



April 28, 2016

Dear Yankees,

Where does one begin when speaking about the influence that an organization as nostalgic and revered as the New York Yankees can have on a foundation? For the Friends of Jaclyn Foundation, we can say that the impact has been immeasurable. We, as fans, are well aware of the reach that the Yankees can have on the field, but the breadth of their impact off the field is even more extraordinary. When we were first chosen to participate in HOPE Week in 2014 we were speechless. The Yankees Organization rolled out the red carpet for our families that struggle to find a simple reason to smile in their everyday lives, as they are constantly battling the "beast." Yankees HOPE Week offered the most welcome distraction from those woes, and created an opportunity that will not soon be forgotten.

Beyond the special day that the Yankees organization provided for our foundation through HOPE Week, they have opened doors that have created relationships and connections beyond our wildest dreams. Sean Callahan -- participant in HOPE Week and Friends of Jaclyn adoptee -- felt the impact of the Yankees on a surreal level. Sean was adopted by the West Point football team, in part, due to the Yankees' connections. It is with a heavy heart that I report that Sean earned his wings last summer. At his memorial service his family spoke about Sean's journey. They quoted Sean in saying that one of the first things he would do in heaven is find the famous Yankee, Babe Ruth, and ask him to play catch. This was a vision of his because he too, was a Yankee, signed to a one day contract through HOPE Week. As a brain tumor parent there are no words that can describe the feelings that come with knowing your child is at peace and ready to enter into a new phase of being. The Callahan family also spoke at length about their relationship with the West Point Football team. One of Sean's final wishes included having his Army "brother" speak at his memorial, as well as wearing the renowned black and gold when he was laid to rest. This relationship, or should I call it dream, came true thanks to Yankees HOPE Week.

The New York Yankees have continued to support the Friends of Jaclyn Foundation; their efforts to help us improve the quality of life for children battling pediatric brain tumors and other childhood cancers have allowed us to touch nearly 700 families throughout the United States, Canada and internationally. We are forever grateful. Pride can't even begin to describe how it feels to have the support of an organization that, at its core, values the same high standards as the Friends of Jaclyn. Our foundation and community as a whole is a better place because of the Steinbrenner family, HOPE Week and the New York Yankees.

Live in the moment, Play in the moment!

Denis Murphy - Founder

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