

# MIRACLES IN ACTION



## Luke Colavita

AGES: 16

RHABDOMYOSARCOMA

COHEN CHILDREN'S MEDICAL CENTER



Luke was diagnosed at 19 months old and was clearly showing pain several times a day. He would double over, grimace, and run back and forth crying until the pain stopped. We thought he was having bowel issues, so we took him to a GI doctor who found nothing wrong. But the pain remained...enough to wake him from a sound sleep on many occasions. Our next action was to see the urologist. The doctor found a tumor from an ultrasound of the bladder, which the biopsy determined to be rhabdomyosarcoma. The tumor acted like a valve preventing him from urinating. The running back and forth moved the tumor enough for the urine to drain from the bladder, causing the pain to stop.

Our lives completely change when he was diagnosed with cancer. Our pediatrician and urologist both recommended Cohen Children's Medical Center. We spent almost a year at Cohen Children's Medical Center, but it took only a couple of days to realize that there was no better place for Luke. The doctors were brilliant and informative and made sure that we thoroughly understood every step of his treatment. The nurses were attentive and warm, and the supporting staff immediately made us feel like they would do anything they could to comfort us during this time when our lives was thrown into upheaval. It was as if we were welcomed into a whole new family. The medical care he received was nothing short of outstanding, and it is was only matched by the care that the whole family got.

### **How donations helped Luke:**

CMN Hospitals donations heavily impact pediatric cancer research. Financial support also goes to the Survivors Facing Forward program that helps Luke and families like his to cope with his condition and the unique concerns ahead.

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**Maria Fareri  
Children's Hospital**  
Westchester Medical Center Health Network



## Tyler Mejorado

AGE 17

LIVER TRANSPLANT

MARIA FARERI CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Tyler's difficult journey toward liver failure began when he was just six years old. By the time he was 10, he required a liver transplant. A donor was found for Tyler and, ironically for this young sports fan, his surgery was scheduled for the same day as the hospital's 2011 Go the Distance Walk and Family Fun Day.

As the surgery center prepared for his transplant, Tyler was able to fulfill his wish to participate in the walk and support the Children's Hospital with his doctors' permission. As Tyler crossed the finish line, his doctors and nurses cheered him on, ready to help him begin his improved life with a new liver. The transplant surgery was a success and his bravery and attitude aided Tyler through the recovery process.



Tyler's incredible story led to him being named the 2012 Children's Miracle Network Hospitals Champion for New York State. Inspired by her son's treatment and experience at Maria Fareri Children's Hospital his mother, Milinda, went back to school to become a nurse. Today you can find her treating patients in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. Tyler and Milinda continue to share their personal experience, while educating others on the importance of organ donation.

This is Tyler's 4th year participating in the Marriott Golf Tournament!