



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on July 22, 2022

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## The Goodness of America

### A Yearbook to Remember

When 12-year-old Brody Ridder of Westminster, Colorado, couldn't get his classmates to sign his yearbook to commemorate the end of his school year, a group of high-school students stepped in to save the day.

Brody's mother, Cassandra, told *The Washington Post* that her son had been experiencing some bullying at Academy of Charter Schools and was struggling socially.

Brody was moved to Academy of Charter Schools after fifth grade for more academic support, his mother told the *Post*. Before moving to the new school, Brody had friends, but his experience at Academy of Charter has not been positive.

"There's kids that have pushed him and called him names," she said. The bullying subsided a bit after she addressed it with the school administrators, but Brody continued to be isolated from his classmates.

Administrators at the school told the *Post* that remote learning and the transition back to in-person classes have created more conflicts and bullying.

On May 24, Brody asked his classmates to sign his yearbook but was repeatedly told "no." Ultimately, he got signatures from just two classmates and two teachers. Heartbroken over not getting more signatures, Brody wrote himself a note in his yearbook that read, "Hope you make some more friends."

When Cassandra saw Brody's yearbook and heard about the rejection he felt from his classmates, she took to Facebook, where she shared the story with a private group of parents whose children attend the same school.

"My poor son. Doesn't seem like things are getting any better. 2 teachers and a total of 2 students wrote in his yearbook. Despite Brody asking all kinds of kids to sign it," Cassandra posted in the Facebook group. "So Brody took it upon himself to write to himself. My heart is shattered. Teach your kids kindness."

Cassandra told the *Post* she had hoped that her post would inspire parents to talk to their kids about empathy and kindness.

That post reached the right hearts. On May 25, a group of high-school students appeared outside of Brody's classroom and asked his teacher if Brody was there.

High-school student Simone Lightfoot recalled to Denver news station KDVR that the teacher directed the students to where Brody was seated in the back of the classroom. When the high-school students spotted him, they said, "We're here to sign your yearbook, bud!"

Lightfoot and her friends lined up to sign Brody's yearbook. And while that was happening, dozens of other students lined up to do the same. Lightfoot told KDVR that there were so many students to sign Brody's yearbook that they played "Rock, Paper, Scissors" to see who would get the chance to sign first.

Eighth-grader Maya Gregory also showed up to sign Brody's yearbook with a group of her friends. She



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said that she was inspired to act because she also struggled with bullying and making friends when she was in sixth grade.

“No one helped me when I was in that situation,” said Maya. “So I wanted to be there for him.”

The *Post* reported that some of the students knew Brody, while others heard about the situation from their parents and wanted to do something nice.

Some of the students just signed their names, while others added notes of encouragement.

“Brody, you are the kindest little kid. You are so loved. Don’t listen to the kids that tell you different,” one student wrote, [Today.com](#) reported.

Another added, “Hey buddy, never change, never put your head down.”

The show of support from the high-school students even prompted some of Brody’s own classmates to sign his yearbook. By the end of the day, he had signatures from more than 100 people.

The *Post* reported that some of the students who signed Brody’s yearbook have vowed to remain his friends, and some of them have already gone out for ice cream with him.

Cassandra told the *Post* the entire experience made her feel that “there’s still hope, not just for Brody, but for humanity.”

## **A Sister’s Love Never Dies**

Nine-year-old Julia Wolf of Loveland, Ohio, lost her twin brother to brain cancer last year and has since decided to raise money for research to help other families avoid the pain of such a loss.

Julia’s family learned in 2019 that her brother, Grant, had medulloblastoma, and after just over a year battling the disease, Grant passed away only weeks before he and his twin sister were to celebrate their eighth birthday.

“I couldn’t even bear the thought of having a birthday without my twin brother so I wanted to honor him while turning eight,” Julia recently told Cincinnati news station WLWT.

With the help of her mother, Julia started a Facebook fundraiser for the nonprofit group The Cure Starts Now, with the hope of raising \$240 for brain-cancer research.

The Loveland community, which had provided invaluable support to the Wolf family during the turmoil of Grant’s diagnosis and passing, came through and helped Julia surpass her goal. In fact, she raised a whopping \$56,000 through her campaign.

Fast-forward one year, and Julia decided she would host another fundraiser for The Cure Starts Now for her ninth birthday, in honor of her brother. Once again, she raised an enormous amount of money: \$52,000.

Julia’s wish is that the success of her fundraisers will inspire hope and encouragement in others who are struggling with loss.

“I want you guys to know just always keep hope in your heart,” she said while speaking with WLWT. “Also if they do lose their loved ones, just know that they’re with you in spirit. I get thousands of signs every day from Grant knowing that he’s with us.”

According to WLWT, the money raised is going toward research trials at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital.



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WKRC out of Cincinnati also reported that the Wolf family's generosity did not end with the fundraisers. They also purchased 30 stuffed dogs to be donated to the Child Life Department at the hospital because Grant always had one with him during his appointments.



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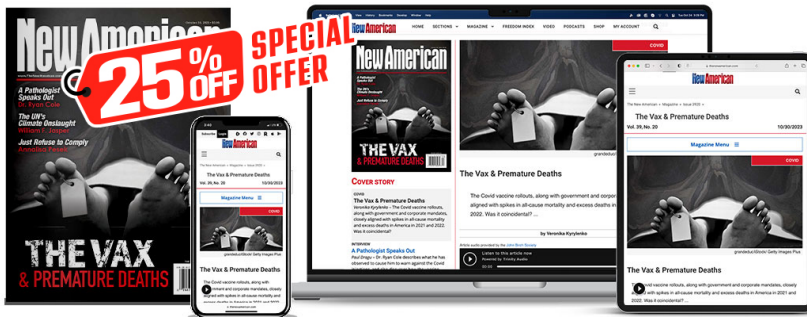
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