

Neighbors

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100+ Women helps raise donations for Rainbow Angels

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Guest Writer

No parent wants to hear the words “your child has cancer” or a serious illness. Unfortunately, it happens more often than we think.

Many nonprofits in the community have been started because a family experienced the unthinkable. The subsequent nonprofit is a way for the family or parent(s) to help others who must walk that same path.

Amanda Hope Rainbow Angels is one of those community charities.

It was founded in 2012 by Lorraine Tallman to honor her daughter Amanda by addressing the “here and now” needs of pediatric cancer care.

Amanda Hope was a special little girl, the type of child who lit up the room with her smile. At age 9 she started experiencing severe headaches and flu-like symptoms. After several tests it was con-

firmed that Amanda had leukemia.

The phone call confirming the diagnosis would forever change the lives of Amanda and her family.

It took three long years of chemotherapy to finally go into remission. Celebrations were had, along with a huge “No More Chemo Party” attended by family, friends, nurses, and doctors.

Amanda went back to school and started to enjoy life again. Then, one afternoon three months later, she mentioned she wasn’t feeling well.

A battery of tests discovered she had a mass in her brain. Another painful journey of chemo and radiation began.

Throughout the treatments, Amanda’s



Jessie Swygert of Amanda Hope is flanked by Crissy Haidos, left, and Katherine Katz as she receives a check from 100+ Women Who Care Valley of the Sun on behalf of her organization.

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sure her dream became a reality with the Comfycozy’s for Chemo shirt. Today, over 10,000 warriors have their very own Comfycozy’s for Chemo shirt.

Although Amanda lost her battle with cancer, her legacy has helped thousands of children through the programs offered by Amanda Hope Rainbow Angels.

The organization’s mission is to bring

spirits never waned. She kept smiling and expressing her concern and caring for the other children in the hospital. Amanda dreamed of a simply designed shirt to keep the children covered and warm during treatments.

After her passing, her mother made

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dignity and comfort into the harsh world of childhood cancer and other life-threatening diseases.

Its vision is to provide Comfycozy Care gifts to all children diagnosed with cancer and other blood related disorders. It aims to support healthcare professionals in providing person-centered care to children and their family with empathy and understanding.

And it strives to help families have a voice and choice above the harsh protocols often present in the healthcare system.

In January, Jessie Swygert, director of operations for Amanda Hope, shared the nonprofit's mission with her 100+ Women Who Care Valley of the Sun group in the East Valley.

The members were moved by her presentation and selected the charity to receive their quarterly donations. Amanda Hope Rainbow Angels was awarded \$11,700.

"With the incredible support of 100+ Women Who Care, we can continue to

support families with a child battling cancer or another life-threatening disease in Arizona. We encouraged the women to choose the program closest to their heart when making their donation. Because of this, each of our programs will be supported," said founder/CEO Lorraine Tallman.

"One free counseling session will be provided, one utility bill will be paid, ten Comfycozy Care Gifts will be sent out, and the remaining funds will support our nonprofit overall. Some of our current projects include transforming an office into a Wellness Room for free mindfulness modality sessions for parents and teen/young adult patients and siblings, weekly cafeteria cards going to families in the hospital, and ongoing support groups for all ages."

Since the chapter's inception in 2015, over \$1,058,550 has been donated to local charities through 100+ Women Who Care Valley of the Sun.

To learn more or to register for their upcoming giving circle on April 20, visit 100wwcvalleyofthesun.org/. To learn more about Amanda Hope Rainbow Angels, visit mandahope.org. 