

Happy Holidays!!

December 2018

As the holiday season is upon us once again, my wife and I have many emotions as this year marks the two-year anniversary of our son Jake's passing at age 15. A few months before Jake's 15th birthday, he suddenly became stricken with overwhelming anxiety and depression. He had been a perfectly happy child for 14 ½ years, but the stress of high school just took over. We engaged doctors, therapists, medications, and everything else we could do to try to help him. Sadly, Jake took his own life in mid-December 2016.

We are sad beyond words that Jake is no longer with us, but we are so thankful for the family and friends who love and support us. Without their kindness, love, and thoughtfulness, I am not sure how we could survive. People ask us frequently, "how do you continue to get out of bed every day and continue on without your son?" There are many reasons we are able to move forward, and one of the most important reasons is that we know our son lives on through the organ and tissue donations we made with the help of the WRTC.

We think back to those terrible few days in the hospital and have such difficult memories that we re-live almost every day. We hoped that Jake would survive; we heard the news from the doctors that he would not; then we had to decide what to do next... If not for the amazing staff at the Fairfax Hospital, and the help of the WRTC staff who so kindly explained our options, helped us to understand the donation process, and helped us learn about just how many people we could actually help, it would have been impossible to get through it.

So, in the face of tragedy, with the help of the WRTC, we helped create so many incredible miracles that saved lives and gives us something so positive to think about and remember. There are dozens of families that will have a great holiday season with loved ones who might otherwise no longer be here.

Another key point to realize this time of year is that there are still so many people, both adults and children, on the transplant waiting list (114,400+ nationally, 2,300+ locally). They need our help! Now is the perfect time to sign up to be a donor. It is so easy; just visit www.beadonor.org to learn more and register!

We sincerely hope that you, your family, and your friends all have a safe and happy holiday season and we thank you so very much for your support of the WRTC!

Warm regards,
Debbi and Bryan



*Jake, 1 week before his passing,
at our last Caps game together*



WASHINGTON REGIONAL TRANSPLANT COMMUNITY

