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- ▶ **Kevin Chandler**, Program Coordinator

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- ▶ **FS Food Group**
 - **Mama Ricotta's**
 - **Midwood Smokehouse**
 - **Paco's Tacos & Tequila**
 - **Plate Perfect Catering**
 - **Yafo Kitchen**
- ▶ **Hawthorne's NY Pizza**
- ▶ **Griffin Masonry**
- ▶ **Blue Dot Read-Mix**
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- ▶ **Windsor Jewelers**
- ▶ **Charlie's Heart Foundation**
- ▶ **24 Foundation**



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Claire's Army is an exempt organization as described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, EIN 46-3056024.

SERVE FAMILIES. LOVE KIDS. FIGHT CANCER.



Annual Report as of Fiscal Year 6.30.23



Claire's Army didn't begin with a cancer diagnosis, it began with the birth of our beautiful little girl on August 30, 2009.

Kevin and I both grew up in Charlotte, which allowed us to build an incredible and wide-reaching group of friends and colleagues. When Claire was diagnosed with Stage IV Neuroblastoma in May of 2011, before she was even two years old, this wonderful group stepped up, acted, and rallied behind our family. These loving people became known as Claire's Army. They did everything possible to take care of our family, which allowed us to focus on Claire's treatment and soak up every moment with her. Claire exuded an all-inclusive spirit. Her empathy, unconditional love, and ability to connect with whomever she met was boundless. She was a ray of light to everyone she touched, even on her hardest days. Her new "friends" were her nurses, doctors, child-life specialists, and fellow patients.

Unfortunately, our journey with Claire's childhood cancer was cut short with her death on January 17, 2012, only eight months after her diagnosis. Our Army helped us daily through our grief and healing. While Neuroblastoma stole her little body from us, Claire's legacy of unconditional love and encouragement will never end.

Claire's Army "officially" was founded in 2013, and we are overwhelmed at how quickly we have grown to serve the many childhood cancer patients and their families with timely, tangible, and targeted support. Claire's Army helps in ways that are unique, intentional, and consistent.

Our first Claire Package was given to a newly diagnosed patient in November of 2013 at Novant Health Hemby Children's Hospital (where Claire was treated). Today, thanks to our generous Army, we are running 3 powerful programs at Hemby and Levine Children's, impacting hundreds of patients from around the country who travel to and from Charlotte for treatment.



Thank you for investing in and engaging with our mission! Claire's Army continues to respond to our patient families' needs and make a life-changing impact. I know Claire can see us all pushing forward to make life better for children like her and families like ours.

Emily Ratliff,
Claire's Army
Executive Director



EMILY
and
CLAIRE
RATLIFF

MISSION

Claire's Army strives to act as God's hands and feet for families fighting childhood cancer by supporting their daily responsibilities, allowing them to put time and focus on their child.



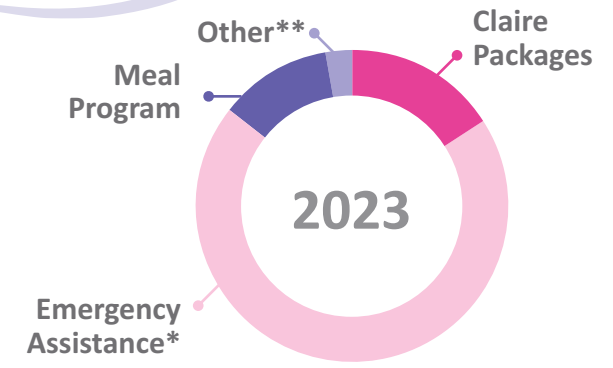
Opkalla team

IMPACT Spending

22
FUNDRAISING EVENT VOLUNTEERS

45
MEAL PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS

18
LEAD PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS



	2023
Claire Packages	\$46,669
Emergency Assistance*	\$205,248
Meal Program	\$34,416
Other**	\$7,503
TOTAL Program Service Expenses	\$293,836

* Includes Mortgage, Rent, Utilities, Travel, Transportation, Bereavement Support, and Other
** Includes Hospital Assistance and Hospital/Clinical Support





Claire's Army is there at diagnosis, when parents have received news they never expected. Hospital staff at both Hemby Children's and Levine Children's Hospitals enter the patient's room with a Claire Package – a tote filled with hospital essentials, gasoline and grocery gift cards – hope and encouragement from one family to another, letting them know that they are not alone.

ISSUE

The child/parents/caregivers have just received very shocking news of a cancer diagnosis; their mind is immediately filled with fear, despair and worry. They're no longer in their home, but living in a hospital room or sitting in a clinic room with none of their stuff with them; lacking supplies and any desire or time to leave their child

ACTION

On site is a Claire Package – a utility tote filled with hospital essentials like bathmat and towels, a journal for taking notes, beverage tumblers, water bottles, toothpaste and toothbrushes, and \$100 each in gasoline/grocery gift cards to financially support them immediately, and a handwritten note with encouragement

IMPACT/RESPONSE

Every patient family in Charlotte receives one, delivered by hospital care staff within 48 hours of diagnosis, so they know they're not alone from the beginning of a long journey

"Thank you, Claire's Army, from the bottom of our hearts, for the generous donations to support our family while my daughter battles cancer. We received the inpatient care package early on and it brought the biggest smile, like a ray of needed sunshine. In addition, being able to put some of the financial worries aside during this journey has been a blessing and extremely comforting."

"The ray of light you provided us certainly drives out some of the darkness. Thank you again!"

- Sarah, mom to daughter in treatment



"Approximately 200 children are in active treatment between both Levine Children's and Hemby Children's Hospital. Annually, another 100 children are newly diagnosed with childhood cancer at these two medical centers."

WHAT'S INSIDE A CLAIRE PACKAGE





Claire's Army is alongside families during their inpatient stays for treatment or emergencies at the hospital. We partner with local restaurants and amazingly dependable volunteers to deliver delicious family-style meals to Hemby Children's and Levine Children's Hospital, at **NO CHARGE**. Since 2019 our volunteers have delivered over 2,800 family meals.

ISSUE

Hospital cafeteria food is the only option; a lack of resources to order take-out, lack of time or energy to think about dinner for family; opportunity could be missed to eat with one another; lack of money; inconvenience to cook in hospital

ACTION

Claire's Army partners with local restaurants and diligent volunteers to deliver warm, delicious dinners directly to the hospital at no charge

IMPACT/RESPONSE

Families have access to a variety of quality foods, they have options. Not only is it free but it is also convenient, giving families the opportunity to dine together. This is something families can look forward to each week that is within their control in the inconsistent world they are facing. These meals not only provide fuel for the body, but they provide options, a moment of normalcy, comfort and quality time for the family

"Claire's Army has provided our patient families with a sense of normalcy, peace and understanding during what is often the most challenging time of their lives. The consistent meals from local restaurants provide the opportunity for families to eat together without having to worry about what to feed everyone, eating hospital food yet again or spend time away from their sick child to get a meal they will enjoy."

- Kristen Beaury, Certified Child Life Specialist, Novant Hemby



Anne Marie Young delivering Hawthorne's NY Pizza

HEARTFELT THANKS TO OUR RESTAURANT PARTNERS

- MAMA RICOTTA'S
- MIDWOOD SMOKEHOUSE
- PACO'S TACOS & TEQUILA
- YAFO KITCHEN
- HAWTHORNES NY PIZZA

★ **570** ★
DONATED DINNERS

WERE DELIVERED TO PATIENT FAMILIES THIS FISCAL YEAR

Restaurant Partner,
Paco's Tacos & Tequila





During a crisis, we've got you. Parents and caregivers are forced to adapt their lifestyle and often either have to quit their jobs or drastically reduce their hours to take care of their sick children. Research shows over 60% of families report losing more than 50% of their income since the time of cancer diagnosis (familyreach.org 2023). When parents are finally willing to ask for help, they are usually facing disconnection and sometimes eviction. Claire's Army works in partnership with the patient's healthcare team, specifically their pediatric oncology social workers, to quickly pay bills on behalf of families.

ISSUE

Every patient family facing diagnosis may not have the level of support needed to sustain them financially, emotionally and physically over the course of treatment, which can last from 1-5 years, most often. Parents are forced to either quit or cut back on hours due to treatment regimens

ACTION

Pediatric Social Workers at both Hemby and Levine contact us with specific financial requests based on the patient's diagnosis, treatment plan, family support, etc. They provide us with statements for mortgage, rent, utilities, vehicle insurance and many more to quickly pay on behalf of families

IMPACT/RESPONSE

No family is ineligible for support. We meet them at the pain point of their financial crisis by helping them quickly with their expenses, providing tangible relief typically within 24 hours notice. Claire's Army has the unique ability to respond quickly with minimal red tape to assist these families in need. We will pay multiple months of past due utilities and reconnection, secure temporary housing for families who just left their homes to come to Charlotte for specialized treatment

"I was unable to work to care for my child, meaning I would have no way to pay my rent, buy groceries, or other bills – something no parent wants to face, especially during a time when all their focus is on their sick child. Thanks to Claire's Army that burden was lifted. Not only did they provide meals throughout the week for us at the hospital, but they also paid my rent, utilities and other critical needs. Claire's Army carried my family through a difficult time in my life and I will be forever grateful."

- Tracy, mom to Noah Prieto

CLAIRE'S ARMY MADE **OVER \$184,000** IN PAYMENTS ON BEHALF OF **66 PATIENT FAMILIES** THROUGH OUR **EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM** THIS FISCAL YEAR

St. Jude Affiliate Clinic
Novant Health Hemby
Children's Hospital team
members, Michael Enos
and Robin Gardner

Levine Children's
social workers





"Claire's Army is unique. I could say a million things but when I think of them, I just want to cry because they have been the lifeline and saving grace to our families, more times than I can count. They are the ONLY foundation to help in an ongoing way when it's needed, no matter what part of treatment the family is in, and who helps with the exact need being asked for. I am humbled beyond what I can say because of their love and commitment to making sure these families have someone who has "got them" and who can help when there is no one else to help pick up those pieces."

- Juliet Galton, LCSW at Levine Children's Hospital



"I consider Claire's Army to be my lifeline to help support patients and families no matter what. They are the only organization that can help with immediate needs for housing, utility bills, car payments and other urgent needs that cannot wait for weeks that are needed by other organizations. They creatively help support patients in the hospital with specific interests. Recently, they purchased work-out equipment for a newly diagnosed patient with Leukemia who loves to work out at Cross Fit. They decorate rooms for holidays and help with other celebrations. They provide gift cards for our patients at their end of treatment "Ring the Bell" ceremony to help them celebrate this milestone."

- Robin Gardner, MSW at Novant Hemby Children's Clinic



"Claire's Army stands out amongst others, because of their quick response time with emergency assistance requests. They make it a seamless process and effectively provide support in crisis situations. They consistently go above and beyond to meet patient families where they need it most! Examples include making utilities payments within an hour to avoid disconnection and meeting a family in person to submit a late rent payment. I couldn't do my job without Claire's Army!"

- Mallory Valverde, MSW, LCSW at Levine Children's Hospital



Levine Children's Hospital social work team