

YOU CAN CHANGE THE STORY



Jennifer's Story

Jennifer Scheer's life changed forever in December 2013 when she and her husband, Caleb, welcomed their first child. The couple's first six weeks with their son, Elliott, were full of love and joy.

Jennifer works as a Certified Optometric Vision Therapist and is one of four people in the state of Wisconsin to hold COVT certification. Like most mothers, Jennifer was sad to see maternity leave end, but she was excited to get back to a job she loves, and she knew Elliott would be in good hands. He was enrolled at the YWCA Child Center, a Four Star YoungStar facility.

On her first day back to work, Jennifer received a frantic phone call from her mother, which – like Elliott's birth – would change her life forever. Caleb had suffered a major heart attack. Four hours later, he passed away.

During this time of terrible tragedy, Jennifer took things day by day, focusing on her infant son. Doing what was best for Elliott kept her going. Jennifer was now a new mom, a single mom, and a widow. She was experiencing tremendous grief and had many worries, chief among them was continuing to pay for Elliott's child care.

"I have peace of mind knowing that my son is in good hands while I'm at work. Thank you."

-Jennifer Scheer

Jennifer was approached by the director of the YWCA Child Center, who told her that she qualified for a 50% Tuition Match Grant funded by United Way. Grants of varying amounts dependent on need are available to families, like Jennifer's, who are struggling to pay for child care because of unexpected, and oftentimes very tragic, circumstances.

The grant, which now pays for 25% of Elliott's tuition, has lightened Jennifer's load financially and emotionally. She felt guilty for being a working mom, and that guilt intensified after Caleb's death. The grant made it possible for Elliott to stay in an exceptional care facility, and with one less thing to worry about, Jennifer's focus can be on her son.

Jennifer hopes that this grant continues to be available for other families in need. This small preventative measure has kept her on more stable footing and provides amazing care to a little boy who will never know his dad.

Jennifer's story is one of perseverance. You can change the story for community members like Jennifer with a gift to United Way.

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.

Great Rivers United Way

www.gruw.org

