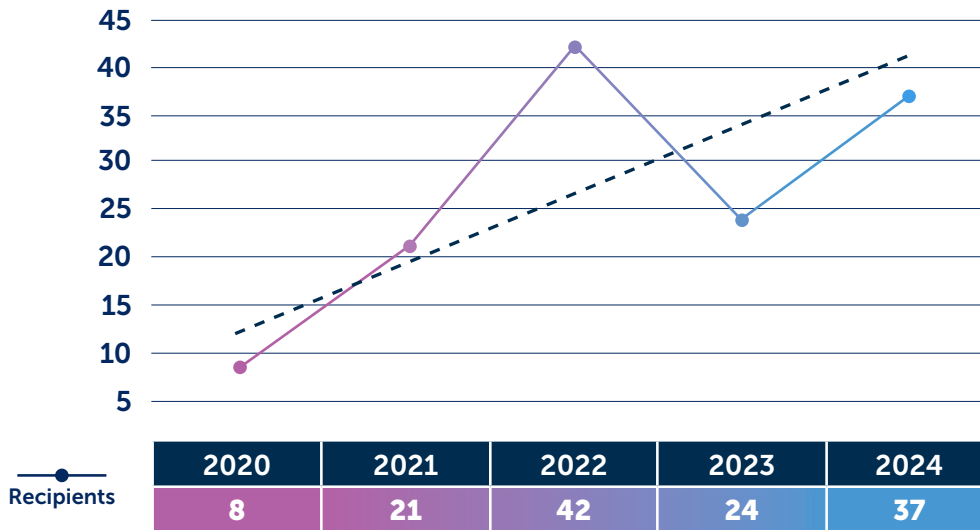
- ♦ Rent or mortgage payments
- ♦ Utility bills (electric, gas, water)
- ♦ Car repairs
- ♦ Groceries
- ♦ Gas cards for medical travel

*Every dollar brings real relief to a real family—right when they need it most.*



MEGHAN K. DUFFY

# HARDSHIP FUND RECIPIENTS



**165**

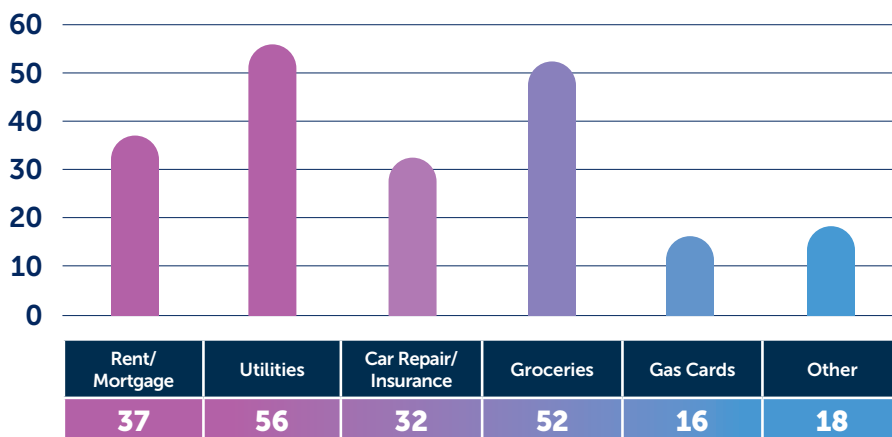
FAMILIES HAVE RECEIVED  
FINANCIAL SUPPORT  
WHILE ADDRESSING THEIR  
FINANCIAL HARDSHIP  
ALONG THEIR JOURNEY

**\$163,000**

GIVEN TO FAMILIES  
IN NEED



## WISH FAMILY REASONS FOR HARDSHIP SUPPORT



**1 IN 4**

FAMILIES WITH A MEDICALLY  
FRAGILE CHILD WILL FILE  
BANKRUPTCY.





# MAGICAL WISHES GRANTED



**14**  
2019

**15**  
2020

**19**  
2021

**20**  
2022

**43**  
2023

**30**  
2024  
WITH 10 ON HOLD  
DUE TO MEDICAL  
REASONS

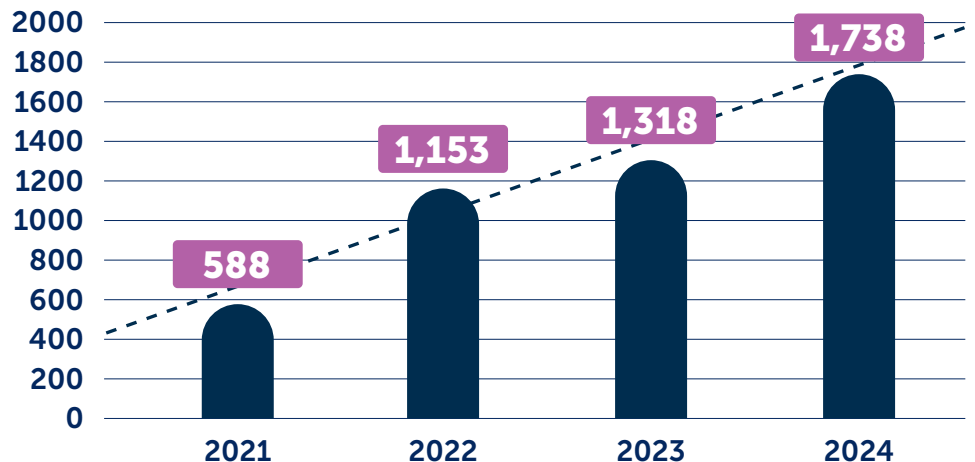
**141**  
WISHES GRANTED  
SINCE 2019

**705K<sup>+</sup>**  
INVESTED IN  
MAGICAL WISHES



# TOTAL PEOPLE IMPACTED BY AWCT

*through magical wishes, financial hardship and activities held for children and families.*





# TESTIMONIALS



"We acknowledge and appreciate your unwavering dedication, which extends beyond my family to touch the lives of many. Your presence has been a **constant source of comfort** throughout this journey. By showing exceptional care and compassion, you have created a **profoundly positive impact on my family through AWCT**. Your words were exactly what I needed to hear today and I will remain **eternally grateful** for our AWCT family."

- TIFFANY, WISH MOM

"With a whirlwind of emotions, we were sent to Disney to meet "Nemo" and "Jack Skeleton" almost 5 years ago. It still is **one of our most precious memories**. Our wish was made possible by all your generosity and our entire family got to go! **I still get emotional thinking about it!**"

- MELANIE, WISH MOM



"Thank you so much for sending me and my family to GKTW! **I had so much fun** visiting all the theme parks as well as the places in the village. My favorite things were the nightly events and meeting characters in the Magic Kingdom especially Peter Pan (who I visited twice)! It was truly a wonderful experience, and I am **extremely grateful that I was given this opportunity to go.**"

- RYLIE, WISH CHILD

"Thank you so much for such a **fun celebration** at KC Burgers in Seekonk! We had a blast and enjoyed great food and company to celebrate our birthday girl. **We appreciate the Cerrone's hospitality and accommodating our group.**"

- ROCHELLE, WISH MOM





# TOTAL GROWTH IN REVENUE

A Wish Come True had an **exceptional year** in fundraising thanks to the extraordinary generosity of individual and corporate donors and partners. Support of all of our signature events throughout the year exceeded our expectations and we are **deeply grateful**.

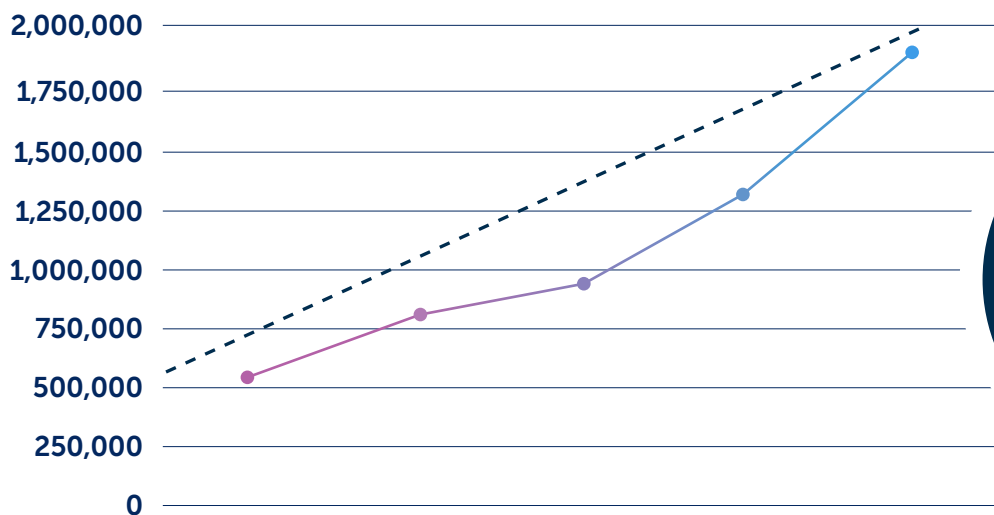
In particular, our Gala honoring Steve and Beth Napolillo with a Lifetime Achievement Award **raised over \$630,000, the largest and most successful event in the history of A Wish Come True**. Due to this, we diligently developed a plan for additional resources above that which was budgeted. **This included a four-part plan.**

Provide additional resources for our Wish Families in the last quarter of 2024 through the Meghan K. Duffy Hardship fund which included helping an additional forty-three families with holiday meals and additional gas cards for those traveling to and from the hospital. We also provided holiday presents for 199 Wish Kids and their siblings and a special night out for 100 Wish Family Members to enjoy the Holiday Lights Spectacular show at Roger Williams Park Zoo.

Create a \$50,000 Restricted Board Fund designated to support ten children who were unable to receive their Wish in 2024 due to illness or relapse.

Fund the infrastructure needs of the organization by replacing the aging laptop and computer equipment and investing in a new software program to successfully identify and leverage grant funds.

Invest in the long-term financial health of the organization by making a \$100,000 contribution to our Endowment Investment Fund.



# 206%

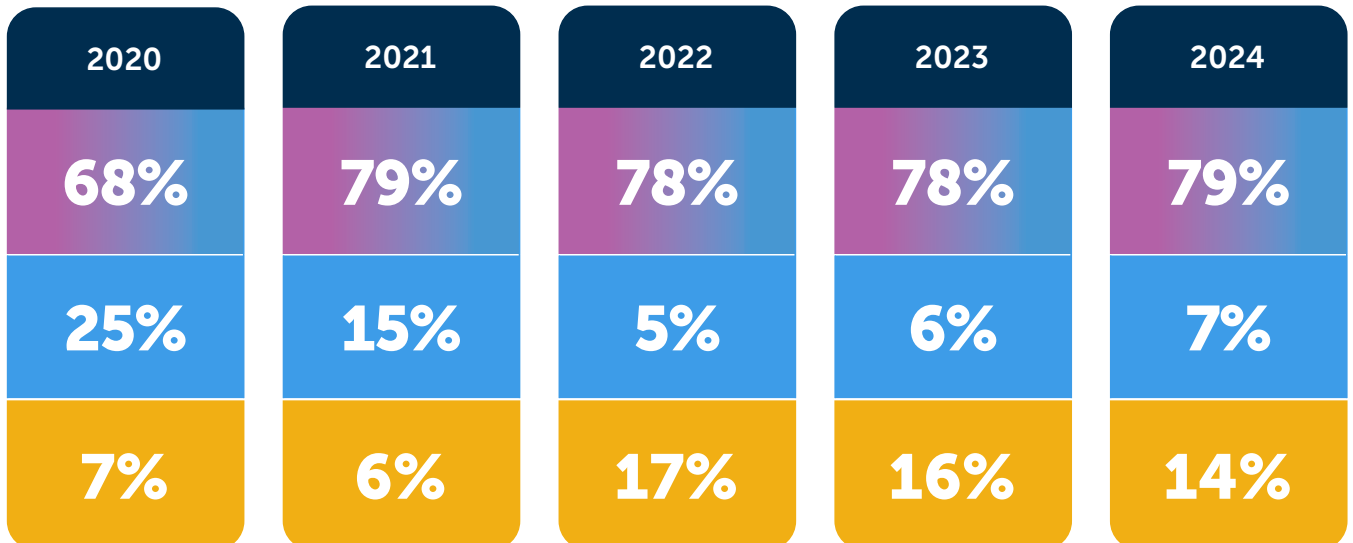
INCREASE IN MAJOR  
DONORS OVER \$5,000

Total Revenue





# PROGRAM ALLOCATIONS

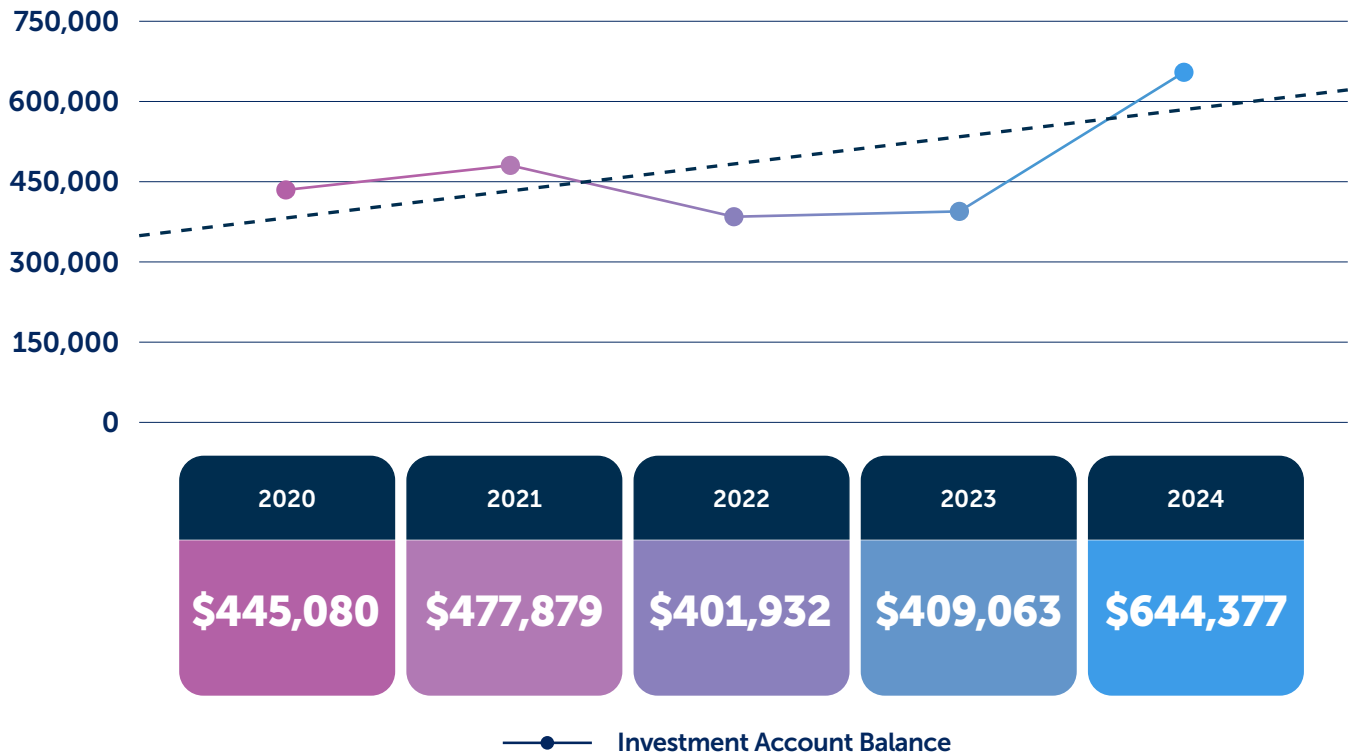


● Program Allocation ● Management ● Fundraising



# INVESTMENT ACCOUNT

We are very proud to see our Investment Account grow to **\$644,377**. In addition, the Finnegan Family Wish Fund was established and now has an **additional \$54,000 as of the end of 2024**. This Fund is restricted for growth of the organization and all withdrawals are Board restricted.



**2023**  
FINNEGAN FAMILY  
WISH FUND ESTABLISHED



**\$15,229**  
INVESTED IN  
2023



**\$53,986**  
RAISED THROUGH  
2024



# OUR BOARD



**Paula Pais Leach**

**Board Chair**

Senior Vice President, Customers Bank



**Sean Finnegan**

**Treasurer**

Financial Controller, Finetco Family of Lumberyards



**Ron Volpe**

**Past Wish Kid & Secretary,  
Governance Committee**

Senior Mortgage Loan Officer, CMG Home Loans



**Colleen Duffy**

**Fundraising Committee Chair**

President, Meghan K. Duffy Memorial Foundation



**Tracy Walsh**

**Governance Committee & Committee Chair**

Director, AIPSO Insurance Operations,  
Personal Auto



**Jeff Beckwith**

**Past Wish Kid & Finance Committee**

CPA for Kahn, Litwin, Renza & Co., Ltd.



**John Carvalho**

**Finance Committee**

President/CEO, Apollo Safety



**Sean Carey**

**Fundraising Committee**

Entrepreneur & Real Estate Professional



**Bill Finnegan**

**Finance Committee**

President/CEO, Finetco Inc.



**Bruce Messier**

**Finance Committee**

President, Butler and Messier, Inc.



**Steve Napolillo**

**Fundraising Committee**

Vice President / Athletic Director,  
Providence College Friars



**Amy Parker**

**Fundraising Committee &  
Governance Committee**

General Counsel & Director of HR, AGI Construction



**Michael Poirier**

**Fundraising Committee &  
Governance Committee**

VP Customer Success, Global Interconnect



**Greg Dantas**

**Fundraising Committee**

Broker / Owner of Rhode Island Real Estate Services

## BOARD ASSOCIATES



**Evan Finnegan**

Purchasing Manager at Finetco



**Ryan Finnegan**

Outside Salesman at Finetco



# OUR STAFF



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Executive Director

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For questions related to this report please contact Mary-Kate O'Leary

## STAY IN TOUCH



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