



The AYJ Fund was created in honor of Anna Yan Ji Arabia, who was diagnosed at age 13 with gliomatosis cerebri (GC), a rare brain tumor. At the time of Anna’s diagnosis, there was no research being done on this type of cancer. We are committed to supporting new research now being conducted to find effective treatments and a cure for this devastating disease.



The mission of the AYJ Fund is to bring smiles to kids with cancer, to keep them connected to friends and school through technology, and to support the research of gliomatosis cerebri and other brain cancers to find a cure.

AYJ FUND IS GOING GOLD FOR CHILDREN WITH CANCER THIS SEPTEMBER

AYJ Fund will join other childhood cancer organizations and families in spreading awareness of childhood cancer this September. Until October 2009, we did not know that gold is the color of the cancer ribbon for children. We didn’t know that there was no research being done for the type of cancer that Anna would be diagnosed with later that month. We didn’t know that research for childhood cancer was so critically underfunded. Now we do, and we hope you will join us to help make others aware, and help us change this.

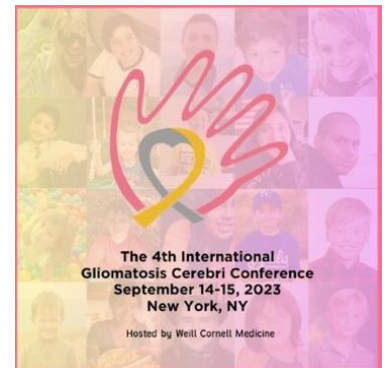
This September we are focused on HOPE for children with cancer. We are in our 10th year of the AYJ Fund and we celebrate all of our supporters who have helped us to accomplish so much during this time. We had planned to hold a celebration this November, but we have now moved the date until February, when we will celebrate the close of our 10th year, and kick off our next decade of AYJ SMILES, CONNECTIONS, and CURES.

Kathy + Joe



4th INTERNATIONAL GC CONFERENCE NYC

On September 14 and 15, we will join leading pediatric neuro-oncologists, neurosurgeons, researchers and other scientists from around the world, along with other families who have lost children to gliomatosis cerebri, for the 4th International Gliomatosis Cerebri Conference. The conference will be held at Weill Cornell Medicine in NYC. AYJ Fund is proud to be one of eight GC Family Foundations who are sponsoring this conference.



We will hear the results of the exciting research that the AYJ Fund has sponsored, and other research projects that will help change the outcomes for children. We will collaborate as families and specialists together to plan the next steps to take to advance GC research further, which one day will lead to effective clinical treatments for children diagnosed with GC.



AYJ FUND SMILES

LEANDRO'S BIG GAME



When we heard Leandro loved the Orlando City Soccer team but had never seen them in person, we contacted the team and they made his visit extra special! He was able to run out onto the field before the game with the team and their mascot. Along with the tickets and all his soccer gear we sent, this was the

perfect AYJ SMILE for this strong and sweet boy.

“Leandro said it was the best day of his life. We couldn’t be more grateful to AYJ for making this possible. He is going through so much right now and seeing him happy, laugh, and his eyes light up is the best gift a Mom could ask for.”

Leandro’s Mom

SUPER COLE



Cole is a Super Mario Brothers fan and a super cancer fighter. He was so excited to open his AYJ SMILES box to find his Super Mario towel, sheet set, and so much more.

“Cole got his SMILES box and LOVED it!”

Cole’s Mom

TEENAGE SMILES FOR TY



What do our teenagers love for their AYJ SMILES? Anything related to gaming!



AMERICAN GIRL PARTY FOR ADELIA



After attending an AYJ Fund event in Brighton, one of our guests, Alex, shared Adelia’s story with us. We reached out to her Mom and discovered she was

an American Girl fan and loved making crafts with her friends. With all she was going through, we planned an American Girl Party for her AYJ SMILE, and sent all the craft supplies for a fun day.



“The girls had such a great time and want to make this a weekly event for the summer because we have so many crafts!”

Adelia’s Mom

ART BY MAEVE

Maeve has had a very hard time lately with post treatment effects and has needed to continue school at home. She has found solace in digital illustration, but her iPad was damaged. We were happy to replace it, and love how much joy this brought to her. We cannot wait to see the art she will create!



“Maeve and I were both in tears! You actually put a huge smile on her face and she wanted to share this image.”

Maeve’s Mom



BIG HUGS AND BIG SMILES FOR BRIELLE

Brielle loves unicorns, and when one of our AYJ Fund supporters donated these bright and cheery unicorns,



we thought she would love one. We were right; her Mom sent us a video of her opening her AYJ SMILES box and dancing around the room when she saw the unicorn. Her excitement, beautiful smile, and big hugs made our day.

JOSHUA



Video games for children with cancer like Joshua are not only fun, but they are a great distraction from difficult days. Joshua has had many of these days since

he was diagnosed with leukemia in 2019, and still has to make many trips back to the hospital. When we heard his screen had broken, we were happy to replace it.

#CARTERSTRONG

We are so happy that our local warrior Carter is finally home from the Boston Children's Hospital. He has spent much of the last year as an inpatient fighting a rare form of leukemia. He is a brave and strong fighter, but it has been a long, hard road. We tried to make his hospital stay a little brighter with a variety of books, games, and AYJ fun.



MICHAEL

Michael was diagnosed with leukemia in December and spent the holidays in Boston Children's Hospital. Following a brief visit at home in Lee, he was admitted to UMass Memorial Hospital, where he spent over 7

months receiving life-saving treatment. Children with Down syndrome are not only at a higher risk of leukemia, but their bodies react differently to treatment. We



helped spread the word that Michael loved receiving cards to brighten his room. He has been a favorite of his medical team as he shares his positive attitude and smiles with each of the staff who cared for him, even throughout his difficult treatment.

GOLF PRO TRIPP

We heard that 4-year-old Tripp loved golf, and thought he would love a child's size golf set. Luckily his Mom shared that Tripp loves to play real golf with a real golf club, so we sent glow in the



dark and fluorescent real golf balls, and fun golf books. Right after this picture was taken, he jumped up and played golf with his new golf balls. You may see him out on the golf course in a new AYJ golf shirt too!

ALEX

After another trip to Boston for treatment, we were happy to send Alex the gaming computer he has been saving for.



"This is the happiest I've seen him in a very long time."

Alex's Mom

MUCH MAHALO



Cassandra is a 3-year-old leukemia fighter who is now on interim maintenance, the third of multiple phases of chemotherapy treatment. Her Mom sent a Hawaiian expression of gratitude for her AYJ SMILE, "Much mahalo."

"Much mahalo for the package we received today. Thank you again for your love and generosity. We appreciate everything you gave us. More blessings in return hoping you'll be able to help more people like us who are in need. God's blessing to everyone! ❤️🙏"

Cassandra's Mom

JULY 4 PATRIOTIC SMILES

July 4 is a big holiday for our family, so we like to share lots of AYJ Fund SMILES. We sent 50 patriotic-themed packs to the Jimmy Fund Clinic for the teens and preteens who needed to be in clinic during the holiday week.



"Thank you again so much for the 4th of July goodies! They were so cute and our teens couldn't believe everything that was inside."

*Kate Nixon
Adolescent Specialist
Jimmy Fund Clinic DFCl*

SPRING SMILES at the JIMMY FUND CLINIC

Each year, we celebrate Anna's birthday on April 9 with gifts to the Jimmy Fund Clinic at Dana-Farber Cancer



Institute in Boston to celebrate spring. This year the clinic recommended these felt flower kits. Teens and preteens who were scheduled for clinic that day were able to make and bring home these flowers.

FULL CIRCLE of CARING

When we heard that cancer again hit our friend Noelle's family, we knew we wanted to find a way to brighten their day. Noelle and the "Irish Girls" took great care of Kathy's parents. We sent Ryan a laptop to stay in touch during his long hospital days and we "made him so happy, we're beyond grateful."



Thanks to our great helpers who are shown above (plus Alison). We love when we get pictures of our AYJ SMILES, and even more when two out of the three pictures are of kids we know, Jake (center) and Carter (right).



ONE COOL DUDE!



"My little guy loves his new toys! Thank you for helping us through these times!"

Mom



McCANN SKILLS USA PENNY WARS

Skills USA students at McCann Technical School were creative and so successful with their Penny Wars fundraiser.



Thanks to the entire McCann community for raising \$1,315 for the AYJ Fund. We were so

happy to meet with Meghan and all of these students, and were so impressed with their passion and commitment to helping children with cancer.

CUTTING EDGE MARTIAL ARTS KICK-A-THON

Cutting Edge Martial Arts members — 86 strong — kicked their hearts out over three days to raise money for the AYJ Fund, Pop Cares, and Run to Home Base. We were amazed by their success. Counting kicks per three-minute period raised \$1,600 for each charity. Special thanks to Aimee Sinopoli, Brandon, and David.



ADAMS LEO CLUB

Hoosac Valley Middle School and Hoosac Valley High School’s Leo Club, a program of the Lions Club, makes a positive impact on our community in many ways. They donated \$1,000 to the AYJ Fund to help children with cancer in our community.



ADAMS COMMUNITY BANK

We cannot thank the Adams Community Bank adequately for their partnership with the AYJ Fund. This bank has a remarkable group of employees who plan and host fun events to get the community involved in supporting those in need. The first six months of the year they partner with the AYJ Fund and our northern



Berkshire friends, Pop Cares, to support those with cancer. The second six months of the year is dedicated to supporting Alzheimers services.

This spring, the bank held three major events, a Pitch Tournament, Pace for Purpose, which was a 5K walk or run held on the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail, and a Golf Tournament at Forest Park Country Club.



Charlie O’Brien, President and CEO, Adams Community Bank, Kris Bona, VP Government Banking, Becky Crouse and Erica Vosburgh presented the AYJ Fund with a check for \$13,385. Employees of Adams

Community Bank throughout the Berkshires are supported by so many individuals and businesses in the community to make this tremendous donation possible. We are so grateful.



BIRTHDAY THANKS!

Happy Birthday to Emma Grace and Fran Maruco! We thank them for requesting donations to the AYJ Fund through Facebook in lieu of birthday gifts. These birthday donations help the AYJ Fund share more smiles with children.



AYJ FUND MONTHLY UPDATE

AYJ Fund now offers a monthly update of AYJ Fund activities, cancer facts, research, and AYJ Fund SMILES,



If you are not currently receiving this email update, send a message through our website or Facebook page and we will sign you up!

BACK IN BOSTON IN PERSON – FINALLY!

It has been way too long since we were able to visit Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in person. It was a long three years of pandemic restrictions, and so wonderful to be back in such a special place to us. This visit was even more exciting because we were able to visit the Filbin Lab, and meet with Mariella Filbin, MD, PhD, and Susan Chi, MD, and all of the lab staff. We presented

Dr. Filbin and Dr. Chi with the first installment of our \$1 million donation to support the AYJ Fund GC research project, “A



Comprehensive Strategy to Advance the Research of Gliomatosis Cerebri and High Grade Gliomas.”

Another highlight of the day was visiting the Jimmy Fund Clinic. We dropped off fun AYJ SMILES for the children, and saw the gaming GO KARTS the AYJ Fund



donated for the first time in person. As soon as we walked in to the clinic, we saw a child enjoying playing video games on one of the carts. This brought us so much joy! The staff was able to share how much fun the children have every day with the GO KARTs.

MALIA – “I’VE GOT THIS”

A very special girl, Malia, has joined our Anna in heaven. Our hearts go out to her family and friends. Malia was a bright



light who bravely battled neuroblastoma when she was only 6 years old. She and her family created the “For Kids’ Sake Foundation” and raised \$2 million to help other children with cancer and their families.

A full eight years later, at age 14, Malia relapsed with neuroblastoma. We had the pleasure of meeting Malia and her Mom at Gillette Stadium when they were also recognized by the Patriots

Foundation as Difference Makers of the Week. At that time, Malia was celebrating this special day and did not want to let anyone know that she had relapsed.



We loved this picture she sent to thank us for the AYJ SMILE box we sent. We will always be inspired by the beautiful smile and beautiful heart of this warrior, who left us with the words “I’ve Got This.”

PRINCESS CONCERT – OCTOBER 14

One of our most popular events is our “Once Upon a Dream” children’s concert. Local high school students become Disney Princesses for the day and delight all of the children who attend. This event will be held this year on Saturday, October 14, at 12:00 pm at the St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish Center in North Adams. Local little ones dress up and pose with their favorite princesses, and then sing along to children’s songs during the concert. You may also see our princesses in the Fall Foliage Parade in North Adams on October 1!



SEPTEMBER IS CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS MONTH



Gold is the color of the cancer ribbon for September to raise awareness of childhood cancer, because “children are more precious than gold.” The AYJ Fund is going GOLD this September to honor our fighters, our warriors and our angels.

CHILDHOOD CANCER FACTS:

- ♥ A child is diagnosed with cancer every two minutes, somewhere in the world.
- ♥ Five children die each day in the US from childhood cancer.
- ♥ Childhood cancer is the #1 cause of death by disease in the US. Brain tumors are the leading cause of cancer-related death among children and adolescents.
- ♥ Every day, 42 kids are diagnosed with cancer in the United States.
- ♥ Childhood cancer research is drastically underfunded. Our children deserve so much more.
- ♥ Despite advances in cancer, some types of cancer remain incurable, including GC and DIPG brain cancers.

These are not only statistics, these are children, too many children we have been blessed to have connected with. Throughout September, we will spread awareness of childhood cancer and do all we can to help these beautiful, strong, bright lights.

AYJ FUND GOLDEN SMILES CAMPAIGN

Your support of childhood cancer means so much to us, and to those who we support through the AYJ Fund’s mission. This year we are busier than ever and we have connected with so many more children and families in need of AYJ SMILES and support, because they have been impacted by the harsh realities of this devastating disease.

We are seeing the difference that funding research can make, as the dedicated physicians and researchers work endless hours to make new discoveries to help our children. At this September’s International GC Conference at Weill Cornell in NYC, these researchers will be presenting the first results from research that you have helped to fund through your AYJ Fund CURES program.

This work does not happen without your support. We ask you to join us this September to raise funds to provide hope for children diagnosed with cancer. Our AYJ Fund Golden SMILES Campaign will help us to continue our mission to support children with cancer through SMILES, CONNECTIONS, and CURES. The AYJ Fund has already exceeded our dreams, but there is so much more to be done. Please join us!



Kathy + Joe

AYJ FUND GOLDEN SMILES CAMPAIGN

Please make Check payable to **AYJ Fund**

Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift of:

\$50 ___ \$100 ___ \$ 250 ___ \$ 1,000 ___ other \$ _____

No donation is too small.

Name _____

Address _____

Mail to: AYJ Fund 201 Eagle Street North Adams, MA 01247

You can also donate online at AYJfund.org or AYJ Fund on Venmo



AYJ Fund
@AYJFund



venmo

ARE YOU RECEIVING OUR AYJ FUND MONTHLY UPDATE?



Our update keeps you informed about our AYJ Fund programs, new cancer research, and our AYJ Fund kids SMILES.

Send us your email address and we will add you to our mailing list. You can send a message through our Facebook “AYJ Fund” page, or through our website at AYJFund.org.

AYJ FUND CALENDAR OF EVENTS



September

- ♥ AYJ Fund GOLDEN SMILES Campaign
- ♥ Fri, 1 – NAMAzing Parklet Sponsor
- ♥ Th/Fri 14, 15 — International GC Conference at Weill Cornell Medicine, NYC
- ♥ Wed, 27 — North Adams Library

October

- ♥ Sun, 1 — Fall Foliage Parade
- ♥ Sat, 14 — Princess Concert at St. Elizabeth Parish Center

November

- ♥ DATE CHANGE – Our 10th Anniversary Celebration has been moved to February 2024

December

- ♥ Holiday SMILES Project