



## Casey uses her experience to Be the Cure for other patients

A patient at Children's Memorial Hospital since she was diagnosed with a brain tumor in August 2006, 18-year-old Casey Patton has dedicated herself to helping other kids with cancer. Her positive attitude, compassion and dazzling smile inspire those around her.

While under the care of her oncologist, [Dr. Jason Fangusaro](#), who she calls "Dr. Jason," Casey and her friends found a way to help her cope with her cancer while rallying around other kids going through difficult illnesses. The many friends Casey made during treatments encouraged her to think about how she could make a difference in their lives.

"Less than 3 percent of all government-funded cancer research goes to pediatric research, and only a small percent of that funding is designated for brain tumor research," says Casey of her decision to raise money for brain tumor research at Children's Memorial through her [Be the Cure \(BTC\) organization](#).

Since May 2007, Be the Cure has raised more than \$56,000 for the hospital. They are supporting pioneering research at the hospital's [Falk Brain Tumor Center](#), where researchers are investigating new and safer treatments for children with brain tumors.

BTC is an inspirational and creative fundraising concept. Casey and her friends started with the hopes of raising \$3,500 and decided that selling t-shirts would be an effective way to get the word out about the need to support brain tumor research. They considered their network of friends, what they could afford and what would encourage their family and friends to help a great cause. Casey and her mom created the "Be the Cure" logo and ordered the first shipment of 500 t-shirts.

From day one, the t-shirt sales were a huge success. Two months later, the girls presented \$11,000 to Children's Memorial. Local media outlets picked up the story immediately and thanks to word of mouth, other volunteers came forward to lend a hand. As of today, BTC has sold over 2,500 shirts and has received donations from all over the country!

Before her diagnosis, Casey was a volleyball player and active in the choir program at Downers Grove South High School. When they heard about BTC, the choir teachers and students, along with Casey's volleyball coach and teammates, immediately jumped in to support Casey. This inspired many other schools to do the same. Suddenly sports teams from other high schools, elementary schools and even a few colleges were wearing BTC t-shirts. Northside College Prep High School's volleyball marathon raised more than \$7,200 and they are currently planning their second fundraiser for BTC this fall. After Casey gave a speech at Avery Coonley School, the students organized two fundraisers and raised \$2,000. Other schools include Downers Grove North, St. Charles East, Homewood Flossmoor, Lincoln-Way Community High School, O'Neill Middle School, Jefferson Junior High, Siplely Grade School, Illinois Wesleyan University, Western Michigan University, and the list goes on!

Casey has joined Children's Memorial Foundation's Circle of Friends team at numerous events this past year, bringing a room of men at a golf outing to tears when she shared her story. Spreading the word and getting others involved helped make this fundraiser truly exceptional.

Casey's activism, her mom's dedication and her friends' support are all key ingredients of Be the Cure's success.

Casey's recent graduation from Downers Grove South High School and acceptance into Illinois Wesleyan University marks the beginning of a new chapter in her life. BTC will continue at Casey's alma mater and from her home through her mom's commitment and enthusiasm. Check out [Be the Cure](#) for details.



Casey Patton accepts a donation on behalf of the Falk Brain Tumor Center from Northside College Prep volleyball team coaches and players at Children's Memorial in December, 2007.