

KEATON'S

Child Cancer  
AllianceMission  
in MOTION

## THRIVING TOGETHER BEYOND PEDIATRIC CANCER

Keaton's Child Cancer Alliance is committed to strengthening resilience through hope, connectivity, advocacy, and empowerment. Our Thriving Together Programs will provide peer-to-peer support among young patients, teens, siblings, survivors, warriors, caretakers, and bereaved families. Foundational elements include an emphasis on coping strategies, increased access to mental health support, and customized support from a trauma-informed lens.

***Our precious children's lives are forever changed by a cancer diagnosis. Parents and caretakers are fighting every single day to save their child's life.***

Throughout 2021, Keaton's served the increased demands for comprehensive, family support services in our region. Thanks to our community, over 400 pediatric cancer patients and their families, totaling over 1,800 individuals, received customized support through our Family Navigator Programs. Thank you for your continued passion and dedication to fighting childhood cancers. Together we will overcome. Together we will overcome and heal from the effects of pediatric cancer.

Family Navigator  
Program
 Family Connect Program

 Joy-Filled Experiences

 Emotional Support Network

 Nutritional Aid Program

 Financial Assistance Program

 Travel Solutions Program

 Education, Research & Advocacy



## Meet 4-year-old brother's John & Dean



Meet 4-year-olds, John and Dean, remarkable little humans with unique personalities and quirks. John and Dean are identical twin boys born prematurely at 31 weeks gestation in 2017. The first month of their lives was spent in the NICU where John was diagnosed with a heart condition called Super Ventricular Tachycardia (SVT). Aside from the quarterly trips to the cardiologist, their regular appointments with their pediatrician, and the occasional cold or gastro bug, both boys were healthy.

In May of 2019, the boys started daycare and around that same time, they both started to frequently get sick. It seemed like every other week there was a stomach bug, ear infection, or fever of unknown origin. By October, John wasn't acting like himself, asking to be carried more often than not, and had lost about 10 lbs. Their dad took John in for blood work because his parents just knew something wasn't right. In the days following, John became sicker and developed a cough that had gone from bad to worse in a matter of days. They took him into a local ER where they took more blood and started him on a breathing treatment. Shortly after they began the breathing treatment hospital staff told his parents that he was severely anemic and neutropenic with basically no immune system and would need to be transferred to UC Davis.

After a night in the PICU at UC Davis where more tests were run and transfusions were given, John was diagnosed with B-cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia.

When John was diagnosed it was briefly mentioned that because the boys are identical twins there was an increased chance of Dean also having it, but because they were over the age of 1 the odds weren't quite as high. The family was told that it was so unlikely that they had better odds of winning the lotto before having both twins diagnosed. Still, their parents couldn't ignore the signs and symptoms Dean was displaying. On Thanksgiving morning, the care team at Davis confirmed that Dean also had leukemia. **Continue to read John and Dean's story at [childcancer.org/johndean](http://childcancer.org/johndean).**

### ACUTE LYMPHOBLASTIC LEUKEMIA

In the United States, an average of 3,000 children are diagnosed with Leukemia each year. ALL is the most common type of childhood cancer, with approximately 74% of individuals diagnosed being under the age of 20. Children with ALL are more likely to experience anemia, bruising, bleeding, or infection. The majority of ALL cases occur between the ages of 2-5 years old with a 90% survival rate in children ages 0-14.

## Sponsor Spotlight - Mikuni Charitable Foundation



Thank you to Taro Arai and the Mikuni Charitable Foundation for supporting our mission since 2015. His passion and contagious energy spreads awareness through his participation in various events including our "Brave the Shave" fundraisers for pediatric cancer research, Big Day of Giving, and Year-End support. In 2017, Taro chose to stand in solidarity with children fighting cancer by shaving his head while raising over \$12,000 to help advance pediatric cancer research. Taro compassionately welcomed the opportunity to engage with Keaton Kiddos and families. During September Childhood Cancer Awareness, Taro invited families to Mikuni Sushi to share his story and empower our young warriors and their siblings to dream BIG. As a bonus, he taught them how to make sushi rolls and engaged in a fun dinner outing.

Taro reminds us of the importance of hope and that dreaming is free. Congratulations to the Arai Family and Mikuni Sushi on celebrating their 35th Anniversary!





# MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

20  
Years

**Brave the Shave &  
Support Children Battling Cancer,  
Saturday, March 26th, 12 pm - 3 pm!  
Westfield Galleria at Roseville,  
Outside Promenade**



## Celebrate 20 Years of Supporting Pediatric Cancer Research!

Register to be a part of Keaton's 20th Annual "Brave the Shave" fundraiser for pediatric cancer research in partnership with the St. Baldrick's Foundation.

Celebrate this huge milestone and be a part of the festivities! Join us in person or virtually, choose what works for you.

Visit [stbaldricks.org/events/WestfieldGalleria2022](https://stbaldricks.org/events/WestfieldGalleria2022) to register to "Brave the Shave," and or to fundraise for pediatric cancer research.

Have questions? Contact Alicia K. Shrum, event lead, at 916.208.0187 or at [alicia.shrum@childcancer.org](mailto:alicia.shrum@childcancer.org).



**February 4th** - World Cancer Day - Go Gold  
**February 20th** - Keaton's Anniversary "Forever 5"

## Community Supporters

Thank you to Walmart E-Commerce and Build-A-Bear in Roseville, for coming together to share hope and joy with Keaton kiddos and their siblings this holiday season. A total of 54 bears were made with love by amazing teams with a passion for making a difference in the lives of others. Their thoughtfulness brought comfort and smiles to children who were thrilled to have a new snuggle buddy.

As our many partners continue to be a light in the lives of Keaton kiddos and their loved ones, our team thanks YOU for continuing to be of support and touching the lives of children impacted by pediatric cancer.



## Your Support Provides Hope

Thanks to the generosity of our Community Partners, the holidays were much brighter for 55 local families participating in our annual Holiday Adopt-A-Family Program. A total of 252 individuals including 158 youth were surprised with wish list items and various gift cards including gas and food cards. Thank you to our sponsors for their generosity, kindness, and support of children fighting cancer, their siblings, and caregivers.

### Adopt A Family Sponsors

McKinley Elevators, Bellwood Investments, Rademann Family, Jones Family, Mann, Urrutia, & Nelson, CPAs, The Mortgage Company, Point Equity, DR Horton, Cherri Chiodo, Capital Insurance Group, California State Waterboards, Lacayanga Family, Dutch Bros, American Advisors Group, Susan Ramirez, BRMS Online, Optimist Club of Sacramento, Ashley Oates, CalSTRS, Sacramento Rivercats, SAFE Credit Union, John Mourier Construction, Inc., Kara Swars, Kaiser Roseville Outpatient, Gill Orchards, Chicago Fire, Mass Mutual Northern CA, Michael Wagener, Anthony Prendez, Kinpritma Sangha, Ken Flavell, Ginger Brown, Charlotte Radmilovic, Junior Chand, Arleen Destefano, Becky Carroll, Riyleen Chand, Cherie Fields, and Lan Ho.







## We ♥ Our Volunteers! Team Giving

Team Giving is a volunteer and capacity-building resource for the nonprofit community in the Sacramento region. They strategically match the needs of the nonprofit with the interest, passion, and talent of volunteers. By creating viable community collaborations, they provide true value in volunteer management and contributions. This helps the nonprofits better succeed on their mission and provides invaluable support and advocacy to strengthen our communities.

Team Giving has been an invaluable resource for Keaton's Child Cancer Alliance in helping to move our mission forward. Since Team Giving was founded in 2016, they have partnered with Keaton's in coordinating hundreds of volunteer hours and provided donations to assist in the care of these fragile families.

As a non-profit, building relationships and utilizing resources are key to sustainability. Keaton's relationship with Trudy Harris, Executive Director of Team Giving expands over many years. Working with Trudy Harris and Sabryna Roberson, Volunteer Administrator has been such a pleasant experience. Keaton's appreciates Team Giving immensely and all they do for the community, getting people involved and engaged in giving their time, talent and passion to those in need.

"It is our honor to continue our partnership and provide important services for these families in need." ~ Trudy Harris, Team Giving

## Mission in Motion ~ A Special Wish Granted

Meet 13-year-old Paul, a gaming and sports-loving kiddo. At just 8 years old, in July of 2017, Paul and his family entered an unforeseen journey. He was unfortunately diagnosed with Juvenile Pilocytic Astrocytoma (JPA), a rare childhood brain tumor. After completing treatment, Paul was fortunately in remission for three whole years, before sadly relapsing on October 6, 2020. After a few months of treatment, the Keaton's team had the pleasure of connecting with Paul's family in March of 2021 and has been growing a strong bond with them ever since.

Paul and his family, including his single mom, Jonisha and three younger siblings, most recently participated in Keaton's Holiday Adopt-A-Family Program. This year, Paul's special wish for the holiday was one for the books! Jonisha shared that Paul wanted a bike, followed by the unique wish for a puppy! The Family Navigator team could not and would not turn this special wish down and our team immediately identified an awesome team of sponsors to match with Paul's family. Being such a generous group, Paul's family's sponsors' purchased gifts for the family to help bring joy and happiness to their holidays.



Uniquely, one of the members associated with the family's sponsor group, Irene, had her own special connection to Keaton's and childhood cancer. In memory of her sibling, Juan, a Keaton's Angel – Forever 11 years old, Irene used her family's past experience as a way to give back to other children and families who are going through their own battle.

"I chose to give back to an organization that did so much for my family. Keaton's was our family away from home and their support was more than we could have ever asked for." Understanding Irene's journey, the Family Navigator team knew she would be the perfect match for Paul and his sweet family. Amazingly, Irene and her place of work had a connection to the SPCA. Thanks to this partnership, our community came together to fulfill Paul's hope for a puppy! Continue to read Paul's story at [childcancer.org/paulspuppy](https://childcancer.org/paulspuppy) and learn the name of Paul's puppy.

## Volunteers Needed!

Volunteers help make all the projects and family outreach events possible for cancer kiddos and their families.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Melinda, Director of Operations, at 916-757-6136 or [melinda.sober@childcancer.org](mailto:melinda.sober@childcancer.org). Visit our website for additional opportunities at [childcancer.org](https://childcancer.org).

## Connect with Us

See Keaton's Mission in Motion as it happens on our social media channels.



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916.784.6786

[childcancer.org](https://childcancer.org)