

Mandy Karolkiewicz Family Foundation Fund Established to Support Grand Haven Area Public School Students Through Music, Arts, and Student Assistance

GRAND HAVEN, Mich. – In honor of Amanda "Mandy" Karolkiewicz and her children, Mandy's family has established the Mandy Karolkiewicz Family Foundation Fund at the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation (GHACF). The fund will support Grand Haven Area Public Schools (GHAPS) students through music and arts opportunities as well as assistance with unmet needs in perpetuity.

For Mandy's parents, Steve and Becky Lawwill, the fund is a way to celebrate who Mandy and her children were and the values they carried every day.

"Mandy and the kids brought so much joy, creativity, compassion, and love into the world," said Steve and Becky. "We wanted to create something that reflected the way they lived and would continue to make a difference for children in our community."

Honoring a Love of Music, Creativity, and Expression

Music was woven throughout the lives of Mandy and her children. The family shared a love for music, singing, creative play, and school performances. Mandy encouraged her children to dress up, sing, act, and express themselves creatively, and music was a constant in their home.

At Steve and Becky's home, one of the children's favorite places was the family's music room, filled with instruments and microphones. Family gatherings often included singing, playing music together, and impromptu performances. The music room was a place where the family shared their love of music, encouraged creativity, and created some of their most cherished memories together. It became a space where imagination flourished, confidence grew, and joy was shared across generations.

Those experiences helped shape the family's desire to support music and arts opportunities for future students. Through the fund, they hope more children will have the chance to discover the confidence, connection, self-expression, and sense of belonging that music brought to Mandy and her family.

Some of the family's fondest memories are of attending school performances and watching the children participate in concerts, programs, and productions. Mandy especially loved celebrating those moments and proudly invited family members to attend performances whenever possible.

The fund's support for music and arts programs reflects those experiences. The family hopes every child who has a passion for music, theater, choir, band, orchestra, or the arts will have the opportunity to participate, regardless of financial circumstances. Just as music created meaningful memories and opportunities for Mandy and her children, the fund will help students discover their own voice, confidence, and creative expression.

Honoring Mandy's Compassion for Children

The fund's second area of support grew directly from Mandy's work and the way she cared for students.

Mandy was a substitute teacher with Grand Haven Area Public Schools and was recognized by the district as a Peach Plains Elementary "Premiere Substitute Teacher." In recognizing her contributions, GHAPS noted that Mandy "went above and beyond for students," responding to children with empathy, patience, and care, and consistently poured her heart into her work.

Students affectionately knew her as the "Blow-Pop Lady" because she often had a Blow-Pop available for a child who had accomplished something special or simply needed encouragement on a difficult day.

According to her family, Mandy frequently noticed when students needed extra support and quietly stepped in to help. Whether ensuring a child had basic necessities, offering encouragement, or simply making a student feel seen and cared for, helping children was central to who she was.

To honor that legacy, a portion of annual fund distributions will support students' unmet needs at Peach Plains Elementary School, helping remove barriers to learning and supporting student well-being and academic success.

About the Fund

The Mandy Karolkiewicz Family Foundation Fund is held at the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation and was created as an endowed fund that will provide support in perpetuity. Annual distributions will benefit Grand Haven Area Public Schools in two key areas:

- **Student assistance at Peach Plains Elementary School** for unmet needs that support student well-being and academic success.
- **Music and arts programs across Grand Haven Area Public Schools**, including opportunities related to band, choir, orchestra, visual arts, theater, and student participation.

Through the fund, the family hopes Mandy and her children will be remembered not for how their lives ended, but for how they lived: with kindness, creativity, compassion, and a deep commitment to helping others.

How to Donate

Community members who wish to honor Mandy and her children are invited to contribute to the Mandy Karolkiewicz Family Foundation Fund held at the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation.

Donations can be made online **via the below QR code**, which directs donors to the fund's giving page.

