



The
Rainbow
Connection

Kids • Wishes • Hope

2018 Impact
Report



Our Mission

The Rainbow Connection makes dreams come true for Michigan children with life-threatening medical conditions. In addition, we provide support services to our wish families experiencing financial difficulties.



Liam wished to meet his favorite celebrity, Mark Wahlberg! Liam's smile says it all!

2018 Initiatives



MEET KAI!

In 2018, we introduced our new mascot, Kai. Wish children were asked to name the stuffed lion, who symbolizes courage. After the names were put to a social media vote, Kai came out the winner. Kai has several meanings, including warrior, recovery and victory making him a perfect companion for our brave wish children.

Kai lions can be purchased on our website, and are gifted to each of our wish children. To purchase a Kai lion, or sponsor one for a wish child, visit rainbowconnection.org

TURN YOUR WHEELS INTO WISHES

Donate your car, truck, boat, RV, or motorcycle to The Rainbow Connection. You will receive a tax deduction for the Kelley Blue Book Private Seller Value.



FACEBOOK FUNDRAISERS

Looking for a simple way to fundraise for The Rainbow Connection? Facebook has made it easy to set up a fundraiser so your friends and family can donate! Just go to "Create A Fundraiser" from your Facebook Profile and choose The Rainbow Connection as your nonprofit of choice! In 2018, Facebook Fundraisers raised enough to grant 4 wishes!



SCHOLARSHIP BREAKFAST

Board Members, Dave LewAllen and Kevin Schnieders, led an initiative to honor our scholarship recipients and raise funds for the scholarship program.

In 2018, 17 scholarships were awarded to wish children continuing their education beyond high school. Each of these \$1,000 scholarships was funded by our first annual Scholarship Breakfast.





Abigail wished to go to the premiere of **Dancing with the Stars**.

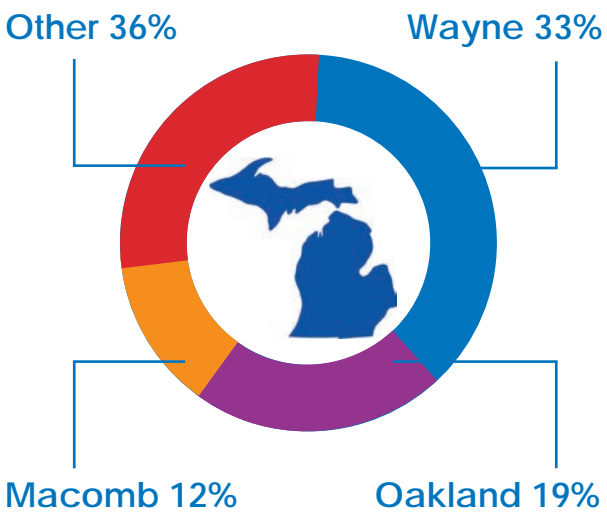
"Abby was diagnosed with Leukemia in 2017. Shortly thereafter we were introduced to The Rainbow Connection. The entire wish process created a night we will never forget. Abby was so excited that all of the celebrity dancers took time to talk to her and make her feel special."

-Abby's Mom

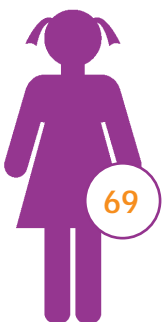
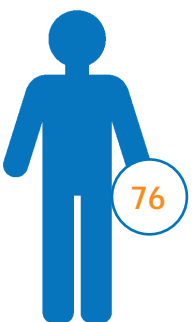
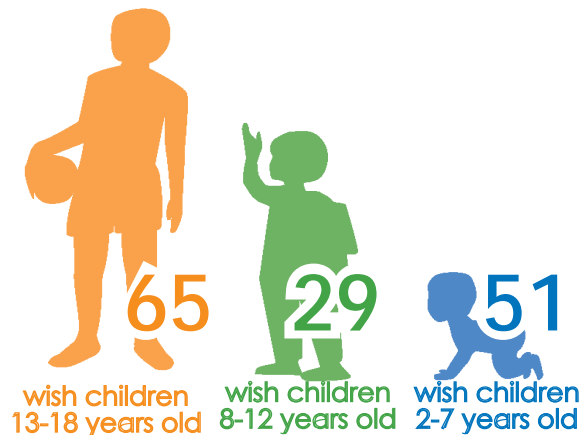
145 wishes granted in 2018

2018 Wish Stats

Where Our Kids Live by county



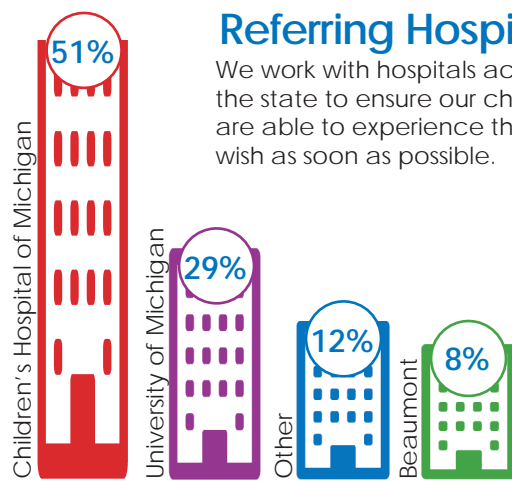
How Old Our Kids Are



boys vs girls

Referring Hospitals

We work with hospitals across the state to ensure our children are able to experience their wish as soon as possible.





Thank You, Mr. Patterson

On May 9, 1980, Ron Dobson and his two children, Tim and Jennifer, tragically died in a plane crash. Ron's wife, Janet, was critically injured. In August of that year, Oakland County Executive, L. Brooks Patterson, and other dear friends held a memorial golf outing to raise funds in honor of Tim and Jennifer.

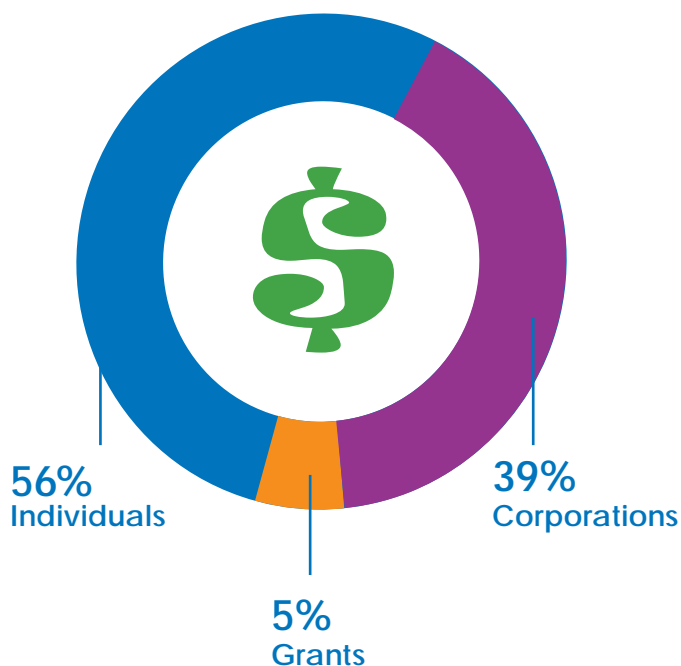
"Out of that tragedy, I wondered if something positive could be created to remember these kids," shares Mr. Patterson.

That humble beginning has evolved into what is now The Rainbow Connection, dedicated to granting wishes for Michigan children with life-threatening illnesses. Janet Dobson remains on the Board of Directors. Since 1985, we have made dreams come true for over 3,500 children.

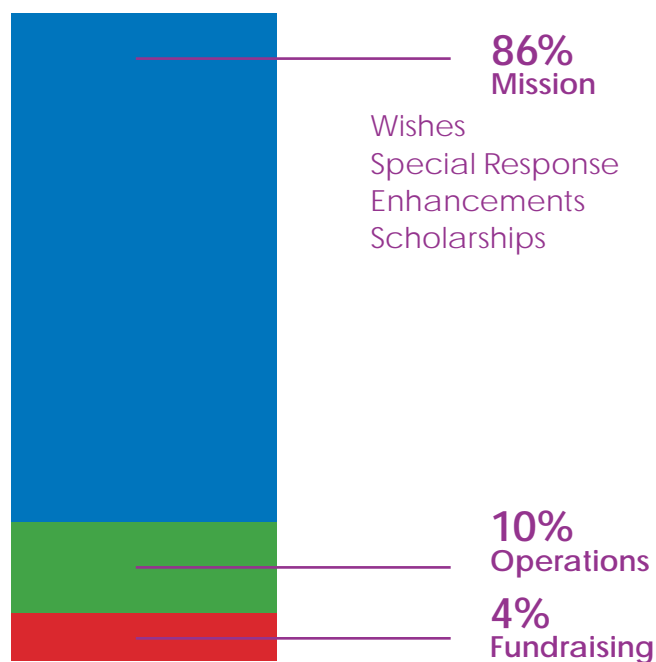
Mr. Patterson continues, "Not many people get to start something like The Rainbow Connection. It has been around for more than 34 years, and I know it will be around for a long time to come. I'm very proud of that, proud of the longevity."

How It All Adds Up In 2018

Funding Sources



Where the Money Goes



2018 Major Events



Record-Breaking Dream Makers Ball

Thank you for helping us **break records** in **tickets sold (337)**, dollars raised during a **live auction (\$104,000)**, and **total funds raised (\$456,590)**.

NEW Mobile Bidding at The Dobson

Golfers and diners were able to **bid** on our 70 amazing silent auction items **all day** directly from their phones! The process made for more time to bid and a **quick and easy check out** for our guests!



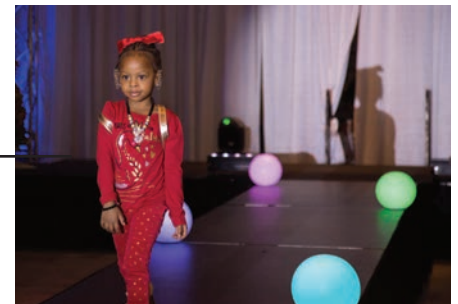
Teamed up with The Brooksie Way

Our Metro Detroit Walk for Kids **teamed up with The Brooksie Way** on Oakland University's campus offering our participants a larger **variety of races**.

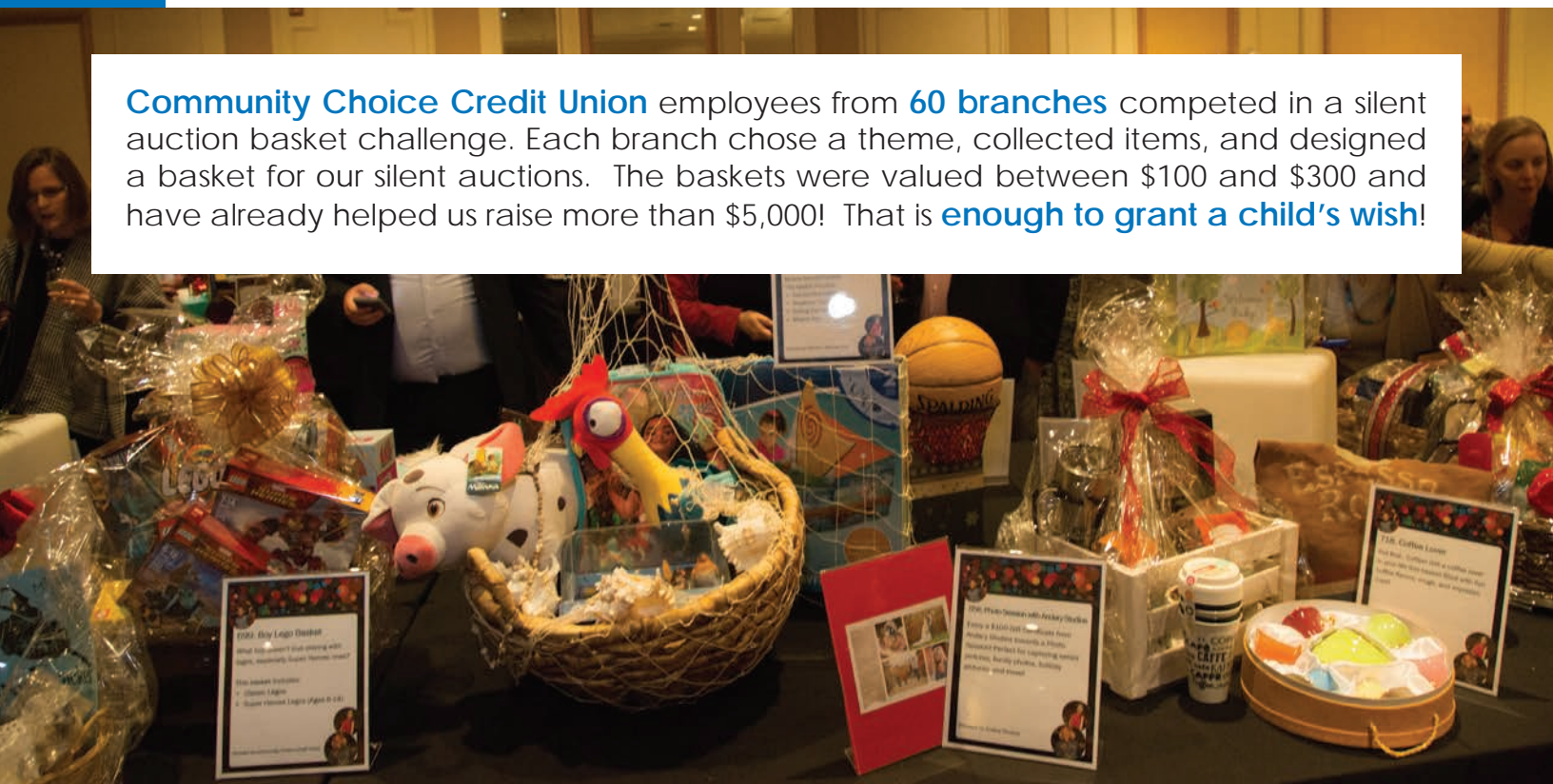


SOLD OUT Celebration of Dreams

This year more than **450 guests** gathered at Penna's in Sterling Heights for our Celebration of Dreams. This **annual favorite** features a gifts galore silent auction and a Wish Child Fashion Show!



Community Choice Credit Union employees from **60 branches** competed in a silent auction basket challenge. Each branch chose a theme, collected items, and designed a basket for our silent auctions. The baskets were valued between \$100 and \$300 and have already helped us raise more than \$5,000! That is **enough to grant a child's wish!**





Volunteer of the Year, Dennis Costa

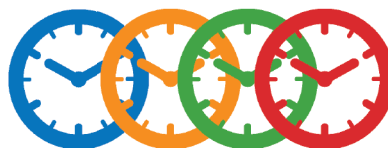
2018 Volunteer of the Year, Dennis Costa's first Rainbow Connection event was our 2016 Wish Picnic. He shared that he was "hooked" as he saw "the sheer joy on the faces of the kids and their families."

"My favorite experience took place at the Family Holiday Party while helping to get Santa ready for all the family photos. We had a wonderful visit from a little friend and wish child named Panda. It is hard to find words to accurately describe the sheer amazement, joy and love she expressed as she visited with Santa. Her mother used sign-language of 'blowing my mind' to express Panda's thoughts. Panda returned several times, insisting on waiting in line to visit her friend, Santa, tugging at all of our hearts!"

Dennis has been married to his wife, Margie, for over 50 years. He has four sons and eight grandkids ages 3-19. He loves to share special times with his grandchildren including trips to the lake, bowling, sporting events, and yes, even shopping with the girls! Dennis is retired from Penske Automotive Group and volunteers at a number of organizations. We are honored to name Dennis our Volunteer of the Year and are very grateful for all he does to help support our mission!



493
volunteers



5,641
hours of service

Thank You to Our Major Donors

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 AFR Furniture and Temporary VIP Suites
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 APTIV Foundation
 Art Van Furniture, Inc.
 Artichoke Garlic Foundation
 Arts, Beats & Eats Foundation
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 Attendance On Demand
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Detroit Auto Dealers Association
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ITC Holdings Corp.
 Jenoptik Automotive Golf Outing
 JW's Annual Charity Golf Outing
 Peter Karmanos
 Kaizen Dojo Golf Outing
 Keller Williams
 Kennedy Industries, Inc.
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 MB Equipment Finance
 Meadowbrook Country Club
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 Michigan Chinese Women Association
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 Candice Mihalich
 Forrest Milzow
 Dominic & Anna Mocerl
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 Nextep Systems
 Oakland Community College
 Oakland County Employees
 Oakland Hills
 Oakland University
 Others First
 Our Dancing Light Show
 Party With a Purpose, Inc.
 Peardon Team Golf Outing
 Penn Station
 Philip A. Incarnati Foundation
 Philip and Elizabeth Filmer Charitable Trust
 Ted Plafchan
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Prudential Financial
 Psi Upsilon Fraternity
 Purvis & Foster Inc.
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 Reliance One
 Richard and Jane Manoogian Foundation
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 Wishes Can Come True
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 Xpert Technologies
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 Mike & Ellen Zerafa

From Our Executive Director

"The back of any man can be broken. Any single life can be gone in the blinking of an eye. But when a noble idea is joined by the belief and faith of thousands, then that idea is elevated, like a prayer, to a place where it cannot be harmed."

– **Henri Landwirth, Founder of Give Kids the World**

I have been witnessing this for the past two years. The Rainbow Connection is stronger with each person and company that joins our cause. This was ever so true in 2018. Those that continue to stand by us represent a unity of hope for our wish families that cannot be shattered. Every act of kindness, every service and every dollar donated sets off its own series of unforeseen ripples.

As you read through this report, be aware of how many people are impacted by reaching out to help a sick child. Parents, doctors, social workers, hospital volunteers, individuals fundraising and corporations donating, not to mention the TRC Board members and staff all play a huge part. Multiply this by the friends and relatives of the child, school classmates and teachers, and you quickly get a picture of how much this world cares. The progression of lives touched goes far beyond our comprehension.

With your help, TRC stands at the ready to help these *Kids* by making their *Wishes* come true and inspiring *Hope* for the future!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

George J. Miller
Executive Director

We Wear Our Hearts On Our Sleeves



With the generous support of Eastern Oil and Oakland Community College (OCC), our wish families and volunteers got new Rainbow Connection t-shirts this year! Their donation covered the entire cost of providing these shirts to our wish families and volunteers for 18 months!



As our wish families and volunteers proudly wear these shirts, they continue to help raise awareness of our mission and all of the ways we help our families. Thank you, Mike Skuratovich from Eastern Oil and Chancellor Peter Provenzano at OCC, for your commitment to helping make dreams come true!

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Program Accountant
Ray Lagrou

Granted **145** Wishes
to Michigan children

Provided fun-filled
activities to
862 TRC Families



Responded to
44 wish family requests
for emergency support

Awarded **17**
TRC children with
college scholarships