



 Merry Merry to all the Melonhead supporters!

 Hi this is Keelin DePas. Many of the longtime supporters of **The Melonhead Foundation** know my story and have watched me literally grow up through the support of the Melonhead Foundation and activities over the years. I don’t know if all of you are shocked like I am, but can you believe I’m 23 now? We found The Melonhead Foundation during my recovery of a Bone Marrow Transplant in Sept. 2000. I believe it was Winter Solstice of 2001. My recovery from the transplant wasn’t going too well and my mom had found Deb Leone through the hospital and she was desperate. I wasn’t getting better and she was looking for anything that might help me at that point. I know what it’s like firsthand to be sick during the most magical time of the year, as well as on my birthdays and every day in between. I was diagnosed with Leukemia at the age of 3 years old. I was diagnosed as having a fatal disease at 6 years old with zero chance of living without a bone marrow transplant. With a transplant I had a 35% of living. I guess 35% was good enough because I’m writing this letter today! LOL!

Recovery wasn’t easy, a year after the transplant I was just holding on. Still very sick, taking over 35 pills a day, I was a “walking skeleton”, my mom said. When we met Deb on Winter Solstice 2001, we were hoping for a miracle. Enter **The Melonhead Foundation**. With the help of Deb Leone and many of the Melonhead volunteers I became the pilot kid for Camp Wannahealyah in February 2002. Four weekends in February were spent with natural healing, play, nutrition, and love from all who participated. Everything about the camp was not only focused on me but my family also. My parents received support and love as I did, and all of us healed.

Fast forward… today, I’m 23 years old. I am finishing college next semester and on the path for my Master’s degree. I currently volunteerat Cardon’s Children’s Hospital. As a cancer survivor I support **The Melonhead Foundation** which remains very important to me even now. The foundation and all the people involved with Melonhead played a big role in getting my parents and I through the dark days of living with cancer. It’s my turn to give back.

Since I started back in 2013 this fundraiser has gone from a blanket and stuffed animal fundraiser at Christmas to a full-blown event TEMPE FEST 2018 with a goal of raising $20,000. All the proceeds will go towards helping Melonhead families. Please consider donating to my fundraiser. I have attached a sponsor donation form with this letter for your convenience. Every donation helps, no maters how large or small, so all I ask is please help me achieve my goal of making Christmas a bit brighter for children and their families who need some extra special magic during the holiday season.

With Gratitude,

Keelin DePas