

# WE BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF HUMAN CONNECTION



# ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

In 2013, Christopher Cayford was diagnosed with cancer. In the years that have followed, he navigated the challenges of being seriously ill with kindness and grace. Christopher serves as a role model for many. In return, his 'village' stepped up and supported him through his journey with every opportunity possible. Christopher and 9 remarkable people were motivated to ensure that no young adult facing a shortened life expectancy should pass without first realizing a treasured experience, shared with those who love and support them. With that concept serving as motivation, the Forward Foundation was established.

## MISSION

To provide young adults who are terminally ill with meaningful experiences of connection.

## VISION

That no young adult shall die without having an experience of connection realized.

# FOUNDATION TIMELINE

2017



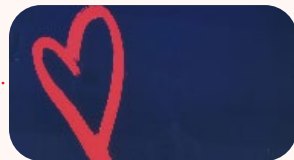
April 29, 2017  
2017 Cayford Gala



February 19, 2018  
Forward Foundation is incorporated



March 3, 2018  
Kayak for a cure event



March 7, 2018  
Forward Foundation Co-founder  
Chris Cayford passes



March 15, 2018  
Forward Foundation launch party

2018

2018



July 7, 2018  
2018 Chris Cayford Golf Tournament



October 20, 2018  
2018 Cayford Gala



November 7-10, 2018  
Tamara's recipient experience



June 23, 2019  
2019 Chris Cayford Golf Tournament



August 14-19, 2019  
Danika's recipient experience



October 19, 2019  
2019 Cayford Gala

2019



February 9, 2020  
Ann's recipient experience

2020



August 24, 2020  
2020 Everesting Virtual Fundraiser



# FUNDRAISING EXAMPLES

Forward Foundation utilizes various fundraising opportunities to be able to provide significant experiences for recipients and those closest to them. Below are examples of past events that enable Forward Foundation to carry out its mission.



**2017**

Cayford Gala



**2018**

Cayford Gala

*Cayford Gala*



**2018**

Chris Cayford Golf Tournament



**2019**

Cayford Gala

# 2020 VIRTUAL EVERESTING



Forward Foundation supporter Marco Lam found a unique and incredibly grueling way to raise funds and awareness for Forward Foundation and our mission. To celebrate Chris Cayford's birthday, Marco decided to attempt an indoor virtual cycling challenge known as "Everesting".

The concept is as simple as it is agonizing - pick a hill anywhere in the world and complete repeats of the climb for a total incline of 8848 m; the equivalent of scaling Mount Everest.

Marco chose to ride Alpe du Zwift, a route that included 21 hairpin turns over a course that required him to cover 1036 m of incline every lap. The route is inspired by Alpe D'Huez, one of the most famous mountain stages of the legendary Tour de France bike race. Using a Wahoo KICKR Smart Trainer that simulated the climb's gradient, Marco needed to complete more than 8 laps of this route to accomplish his Virtual Everesting goal.

"Forward Foundation has really become a way for us to share Chris' kindness and love with young adults experiencing challenging times. With the negativity and unfortunate events happening around the world, Chris' love and unselfishness has inspired me to give back to the Forward Foundation in a different way instead of just the golf tournament and gala." - Marco Lam

After taking the day before off work to rest and prepare, Marco was on his bike shortly after four o'clock in the morning to begin the first of his ascents. The entire event was streamed live on YouTube as followers from around the world chimed in with words of encouragement and donations to support the cause.

After the first two laps, equipment malfunctions started to become a factor as the Smart Trainer that Marco was

using struggled to keep accurate tabs on his progress. "Halfway through lap 3 was a struggle because my trainer was overheating a bit and I had to rig a solution with another fan to cool it down. The trainer was under-reading any power output by about 15%. [While that] doesn't sound like much, overexerting for [an] Everest effort is not something you want to do." After getting the bike sorted out, Marco recalled lap 4 being "just a grind to finish". One of the benefits of a virtual Everesting challenge is that riders can get off the bike as their avatar descends the mountain they've just climbed. This allowed Marco to stretch his legs and get something to eat.

After 8 fully completed circuits, Marco was very close to his end goal of almost 9200 m as he was joined by a few friends who rode alongside him and pushed him to the finish. Initially aiming to raise one dollar for every metre climbed, Marco had set out to raise almost \$9000 for Forward Foundation and their mission. Final donations totalled \$15,118, well beyond the original goal!

Finally, after almost 20 hours after he started, Marco surpassed both 8848 m (Virtual Everesting badge) and 9200 m, which guaranteed his Everesting badge. His accomplishments can be seen on his Everesting Hall of Fame page. Shortly after he got off the bike for the final time, Marco dove into a midnight snack that consisted of "pizza, burgers and coke" followed by an ice bath, epsom salt bath, and a shower before getting right into bed.

Reflecting on the finish when he was overcome with emotion, Marco fondly shared how he was feeling as he made his final surge to finish at 9203 m, 216 km after he began his ride!

"Simply seeing all the congratulatory comments and the thought of finishing was overwhelming," he said. "The thought of \$15k+ providing someone with an experience is what was going through my mind afterwards. It wasn't about me, but more so for the foundation and what THEY do!"





# RECIPIENT STORIES

## TAMARA

Since the official launch of the Forward Foundation in March 2018, the board had been focused on fundraising in preparation for opening the online application process. However, as fate would have it, the Callanish Society referred Miss Tamara O'Brien and the board instantly knew that supporting her was perfectly aligned with the vision of the Forward Foundation's inspiration, Christopher Cayford.

The Forward Foundation was introduced to Tamara just prior to the 2018 Cayford Gala. A 22-year-old high-performance trampoline gymnast, Tamara had been diagnosed with stage IV melanoma cancer that spring. Tamara's initial cancer diagnosis came just after she won the silver medal in women's double mini-trampoline at the 2017 World Games. Her treatments prevented her from being able to travel and compete in the 2017 World Championships. "We received Tamara's application and her request struck every member of the Forward Foundation board," stated Claire Conde, Forward Foundation Chair. Tamara thoughtfully expressed her desire to connect with her Gymnastics community by attending the World Championships in St. Petersburg, Russia from November 7-10, 2018, with close friend and teammate, Pam Kriangkum. It was an event she would have been competing in if it weren't for her diagnosis. With her application unanimously approved, the Foundation informed Tamara that her trip was going to become a reality. As the first recipient of a Forward Foundation experience, Tamara received an all-expenses-paid trip for two to the Trampoline Gymnastics World Championships in Russia. The plans came together quickly; visa applications submitted, flights and accommodations booked, Russian ruble spending money in hand, and accreditation to take in all the events. Just five days before their departure, the young women received their travel visas and were set to go!

Prior to her departure, Tamara attended the Gymnastics BC annual awards night on November 3rd, where she was presented with the Female Athlete of the Year Award from the provincial sports organization. The following day, with brave and grateful hearts, Tamara and Pam began their journey to Russia. After a few unanticipated delays and over 24 hours of travel, Tamara and Pam arrived at the Team Canada hotel in St. Petersburg on November 6th, one day after Tamara's 22nd birthday.



Tamara expressed that she was nervous to be at the event as a spectator, but the Forward Foundation, Pam and Gymnastics Canada had made plans to ensure Tamara felt right at home. Upon her arrival at the hotel and re-connecting with Team Canada, she was overwhelmed to see the entire Canadian contingent wearing "We Jump for Tamara" t-shirts. Team Canada welcomed Tamara and Pam with open arms, while proudly supporting Tamara by wearing their shirts throughout the event. It was a well-deserved welcome after a day and a half of travel.

Team Canada had many more heartfelt surprises for Tamara. She was named the flagbearer for the Opening Ceremonies, an honour that had immense meaning to Tamara and served as another reminder that her trampoline community was behind her. Over the course of the event, Tamara took over the @cdngymnastics Instagram and reported on Canada's bronze medal in the first-ever All-Around Team competition. Tamara was proud to have witnessed Team Canada capture the bronze medal in the team event.

However, that bronze medal would take on a new meaning for her. On the final evening of the event, Rosie MacLennan – two-time Olympic gold medalist (2012, 2016) – and the Team Canada athletes surprised Tamara by presenting her with the bronze medal. It was a selfless gesture that left Tamara feeling stunned but truly supported by the community that has been such an integral part of her life. She knew that while she faced her battle with cancer, her gymnastics community was fighting with her.



Tamara and Pam returned home, still overwhelmed by the love and support they experienced by re-joining Team Canada. Trying to find the words to express what the trip meant to her, Tamara said, "the amount of normalcy I experienced being there is amazing. I know I'm not coming back so I feel a deep sadness, but I'm also recharged and feeling joy I didn't know I could feel anymore. I'm realizing how important community is and that it never goes away. I'm living in the present and appreciating every moment."



# DANIKA



On February 5th, 2019, Danika, a 38-year-old teacher referred herself to Forward Foundation after being made aware of a previous recipient's experience, as they had met through Young Adult Cancer Canada. Danika had been diagnosed with metastatic colon cancer and, as a previous world traveller, wanted to share an intimate trip with some of those closest to her in order to connect her community together.

“Forward. What does this word, idea, mean? When we say it, we think of movement, advancing forward with time. This can be hard to understand when you're a young adult diagnosed with a terminal illness, which is removing that time from you second by minute by hour. Life, in all its beauty and pain, continues to move forward. Time both leaves us behind and pushes us forward into an uncertain and difficult future.” - Danika

Danika had spent much of her adult life travelling and living abroad while working as a teacher. During those years, she met three teacher colleagues from across North America and they became an integral part of her life even though they had never all met each other.

Danika's wish was to bring the three of her friends together to meet at last. She felt in her heart that they would connect and all become close friends. This was so very important to her, as she said that when she was gone she thought they could provide support to one another with their relationship with her serving as the common denominator. They could have wonderful shared memories and new connections.

“Claire once told me that Christopher wasn't scared of dying but of hurting those he loved. I know this feeling. It often creeps into my thoughts in the small hours. Those I most adore will continue moving forward without me. If I were still here with them, I would hope to be able to prevent their pain, but at some point, our paths will diverge, and I will have to leave them, as much as that hurts and is nearly unbearable to think of.”

She wanted to bring everyone together for a mini road trip around the island she grew up on, showing them all of the places that were so important to her and were a part of her childhood. She wanted to end in Tofino, as that was her safe place and the place she felt most at peace. Forward Foundation brought the four friends together and arranged a 4-day road trip of a lifetime around Vancouver Island that included spa dates, a whale-watching boat tour, high teas, and beautiful oceanfront accommodations.



“With all this uncertainty, the Forward Foundation provided me with the opportunity to still feel like part of my loved ones' future. In August 2019, I spent 6 days with a few of my dearest friends, sharing my memories with them and creating new ones for them to keep when I'm gone. My past became part of their future as we travelled Vancouver Island and visited familiar sights from my childhood, creating a deep sense of connection. This meant a great deal to all of us, and at times was a very emotional experience, such as when we saw a grey whale surface on a wildlife boat tour near Tofino.

“I know that my friends, along with my family, who supported us on our trip, will always be grateful for the experiences so lovingly arranged by Claire and Louise, along with everyone else at the

Forward Foundation. They anticipated and provided for our every need, allowing us the chance to simply dive into the experience. We were spoiled emotionally, even more than physically, by these most wonderful and kind people, who I now treasure. I felt Christopher's presence too, especially on the beach in Tofino. The gift he continues to give to those of us now in his situation, through those he loved, is beautiful and invaluable.

“How can I accurately describe the gratitude I feel for being chosen to receive this gift, not only that of the experience or the trip, but more profoundly, of friendships old and new, and of deep connections? I can only say thank you for allowing me the chance to keep moving forward while asking time to hold on just a little longer.”



# ANN

On October 1st, 2019, Ann was referred to Forward Foundation by her friend Shannon. Shannon works with West Coast Kids Cancer Foundation, a fairly new foundation based in Vancouver that supports kids with cancer and their families. Shannon had come across Forward Foundation and reached out about her dear friend Ann, a 30-year-old who had just been re-diagnosed with cancer for the sixth time in her life. Ann was described as an “absolute champion” by her friend, Shannon. At the time, Ann was in discussions with the palliative team, and her friends were really rallying to support her as best they could. The referral to Forward for an experience of connection was part of that support.

“What you and your team are doing, and the way you’re honoring Chris’ legacy in doing this work is incredible and I’m just so thankful and in awe.” - Shannon

When her friends sat down to dream of what would be an ideal experience, Ann said, “a wedding reception without the weird parts of a wedding”. After being in the cancer world for several decades, Ann had ‘collected’ many dear friends from Camp Goodtimes, She Defines Strength Foundation, Inspire Health and Camp Make-a-Dream. Ann has walked alongside these people throughout her cancer journey, and they have truly become her family. Ann is not the type of person who loves the limelight or wants to take centre stage, but at this time, she wanted nothing more than to be completely surrounded by and immersed with people she loves and who love her.

It was decided that a gathering-together celebration would be an opportunity for her to reconnect with those who have been along with her on this journey for decades. The room was to be filled with all the people who know her from all aspects of life. This gathering-together was to allow Ann to have an occasion where she could look around the room, and in every single face, see and feel, a deep sense of being loved, cared for and known.

“When Ann and I started talking about this in the fall she really needed a pick-me-up and this party has given her such a positive thing to think about and focus on. Thank you for all that you do! You certainly made a dream come true for Ann.” - Anonymous friend



Ann is an adventurer who loves being active, and for years was a lifeguard and a hockey player who had dreams of becoming an Occupational Therapist. She was first diagnosed with leukemia at the age of 11. In the 20 years that followed, Ann has had an additional five cancer diagnoses and uncountable rounds of treatment. Throughout it all, Ann has always been a caretaker. She thinks about everyone around her and how they are doing, even in the midst of her treatments. In times of unthinkable uncertainty, Ann has always shown a quiet determination to help those around her, even struggling at times with feeling like she is burdening others. Forward Foundation was able to help provide Ann with a day that was full of love and happiness by bringing together all the people that cared about her the most.

“Every detail about the party was perfect! The space looked beyond great! The trees, happy wall, photo wall, the photos you shared, the food, the popcorn, the everything...it was a perfect day! But beyond all that, it was what you all brought that made everything that much brighter and full of love. The group of people you had setting up and tearing down were amazing! I saw hugs, high fives, laughs, and was brought to tears when a lovely tall gentleman said “it’s all love” with a giant smile on his face.” - Anonymous friend

“Louise was empathetic, caring, and helped put me at ease. Please pass on my sincerest thank you to her for those hugs that day. I really, really needed them. I was overwhelmed and overcome with emotion about what the day actually meant.” - Ann’s friend, Mia.





## HOW DO YOUNG ADULTS QUALIFY FOR AN EXPERIENCE?

In order to be eligible for an experience, an adult must be:

- Between the ages of 18 and 39;
- A legal Canadian citizen or permanent resident; and
- Have a terminal illness diagnosis

## WE DO NOT FULFILL CERTAIN TYPES OF EXPERIENCES

Including:

- Requests from individuals living outside of Canada
- Cash
- Gifts for others
- Surprise experiences
- Reimbursements for completed experiences
- Legal assistance
- Automobiles, lifts, repairs
- Hunting
- Property home improvements and repairs
- Funeral arrangements or posthumous requests
- Medical treatment/supplies/equipment/transportation or dental extractions
- Cruises
- Any Experience request deemed offensive, inappropriate, or inconsistent with Forward Foundation values, or those of our corporate partners

# DONATIONS & SPONSORS

## YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

By supporting Forward, you will make a positive difference in someone's life right now. When a young adult is diagnosed with a terminal illness, lives are thrown into turmoil. Life becomes dominated by hospitals, treatments, and fear for what the future might hold. Your support will provide young adults with the ability to focus on what is of most importance to them during their journey and help bring that moment of connection to fruition for them.

### WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

You can support Forward Foundation's mission with cash and in-kind donations.

Most of our referrals come from the network of medical professionals involved in the prospective recipient's care, but they can also be made by family members, friends or through self-referral.

More information can be found on our website:  
[www.forwardfoundation.ca](http://www.forwardfoundation.ca)

