



Robby Gomez Foundation: Giving Back through Gratitude and Celebration of Life

Story by Marty and Julie Gomez, Co-Founders | Photos provided by the Robby Gomez Foundation

In memory of a boy who touched so many, the Robby Gomez Foundation was established with a mission of giving back to Children’s Hospital of Orange County (CHOC) and supporting families in need within our local community.

Robby was born in 2001 with a congenital condition that obstructed his airway. He struggled to breathe from the moment he was born and was immediately transported to CHOC for an emergency tracheotomy. The fear and uncertainty in that moment was overwhelming as first-time parents, but we knew he was receiving the best of care.

While in the NICU, a team of doctors, nurses and specialists focused on ensuring Robby continued to thrive. They were knowledgeable, patient, compassionate and reassured us every step of the way that everything was going to be okay...and it was. After several weeks, Robby came home to a nursery room filled with medical supplies and monitors. After six months, he had surgery to remove the tracheostomy tube, followed by more surgeries and monthly check-ups with specialists to expand and heal his limited airway.

Robby was an energetic, kind, and goofy child. He had the biggest smile, told silly jokes, was curious about everything, had concern for others, and made everyone feel important. He loved driving his electric Jeep, pretending he was Batman, playing with his friends and running the bases his first year of t-ball.

Our lives were forever changed in 2006 when Robby passed away suddenly and unexpectedly in his sleep. At five years old, our baby boy was gone, and we were left with the devastating and unimaginable pain that comes with the loss of a child. After years of counseling and a close support group, we began to focus on opportunities to say his name, share his love and light, and express our gratitude to the doctors and nurses that were such an integral part of his life. Robby’s

The 5th annual Robby Gomez Foundation Golf Tournament will be held Feb. 5 at Black Gold Golf Club. To register, go to robbygomezfoundation.org.

life was short, but so many people were there for us when we needed them, and we are forever grateful for five wonderful years and memories.

Our desire to honor Robby’s legacy and to perpetuate the sense of community that lifted us during our darkest time moved

us to action. With the help of talented and gracious friends, the Robby Gomez Foundation was created in 2018. Our largest fundraiser is an annual golf tournament held at Black Gold Golf Club in Yorba Linda. With the support of local businesses and sponsors, the tournament has welcomed a sold-out day of golfers followed by a celebration dinner and silent auction in memory of Robby. Within four years, the tournament has raised over \$75,000 for CHOC and provided funds for hospital bills and treatment to several local families experiencing a terminal illness or the loss of a loved one.

Sixteen years later, we are blessed to celebrate Robby and inspire others to give back to our community. We are so thankful for the dedication of family, friends and local businesses that support our cause and are touched by his story.



Board members Tim and Janette Gorman; Marty and Julie Gomez; Nicole and Rick Parmenter.

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