

YOUR HEROES CIRCLE  
IMPACT REPORT

ILLUMINATING

THE HEALING PATH FORWARD



Phoenix Children's<sup>®</sup>  
Foundation

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Heroes Circle

## Stories Made Possible by You

In the heart of every patient lies a story waiting to be told—a tale of resilience, hope and the unwavering spirit that defines childhood. At Phoenix Children’s, these stories unfold daily, guided by the steadfast support of our philanthropic community of Heroes Circle members like you.

You are part of a community of light that illuminates the path towards a brighter future for our young patients battling injury and illness. Through your exceptional generosity, you and your fellow Heroes Circle members are making a profound difference in the lives of children and shaping a healthier future for our community and all of Arizona.

### Your impact in action

Your commitment, generosity and dedication make Heroes Circle a transformative force at Phoenix Children’s. Collectively, Heroes Circle has raised significant funding to support our mission of advancing hope, healing and the best health care for children and their families.

### 2023 Heroes Circle impact

- \$5M** given by Heroes Circle members
- 1K+** Heroes Circle members
- 283K+** patients served
- 170+** programs impacted

As impressive as these numbers are, you are more than a number to us. You are a partner in our mission to provide compassionate care and cutting-edge treatment. This support is deeply meaningful to our patients and their families, giving them hope and healing during their most challenging times. We are grateful for your continued dedication and generosity.



SAMANTHA, AGE 16



## How You Journeyed Alongside Samantha

As she navigated a life-changing diagnosis, your support helped her heal every step of the way.

When Samantha woke up in the hospital with tubes in her nose, her first thought was, “What is happening to me?”

At the age of 14, Samantha had been leading a normal teenage life, but all that changed when she was admitted to Phoenix Children’s with severe abdominal pain and bleeding. She was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis, a chronic inflammatory condition that affects her digestive system.

As with many of our young patients, the diagnosis of a chronic illness was the beginning of a long and difficult journey for Samantha. Suddenly, football games and school dances were replaced by medical appointments and hospitalizations. Steroids, medications and blood transfusions failed to alleviate her symptoms, and Samantha’s health continued to deteriorate. She underwent a total colectomy—removal of the entire colon—and surgeons created a stoma, an opening in the abdomen to remove waste from the body.

After surgery, Samantha developed mysterious skin lesions throughout her body and had difficulty breathing. She was transferred to the pediatric intensive care unit (PICU), where she was eventually diagnosed with Sweet syndrome, an anti-inflammatory disease in which the body’s immune system attacks its own tissues.

With her condition diagnosed and an effective treatment plan in place, Samantha was discharged in time to spend Christmas at home. Thanks to your support, her journey to a healthy life is now in full swing, and she and her family are grateful for their Phoenix Children’s care team.

## In the Dark, Your Generosity Brings Light

Though her journey was filled with twists and turns, your support enabled her to get better. Samantha's care involved several programs supported by your philanthropy, each one healing in its own special way.

"Donors are giving opportunities to someone who may never have had the chance to know 'normalcy,' which was taken from me when I got sick. I missed the first two years of high school," Samantha says. "Donors help bring the outside in for normalcy, and it matters."

### You empower frontline nurses

The exceptional pediatric nursing staff at Phoenix Children's provided Samantha not only with outstanding medical care, but also with emotional support. Nurse Brittany on Samantha's floor was a big motivation for the struggling teen.

"She motivated me to keep going," says Samantha. "She would sit and hold my hand and give me a long speech about not giving up. She wouldn't leave until I believed what she was saying."

Our Clinical Nursing Attending Program is one of the 170+ programs fueled by Heroes Circle members. Seasoned nurse leaders are placed in positions of oversight to support other nurses and physicians to identify and address issues as early as possible. Since the inception of the program, Phoenix Children's has had zero patient safety events.



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*Nurse Brittany motivated me to keep going.*

SAMANTHA

## You help paws heal

Phoenix Children's Animal-Assisted Therapy Program promotes healing through therapeutic animal interactions.

Samantha remembers the name of every therapy dog that helped her cope with her pain and anxiety and assisted with physical therapy. Whether it was Tilly, Gertie or Checkers, these furry animals were her connection to the outside world. They also helped her relearn how to walk after being bed-bound for so long.

"Gertie was so gentle and strong," Samantha says. "She intuitively knew what to do and would lean her body into me when I felt weak."

The Animal-Assisted Therapy Program is funded entirely by philanthropy, and it exists only because of generosity like

yours. Heroes Circle members ensure that when a child is having a rough day, a visit from a therapy dog or cat is available to turn everything around.

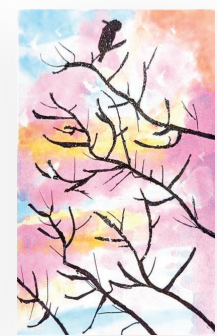


## You give the joy of healing

Heroes Circle members ensure that many of our programs provide patients with safe spaces for learning, coping and healing.

Samantha credits many of the programs at Phoenix Children's with helping her get through her darkest moments. Whether it was meditating to cope with her anxiety, making art to express her emotions, or reconnecting with joy through playing games, these programs made a difference in her life—and your donation made it possible.

The Child Life Zone, a procedure-free area in the hospital designed for playing and having fun, was Samantha's favorite place during her hospital stay. But it was art therapy that pulled her through. The art therapists helped her escape her pain and anxiety by giving her paint and a blank canvas. Samantha's artwork from her time in the hospital will appear in the 2025 Phoenix Children's calendar, where it will be seen by thousands of community members.



Samantha's artwork



Samantha's  
view from her  
hospital room  
overlooking  
Ignite Hope



## Heroes Circle Illuminates the Path Forward

Toward the end of her hospital stay, Samantha and her family witnessed Ignite Hope, Phoenix Children's annual candlelight walk, where thousands of community members come together to show support and spread holiday cheer to patients and families in the hospital.

"This event made Sammy's night," says Samantha's mom, Stephanie.

"We had the opportunity to view from the third-floor family room in the East Tower. It brought a much-needed smile and newfound hope in getting better. It brought tears to my eyes when Sam suggested, 'Maybe when the doctors and nurses get me healthy, we can walk next year.'"

Much like the small flames carried by thousands of caring individuals against the backdrop of the night sky at Ignite Hope, Heroes Circle members serve as a collective beacon of hope, illuminating the path forward and out of the darkness.

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SAMANTHA

## Sustain Your Impact

At the heart of Heroes Circle members' giving, a profound commitment to philanthropy intertwines with the passion to make a difference in the lives of our young patients. Through this commitment, Heroes Circle members come together to form a community bound by a shared vision—a vision where every child receives the care and support they deserve.

We look forward to achieving even greater milestones in the years to come with your partnership, knowing we are better together.

**To learn more about how you can maximize your impact as a Heroes Circle member, please contact a gift officer.**



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**Heroes Circle** is a community of dedicated individuals who contribute \$1,000 or more in a calendar year to Phoenix Children's and share a passion for the health and well-being of our patients. Together, Heroes Circle members fuel the lifesaving programs and services that help us provide the best possible care for our patients and their families during their time of need.

This community of our most dedicated donors helps transform not just individual lives, but also the very fabric of pediatric health care in Arizona. The Heroes Circle commitment stands as evidence of the power of collective giving, inspiring a legacy of better health and brighter futures for generations to come.

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