

Benjamin Even - St. John the Baptist Dry Ridge - LaSalle High School

In October 2016 my dad was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma stage 3es with Vanishing Bile Duct Syndrome, followed by a Renal Cell Carcinoma diagnoses in February 2017. In March 2017 my friends and family rallied around my family and I by hosting a 3v3 basketball tournament to show support and help with the medical expenses that come with cancer. With my Dad's test results clear and my family settled into our new normal, we decided we would pay it forward by continuing the tournament. With the help of the original tournament committee, we have officially become a 501(c)3 non-profit.

The money we make from the night of the tournament goes to help a variety of organizations and people. Every year, we choose a family that is fighting an illness and needs financial help. This year we picked a little girl who is three years old and fighting a rare form of tissue cancer. She has 67 weeks of chemotherapy and we wanted to help them with their medical bills so it was one less thing for them to worry about. We are also in the process of endowing a scholarship fund to help people go to LaSalle as well as donate money to the Make-A-Wish Foundation and the Leukemia Lymphoma Society.

It is a good thing to look around on the night of the tournament and realize that all the people are at the event because we put it together to help others. Knowing that I helped bring in hundreds of families and thousands of dollars to help other people in need is a great feeling. Not only do we get to raise money for people but to see all the smiles on peoples faces and watching people come together for a good cause is what being a community is all about. A lot of people don't even know each other but they show up because they know someone is in need of help. I believe I qualify for this scholarship because I'm a part of helping people when they need it most.