

Make-A-Wish Foundation®
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N E W S R E L E A S E

Make-A-Wish Foundation® Celebrates 'Hope'

Hope Stout's Wish Lives on in the Lives of those her story touched

CHARLOTTE (January 4, 2006) – The **2006 Celebration of Hope** campaign kicks off January 20, 2006 at the Westin Hotel Charlotte with a black tie event. This event celebrates the memory of Hope Stout whose wish in 2004 was to grant the wishes of 155 children on the waiting list for the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Central and Western North Carolina. In 2005, the foundation surpassed the preceding year's goal by granting 200 wishes.

Hope's Wish: In early 2003, Hope Stout was like any normal 12 year old – spirited and vivacious in nature, looking forward to the fun of each day. All this changed that summer. Hope was diagnosed with a rare form of bone cancer and after a courageous battle, passed away peacefully at her home in January 4, 2004.

Before her passing, the Make-A-Wish Foundation asked what she wished for. Her reply – grant the wishes of each of the 155 children on the waiting list at that time. As Hope's story was heard, donations poured in, culminating in a Hollywood-themed party that inaugurated the Celebration of Hope event. In 2005, the 2nd Annual Celebration was held with a Tropical Seas theme.

I ♥ A Wish: Hope's wish of granting other children's wishes will continue through the 2006 Celebration of Hope on January 20 at 7:00 p.m. at the Westin Hotel Charlotte. Inspired by Hope's love of all things pink participants are encouraged to don 'Heart Inspired' Black-tie.

Food stations will offer a variety of hors d'oeuvres while guests enjoy entertainment by Summerdaze and Peace & Love. The under 21 crowd will have a section all to their own with the Sugar Shack – full of sweets, treats and Willy Wonka himself.

Individual tickets are \$250 per person over 21 and \$125 per person under 21 and advance reservations are required. To purchase tickets, call 704-376-1943 x3101 or register online at www.celebrationofhope.org.

Additionally, donations can be made in memory of Hope to the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Central and Western North Carolina, 212 S. Tryon St., Suite 1080, Charlotte, NC 28281.

Important Media Information:

- ♥ Interviews with the Stout family and the Make-A-Wish Foundation staff may be arranged.
- ♥ Video of hope Stout explaining wish is available on beta format
- ♥ Media interested in attending the event are asked to pre-register
- ♥ Media contact for additional information – Lisa Woytovich – 704-339-0334 x26 or lwoytovich@ncwish.org

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