

The Katie McBride Memorial Scholarship

Katie's Story

Katie was a beautiful, happy, healthy, feisty young lady with silky long blonde hair, bright blue eyes, a warm smile, her Dad's dimples and great sense of humor. She was a Girl Scout and an altar server at our church. Katie loved to draw and sing and dance. She played soccer and basketball, and although athletics was not her strong suit, she enjoyed being part of the team. The most important thing in the world to Katie was her family. She adored her brothers and her parents. She loved having girls' night with Mom which usually meant mani-pedi's and a movie or having her cousins and some friends come for a sleepover. We also enjoyed baking cookies together. Katie fashioned herself as the welcoming committee for anyone new to the neighborhood with a plate of homemade cookies and a friendly greeting. Katie was an amazing spirit, full of energy and imagination and life!

On Memorial Day weekend of 2007, our nightmare began. Seemingly overnight one tonsil grew to the size of a golf ball. After a multitude of tests, on her 11th birthday, Katie was diagnosed with Burkitt's Lymphoma, a rare and aggressive childhood cancer. By the time it was found, the cancer had already spread throughout her body. Our little angel was admitted to Schneider Children's Hospital and over the next 4 months she endured surgeries, chemotherapy, endless tests and a host of side effects from all the medications she was given. Her body was swollen and riddled with puncture wounds from lumbar tests and central lines. Katie so bravely endured this ordeal. One would never have known how sick she was when she was singing songs to cheer up the other patients and joking with the doctors and nurses. We were never more proud of her.

By mid September we had a glimmer of hope. Katie was in remission. With jubilation she returned home and joined her friends at the Middle School excited to begin this new experience. After just three short weeks she relapsed. The cancer had spread and was now in her bone marrow escalating her diagnosis to leukemia. The only treatment option left was a bone marrow transplant. Katie's brother Michael was a match and proud to help his sister. Now, in so much pain, our little girl who loved to sing and dance, couldn't walk, barely talked and was on so much medication that she slept most of the day. Again she faced chemo and, from Christmas Eve to January 2nd, full body radiation and bone marrow transplant. But even that didn't stop this poison from taking over. The disease ravaged her beautiful young body and our strong, brave fighter lost her battle. She passed into the hands of God on March 1, 2008.

Katie was a blessing. She brightened our lives and showed us how to live life to the fullest. We miss her every day. Although we only had her with us for eleven short years, her spirit, her love and her memory will be with us forever.

Criteria for Scholarship for Students applying for this award:

1. Must be a graduating senior of the East Islip High School.
2. Must be accepted as a full time student at a college or university for the coming school year and include a copy of your acceptance letter.
3. Must have a clean behavior record.
4. Must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher and include a copy of your transcript with your essay. (Transcript can be printed from your student Campus Backpack)
5. Must complete the essay below.

Essay Questions:

Please choose **one** of the following for a brief essay (500 words or less). Make sure that your name and phone number are on your essay.

1. Describe how cancer has touched your life and how your experience has helped you to grow personally and/or spiritually.
2. Community Service was a large part of Katie's young life and very important to our family. We benefitted greatly from the help of our community during Katie's illness. We offer this scholarship as a "thank you" gesture. Please tell us how you serve your community or how you have benefitted from the service of others and why you feel it is important to contribute or "give back".

Please return your completed application to the Guidance Department on or before the
Due Date