

Hope, Loss and Hope Again

Lola Rebuilds a Life for her and Timur after Losing her Husband to Cancer

By Laura Krotky

Lola had been living in Springfield for only a few months when her young husband, Azamat, was diagnosed with stage 2 brain cancer. It was devastating news for the young couple. Their extended family lived in Uzbekistan and, as recent immigrants, they didn't have a community of friends to rely upon. Azamat started treatment immediately. Over a period of several years, he survived 2 surgeries and endured months of chemo and radiation. After a valiant battle, Azamat passed away, survived by young Lola and their 3-year old son, Timur.



Lola often pauses to dry her tears when she talks about Azamat. The loss feels so fresh and life as a single mom is so difficult. She has been making her way though. She works full-time at a preschool and is taking a computer programming class at night. "My friends took this class and they found good jobs. So I would like to do the same. It would be good for my future." Her friends help with Timur. "He wants to play when I have to study. He is so active and runs up and down the hallways of our apartment building with the other kids."

The stress of being a single mom is often worst in the summer. Lola explained, "Timur does not want to go back to the daycare at my office. He is older than the babies and bored. He has no other kids his age to play with." That's why she turned to Wildflower.

When Lola first applied for support from Wildflower, she was placed on our waitlist. Program Director Audrey Loria explained, "Wildflower supports as many families as we can, but we are limited by how much funding is available."

Despite her waitlist status, Lola was matched with a volunteer liaison who introduced Lola to the Longfellow Health Summer Camp, a camp that was close to Lola's home, offered extended hours and kept the campers very active. Lola believed it would be a perfect fit except for one thing—the tuition. Wildflower's Audrey Loria reached out to Longfellow to share Lola's story and ask about placement for Timur. They were so moved by Lola's struggle that they offered a full camp scholarship.

Longfellow's generosity made it possible for Timur to attend camp for the first time last summer. He loved it! He loved swimming every day and being with a big group of kids his age. And Lola loved it, too. She was so happy to see Timur's smiling face each morning as he anticipated another fun day at camp.

More good news arrived in May. The Cummings Foundation selected Wildflower to receive a "\$100K for 100" grant. The additional funding enabled Wildflower to extend our full services to every single family on last year's waitlist. For Lola, that means she will be able to rely upon Wildflower for summer camp placement, scholarship assistance and consistent support every year, for as long as her family needs our help. With Wildflower by her side, Lola will be able to look forward to summer as a time of joy for Timur and respite for herself.



Wildflower President Cyndi Jones accepts the "\$100K for 100" grant from The Cummings Foundation's Mike Truesdale

Community Partners Enable Wildflower to Extend Services to More Families

This year's granting organizations and sponsors will make it possible for Wildflower to serve more deserving families! We are enormously grateful to these organizations for their generosity:



Wildflower At-A-Glance

Wildflower, along with our camp and related partners, has awarded **more than \$1.675 million** in funding to our families since our founding in 2004. To our entire community of supporters, thank you for helping our families rediscover life after loss. Summer highlights:

Number of Campers Served
69

Tuition Awarded by Wildflower and Our Partners
\$215,000

Number of Camp Partners that Welcome Wildflower Campers
51

Number of Weeks Our Children Spent at Camp
306

International Destinations
Costa Rica, Argentina, Spain, British Virgin Islands

Domestic Camp Experiences
Biking Across the US, Language Immersion, College Essay Writing, Hockey, Arts & Music, Leadership, Special Needs, Legos, Bereavement

New Service Offered to Families
College Planning for Families with High Schoolers



Wildflower camper Elijah (left) with friend Jakob at the Rodman Ride for Kids on Saturday, September 22. Wildflower joined 45 other nonprofits to raise \$10 million for kids in greater Boston, including Wildflower's campers.



Bonnie with her husband Stephen Gararin

DONOR PROFILE

Meet Bonnie Parri

Bonnie Parri is enjoying every minute of retirement. She loves to dance, practice yoga, travel, is an avid reader, a life-long learner and a busy volunteer. Bonnie recently selected Wildflower to receive a Required Minimum Distribution as part of her IRA distribution plan. Founder Cyndi Jones noted, "I am so thankful for Bonnie's leadership as a donor as well as a thoughtful and enthusiastic volunteer."

Are you over the age of 70½?

If so, you have a distinct opportunity to make a direct transfer from an individual IRA to Wildflower. This is an excellent charitable planning option. Please contact Cyndi at cjones@wildflowerforkids.org to discuss options that are right for you.

OUR MISSION

Wildflower is dedicated to serving children and families who have experienced the loss of a parent. By providing the gift of camp and enrichment opportunities for children, as well as consistent support and respite for parents, families are able to strengthen their resilience and create positive opportunities for the future.

YOU CAN HELP A CHILD WHO HAS LOST A PARENT

Your donation, of any amount, enables Wildflower to serve the children and families who reach out to us for help. Together, we can help them rediscover life after loss.

Please make your donation today.

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