

Wishing you and yours
**A SEASON OF BEAUTIFUL
UNWRAPPABLE GIFTS!**

Azley, Beckey and Kennedy | JW House Guests




**THE SEASON FOR
UNWRAPPABLE
GIFTS**

Meet Kennedy Miller-Robinson

On the outside, Kennedy is a typical 12-year-old girl. She loves being silly with her sister Azley, trying new recipes with her mom, making bracelets for her friends and family, and playing with her French Bulldog, Eugene. Kennedy loves art, singing, and dancing. She dreams of becoming an actress when she grows up, and it only takes a few minutes for someone to realize that she will be great at it. She truly exudes a positive vibe! One would never think this spirited, vibrant child was in multi-level organ failure.

Kennedy was born with Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome (HLHS), a heart defect in which the left side of the heart does not develop properly. When her mom, Beckey, heard that there was no cure for HLHS and that the average life expectancy of a baby with the condition was 4.5 days, she was crushed. But Kennedy beat the odds and courageously overcame every obstacle. She has had multiple strokes, three cardiac arrests, and four open heart surgeries throughout her young life.

This year, it was clear that Kennedy would need a heart and liver transplant. Beckey, Kennedy, and Azley packed their bags and relocated over 3,000 miles from Wasilla, Alaska, to get a life-saving transplant at Stanford Hospital.

As a single mom, finding a safe place to stay for her two girls worried Beckey. She wanted to provide some sense of “normalcy” amid so many changes, but she knew such a place would have a cost that she couldn’t afford. When a hospital social worker told her about JW House, she didn’t imagine this would be the answer to her prayers.



Stanford Hospital after heart surgery, October 2021

JW House, October 2022

JW House’s Family Services manager suggested one of JW House’s Extended Stay Apartments, which was a perfect fit. For the first time in weeks, the family had a kitchen, in-unit laundry, a charming little patio, and even a swimming pool for the girls to enjoy. Beckey couldn’t believe it:

“When you’re stuck and you’re far from home and you have no friends, and no family and no resources and you’re terrified and anxious... to be able to have something like JW House – for however long you need it – is the most precious gift that I could even think of.”

Last month, Beckey received the call that they had been waiting for: there was a donor, and Kennedy was to get ready for the transplant. However, she had a cold, and the doctors decided it wasn’t safe. Beckey shared with tears in her eyes that she was visibly devastated until Kennedy said, “I’m actually not sad because another kid will get the ‘gift of life’ today, and maybe even two kids. One who needs a liver and one who needs a heart.” Even though she couldn’t get her transplant that day, Kennedy thought of others.

Today, Beckey spends her days homeschooling the girls, studying online to be a nurse, and keeping the family in good spirits. Kennedy remains on the waitlist for a transplant and patiently awaits her surgery. Until that day, she and her family continue to enjoy their **home away from home at JW House.**

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