



Dear Family and Friends,

Remember with me: the sound of her laughter, her spunk, her unmatched sense of humor. Kaitlyn was a warrior here on earth. She endured a life of struggle for 28 years but now, we know that she has her wings. She is enjoying all the things she couldn't while we had her here. For those of you who walked this journey with me, I am profoundly grateful.

Though Kaitlyn is no longer physically with us, Kaitlyn's spirit lives in our hearts. Because of Kaitlyn, our capacity for compassion grew. She pushed us to love more deeply. Without trying she taught us all about finding joy in life. She is a constant example of strength, perseverance, and faith.

After Kaitlyn died, my world completely changed. Where I had once lived with structure and schedules, I was left with a void, trying to fill my days, and it was very hard. I had to find a new normal. A friend told me about THRIVE and I decided to start volunteering. It's been a wonderful place to meet new people, and it feels good to know I'm spending my time doing something that helps others. Being at THRIVE doesn't just fill a gap in my schedule it has helped fill a hole in my heart.

As Christmas approached, I wanted to do something special to remember Kaitlyn. I decided to make a donation to THRIVE. Through my volunteer work every week, I talk to real people who are in need in this community, and I wanted to do something to help. I knew my donation would provide not just food but help with bills and essentials for everyday life. People come to THRIVE for help when they have nowhere else. In turn THRIVE seeks to transform lives by providing initial support and continued education through financial training to make a sustainable impact on individuals.

After making my gift I had the opportunity to share more about Kaitlyn's life and why I chose to make the gift in her memory. I wanted to give Kaitlyn a voice, a place she could make a difference. That was something she always wanted to do but her physical limitations made that seem impossible to her. She didn't know what an impact she had made on all of us.

Our story resonated with THRIVE, who's many clients who come seeking assistance due to medical expenses. Illness can be a huge financial burden. I was always fortunate in that we could provide for Kaitlyn and never experienced the trauma of choosing medical care over daily living expenses. But many face these hard decisions.

Because of that, THRIVE suggested that we establish something more permanent with my gift that would reflect Kaitlyn and keep her memory alive, while actively helping others. So, the

THRIVE Peninsula Community Hardship Fund in memory of Kaitlyn Smitter was formed. This fund will focus on providing much needed aid to Peninsula families in times of uncertainty.

**Will you join me in making a gift toward this fund?**

We were blessed beyond measure to know and love Kaitlyn. I also know firsthand the relief that this fund will provide for families struggling. With your help, my goal is to raise \$50,000. I believe we can come together in solidarity and be a source of hope for those that are facing challenges that we know well. THRIVE has arranged a \$50,000 match, meaning we can double our dollars and make an already significant gift even more special. Join me with a gift of support and let us continue to share Kaitlyn's light with the those who seek hope.

With gratitude,

*Christine*

*[Click here](#) to find more information about THRIVE, the **THRIVE Peninsula Community Hardship Fund in memory of Kaitlyn Smitter**, and how this special fund will carry Kaitlyn's strength and perseverance onward and be a source of faith and hope for families who have nowhere else to turn.*

*THRIVE, formerly DUCO, is a faith-based ministry supported by 80 churches including Warwick River Mennonite, Huntington Mennonite Church, and Providence Mennonite Church.*