

When Jordan was diagnosed with a brain tumor and required emergency surgery and treatment in Seattle, the Angel Fund supported his family so they could focus on Jordan's care.

Contributor

Angel Fund Supports Local Family through Son's Battle with Brain Cancer

When Jordan Kleinhans was 11 years old, he began having frequent headaches, sensitivity to light, and excessive fatigue. **A CT scan revealed a heartbreaking discovery—there was a dime-sized tumor in the middle of his brain, and his brain was filling with fluid.**

The pressure on Jordan's brain was critically dangerous—**he required urgent specialized care in Seattle.**

He and his mother, Maxine Nakai, were immediately escorted to the Great Falls airport by ambulance. They were flown by Mercy Flight to Seattle Children's Hospital where Jordan was rushed straight to surgery.

“ You can't begin to imagine how it feels when you must leave suddenly, not at all prepared to go out of state, and you have but a few dollars on you... You want to worry about your sick child, not about money. ”

Maxine Nakai

Continued on page 2

Continued from cover

Maxine is now a Resource Nurse at Benefis Westview, but at the time she had never heard of the Angel Fund. Fortunately, their nurse gave them an application on the ambulance ride to the Great Falls airport, and then promptly submitted it to the Benefis Foundation office on their behalf.

Jordan's father, Bill, picked up their Angel Fund check from the Foundation the very next day, which helped cover the cost of gas and lodging as he joined his family in Seattle.

During Jordan's surgery, the tumor was biopsied, and a burr hole was created to drain the fluid from Jordan's brain. **Jordan was diagnosed with pineal germinoma, a germcell tumor.**

“ There is so much good that comes from the Angel Fund. It is truly a blessing. ”

Maxine Nakai



Jordan's health suddenly took a turn for the worse when he developed meningitis. **The chemotherapy treatments that he direly needed were put on hold for two weeks** as he received intravenous antibiotics.

During those fourteen days, **Jordan's brain tumor grew to the size of a half dollar, and he lost vision in one eye.**

He also experienced complications from the burr hole, so a Ventriculoperitoneal Shunt was placed in his brain, which Jordan will have the rest of his life.

Throughout the horrendous turn of events, Jordan's family was grateful to be able to remain by his side. "The Angel Fund helped with more than just the basics of meals, gas, and rooms. It helped put a smile and laughter on my son's face," Maxine said.

Finally, Jordan recovered from the meningitis and was healthy enough to begin his treatment regimen. **Jordan endured multiple chemotherapy treatments and dozens of proton radiation therapy sessions in Seattle over the course of six months.**

Jordan also braved several more emergency surgeries related to the Ventriculoperitoneal Shunt in his brain, plus years of follow-up appointments.

Thanks to help from the Angel Fund, Jordan's family was with him every step of the way.

Maxine is committed to supporting the Angel Fund every year during the Benefis We Care! We Share! Employee Giving Campaign. "Every little bit counts. I know how it feels to worry, and if I can relieve at least one family's stress by donating, that is what I'll do."

Jordan, now a healthy 16-year-old, was just declared cancer free in early August 2018.

Over Half a Million Dollars Donated by Benefis Employees

Benefis Health System employees donated a record-breaking **\$524,486** during this year's We Care! We Share! Employee Giving Campaign.

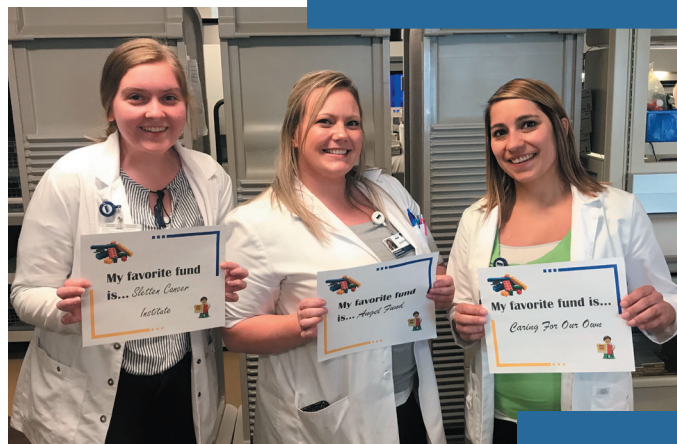
Each year, Benefis employees demonstrate their incredible compassion by supporting the causes they care about most during We Care! We Share!

Thanks to the generosity of over 1,400 employees in 2018 alone, their gifts to the Benefis Foundation, United Way, and other local nonprofits will make a significant impact in the lives of our patients, coworkers, and community members.

Since the first We Care! We Share! campaign in 2002, Benefis employees have given more than \$5 million to help people in need.

“ I can't say thank you enough for helping me and my girls. My coworkers are the most caring people I have ever come across. Thank you to all that donate to Caring For Our Own. You have touched my life. ”

Benefis employee & Caring For Our Own recipient



The top supported fund this year was **Caring For Our Own—a program that helps Benefis employees and volunteers grappling with a sudden crisis**. The fund provides a financial care package to employees when they need it the most.

More than 1,465 Benefis employees have been supported by Caring For Our Own since the program began in 1999.

2018 We Care! We Share! top three supported funds

Caring For Our Own - \$80,441

Angel Fund - \$55,866

Greatest Need Fund - \$27,591

Benefis employees who give to the We Care! We Share! campaign understand that no matter the size of their gift, every contribution makes a difference. **Help ensure people continue to get the help they need. Visit www.BenefisFoundation.org to donate to your favorite fund today.**

In-Demand Nurses Graduating with Help from Benefis Foundation Healthcare Scholarship Program



Michaela Munsterteiger, a 20-year-old junior at Montana State University, aspires to follow in her grandmother's footsteps by becoming a nurse and helping others.

Once she graduates in May 2020, Michaela hopes to work in pediatrics at Benefis and is most looking forward to getting to know patients on a personal level. "I enjoy making patients as comfortable as possible and doing whatever I can to help them feel better," said Michaela. **"These scholarships mean so much to me. It helps me focus on becoming a better nurse so I can help patients heal."**

“Winning these scholarships has given me an extra push to do the best I can to represent Benefis and the donors who support the scholarship program.”

Michaela Munsterteiger

Thanks to donors who generously support the Benefis Foundation Healthcare Scholarship Program, Michaela Munsterteiger won two scholarships—the Jane M. Buckman Husted Nursing Scholarship and Cecil and Dorothy Goodbrand Nursing Scholarship—which will help her earn a Bachelor of Science degree from the MSU College of Nursing program.

Michaela is one of 34 college students to receive healthcare scholarships from the Benefis Foundation for fall 2018 and spring 2019 semesters. **In total, \$77,500 was awarded to these deserving students. "My scholarships have greatly helped me pay for school this year, and I am very grateful," said Michaela.**

The Healthcare Scholarship Program is designed to assist with the development of skilled healthcare professionals in our region. Dozens of scholarships are available to students who are pursuing a degree, certification, or advancement in a medically related field.

"Any donation to the Benefis Foundation, no matter the size, helps people in need more than the donors could ever know," said Michaela. "If you're thinking about donating, just do it. It will help people that need it."

Thanks to the support of many donors like you, **the Benefis Foundation has awarded more than 620 students with \$1.18 million in scholarships since the program began in 1998.**

Please consider supporting the Healthcare Scholarship Program with your next gift to the Benefis Foundation. Your contribution will help students like Michaela earn their degree and help our community gain skilled and compassionate healthcare professionals.

New Scholarship Funds Created to Help Bring Doctors to Montana

Scholarships will be awarded to medical students attending the Idaho College of Osteopathic Medicine (ICOM)

To help combat the ever-growing physician shortage in Montana, the ICOM Scholarship Fund was recently established by the Benefis Foundation Board of Directors.

The Benefis Foundation Board designated \$50,000 for the ICOM Scholarship Fund and created a special match campaign encouraging Benefis physicians to support future generations of physicians. Gifts made by providers to the ICOM Scholarship Fund will be matched up to an additional \$50,000!

These scholarships will be awarded to ICOM medical students to help cultivate much-needed providers and ultimately improve healthcare for our community.

Prior to ICOM opening in August 2018, neither Montana, Idaho, or Wyoming offered a medical school. Benefis Health System has partnered with ICOM to support their objective of training and keeping those new physicians in our region. Benefis is the clinical hub for ICOM in Montana and is currently developing a residency—our first—in Internal Medicine.

The Benefis Health System Foundation Classroom, a teaching classroom featuring three walls of floor-to-ceiling windows, was dedicated on the ICOM campus in Idaho to recognize the Benefis Foundation's commitment to our region's first medical school.



Benefis CEO John Goodnow and Keiffer Hepola, medical student from Butte

Located in Meridian, Idaho, ICOM's mission is to train osteopathic physicians prepared for caring for persons in Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, and beyond. Keiffer Hepola of Butte, Montana, is in the inaugural class at ICOM and hopes to return to Montana to practice medicine after graduating.



Dedicated philanthropists Dr. David and Tanya Cameron believe education is a cornerstone to the success of a community. Long-time donors of the Benefis Foundation, the Camerons have also provided instrumental support to ICOM by creating an additional scholarship endowment through the Benefis Foundation. ICOM dedicated their state-of-the-art Cameron Medical Library in their honor.

By contributing to the ICOM Scholarship Fund or Cameron Medical Education Scholarship at the Benefis Foundation, you can support these medical students today—**just return the enclosed giving envelope or donate online.**



Triplet Boys Safely Delivered Thanks to Benefis NICU and Gift of Life Housing

After struggling to conceive for two years, Lexi and Dillon Udelhoven's prayers were answered—they were pregnant with not one or even two, but three boys.

While overcome with joy, the Winifred, Montana couple also knew they would face definite challenges. Lexi's multiple gestational pregnancy was considered high-risk, which required Lexi to live within 30 minutes of the Benefis Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) in the later stages of her pregnancy.

Fortunately, the Benefis Gift of Life Housing program offers free lodging to people just like Lexi and Dillon—patients that must travel great distances to receive medical care in Great Falls.

As soon as they discovered they were pregnant with triplets, Lexi and Dillon made arrangements to stay at Gift of Life Housing. When Lexi was just 25 weeks pregnant, Dr. June Murphy, Benefis Maternal-Fetal Medicine expert and the only specialist of her kind in the region, determined that Lexi needed to make the 160-mile move from Winifred to Great Falls.

"At first it was overwhelming to receive the news that I could no longer live at home," said Lexi. "But after being here for months, it feels like home."

If not for Gift of Life, the couple would have had to pay for a hotel or apartment, not to mention utilities, for nearly four months. **"It's an incredible opportunity to have these services for free at Gift of Life. To not have to worry about that additional financial strain has been huge. It's definitely given us peace of mind,"** said Dillon.

“ Gift of Life has been a godsend to us. It's amazing that it all comes from donations. ”

Dillon Udelhoven

Lexi's stay at the West Gift of Life Housing Center began on July 9. "My apartment is homey, spacious, and is fully stocked with everything you could possibly need, which is really convenient," said Lexi. Dillon and her family members were able to visit and stay with Lexi throughout the summer as they anxiously awaited the arrival of their three baby boys.

On August 27, Trexton, Traylan, and Timmer made a remarkable debut at just 32 weeks. Each baby had his own team of providers ready and waiting, consisting of either a doctor or nurse practitioner, a respiratory therapist, and a registered nurse.

Although the delivery went smoothly for the babies, Lexi lost a considerable amount of blood and required blood transfusions. **She was unable to visit her babies for nearly 10 hours as she recovered.** Lexi was grateful to be able to use the NicView Streaming Camera System, allowing her to view their babies in real-time on her phone through a secure online portal. "This was big for me. Even though I couldn't physically visit my boys, at least I could see them because of the NicView cameras," said Lexi.

“ The NicView cameras let us check in on our boys 24/7, and we know they are getting great care in the NICU. ”

Lexi Udelhoven

As Trexton, Traylan, and Timmer received specialized care in the NICU, Lexi remained at Gift of Life for nearly two more months until they grew strong enough to go home.

“There aren't words to describe how grateful we are for the donors who support Gift of Life,” said Dillon. “Thank you' doesn't do justice for what they have done, for not only us, but for so many other NICU parents and cancer patients.”

“ Hardships do not discriminate; all walks of life can be impacted. Donors to the Gift of Life Program will never be disappointed with where their money went. ”

Dillon Udelhoven



Hundreds of families from across Montana rely on Gift of Life Housing every year. We need your help so patients in need may continue using these free services. Make a gift today to support Gift of Life using the enclosed giving envelope or online at www.BenefisFoundation.org.

NUMBER OF SICK CHILDREN IN NEED INCREASES EVERY YEAR

The Benefis Foundation's Angel Fund helps families with the tremendous financial strain of caring for a seriously ill child.

With the support of generous donors like you, the Angel Fund helps cover the costs of travel and lodging when the child's treatment takes the family out of northcentral Montana and far from home.



Like Jordan, many families are left with no choice but to leave unexpectedly and often on very short notice to get the medical care they so desperately need.

Since Jordan's brain tumor was discovered five years ago, his family has traveled from Great Falls to Seattle dozens of times for emergency surgeries, chemotherapy and radiation treatments, and follow-up tests and appointments. The Angel Fund has helped ease the burden for Jordan's family. "The Angel Fund has been such a blessing, thank you so much," said Maxine. "Without the support from the Benefis Foundation, we all wouldn't be able to be there as a family to support Jordan."

The demand for this fund increases every year. We need your ongoing support to continue providing this vital assistance to children and their families in our community.

Your donations will help sick children who must travel out of town to receive specialized care.

Jordan is one of more than 1,200 children that have been helped by the Angel Fund since the program was established 20 years ago.

Your **gifts** will help to make a family's journey **easier to bear**.

YES, I'll support sick children from my community in their journey to receive specialized care!

Please accept my gift to the Angel Fund:

- in the enclosed giving envelope
- as an online donation given today at www.BenefisFoundation.org