



Brighter Tomorrows
 An Outreach to Families Touched by
 Childhood Cancer
 P.O. Box 126
 Rochester, MN 55903
 BrighterTomorrowsHope.org

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THE BEACON

Brighter Tomorrows Newsletter

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What Brighter Tomorrows Means To Our Family

March 16th 2018, our daughter Eleanor, was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia B cell with Philadelphia-like chromosomes. Just 4 months earlier her little brother, Emerson, had been born. The time had come for his shots and Eleanor was due for her three year checkup, so I took them both to the Olmsted Medical Center in Rochester. As soon as Eleanor's primary care provider walked in the door he looked puzzled and asked if Eleanor always looked that pale. He was concerned enough that he decided to draw blood to see if her iron was low.



Once the results were back, I was instructed to immediately take her to St. Mary's Hospital where the Hematology Oncology team would be waiting for her arrival. I called Eleanor's father in a panic and asked him to come home right away so we could take Eleanor to the hospital together.

When we arrived at St. Marys the team promptly took us back to a room. Within the first five minutes, there was talk about Eleanor having leukemia. We could not believe what they were telling us; our little girl had cancer. Our world felt like it was spinning out of control. We were immediately admitted to the hospital for further testing. Results showed that 90% of the cells in Eleanor's body were leukemia cells, but on the upside the fluid around Eleanor's brain and spine came back clear. Questions started to swirl in our heads.



We still had little knowledge or understanding of what this meant for our daughter. In that moment, the doctors introduced her two year chemotherapy plan to us. We felt lost, had a lot of doubts, and felt we had little hope. Who do you talk to? Where do you go? There couldn't possibly be others out there who have experienced something so drastically traumatic to their family... could there?

Doubtful we would find someone or someplace for people like us, I prayed. I don't think I've ever prayed so hard in such short time, but I am forever grateful I did. Shortly thereafter, a gracious woman from our church approached me to kindly inform us of an organization, called Brighter Tomorrows that existed for people just like us.

Brighter Tomorrows has been the biggest help and support to us in this time of loss and hopelessness. They have been there with us through it all. Brighter Tomorrows reminds us to remain hopeful because hope will shine through. Whether it is through email, a phone call, or in person, they are there.

The first three and a half weeks after Eleanor's diagnosis were spent in the hospital and we felt as though we were never going home. Brighter Tomorrows helped make the hospital feel more like home. They provided us with the information and resources that helped make those long endless hours more bearable.

After just her first cycle of chemotherapy, Eleanor went into remission and we were allowed to go home. We were even more thrilled to finally have the opportunity to attend our first Brighter Tomorrows meeting. It was refreshing to know and talk to people who've experienced a similar situation. Eleanor even had the opportunity to play with kids that are, as she would say "superheroes" just like her! Even though we have a long road ahead of us, we know that with the love of family and the support of Brighter Tomorrows, we are not alone

Cory Timm, Robyn Miller, Eleanor, and Emerson



BRIGHTER TOMORROWS

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Our Wish List

- » \$25 & \$50 Kwik Trip Gas Cards
- » VISA Gift Cards
- » Postage Stamps
- » Gift Cards to Panera, Target, Hy-Vee, Walmart
- » Microwave Popcorn Packets and Toothbrushes

Please Send To:
 PO Box 126
 Rochester, MN 55903

The Mission of Brighter Tomorrows is to provide emotional, educational, and spiritual support by listening to, understanding, and supporting families touched by childhood cancer. Brighter Tomorrows is a Minnesota non-profit corporation supported entirely by charitable contributions and primarily volunteer labor.

Holiday Fun

Brighter Tomorrows hosted a very fun event during the holidays this past winter! All of our families were invited to join us on a Trolley Holiday Lights Tour where everyone enjoyed the colorful Christmas lights twinkling against the crisp white snow! There were 142 of us who filled 4 festively decorated trolleys and headed into the night. The children all enjoyed a stop at Santa's workshop where they got to visit



Santa and receive a little treat. The evening was topped off by a Pizza and Arcade Party at the Bowlocity Entertainment Center. It's a great time for our families to spend time with one another away from the hustle and bustle of the everyday medical world. Brighter Tomorrows is grateful to our generous donors who make these outings a reality for our families. Thank you everyone!

2018 Family Winter Retreat

This past January, our Brighter Tomorrows families enjoyed our sixth annual Family Winter Retreat at Ironwood Springs Christian Ranch. This event remains one of our most coveted events of the year, allowing our families to spend an extended weekend together. The surroundings were beautiful and peaceful and provided a solace, far removed from the busyness of their daily struggles. The children and teens enjoyed crafts, games, laser tag, nerf gun fun,

snow tubing, pajama movie night, painting, horse and sleigh rides, and so much more. While these three days pass way too quickly, the friendships forged last a lifetime. We are already busy making plans for next year's event. If you would like to sponsor this remarkable retreat, please connect with us at info@BrighterTomorrowsHope.org. Thank you in advance for your support!



Brighter Tomorrows' Cancer Survivor Gives Back



Our hearts are truly warmed when a childhood cancer survivor is moved to give back after having dealt with this experience in their lives. Erik Sutter, a Brighter Tomorrows young adult, is a survivor of leukemia. For the past few years, during September (childhood cancer awareness month), Erik has held a bake sale in his hometown of Lanesboro, MN while raising funds for non profit organizations who helped his family along the way. This year, Erik donated \$870.33 to Brighter Tomorrows. Words cannot express how grateful we are to Erik for this generous donation.



Go For The Gold

5k Run/3k Family Walk and Children's Races!

July 7, 2018

Silver Lake Pool NE, Rochester

Meet Slider and Star Wars Characters



5k Run begins at 8:30 am

*Certified Race Course and Chip-timed
Techweave Race shirts*

3k Family Walk begins at 8:30 am

*Stroller Friendly
Pets welcome if on leash
Face Painting
Balloon Animals and Popcorn!*

Awards Ceremony at 9:30 am

Congratulate our winners and hear from our honorary family members! Great prizes awarded to top fundraisers! Win a bike, a stay at the Radisson Blu MOA, gift cards and more!

Children's Races begin at 10:30am

*Race T-shirts and ribbons!
Cool Prize Drawings*

*Preregister to reserve
your race shirt!*



Tomorrow's Chapter ~ Hope for Grieving Families

Brighter Tomorrows provides support to families who have lost their child to cancer through Tomorrow's Chapter, it's bereavement program. We are saddened to share that six Brighter Tomorrows' families have recently lost their child to cancer. This past March our newly bereaved families were invited to come together over dinner and to spend time with others facing the same great loss, allowing them time to support and encourage one another.



Kendal Breyfogle



Elliot Burgos



Vito Skaro



Rilee Bjerke



Nivah Hyatt



Ava Hutchinson