



New Jersey Center for Tourette Syndrome
AND ASSOCIATED DISORDERS

*Collaborative Partnerships
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wish Upon A Hero Foundation, with help from a star, grants wish of Jersey boy with Tourette Syndrome

Country music star LeAnn Rimes personally funded a new iPad for 11-year-old Manahawkin boy whose previous computer was destroyed by a bully

MANAHAWKIN – For the past 6 years, 11-year-old Joey has struggled with Tourette Syndrome, anxiety, depression, OCD, ADHD and Asperger’s Syndrome. With each passing year, his quality of life has deteriorated because of those conditions and the bullying that ensued at school. One of his only sources of happiness was an iPad his family surprised him with last Christmas.

However, not long after his eyes were wide with wonder and excitement from viewing the big, bright screen for the first time, that iPad was smashed to the ground by a ruthless bully. Joey’s world – and his precious gift – was shattered, and his family could not afford to purchase him a new one.

Enter the Wish Upon A Hero Foundation, which for the past 10-plus years has swept to the rescue of kids just like Joey all over the United States. The Foundation, which has no prequalification list for granting someone a wish, listed Joey’s

desire – a new iPad – on its website so that like-minded, philanthropic people from around the nation could contribute to making that wish a reality.



Photo courtesy of Wish Upon A Hero

From left, 11-year-old Joey of Manahawkin enjoys his Wish Upon A Hero birthday party and wish-granting celebration with Wish Upon A Hero teens Cory Singer, 18, and Tommy Licato, 13, both of South Plainfield. Joey’s wish was an iPad, which was granted to him through a gift from country singer LeAnn Rimes.

In late September, country music artist LeAnn Rimes became aware of Joey's wish and granted it immediately, personally funding the project. And on October 13, Joey received his new iPad just 10 days after his 11th birthday at a surprise party thrown in his honor at the local Jersey Mike's Subs. More than 20 people attended the party, including members of the Jersey Mike's Corporate Office.

Wish Upon A Hero National Spokesperson for Autism, 18-year-old Cory Singer of South Plainfield, presented the iPad to Joey with the help of Wish Upon A Hero Club Officer Tommy Licato, 13, also of South Plainfield, and Wish Upon A Hero National Youth Ambassador Gracie Gutos. Joey and his mother, Tiffany Kurtz, were overjoyed.

"A heartfelt thank-you to super hero LeAnn Rimes, Wish Upon A Hero and all the heroes out there for making this wish so very special," said Kurtz, who immediately requested that all of the funds raised to put on the party be donated to help another child in need. "People helping people is what it is all about. Thank you all for being you and making the world a better place by being in it. (We are) forever grateful to you all."

For more background on Joey's story, please visit the [Wish Upon A Hero](#) website. There also are two YouTube videos of Joey's [wish party](#) and birthday [sing-a-long](#), as well as more photos from this event on the [Teens4TS blog](#). For more information on another wish that was granted, that of Tommy Licato, please visit the [NJCTS](#) website.

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