

Annual Report





“

Starlight didn't just support our cancer kid – they embraced our whole family too. **Starlight's support encouraged me to keep going even when it didn't seem possible**, or I was running on empty. Their care provided invaluable comfort and clarity to our entire family.”

Amanda, Ashton's Mom

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To Our Donors, Fundraisers, and Partners,

Moments of play and happiness are essential to the care of seriously ill kids. Equally important, is our internal focus on what's 'essential' to go further and serve deeper than ever before.

We prioritized fundraising activities with the greatest potential to reach more children. In 2025, we increased revenue by 16% and extended our programs to 3.2 million children, a 24% increase from the previous year.

As our reach expands, we concentrate on equitable distribution of programs to communities where resources are stretched. Nearly half of our network hospitals and facilities care for medically underserved and vulnerable populations. While reaching more children is always our goal, we are committed to reaching the kids who need us most.

For many of the children we serve, illness continues after discharge, affecting both them and their families at home. Our Starlight Families program bridges this gap by delivering resources directly to families managing chronic or serious, long-term illnesses. We expanded our families by 23%, strengthening our support both in the hospital and in the everyday hard moments in between.

Behind our growth in 2025 is a community that never loses sight of why this mission matters. Our staff, donors, fundraisers, and partners generously help carry the organization forward. Together, we make sure that childhood illness is met with the best parts of care—laughter, creativity, and the chance for kids to be kids, not just patients.

The best is yet to come. We enter 2026 with more resolve than ever before. The children and families we serve deserve nothing less.

With deep gratitude,



Adam Garone
Chief Executive Officer,
Starlight Children's Foundation





Mission

Starlight Children's Foundation delivers happiness to seriously ill children and their families.

No matter the length, hospital stays can be lonely, stressful, and scary. That's why Starlight exists. We make hospitals easier places for kids. Our vital programs help prepare kids for treatments, distract them from endless pokes or pain, alleviate stress, and ease boredom – because healing begins with happiness™.

Nearly half of our hospital network serves medically underserved populations, providing critical support to children and hospitals in these communities.



**Happiness is essential
to care**

When a child is facing a serious illness, kids need more than medicine.

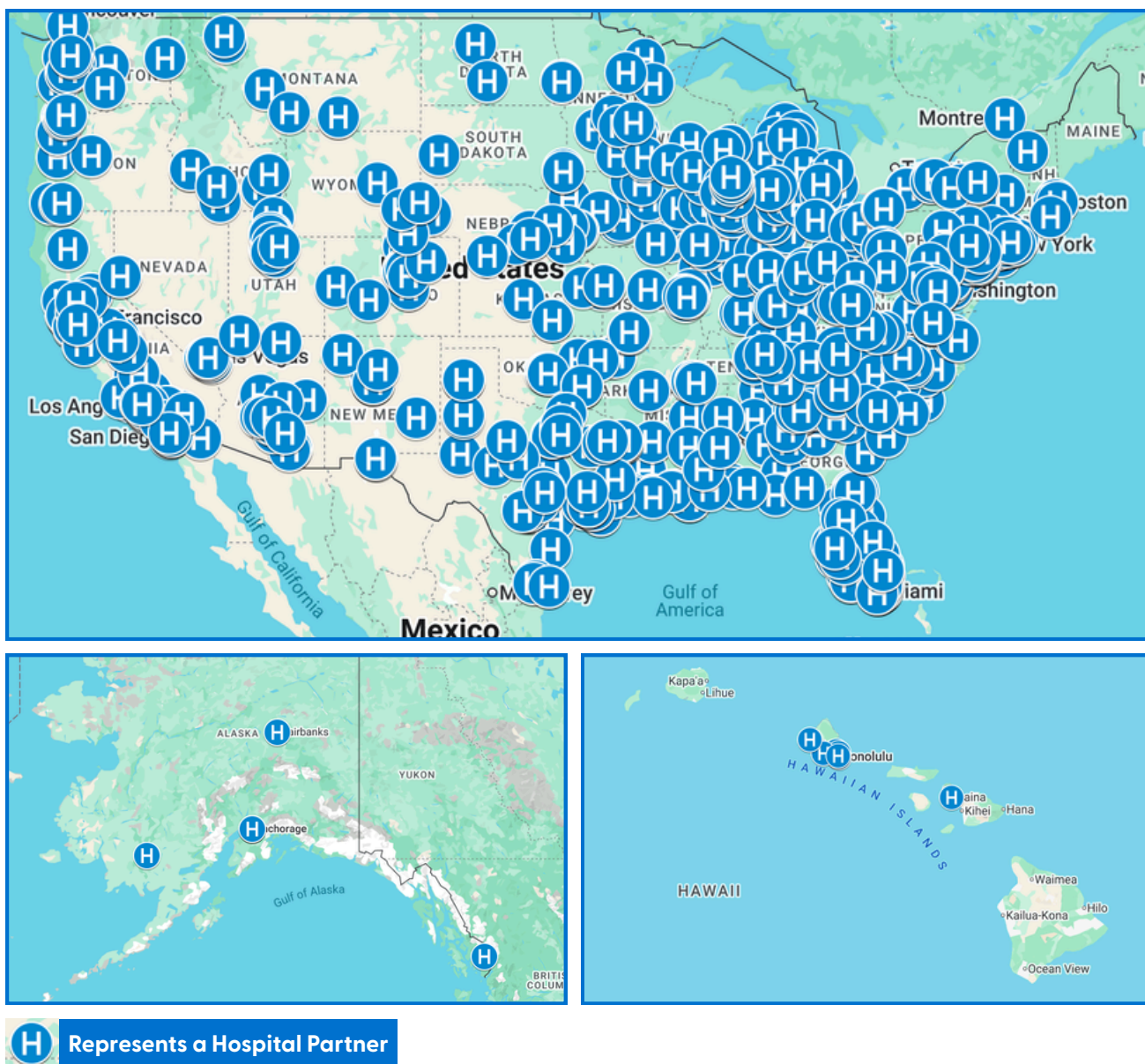
During a hospital stay, children can feel anxious, overwhelmed, and disempowered, making it harder for them to cope. These feelings can make treatments more difficult, cooperation challenging, and put additional stress on both children and their families.

Starlight programs deliver happiness—a critical part of helping children feel safe, engaged and supported. When kids feel happy, pain levels decrease and blood pressure steadies, making it easier for hospital staff to give children the care they need. More than 98% of hospital partners report that Starlight programs help put kids at ease and combat their anxieties and stress while in the hospital. That calm creates space for something more. In fact, 89% of healthcare staff said Starlight programs help them teach children coping skills.

These transformative benefits go beyond a single hospital stay. Through these play programs, children build trust and rapport with their care team, leading to better treatment compliance and more positive attitudes towards care long-term.

Healing Begins with Happiness™, and for every child facing a serious illness, Starlight programs are not nice-to-haves — **they're an essential part of care.**





We delivered Starlight programs to more than

✦✦✦✦ **3.3 Million Kids** ✦✦✦✦
at 861 Hospitals

starlight[™] Programs



Starlight programs are an integral part of care for seriously ill kids, supporting them at every stage of their healthcare journey. Starlight prioritizes delivering its programs to hospitals and pediatric care facilities serving underserved and vulnerable communities, with more than 45% of programs reaching these children and families.



Starlight Gaming

Powered by Nintendo, Starlight Gaming Stations and Handheld devices bring play and routine into unfamiliar environments. Gaming offers opportunities for decision-making, goal-setting, and accomplishment, restoring a sense of control and normalcy – reducing stress and improving mood for millions of kids over the past 33 years.



2,238,289
play sessions



94,912
gowns and pants delivered

Starlight Hospital Gowns



Designed for privacy and comfort, Starlight Gowns replace traditional hospital gowns with colorful, character-themed designs. They help children feel confident, in control, and less anxious during that first moment of changing into a gown, allowing them to relax and open up more freely with their care teams. Over 93 percent of hospital partners reported easier conversations, and 92 percent reported more opportunities for meaningful interaction.



Starlight Toy Deliveries

Simple toys can brighten the hardest days and become therapeutic tools for kids. They can provide distraction, encourage emotional expression, and help kids build trust with their care teams. Over 78 percent of hospital partners report that toys created meaningful opportunities for patient interaction. Nearly half reported a reduced need to sedate patients.



637,744
delivered to kids



302,922
kids rode a Hero Wagon

Starlight Hero Wagons



Designed by Radio Flyer for Starlight, Hero Wagons turn hospital hallways into joy rides – encouraging kids to venture beyond their rooms, connect with other patients, and feel like kids again. With IV pole attachments and easy-to-sanitize surfaces, they're built for hospital life while delivering adventure.



Starlight Families

The Starlight Families program bridges the gap between hospital and home, giving families the tools they need beyond hospital walls – from coping skills and pain management resources to diagnosis-specific support, all developed by Child Life Specialists.



1,260
families in our network



Starlight Gave My Family Powerful Signs of **Hope**

Starlight's programs **reduce kids' anxiety**, making it easier for them to engage with care and trust providers. This supports treatment follow-through and fosters lifelong positive health behaviors.

Around January, our 10-year-old son, Magnus, was diagnosed with transverse myelitis. In a matter of three days, our active, playful little boy went from running around the playground to losing his ability to walk, grip, and control his bowel and bladder. He was suddenly completely immobile.

The first weeks were overwhelming and frightening. Around the two-week mark, we began to see small but powerful signs of hope – he was able to sit upright with support and make simple hand gestures like a thumbs-up or peace sign. From the moment Magnus started to regain sensation, Starlight was there.

Starlight showed up with video games and plushies, immediately lifting his spirits. It made the hospital feel a little less heavy. And having something like Mario Kart 8 Deluxe on the Starlight Gaming Station to look forward to after hours of treatment gave him motivation. It broke up the day. It gave him something normal. Something fun. More than the fun, though, it gave him back a sense of dignity.

In a season where so much felt out of his control, he didn't feel different in those moments. He felt like himself. Confident. Engaged. Excited. And during one of the darkest and most uncertain times of our lives, he was able to create memories he'll probably carry with him forever.

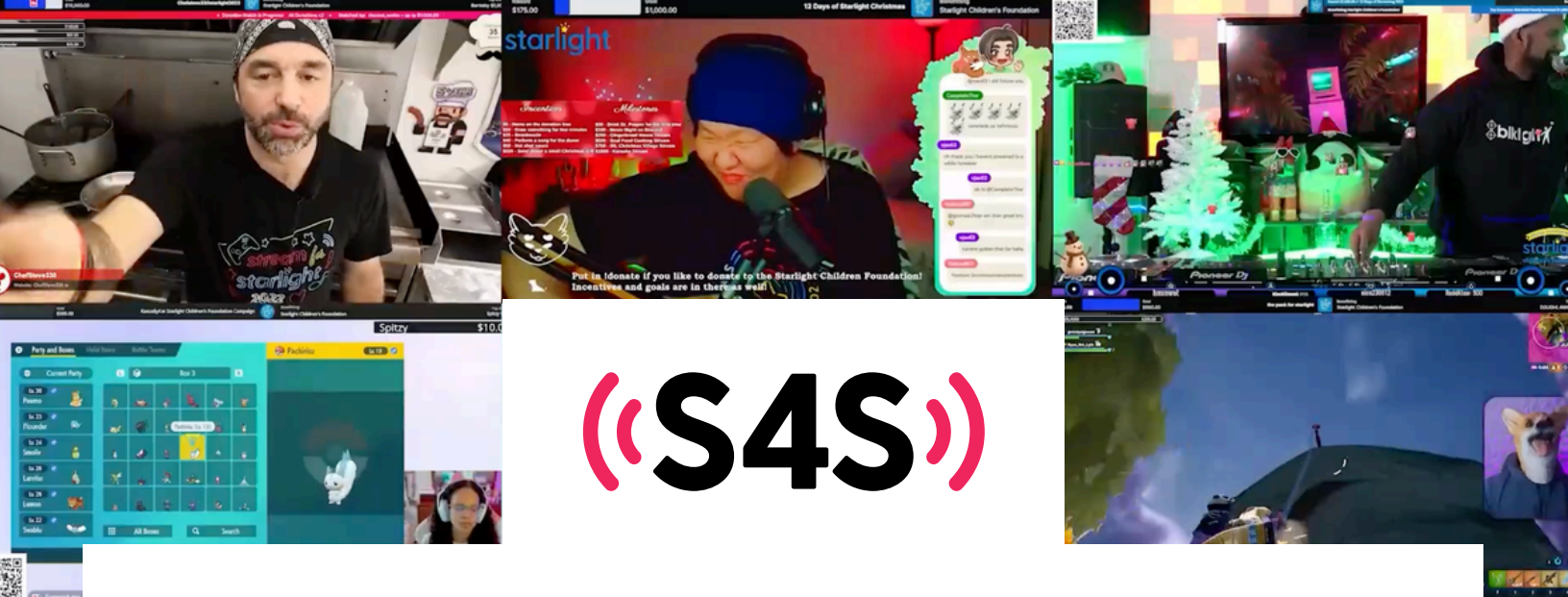
Those happy moments felt monumental to us. And as his dad, watching and experiencing that alongside him... that was just wow. For me, it was a reminder that even in the middle of something overwhelming, there's still room for joy. And that changes everything.

We know we still have a long road ahead, but the experiences Starlight created for Magnus have become beautiful, lifelong memories in the midst of profound uncertainty.

For that, we are endlessly grateful.

Mike, Magnus' Dad





((S4S))

Since 2019, the Stream For Starlight community has never stopped believing in the power of play. Now, just a handful of years later, Starlight is celebrating an incredible milestone by raising \$3 million. More than 340 creators went live in 2025, raising a total of \$475,220 through 9,287 donations during livestreamed events. The year consisted of six total campaign moments, including Starlight's recurring annual campaigns and new campaigns, such as May the Fourth be Streamed, Play Week, and Stream Halloween. Some standout moments include the Starlight x Twitch NYC Meetup in collaboration with the Latin Guild and becoming the chosen charity for the Midwest Gaming Developer Conference. S4S also hosted their first-ever in-person streaming event supported by Tantrum Merch, raising \$40,000.

2025 By the Numbers

Spring Stream	September Stream	12 Days of Streaming
\$134,075 raised	\$90,000 raised	\$157,399 raised
135 creators	120 creators	165 creators

Campaigns & Talent Activations

Upside-Down Challenge

The social media Upside-Down Challenge from mid-August through September had one simple but powerful goal: raise awareness and stand up for kids and their families whose lives are upended by hospitalization. Supporters were encouraged to creatively flip photos to demonstrate what many hospitalized kids experience – disorientation, vulnerability, and uncertainty.

To balance creativity with empathy and deepen audience connection, the initiative emphasized that no child should feel alone as they navigate their medical journey, regardless of diagnosis. Celebrities, fandom groups, and community members personalized the challenge by sharing fun, eye-catching, upside-down images, such as flipped selfies, creative photo edits, and humorous stunts. This visual disruption stopped the scroll and naturally drove curiosity and conversation.

Celebrity ambassadors – including Jack Black, Jimmy Kimmel, Kate Hudson, Lance Bass and others – joined the effort, helping build momentum and expand the campaign's reach.

While the challenge brought attention to the hardships hospitalized kids and their families experience, it also introduced new audiences to Starlight's mission, expanded the visibility of Starlight's work and inspired greater support for children facing serious illnesses.

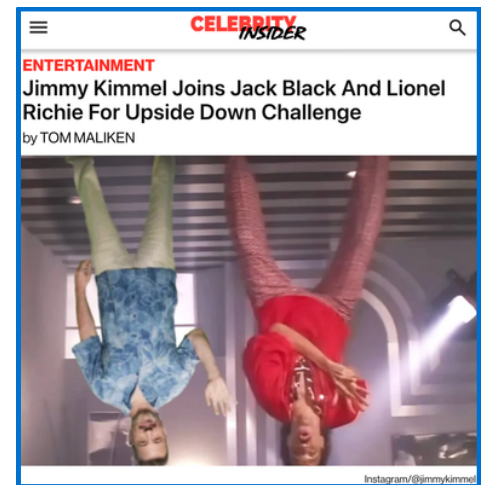
It even earned organic media placements, including a feature in Celebrity Insider.

Reader responses reinforced the campaign's impact:

“Leave it to Kimmel & Jack Black to turn the world upside down and make it brighter for kids.”

“It seemed to me my phone flipped upside down for a moment.”

“Such a clever way to grab attention while making the message unforgettable... empathy-driven creativity that sticks.”



200%

increase in social media
impressions & reach



43%

boosted social media
link clicks



88%

increase in traffic to
the Upside-Down
Challenge page



\$1M+
raised

86,500
kids experienced
happiness through toys

528
children's hospitals and
pediatric care facilities
received toy deliveries

Through the Give Happiness campaign, held each November and December, Starlight supported thousands of kids nationwide by delivering toys and bringing holiday magic right into their hospital rooms, ensuring they didn't miss out on the fun and joy that defines this time of the year.

During a season when giving is top of mind for many Americans, the annual holiday campaign mobilized supporters to fund toy deliveries that spark moments of play, comfort, and connection in children's hospitals across the country.

To help amplify awareness and inspire giving, celebrities and athletes participated in a pass-the-gift social media campaign and distributed toys to children in hospitals across the country, strengthening emotional connections to the cause and broadening its reach.

The campaign exceeded expectations, raising more than \$1 million and delivering happiness to 86,500 children at 528 children's hospitals and pediatric care facilities nationwide. Starlight is especially grateful to partners Kendra Scott and GlassyBaby, whose cause-marketing initiatives helped make this impact possible.

Thanks to the following celebrities, athletes and supporters for their contributions:

Oliver Bearman (TGR Haas F1 Team), Jack Black, Steve Burns, Ravi Cabot-Conyers, Daniel Carlson & AJ Cole (LV Raiders), Crystal and Charity Carter, Missy Franklin, Tony Goldwyn, Dave Koz, Los Angeles Ghostbusters, Ladd McConkey (LA Chargers), NinePointFive, Matt Olson (Atlanta Braves), Michael Phelps, Quiltoni, Neel Sethi, Giancarlo Stanton (NY Yankees), Tantrum Merch, Ashley Argota, Mick Torres, Jose Trevino (Cincinnati Reds), Tristan Wirfs (Tampa Bay Buccaneers)

Special thanks to our hospital partners:

Bernard & Miller Duker Children's Hospital at Albany Med and Miller Children's & Women's Hospital in Long Beach.

Starlight Partners

Starlight's impact is made possible by the generous support of its corporate partners. Their contributions – whether through funding, gifts-in-kind, or expertise – help create meaningful moments of happiness for children receiving care nationwide.



OFFICIAL
FERRARI DEALER
FERRARI BEVERLY HILLS



Through the generosity and commitment of corporate supporters, seriously ill kids and their families experience the transformative power of play through Starlight programs. Starlight is incredibly grateful for the organizations that help advance its mission. Here are just a few examples of how supporters turned shopping, gaming, and entertainment into powerful forces for good in 2025.



KENDRA SCOTT

Starlight introduced a brand-new partnership with jewelry company, Kendra Scott. The partnership kicked off during the Give Happiness holiday campaign, when Kendra Scott stores hosted a change round-up, allowing shoppers to donate their extra change to Starlight. The company reinforced its commitment to Starlight's mission by donating 20 percent of all online and in-store sales on Giving Tuesday. The campaign raised more than \$470,000, helping bring more of Starlight's transformative programs to kids in hospitals across the country.

WICKED SAINTS: WORLD REBORN

Wicked Saints Studios' collaboration with Starlight has created a new, innovative way for mobile gamers worldwide to become real-life heroes by making a difference in the lives of hospitalized kids and their families by sending them uplifting messages. The interactive story games are “wickedly” fun and connect changemakers with causes they care about. Through World Reborn, more than 8,000 players sent personalized messages of encouragement to children in hospitals during its beta launch, delivering happiness from the digital world to the real world. The partnership was featured in Forbes for “turning Gen Z into real-world heroes.”



DISNEY AND MORE

This year marked 24 years of collaboration between Disney and Starlight. A highlight from the year included a special Movie Party in A Box delivery to celebrate the release of the live-action *Lilo and Stitch* movie. While the delivery went to many of Starlight's hospital partners, Disney and Starlight hosted a special visit at Sutter Children's Center in Sacramento to commemorate the movie's premiere. Some other highlights from the year included the annual delivery of Disney Halloween costumes, a princess-themed hospital event in Orlando, and a collaboration with Glassy Baby, a candle company that created products themed to ABC's *Grey's Anatomy* to raise funds for Starlight.

Starlight Supporters

Through fundraising campaigns, livestreams, special events and grassroots efforts, individuals and fandom groups transformed their passion into meaningful impact. Here are a few of the inspiring fundraisers who helped make it all possible.

Ghostbusters Fan Groups

A total of 35 Ghostbusters fan groups across the country raised a combined \$66,000 for Starlight. Veteran groups like the Los Angeles and Orlando Ghostbusters had record-breaking years, and a wave of first-year groups hit the ground running, thanks to the launch of the Ghostbusters Give Back initiative with Sony Pictures Entertainment. Together, Ghostbusters fan groups are helping Starlight deliver even more Ghostbusters-themed Hospital Gowns to children across the country.



Steve Burns

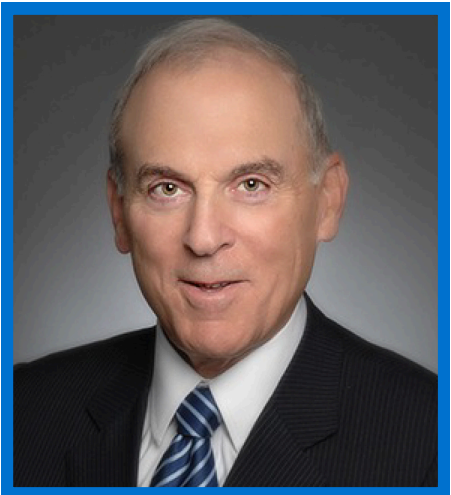
A beloved childhood icon, Steve Burns of “Blue’s Clues” has become one of Starlight’s most impactful celebrity supporters. Leveraging his fan engagements as a fundraising opportunity, Steve began donating proceeds from autograph sessions at fan conventions across the country. His dedication to Starlight’s mission has been extraordinary. Beyond fundraising, Steve regularly visits Starlight partner hospitals while traveling for convention appearances, taking time to meet with kids and families, deliver toys, and create meaningful moments of happiness. [Here’s his visit to East Tennessee Children’s Hospital.](#)

Sammy Kass

In honor of his Bar Mitzvah, 13-year-old Sammy Kass chose to give back to the hospital that gave so much to him. Sammy hit his goal to place a Starlight Gaming Station at Maria Fareri Children’s Hospital in New York, where he received a life-saving liver transplant. Sammy even visited the hospital to see his impact in action.

Starlight Award Honorees

Starlight honors those who have raised the bar in advancing its mission to deliver happiness to seriously ill kids and their families. Congratulations to the 2025 class of Starlight Award honorees!



Lifetime Achievement Award

Since 1997, Henry Fields, former senior counsel and partner at Morrison & Foerster LLP, has served on Starlight's board in several leadership roles, helping strengthen the firm's longstanding support. His efforts helped secure more than 15,000 hours of pro bono legal services valued at \$8.4 million. Though retired, he continues to serve on the board.



Golden Heart Award

Longstanding celebrity ambassadors, Mena Suvari and Mckenna Grace, have supported Starlight for over 18 years and 10 years, respectively. From their early involvements to current contributions, Mena and Mckenna continue to uplift children and their families in meaningful ways.



As a mother, supporting Starlight Children's Foundation over the years has taken on an even deeper meaning than when I first teamed up with them in 2007. Collaborating with an organization that spreads joy and improves the hospital experience for kids is truly a blessing.

– Mena Suvari



Hospital of the Year Awards

Cohen Children's Medical Center and Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women & Children were recognized for their exceptional engagement with Starlight's programs, particularly in their care for young patients, collaboration on storytelling and helping Starlight build deeper relationships with key partners.



Golden Hero Awards

The Golden Hero Award recognizes care teams and donors who have demonstrated their unwavering support for improving the hospital experience for children.

- Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Arthur M. Blank Hospital: Child Life, The Zone and Seacrest Studio teams
- Kevin Prefer, \$30,000 raised
- Debbie and Glen Bickerstaff, \$1 million donated since 2004

Content Creator of the Year Awards

Collectively, these content creators have raised more than \$90,000 for Starlight, rallying their communities to raise awareness and support the cause of bringing happiness to children in hospitals.



NinePointFive



Quiltoni



TheJang

Community Fundraisers



With Team Starlight, every mile helps a hospitalized kid smile. Since 2022, hundreds of charity runners have united to raise over **\$700,000** in support of Starlight's mission. In 2025, the team raised \$220,000 across three *runDisney* races, supported by 2,000 individual donations.



Michael Stickel-Reed

Michael Stickel-Reed has been fundraising with Team Starlight for the past two years and was recognized as one of Starlight's top fundraisers for 2025.



Charity & Crystal Carter

Sisters Charity and Crystal have been part of Team Starlight for more than three years. They use creative fundraising tactics, including creating homemade bracelets, to inspire donations.



Jenny Garby

Having raised over \$11,000 in the last two years, Jenny Garby is a grassroots fundraiser who uses the good old-fashioned bake sale method.

Colossal's Face of Halloween

Now in its second year, the Face of Halloween campaign, benefiting Starlight, brought together more than 226,000 fans who unveiled their most creative costumes and shared their spookiest stories to earn community votes. Hosted by Colossal, the campaign transformed fandom into purpose.

Celebrity hosts Jamie Lee Curtis, Matthew Lillard, and Kane Hodder helped rally Halloween fans, while competitors collectively raised \$3.2 million to expand Starlight's core and Halloween-themed programs to seriously ill kids nationwide.

Ollie Graves, a circus artist who has a deep passion for horror movies and heavy metal, was crowned the 2025 Face of Halloween. Having been hospitalized as a child, Ollie had a personal connection to Starlight through her child life specialist.



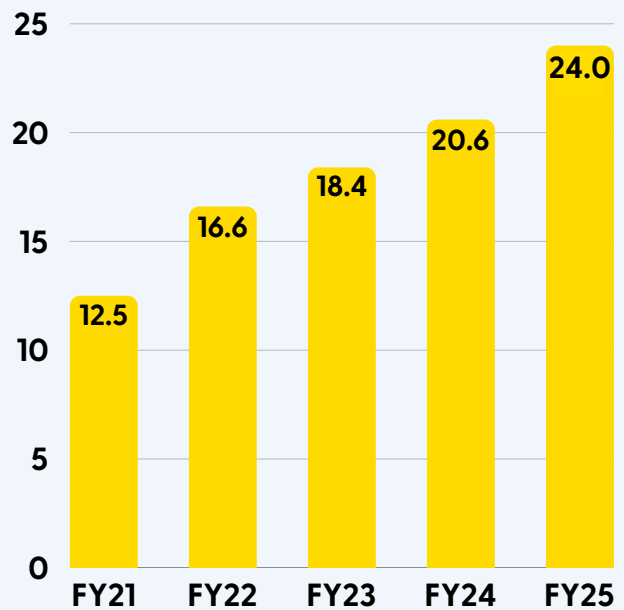
Ollie Graves with Jamie Lee Curtis

Financials

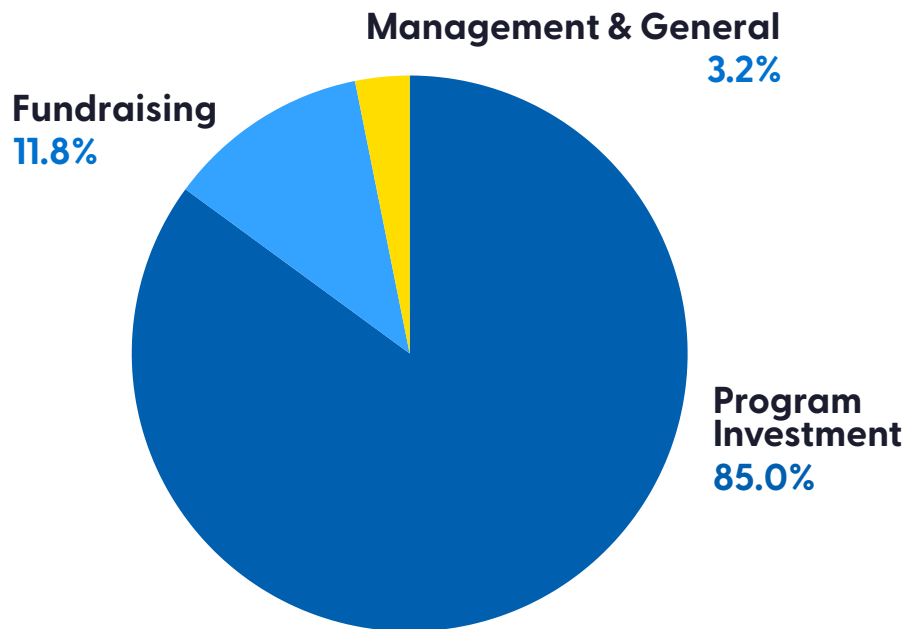
**\$24.0
MILLION**

Annual Revenue Raised
in Fiscal Year 2025

Assets
FY25 \$20.0
FY24 \$20.8



Allocation of Expenses



FY25 Total: \$25.1M

Program Investment: \$21.3M, 85.0%

Fundraising: \$3.0M, 11.8%

Management & General: \$0.8M, 3.2%

Leadership & Governance

OUR BOARD

Alisa Bowen, Board Chair

Howard Cohl, Board Vice Chair, Nominations & Governance Committee Chair, Development Committee Chair

Brian Karmelich, Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair

Shaunna Hatcher, Secretary

Shawn Harpen, Audit Committee Chair

Kira Goldberg, HR & Compensation Committee Chair

Carol Levy, Marketing & Development Committee Chair

Peter Samuelson, Co-Founder

Don James

Thomas Chou

Sarah Cramer

Patricia Lady

Rechelle Porter, CCLS

Jeff Small

Dr. Paula Whiteman

Dawn Wilcox Verrecchia

Steven Spielberg, Chairman Emeritus

John Rosenberg, Finance Committee Advisory Member

Henry Fields, Audit Committee Advisory Member

Ron Burkhart, Development Committee Advisory Member

BOARD COMMITTEES

Board Committees focus on key areas of governance and report directly to the Board of Directors. These committees include:

Executive Committee

- Acts in a consultative capacity for the CEO
- Reviews, deliberates upon and decides matters of significance
- Handles time-sensitive matters that may need speedy action
- Collaborates with CEO in the preparation of Board meeting calendar and agendas

Finance Committee

- Provides financial oversight
- Reviews financial statements prepared by management for integrity and timeliness
- Collaborates with management to develop and approve operating cash flow budgets
- Monitors adherence to budgets
- Oversees compliance of investment and reserve policies established by the Board.

Compensation Committee

- Recommends to the Board the compensation of the CEO and CFO to assure such compensation is just and reasonable
- Oversees implementation of compensation policy

Audit Committee

- Monitors the system of internal controls
- Recommends to the Board selection of independent auditors
- Specifies the scope of external audits
- Supervises internal and external audits

Nominations & Governance Committee

- Determines the skills and qualities needed on the Board
- Evaluates, recruits and nominates prospective directors for election by the Board
- Takes the lead in evaluating the performance of directors

Marketing & Development Committee

- Provides strategic oversight
- Evaluates goals and provides recommendations for improvement.
- Advises on the allocation of resources to maximize the effectiveness
- Stays abreast of emerging trends

“

Starlight allows normalization and play to be more accessible for hospitals, especially smaller hospitals like ours, through their donations. We can bring smiles to kids' faces and make them less scared through play.

SHANNON TAYLOR, CCLS, CHRISTIANACARE

“

Having something like Mario Kart 8 Deluxe on the Starlight Gaming Station to look forward to after hours of treatment **gave Magnus motivation ...** More than the fun, though, **it gave him back a sense of dignity.**

MIKE, MAGNUS' DAD

“

Lake was terrified of the big hospital bed and would not sleep in it, even after surgery. In the Starlight Radio Flyer Hero Wagon, he was happy, felt safe and slept in it for the rest of his hospital stay. Lake was able to get the rest he needed to heal, and I saw how **this wagon really made a difference in Lake's healing process.**

TERESA, HEAD NURSE & LAKE'S GRANDMOTHER

“

Ninety-five percent of our kids are on Medicaid or uninsured. They're not bringing toys with them. Many don't have toys at home. **Giving them Starlight toys to help calm them down**—make them more willing and ready to participate in procedures—really helps with **cooperation, coping,** and **reducing trauma.**

CERTIFIED CHILD LIFE SPECIALIST, ILLINOIS

“

The siblings of the babies I deliver often get **lovely surprises and games that Starlight helps to provide.** It eases the anxiety of having a sick sibling and also helps bond families going through a difficult time ... Knowing that I can help bring joy in their hospital stays makes me feel happy and grateful to support such a special organization.

ANNA, TEAM STARLIGHT FUNDRAISER & OBSTETRICIAN AT NEMOURS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL



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