

Wildflower Profile: Life as a Single Dad

As told to Laura Krotky

From time to time, we like to share the stories of our Wildflower families and the impact Wildflower has made on their lives. This year, we are honored to share the experiences of Scott and his daughter Ella, a Wildflower family since 2012.



I still get emotional talking about how much I appreciate Wildflower's support. I contacted Wildflower soon after I lost my wife. She battled cancer for 19-months before passing in 2012. My daughter Ella was 6 years old at the time and she was traumatized by the loss. We all were.

Since then, I feel like I'm going 800-miles an hour. I'm worried about providing for my girls now that I am the sole breadwinner.

I'm worried about being a good employee now that I am being pulled by so many responsibilities at home. I'm worried about my girls, especially Ella. Losing her mom has left an imprint that will never go away. She struggles with trying to understand why it happened.

Knowing that I can rely on Wildflower's support for the long-term is so important to me. Other than my in-laws, who have been great, I

don't have family in the area. My friends are sympathetic, but they are busy with their own lives. Sometimes I feel like an island. My Wildflower liaison, Joanne, is always checking in on me. We've talked a lot about what happened. I have shared so much with her about what I'm feeling. It helps just to have someone to talk to who understands what it means to experience loss. Joanne also helps me with all of the paperwork related to camp. Sometimes the small details are the hardest to complete. Joanne and Wildflower take that burden off my hands when it comes to summer camp registration and logistics.

Of course, I'm also so grateful for the tuition assistance. It is hard to switch from being a two-household income to being the only person supporting the family. Child-care costs can be overwhelming and Wildflower's assistance during the summer is a godsend.

My daughter, Ella, benefits most from Wildflower's help. Wildflower has made it possible for Ella to attend Camp Mitchman's theater camp for 4 weeks. Ella loves Camp Mitchman! She has always loved performing and Camp Mitchman gives her the opportunity to immerse herself in theater and the performing arts. I see how happy Ella is at camp and I feel blessed. During the school year, Ella struggles with self-esteem issues. She's trying to figure out who she is without her mom. When she is at camp, those struggles seem to melt away. She is Ella the performer; Ella the actor. While at camp, she is able to escape the trauma that she experienced at home.

Wildflower has been a good thing for me and my girls at a time when I really needed the help. WFC helps me believe that life goes on. Wildflower helps me think that maybe our family can be happy again.

Rodman Ride a Success for 3rd Year: A Major Team Effort



Congratulations to Team Wildflower! Our team joined 2,000 other riders on September 28th to ride in the Rodman Ride for Kids, the largest, one-day fundraiser for at-risk kids in the nation. The Ride

is Wildflower's biggest fundraising event and this year we raised an incredible \$111,000. With Rodman's 10% match, our total will surpass \$120,000! What an accomplishment! Wildflower extends a huge thank you to our sponsor Group One Partners, to our riders and to more than 300 individual donors. Your support through the Ride is our primary source of funding for next year's scholarships!

Cutting-Edge Philanthropy: A Donor Profile



Audrey and Michael Loria do it all. Audrey is a Wildflower Board member, committed volunteer and, together with her husband Michael, a leading donor. As donors, Audrey and Michael have taken advantage of a wonderful opportunity offered to IBM employees through its IBM Charitable Contribution Campaign. This program is part of IBM's national fundraising drive that offers IBM employees the opportunity to participate in improving the quality of life for families-in-need through direct contribution methods.

Wildflower is so grateful for Audrey and Michael's creative leadership as donors. Audrey noted, "The IBM Program made it easy for us to make a recurring contribution to Wildflower. I know that other companies have similar programs. I encourage other Wildflower supporters to look into giving programs offered at their offices, too. It feels great to know we're doing our part to support Wildflower's campers and families."

Foundations Offer Major Support

We are thrilled to announce that we have received a generous lead grant from **The Salah Foundation**. *The Salah Foundation is committed to basic human needs, educating children at risk and improving their welfare.* Wildflower was awarded the Salah grant as a testament to the strength of our organization and its importance in improving the lives of children. Wildflower is very grateful to the Salah Foundation for helping us expand our reach to families in need through the gift of camp!

The Northwestern Mutual Foundation also awarded Wildflower a grant this year in recognition of Jeff Baron's demonstrated commitment to Wildflower. Jeff is A Northwestern Mutual Financial Advisor and Development Chair of Wildflower. Northwestern Mutual awarded a \$10,000 grant that was enhanced by Jeff's associate Dave McAvoy for a total donation of \$11,000. Wildflower extends a sincere thank you to Jeff for his leadership and development efforts and to the Northwestern Mutual Foundation. (photo right)

We thank Ann and Mark Melanson of **The Bailey Family Foundation** for their continued commitment to Wildflower through ongoing grant awards. Their annual donations support our efforts to connect with and help our campers and their families.



Thank You To Our Donors

We are so grateful for the donations we received this year. Donor support, at any level, makes it possible for us to continue supporting and providing for our families. Thank you, also, to our growing community of Friends Network donors—those who have made an initial donation of \$1,000 or more in support of Wildflower's mission. Together we are making a difference in the lives of our campers and their families. New and active Friends Network patrons include:

Altamira Foundation
Anonymous, Long-Term Donor
Diane and Steve Boettcher
Don and Ronni Baron
Jeff and Deb Baron
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Margy and Mark Cohen
Ben and Martha Hincks
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Adam Puritz and Robin Neiterman
Richard and Leslye Radutzky
Deborah Shapiro
Jason and Leslie Silberman
Rob and Jody Collins Skinner
Amy and Barry Sylvestsky
Denise Widman and Allan Lauer

Board Retreat Sets a Course for Growth

Wildflower's Board participated in a Retreat this fall to set a course for Wildflower's next 10 years. Our revised strategic plan sets forth a path for continued growth by increasing our capacity as an organization. As a result, we will hire additional staff to support our dedicated volunteers in every aspect of our mission. We will formalize our family and camper support as well as our development efforts.

Would You Consider Lending a Hand?

We need your support to further our mission of helping children who have lost a parent. Please consider becoming a Wildflower volunteer. Contact us for volunteer opportunities at info@wildflowercampfoundation.org. Or, support us with a donation at www.wildflowercampfoundation.org.

Send checks to:
Wildflower Camp Foundation
PO Box 81116
Wellesley Hills, MA 02481

Thank you for your consideration and support!

MISSION

The Wildflower Camp Foundation helps children who have lost a parent. We provide bereaved families with the gift of camp, enrichment opportunities and ongoing support services. We are committed to renewing the promise of summer, offering a restorative experience for both the children and surviving spouse as they recover from their loss. To learn more visit: www.wildflowercampfoundation.org



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