Dear Kesem Friends and Family,

Kesem’s vision is that every child impacted by a parent’s cancer is never alone. How incredible is that? We envision a world where all of these five million children are supported, more resilient, and able to be their best selves—thanks to Kesem. Can you see it too?

Join us on an ambitious and exciting journey as we put into place our boldest strategic plan to grow our community and realize our vision.

We served nearly 7,000 children across the country this year at no cost to their families. While we were so proud to return to camp this summer, we are moving forward focused on our bigger ambitions. We’re expanding the number of children we serve and cultivating life-long skills in our incredible student leaders. We are also developing new programs to support even more children. Thank you for making all of this possible. As we expand to fulfill our mission on a greater scale, we’re excited to have you on this journey with us.

Kesem believes that all children facing a parent’s cancer deserve the chance to fully experience the joys of childhood. We are often asked how we amplify joy and hope during a parent’s cancer journey. It’s hard to describe this Kesem magic, but let us try:

Empowerment is one of the few times at camp where kids can choose to share about their parent or caregiver’s cancer journey. During Empowerment, we cry, we hug, and we support each other. And do you know what we do next? We have a dance party. We celebrate the parents and caregivers in our community, we lean into hope and joy, and we LIVE. We can hold both our sorrows and our joys in the same hands. This is the magic of Kesem.

Thank you for creating Kesem magic with us. Together, we will create a transformational community and ensure that every child affected by a parent’s cancer has the empowering support of Kesem.

Alicia Kabir
Chief Executive Officer

Jay Stilwell
Chair, National Board of Directors

OUR TOMORROW STARTS TODAY

CAMP KESEM HAS BEEN THE ULTIMATE HEALING MY CHILD NEEDED TO ADDRESS ALL THE FEAR, ANXIETY, AND UNCERTAINTY HE STUFFED DOWN DEEP WHEN I HAD CANCER. IT TRULY HELPED HIM HAVE A PLACE TO RELEASE ALL THAT NEGATIVITY AND FILL IT WITH LOVE, SUPPORT, AND POSITIVITY.”
—KESEM PARENT
Kesem is an organization deeply committed to fulfilling its mission. We focus our support on a population that is often overlooked and isolated—children with parents who have or had cancer. A dark cloud settles over a family with a cancer diagnosis. Life as usual for both parent and child becomes overwhelming and scary, and it demands superhuman levels of courage. Over 20 years ago and in support of these families, we found a magic potion, bottled it in the form of summer camp, and began delivering it to children and families in need of myriad things: a break, some fun, a friend. We then also developed services so that Kesem’s magic could be shared year-round.

WHAT’S NEXT, STARTS NOW
This year was our first year back to in-person Camp Kesem programming since 2019, and it reminded all of us of just how meaningful Kesem is to the families we serve and our broader community. Kesem really is magic, and we are focused on sending more kids to camp each summer. We’re also innovating to enhance our year-round support, including creating new programs and experiences outside of sleepaway camp. We’re in motion, moving closer to a world where every child impacted by a parent’s cancer is never alone.

THE NEED FOR KESEM: ALLEVIATING THE HARDSHIP
The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychology found that grieving children may show one or more of these signs:

- loss of interest in daily activities
- inability to sleep
- loss of appetite
- fear of being alone
- acting much younger for an extended period
- withdrawal from friendships
- drop in school performance or refusal to attend school

One in 15 children are grieving because their parent has cancer. Kesem is the leading national nonprofit that supports these children.

KESEM IN 2022

We served nearly 7,000 kids through Camp Kesem

We successfully recruited, supported, and developed the leadership skills of more than 4,000 student volunteers

We introduced a new brand identity to increase relevance, authority, and resonance in our field
“I wish the whole world was a big camp KeSEM.”
—KESEM CAMPER

“KeSEM is a place where I don’t have to explain myself to anyone. Everyone at camp knows what it’s like to have or have had a parent with cancer. I can have fun and laugh, but I can also be sad and talk about those feelings as well. I feel as if I know these people much more than other people I know, even though I only spend a week with them.”
—KESEM CAMPER

99% of campers feel that they made friends through KeSEM
97% of campers felt included while they were at camp
99% of campers would recommend KeSEM to other kids

“I’ve been going to KeSEM since I was 6 years old (I’m now 17) and there isn’t anything that I love more. I have made so many new friends through the years. Because of KeSEM, I have become more confident in myself and my feelings—and have been open to sharing them, too. I have learned many things by being a part of KeSEM, and I’m hoping to use those one day when I become a counselor and in my future. The KeSEM counselors/leaders have made a huge impact on my life, and there aren’t enough ‘thank-yous’ in the world for those people! KeSEM will have a piece of my heart forever.”
—KESEM CAMPER
THE IMPORTANCE OF PEER SUPPORT ON YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH:

Kesem offers children the opportunity to connect with peers who can truly empathize with their situation. Peer support offers a level of acceptance, understanding, and validation not found in many other relationships.

Peer support is demonstrated to:

- Improve an individual’s quality of life
- Improve an individual’s whole health (including chronic conditions)
- Help people realize that they are not alone
- Build confidence and an understanding that better days are ahead
- Reduce the overall cost of service
- Serve as a resource for people seeking additional levels of care to complement their treatment within healthcare settings.

OUR STRATEGIC PILLARS

PILLAR 1: CAMP KESEM
Continue to grow our core program, Camp Kesem, and other year-round services to support more children each year.

PILLAR 2: KESEM CHAPTERS
Sustain and strengthen Kesem chapters and improve the student leader and volunteer experience to build the next generation of empathetic and resilient leaders.

PILLAR 3: THOUGHT LEADERSHIP
Demonstrate Kesem’s expertise in serving children impacted by a parent’s cancer to increase awareness and advocacy for the families we serve.

PILLAR 4: NEW PROGRAM
Design and deliver a new, compelling program informed by families to expand Kesem’s reach.

PILLAR 5: REVENUE
Create more meaningful and impactful donor and supporter experiences to grow our impact.

OUR CORE VALUES

CONTINUOUS LEARNING
We operate with curiosity and a willingness to try new things, and we see our successes and setbacks as opportunities for growth.

ACCOUNTABILITY
We are individually and collectively responsible for advancing our mission.

RESILIENCE
We empower and support each other through challenges while fostering a spirit of joy and hopefulness.

EMPATHY
We seek to understand and appreciate other perspectives and experiences.

While we acknowledge the challenging few years that we and the world have endured, we now look ahead to all of the important work that we still have yet to do. We’re no longer looking back, and we have an exciting new vision and set of values to guide our work.

Our tomorrow starts today. We are moving with a greater purpose and active commitment to achieving our vision of a world where no child has to face a parent’s cancer alone. We encourage you to join us on this ambitious and exciting journey. Let’s innovate, invest, and experience the joy and hope that comes from collective action to ensure that every child affected by a parent’s cancer has the empowering support of a transformational community.
Kesem chapters at colleges and universities across the country host **Camp Kesem**—week-long summer camp programs. At camp, we focus on creating fun experiences that help children escape—even if for a short time—the challenges of coping with a parent’s cancer diagnosis. Applications are now open for 2023.

**YEAR-ROUND SUPPORT**

**KESEM WARM WELCOME** Families receive an immediate welcome—along with a care package—upon joining the Kesem community.

**KESEM FRIENDS + FAMILY DAY** Existing and interested families, Kesem student leaders, alumni, and community supporters attend a local event in the spring and fall for a day full of fun activities, education, and community building.

**KESEM BY YOUR SIDE** Families are offered customized support through our college student leaders to help children through the many challenges associated with a parent’s cancer journey including difficult news, recurrence, loss, and anniversaries. This is an impactful way Kesem shows our families they do not have to walk through these adversities alone.

**KESEM SPECIAL DELIVERIES** Campers receive personalized messages for birthdays and other events by traditional or electronic mail as a consistent touchpoint throughout the year.

**KESEM ONLINE RESOURCES** Families gain access to thoughtfully curated resources online, as well as through Kesem’s social media accounts to keep them connected and informed.

**YOUR GIFT IN ACTION**

**PROGRAM** 80 percent of our expenses were used for programming.

**MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL** 9 percent of our expenses were applied to management and administrative costs.

**FUNDRAISING** 11 percent of our expenses covered outreach and fundraising efforts.

*These figures are estimated.*
YOUR IMPACT ON PARENTS

"This was such a tremendous opportunity for our daughters to feel like normal kids while being supported by kids/teens/young adults that ‘get it.’ They haven’t felt that way since before cancer blew up their world. I could see the change happening in them in the nightly pictures posted on the closed Facebook group. I am so grateful for this experience for them. It’s what they’ve longed for since their dad died." —KESEM PARENT

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<td>OF PARENTS FELT THEIR CHILD BOTH 1) HAD FUN AND 2) ENGAGED IN NEW ACTIVITIES WHILE THEY WERE AT CAMP KESEM</td>
<td>OF PARENTS FELT THEIR CHILD WAS POSITIVELY IMPACTED BY CAMP KESEM</td>
<td>OF PARENTS FELT KESEM DIRECTLY IMPROVED THEIR CHILD’S (AND THEIR OWN) MENTAL HEALTH</td>
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"I still can’t believe the difference in my child before and after camp. Truly KESEM magic!" —KESEM PARENT

"This was the best thing that has happened to our daughter since my husband’s diagnosis 2 years ago. She still talks about it daily. I can’t express how important and pivotal this experience and the friends/counselors she met has been for her mental health. Thank you!!!" —KESEM PARENT
These leading organizations and strategic partners have invested to expand Kesem’s services and support more children impacted by a parent’s cancer.
More than 45,000 wonderful humans are part of the Kesem community, and each and every one of you make the magic happen! You all gave joyfully, and we wish we had scores more pages to name you individually.

We have been able to list supporters who made a gift of $1,000 or more in cash and in-kind support. We want to make sure we included and correctly recognize you. Please let us know if we need to make any corrections in our records by contacting us at: DEVELOPMENT@KESEM.ORG
In 2022, Kesem created a membership program to stay better connected to and harness the generosity of our more than 14,000 alumni who have been an integral part of our organization since our founding.

It was our joy to recognize them during our third-annual Kesem National Senior Night, and to celebrate them with you now.

Join us in honoring Kesem’s National Leadership Class: made up of exceptional students from the Class of 2022 who go above and beyond in living our Kesem values.

Nominated by their peers within the Kesem community, these leaders uphold and represent the vision and ideals of our organization — from expressing gratitude to paying it forward as a camper-turned-student leader to cultivating and growing a new Kesem chapter. We are so grateful to them for their commitment to Kesem, and for all that they have done and continue to do to support children impacted by a parent’s cancer.

It was our joy to recognize them during our third-annual Kesem National Senior Night, and to celebrate them with you now.

**ALUMNI MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM**

**INAUGURAL MEMBERS**

- Lydia Eisenbeis
- Brian Ellis
- Joseph Estman
- Amber Faubrooke
- Kenton Falcon
- Michael Fernekus
- Liz Firestone
- John Fitzger
- Magda Fitzgerald
- Adam Forrier-Brown
- Stephanie Fox
- Nicole Fraga
- Katherine Fuller
- Mark Garrett
- Monica Gaskin
- Megan Gereissen
- Adiya Ghash
- Nikita Ghash
- Hayden Giffen
- Camarae Giggott
- Jonathan Gillis
- Elia Gilliam
- Corin Godine
- Aria Goral
- Ashley Graham
- Tyler Griggs
- Joanna Gross
- Corianna Hoffman
- Pahal Hanjra
- Daniel Harder
- Alex Hatanaka
- Corinne Hauck
- Emma Hayden
- Allison Haazy
- Mary Heim
- Samuel Heupen
- Mia Hibbs
- Shaidee Hieukai
- William Hogan
- Bailey Hogan
- Mark Howard
- Kyle Hurley
- Karen Ibrahim
- Mark Jacob
- Saul Ioffe
- Sara Jex
- Sumrah Jilani
- Paul Johnson
- Chris Johnson
- Taylor Johnson
- Alex Jolly
- Jasmin Joseph
- Jonathan Kabat
- Tarun Kamath
- Gabriel Kardia
- Pamela Karl
- Michael Kelson
- Chase Kessler
- Brooks Knighton
- Breanna Kosevenga
- Taylor Koz
- Jordan Kotler
- Brian Kovachovich
- Madeleine Kox
- Bri Kuhne
- Landis Kwong
- Carrie LeCroy
- Chris Lolas
- Audra Lam
- Riley Lanoux
- John Laverman
- Ilana Lavine
- Valerie Le
- Stephen Leonard
- Camryn Lesser
- Kyle Lewis
- Alexander Linderer
- Conrad Liu
- Daniel Lock
- Amy Logota
- Karyn Ludewig
- Eva MacFarland
- Keerthi Madala
- Emily Mann
- Logan Martin
- James Martin
- Alex Martinez
- Xavier Martinez
- Alex May
- Alexander Mayazak
- Erin McAlister
- Alexander McGregor
- Quinn McKinnon
- Kenze McMurry
- Jemma Meins
- Danielle Melgar
- Cecilia Mendonca
- Sarah Meyer
- Adelina Miller
- Jacob Monty
- Megan Moorcamp
- Henry Morgan
- Hal Morley
- Marshall Murphy
- Steven Nagy
- Jessica Noble
- Kevin O’Connor
- Christena Oldham
- Emily Oram
- Ismael Ortiz
- Abby Paul
- Cason Patterson
- Matthew Patterson
- Heather Paul
- Mauree Pedro
- Samantha Penko
- Michaela Peretti
- Alexander Philip
- Pavan Poornamani
- William Pitt
- Fabiola Plaza
- Adam Poole
- Alexander Possman
- Aaron Popiulis
- Payam Pourtarveri
- Emily Powell
- Christopher Pravete
- Alan Propp
- Karson Proudfoot
- Bernardo Pulido
- Lucas Pyper
- Katie Quatman
- Akash Raman
- Anne Rauch
- Alexandra Rauch-Kelly
- Austin Reed
- Travis Reed
- Rebecca Res
d- Lorena Roman
- Mitchell Rosenberg
- Hanna Rubin
- Carly Rudnick
- Annalise Russo
- Hannah Rutherford
- Adam Ryan
- Zaedid Saheb
- Herveline Samit
- Alexi Sakaris
- Rebecca Saletta
- Anthony Sampson
- Ana L SamMartin
- Allie Satterfield
- Ilana Scandariato
- TJ Schaefer
- Anna Schnider
- Katherine Schmidt
- Marta Sherman
- Mikel Shurman
- Britany Shresta
- Brian Shelton
- Priya Shukla
- Hannah Simmons
- Dylan Skaggs
- Abbi Smith
- Zachary Smith
- Joshua Smith
- Xin Song
- Harriet Spears
- Cameron Spillier
- Avery Stock
- Banne Streight
- Sharmanie Sun
- Jeffrey Sweet
- Andrew Tavarrite
- Lauren Taylor
- Jakobi Tharpe
- Ethan Thomas
- Peter Thompson
- John Uzzell
- Matthew Voloz
- Jessica Volle
- Mark Vanderhyden
- Bailey Vondler
- Lauren Vann
- Alex Varran
- Ryan Vivirito
- Amanda Vo
- Erin Walsh
- Kevin Watt
- Katlin Webb
- Ren Weeden
- Julia Weidman
- Lily Welsh
- Claire Williams
- Julia Williams
- Shena Wilson
- Magdalena Wolczak
- Jessica Worrell
- Yishin Yang
- Jeylin Zuckers
- Trevelle Zakes
- Arunka “Cosmos” Goel, University of Toledo

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**THE 2022 KESEM NATIONAL LEADERSHIP AWARDS**

**CARES DEEPLY AWARD**
- Ashlynn “Milion” Hall, Utah Valley

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION AWARD**
- Madysyn “Wawa” McDougal, Notre Dame

**EMPOWER OTHERS AWARD**
- Olivia “Sesame” Hermsen, UW-Madison

**GRAETFUL AWARD**
- Danielle “Tink” Palmieri, Augustana College

**LASTING AND POSITIVE IMPACT AWARD**
- Charlotte “Lottie” Brenston, Grand Valley State University

**OPTIMISM AWARD**
- Zeya “Protan” Surani, Harvard Undergraduate

**THROUGH AND BEYOND AWARD**
- Nathan “Reu” Perez-Espitia, University of Connecticut

**IRIS WEEDEKING AWARD**
- Arunka “Cosmos” Goel, University of Toledo

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**UPCOMING EVENTS AT KESEM**

- DISNEY PRINCESS HALF MARATHON WEEKEND
  - February 23–27, 2023

- CHICAGO MAGIC BALL
  - March 4, 2023

- LOS ANGELES MARATHON AND CHARY
  - March 19, 2023

- UNITED AIRLINES NYC HALF MARATHON
  - March 20, 2023

- RUNDISNEY SPRINGTIME SURPRISE WEEKEND
  - April 13–16, 2023

- BOSTON MAGIC BALL
  - May 19, 2023

- BMW BERLIN MARATHON
  - September 24, 2023

- BANK OF AMERICA CHICAGO MARATHON
  - October 8, 2023
Kesem’s mission of supporting children through and beyond a parent’s cancer, and our vision of ensuring that every child impacted by a parent’s cancer is never alone, can only be realized through an ongoing, steadfast commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in every part of our organization.

To that end, Kesem makes the following commitments:

To continually expand the communities we support and work with—our camper families, volunteers, staff, alumni, partners, donors, and boards—with attention to engaging communities we are not currently reaching.

To strive for equity in delivering a transformative, fun, and empowering community that recognizes and embraces our differences.

To aspire to create shared spaces that are safe for every member of the Kesem community to feel valued and respected.

Kesem will engage in continued meaningful learning in order to better support our mission, and our growing Kesem community.

2023 CAMP KESEM APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN NOW!