

Annual Report
2025-26 Fiscal Year



Project Joy & Hope

A Message from the Executive Director

Twenty-six years ago, Project Joy & Hope was founded on a simple yet powerful belief: no family should face a child's serious illness alone. Today, that mission remains at the heart of everything we do and continues to guide our work each day.

Throughout the 2025–2026 fiscal year, we witnessed extraordinary courage, resilience, and determination from the families we serve. Parents navigated complex medical decisions while managing financial and emotional burdens. Siblings learned to adapt to a world often centered around hospital visits and treatment schedules. Children faced surgeries, therapies, and uncertain futures with remarkable strength and grace. Through every challenge, one thing remained constant—the unwavering support of a compassionate community standing beside them.

This year was marked by growth, impact, and hope. Because of the generosity of our donors, volunteers, corporate partners, foundations, churches, and community supporters, Project Joy & Hope provided safe housing, financial assistance, educational opportunities, sibling support programs, legal planning services, family activities, and compassionate care to hundreds of families facing some of life's most difficult circumstances.

The Tulip Project Pediatric Palliative Care Campus continued to be a place of refuge and stability for families traveling to the Texas Medical Center for life-saving treatment. Through our Hope Scholarship Program, bereaved students found encouragement and financial support as they pursued their educational dreams. Our sibling programs created opportunities for connection, healing, and joy, while our dedicated staff and volunteers ensured that no family had to walk their journey alone.

As we reflect on another year of service, we are humbled by the trust families place in us and deeply grateful for every individual and organization that helps make this work possible. Your support does more than fund programs—it creates hope, restores dignity, eases burdens, and reminds families that they are surrounded by a community that cares.

Together, we are building a future where every child facing serious illness and every family navigating uncertainty is met with compassion, support, and hope. The stories shared throughout this report are a testament to what can be accomplished when a community comes together to serve others.

Thank you for believing in our mission and for helping us bring joy and hope to families when they need it most. We look forward to continuing this important work together.

With gratitude and hope,

Jane Wheeler, Ed.D.
FOUNDER AND CEO



Our Mission

Project Joy & Hope provides support, stability, and hope to families caring for a child with a life-limiting, life-threatening, or serious medical condition.

Our Vision

A community where every child and family facing serious illness is met with dignity, hope, and comprehensive support.

Our Values

Compassion – We lead with empathy and kindness.

Advocacy – We help families navigate complex systems and challenges.

Respect – We honor the unique journey of every family.

Empowerment – We provide resources and support that strengthen families.

2025–2026 By the Numbers

Housing & Family Support

- 613 individuals served through the Tulip Project Housing Program
- 283 adults and 330 children provided safe and affordable housing
- More than 17,000 nights of housing provided
- Average occupancy of 12 families at a time
- Families referred primarily through Texas Children's Hospital, MD Anderson Children's Cancer Center, Memorial Hermann Children's Hospital, and the UT Fetal Center

Hope Scholarship Program

- 24 graduating seniors from 17 area high schools received scholarships
- \$70,000 awarded to students who experienced the loss of a parent or sibling
- More than \$1.3 million awarded since the program's inception

Family Assistance

- Emergency assistance provided to families facing financial hardship due to a child's illness
- Support included utilities, transportation, food, and basic living expenses
- PJH distributed 51 grants, totaling \$29,147.51 in financial aid to families caring for seriously ill children in Harris and surrounding counties. These grants benefited 81 adults and 124 children.

Volunteer Engagement

- Volunteers contributed more than 7,600 hours of service during FY 2025–2026, representing an estimated in-kind value of more than \$260,000.
- Volunteers participated in campus activities, family events, and fundraising initiatives. Their generosity helped support family activities, campus improvements, fundraising events, scholarship programs, and daily operations across PJH.



The Tulip Project: More Than Housing

When a child receives treatment at the Texas Medical Center, families often leave jobs, homes, schools, and support networks behind. The Tulip Project Pediatric Palliative Care Campus provides a place where families can focus on what matters most—their child.

Our campus offers twelve fully furnished homes designed specifically for families caring for medically fragile children. In addition to housing, families have access to case management, family activities, sibling support programs, and a caring community that understands their journey.

This year, the Tulip Project continued to serve as a refuge for families navigating cancer treatments, organ transplants, complex surgeries, and palliative care.

Supporting the Entire Family

Serious illness affects every member of a family.

Through our sibling support programs, including Sibshop and Sib Camp, brothers and sisters found opportunities to connect with peers, express emotions, and simply enjoy being children.

Family events throughout the year provided moments of joy and normalcy through holiday celebrations, Snow Day, family outings, Creation Station activities, and community gatherings.

Parents also received guidance through our Life Planning Institute, which offers assistance with advance directives, medical powers of attorney, wills, and other essential planning resources.

These programs recognize that caring for a seriously ill child requires supporting the entire family. By addressing emotional, practical, and social needs, Project Joy & Hope helps families build resilience, strengthen relationships, and find moments of hope and healing even during the most challenging times.



Hope Scholarship Program

The Hope Scholarship Program continues to transform lives by investing in students who have experienced the death of a parent or sibling.

These young people have faced profound loss, yet they continue to pursue their dreams with courage and determination. Through the generosity of our donors, scholarships help remove financial barriers and create pathways to higher education, empowering students to build brighter futures while honoring the memory of their loved ones.



This year, scholarships were awarded to **24 graduating seniors representing 17 high schools** throughout the Greater Houston area and beyond. Since the program's inception, Project Joy & Hope has awarded **more than \$1.3 million in scholarships** to deserving students, helping hundreds of young people pursue college, technical training, and career opportunities.

Celebrating Community

The impact of Project Joy & Hope is made possible through an extraordinary network of supporters.

This year we were honored to partner with corporations, foundations, churches, civic organizations, schools, volunteers, and individual donors who believe every family deserves hope.

Highlights included:

- Annual Gala and Golf Classic, Annual Fun Run, Bingo by the Bay
- Birdies for Charity, generating significant support for our mission
- Community and corporate volunteer projects throughout the year
- Corporate sponsorships supporting housing, family programs, and scholarships
- Ongoing partnerships with healthcare providers across the Texas Medical Center

Together, these partnerships strengthen our ability to serve families every day.

Stewardship and Sustainability

As demand for services continues to grow, Project Joy & Hope remains committed to responsible stewardship of every dollar entrusted to us.

During the year, we focused on:

- Maintaining and improving Tulip Project housing units
- Expanding organizational capacity
- Strengthening donor relationships
- Increasing program evaluation and impact measurement
- Developing long-term sustainability strategies

These efforts position us to continue serving families for years to come.

At the heart of every strategic decision is our commitment to the families we serve. By strengthening our infrastructure, investing in our team, and enhancing program effectiveness, we are ensuring that Project Joy & Hope can continue providing stability, compassionate support, and hope to families facing a child's serious illness—both today and for generations to come.

Looking Ahead

As we enter the next year, our priorities include:

- Strengthening financial sustainability
- Expanding family support services
- Enhancing housing resources
- Increasing community partnerships
- Growing scholarship opportunities
- Investing in organizational capacity and leadership development

The need continues to grow, but so does our commitment. Every family deserves a place of hope during life's most difficult moments. *In the year ahead, we will continue building on this foundation—deepening our programs and ensuring families receive comprehensive support when they need it most.*



Thank You

Thank you for believing in our mission.

Because of you, families facing pediatric cancer, organ transplants, serious illness, and palliative care challenges found stability, support, and hope.

Together, we are making a difference—one child, one family, and one story at a time.

Your generosity and commitment extend far beyond financial support or volunteer service. You help create a community where families feel seen, cared for, and never alone during some of the most difficult days of their lives.

Whether providing a safe place to stay, a moment of joy for a sibling, guidance for a parent, or encouragement for a child facing treatment, your partnership makes these life-changing moments possible. The impact of your compassion will continue to be felt long after a family's crisis has passed, leaving a legacy of hope for generations to come.



Imagine you are 7 years old, and your parents have just told you that you'll be moving to Houston, Texas for the next few months as your sibling awaits a liver transplant. Suddenly, the world seems different. You miss the times you spent with your parents and family before their time was taken up by doctor's appointments. You miss the times at school with your friends. You miss the way things used to be.

Now imagine you walk into a place where everyone knows your name. A place where they ask you questions about you, not just your sibling. They ask you about your day, what hobbies you're learning, and what your favorite shows are. You get to spend the afternoon playing sports, painting, laughing, and making memories with your family again. For just a few hours, life isn't about illness; it's about having joy.



This is what Project Joy & Hope provides for children like Micah, a young child with two seriously ill siblings. When asked about what his favorite part of Project Joy & Hope was, he responded by pointing towards all the activities that surrounded him and the staff members who have been there for him since he arrived at the Tulip Project. He explained how much he loves coming in and talking with everyone, and how much he loves being able to enjoy crafts every week.

Project Joy & Hope supports more than just seriously ill children; it provides support and stability to the entire family. It creates a space for joy, laughter, and moments of normalcy during some of life's most difficult seasons.

When our son Maxwell was diagnosed with a congenital diaphragmatic hernia (CDH) during our 20-week anatomy scan, our world changed overnight. What was supposed to be a joyful season quickly became filled with uncertainty, fear, and countless questions about what would come next. We were referred to an incredible team of specialists and surgeons in Houston, and while we were grateful to have access to such excellent care, it meant leaving our home in the Dallas area and relocating for an unknown amount of time.



The challenges we initially encountered felt so overwhelming. We had no family nearby to lean on, and my husband's job did not allow him to relocate. Not to mention we had our 2-year-old son who was just trying to make sense of so much change. We were facing one of the hardest seasons we'd been through while trying to keep our family together.



Project Joy & Hope became so much more than a place to stay. They became a source of stability, comfort, and hope when we needed it most. Having a safe, welcoming home away from home allowed us to focus on what mattered most - being present for our sweet Maxwell. The burden of finding housing, managing expenses, and navigating life in an unfamiliar city was greatly reduced because of the support they provided.



One reason we believe Project Joy & Hope is so special is the people. Every person we encountered treated us with genuine kindness, compassion, and generosity. They didn't just care about Maxwell; they cared about our whole family. They celebrated milestones with us, checked in during difficult days, and made sure our older son felt seen, included, and loved. During a time when so much felt uncertain, their support reminded us that we were not walking this road alone.

Project Joy & Hope gave us more than a roof over our heads. They gave us a sense of community, encouragement, and some normalcy during an incredibly challenging season of life. The kindness shown to our family will never be forgotten.

We will always be grateful for Project Joy & Hope and the role they played in helping our family stay together while Maxwell received the care he needed. Their mission is making a real difference in the lives of families facing unimaginable circumstances, and we are honored to be one of the many families whose lives have been touched by their generosity and love.

Robyn Davis and Family



Each year, the Holiday Gift Program brings moments of joy, comfort, and normalcy to families facing serious childhood illness. Through the generosity of our community, children and siblings receive thoughtfully selected gifts that remind them they are seen, valued, and deeply cared for.



These celebrations go beyond presents—they create lasting memories of hope during a challenging season for the families we serve.





Expense Allocation FY 2025-2026

How Project Joy & Hope invested resources to support its mission.

Project Joy & Hope remains committed to responsible stewardship of donor resources. During FY 2025-2026, 89% of all expenses directly supported programs and services for families facing serious childhood illness, while only 4% supported administration and 7% supported fundraising activities.

This allocation reflects our commitment to maximizing mission impact and channeling resources toward programs that provide stability, support, and hope to the families we serve.



● Administration 4% ● Fundraising 7% ● Program Services 89%



Donor Recognition

We are profoundly grateful to the many individuals, families, foundations, corporations, and community partners who generously supported Project Joy and Hope this year. While we are not listing names, please know that every gift—large and small—has made a meaningful difference in the lives of the families we serve.

Your support allows us to continue providing safe housing, compassionate care, and vital support services for families navigating serious childhood illness, loss, and uncertainty.

A Community of Support

This mission is sustained by a broad and faithful community of donors who believe that every family deserves stability, dignity, and hope during life's most difficult moments. Together, you have helped create a place of refuge where families can focus on what matters most—being together.

Impact of Your Generosity

Because of your collective generosity this year, we were able to:

- Provide safe, stable housing for families receiving treatment in the Texas Medical Center
- Support siblings and parents through specialized programs designed for emotional care and connection
- Offer financial assistance to families facing unexpected hardship
- Award Hope Scholarships to students who have experienced the loss of a parent or sibling
- Expand access to services and strengthen our campus and operational capacity

Partners in Mission

We are also grateful for the continued support of corporate, foundation, faith-based, and community partners who invest in this work and help expand our reach across the Greater Houston region and beyond.

With Deep Gratitude

While programs, buildings, and services make our work visible, it is generosity that makes it possible. We are humbled by the trust placed in us and inspired by the compassion of those who stand beside us.

Together, we are ensuring that no family walks the journey of serious illness or grief alone.

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PROJECT JOY & HOPE

www.joyandhope.org

25th Anniversary



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Established June 2000

For more information, contact Project Joy & Hope at 713-944-6569
or send a message to director@joyandhope.org.

Project Joy & Hope is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Federal Tax ID 76-0646721.