



Dear Friends,

We are honored to have been chosen as the Louisiana Pediatric Cardiology Foundation's (LPCF) 2018 Annual Giving Campaign Chair Couple. We are excited to be able to give back to an organization that has meant so much to our family and many families like ours. Congenital Heart Defects affect 1 in 100 children and is the leading cause of death in children, killing more children than all childhood cancers combined.

In August 2013, during our 20-week ultrasound, we received the devastating news that Miley Grace had a congenital heart defect (a complete septal wall defect) that would require surgery soon after birth. Once meeting with the pediatric cardiologist in Baton Rouge, we quickly learned that there were no pediatric cardiovascular surgeons in Baton Rouge!! With advice from Dr. Hixon, we decided that Boston Children's Hospital was the best option for Miley Grace to have open-heart surgery. Traveling out of state means leaving your home, your jobs, and the possibility of leaving other children behind. This is overwhelming and a strain for any family.



That is where LPCF was a huge relief. We were awarded a travel grant, which helped relieve some of the financial burden of our travel to Boston. LPCF was also there for emotional support through the end of our pregnancy and during our stay in Boston. Knowing that we had other families to lean on and pray with during this time helped carry us through that first year of Miley Grace's life. Miley Grace is now a thriving 4-year-old. She has yearly checkups and her heart function looks good.

TJ and I continue to support LPCF and other heart families because we know what a difference it makes. Through LPCF's Annual Giving Campaign and fundraisers, such as the annual Helping Heal Little Hearts and Heart Hero Hustle, LPCF is able to provide travel grants and provide free heart screens to high school athletes. Sudden cardiac deaths can be prevented with screening. Through LPCF's screening program, several undiagnosed heart defects have been found, saving several lives.

We kindly thank you for your time and ask that you keep all the local heart families in your thoughts and prayers. LPCF, along with TJ and I, greatly appreciate all donations to the 2018 Annual Giving Campaign, which furthers their mission.

Sincerely,

*TJ & Kim Martinez*

2018 Annual Giving Chair Couple