



Ella's Umbrella **IMPACT REPORT**

Transforming Tragedy into Healing

2023

The *good* of having something special
far *outweighs* the pain of losing it.

LETTER FROM THE BOARD

When we first lost Ella 7 years ago, we never could have imagined the positive impact her life would have on the world. The support we have received from amazing people like you has been so healing and transformative, it inspired us to launch Ella's Umbrella in August of 2022.

Now, as we reflect on our first full year as a non-profit in 2023, it is fun to think about all the growth and development that has taken place. This year we launched three new successful events and we have been giving some serious thought to what truly sets us apart as an organization.

Although our primary goal has always been centered around protecting other families from what we have experienced in losing Ella, it has become clear that we have a special passion for connecting with others who have experienced loss. Moving forward, we want further explore how we might be able to make a strategic impact in this area.

Thank you for your involvement in helping us emerge from our tragedy with hope so we can better help others. We could not have accomplished all that we've done without the support of incredible people like you.

Sincerely,

Ella's Umbrella Board of Directors,

Betty Mertens, *President*
Kyle Mertens, *Treasurer*
Pamela Kraus, *Vice President*
Lynn Mertens, *Secretary*
Michael Mertens



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ELLA'S STORY

In May of 2017, Ella Mertens passed away due to an undiagnosed genetic heart defect. In her 13 months, she touched the hearts of everyone she met. Ella's Umbrella celebrates hope. It is a reminder that the good of having something special far outweighs the pain of losing it.



OUR MISSION

The mission of Ella's Umbrella is to transform heartbreak into healing by creating connections for the purpose of bettering and saving lives.

OUR VISION

To provide knowledge, resources and tools that will help save children's lives and bring hope and healing to their families.

WHAT WE DO



**Uplift People
Who Are Grieving**



**Fund Pediatric
Heart Research**



**Advance Heart
Technology**

Our WORK



Uplift People Who Are Grieving

We have created resources to support grieving people and our desire is to connect them to a network that will help them process their grief and figure out what it looks like to move forward.



Fund Pediatric Heart Research

In partnership with St. Louis Children's Hospital, we are funding pediatric heart research to protect other children from what happened to Ella. To date, we have donated over \$100,000 for that purpose.



Advance Heart Technology

In partnership with The Ollie Hinkle Heart Foundation, we are improving outcomes in pediatric heart care by collaborating with innovators on cutting edge advancements in technology.



Our IMPACT



3-D Model of Ella's Heart



Congenital heart defects are the **#1** most common birth defect in the world.



Congenital heart disease (CHD) accounts for **≈40%** of deaths in US children with birth defects.



About **1 in 4** babies with a CHD have a critical CHD, requiring surgery.

According to CDC and NCBI

2023 Highlights

65

VOLUNTEERS

4

FUNDRAISING
EVENTS

66

BUSINESS
SPONSORS

\$17,000 given towards
pediatric heart research.

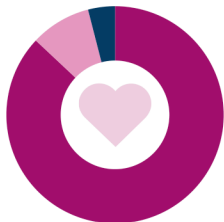
A new event launched to
support bereaved siblings.

\$3,200 given towards
advancing heart technology.

Our RESOURCES

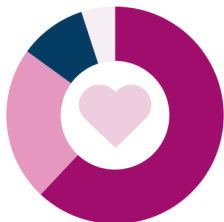


TOTAL REVENUES AND SUPPORT



87% Event Income
9% Non-Event Donations
4% Merchandise Sales

TOTAL EXPENSES



62% Funding Disbursed
23% Fundraising Expenses
10% Merchandise COGS
5% Admin Expenses

REVENUE

Event Income	\$33,660.00
Non-Event Donations	\$3,375.99
Merchandise Sales	\$1,512.95
Total	\$38,313.49

EXPENSES

Funding Disbursed	
STL Children's Hosp.	\$16300.00
Ollie Hinkle Heart Fdn.	\$3200.00
Fundraising Expenses	\$7,693.39
Admin Expenses	\$1,625.37
Merchandise COGS	\$3,057.28
Total	\$31,630.47

Total YE Net Change **\$6,672.90**

Net Assets Dec '22 \$2,250.63

Net Assets Dec '23 **\$8,923.53**

Our FUNDRAISING EVENTS

ELLA'S TRIVIA NIGHT

Our 4th Annual Trivia Night was our largest event yet, bringing in a total of \$20,310. The majority of the proceeds were donated directly to Ella's Endowment fund at St. Louis Children's Hospital for the purpose of pediatric heart research.



SPORTS CAR CLUB OF AMERICA CHARITY EVENT

On Father's Day, we were invited to participate in a special event with the St. Louis Region SCCA Solo racing group. We sold pulled pork sandwiches, merchandise, 50:50 tickets, and a few raffles. Through all our efforts and a few generous donations, we were able to raise over \$2,400.



Our FUNDRAISING EVENTS



WINE SOIRÉE

In August, we hosted our first ever Wine Soiree at Das Bevo. It was a blind wine tasting event that encouraged attendees to test their knowledge and learn more about their own preferences. We raised \$3,200 to support pediatric heart technology advancements through partnership with the Ollie Hinkle Heart Foundation.

CORNHOLE NIGHT

In the fall, we hosted our first cornhole tournament. The event was held at SportsBarn Facilities in Wentzville, and craft beer from Good News Brewing was included as part of the ticket price. It was a great time for all involved, and we raised over \$2,300.



Other EVENTS



"A KID LIKE YOU" EVENT

In April, we hosted a sibling grief event was co-sponsored by Just Enduring, a nonprofit supporting families dealing with child loss. The event also served as the launch of our children's book: **Never Far Apart**. Kids enjoyed gym-play, face painting, therapy dogs, and take-home crafts to remember their siblings.

MENTAL HEALTH EXPO

In July we participated with Just Enduring in a Mental Health Expo at Mid Rivers Mall. We met some incredible people and had some great conversations.



THANKSGIVING

In November, we participated in an event run by Fillament (a meeting planning company). We were partnered with Nestle ImagineIT to think creatively about how to take our nonprofit to the next level. This team helped us further refine our strategy to empower and support grieving families.



Thank YOU

We are deeply grateful for all our 2023 sponsors and donors. We could not do what we do without your support!

For a complete list of donors and to get involved for 2024, visit: www.ellasumbrella.org

2023 SPONSORS

April's Taxes
 Arcane Bagz
 Arrowtown Designs
 Autozone
 Bevo Mills
 Blind Designs
 Brown & Crouppen
 Busy Bee Bling, Brandi Suhre
 Byrne & Jones
 Chris Cadieux, Paper Pie
 Christina White Salon
 Cooper's Hawk
 Corner Pub and Grill, Valley Park
 Costco, St. Peters
 Embroider the Occasion
 F3 St. Charles
 Fabletics
 Fox & Riley Real Estate,
 Marilyn Gibson
 Fresh Thyme, St. Peters
 Good News Brewing

Hawkins Construction & Flat Work
 Integrity Consulting
 Kendra Scott
 Kids Kingdom Preschool
 Kind Soap, Webster Groves
 Kylie's Cake Pops
 Little Bits Gym at Cheer St. Louis
 Lohr Distributing
 Made by Wright
 Magic House
 Mira Smart Conferencing
 MirrorMe STL
 Moonlite Travel Plus
 Nestle Purina
 Nidec Motors
 Nothing Bundt Cakes, St Peters
 Olga Verschoore, Compass Realty
 Olive & Oak
 Patriot Machine, Inc
 Perennial on Lockwood

Playstreet Museum
 PrimeTime Fitness
 PuttShack
 Ready Train Go
 Rockwood Litho
 SportsBarn
 St. Louis Children's Hospital Stages
 TH Photography & Design
 The Adam's Team Real Estate-Powered by Compass
 The Clowns
 The Edge Fitness Center
 The Happy Elephant
 The Inside Network, LLC
 The Little Gym
 Thirty One, Beth Petric
 Tim's Chrome Bar
 Trend Media STL
 Two Little Bees
 Urban Chestnut Brewing Co
 Ya Yas

Our VOLUNTEERS



Thanks to our hard-working volunteers for making our events possible!

2023 VOLUNTEERS

Dustin Beardsley
Katy Bone
Bryan Carr
Hailey Cooper
Katie Crecilius
*Jason Crecilius
Tom Deyoung
Kristen Docter
Bree Friedrichs
Cole Friedrichs
Susan Gibson
Marilyn Gibson
*Ben Gillham
*Laura Gillham
Don Guenther
*Dawn Helderle
Tiffaney Howard
Jane Kolkovich
*Pam Kraus
*Glen Kraus

*Al Kraus
*Jerry Leung
Patrick Lunsford
*Martha McGeehon
*Nick McGeehon
*Mike Mertens
*April Mertens
*Chris Mertens
*Lynn Mertens
Brett Mertens
Emily Mertens
Don Mertens
Christopher Miller
Dan Murphy
Margo Newman
Maya Newman
Jen Oliver
Eli Pippin
Lois Pippin
*Greyson Pippin

*Kelly Pippin
*Michael Pippin
Prashanth Prabhu
Kenny Rose
*Katerina Schnardthorst
*Brianna Schnardthorst
Justin Seiwel
Risa Shirai
Jake Stewart
Jenn Stewart
*Brandi Suhre
Bacardy Taylor
Alderman Trupiano
Ally Vazquez
Tea Wallis Wallis
*Melissa Wallis
Ali Wright
Andrew Wright
*Lindsay Wright
*Kevin Zufall

Our PARTNERS

We are all better when we work together. It is our honor to collaborate with these amazing nonprofit partners to help accomplish our mission.

2023 PARTNERS





Website Redesign and Relaunch

We are taking a step back to re-evaluate the content and organization of our website to give people a clearer picture of who we are and what we do. The re-launch will happen in Q1.



New Fundraising Events

We want to build on what has worked well for us by providing more opportunities for people to have a great time for a great cause. Keep an eye out for some new events coming in 2024.



Foster Collaboration with Grieving People

Loss is difficult and sometimes moving forward takes a village. We want to help people build that village. Our goal is to identify gaps in this space that we can help fill.



Release Audio Book for Unraveled

We are excited to have an opportunity to make our adult grief book even more accessible. We are working with Justin Seiwell at Trend Media STL to bring our audio book to life.

Stay informed at www.ellasumbrella.org.



Sometimes the darkest nights
provide a *brilliant* view of the stars

