

Documentary Featuring Terminally Ill Teen Raises \$20,000 in 3 Days

Individuals have given more than \$20,000 within 72 hours for a crowdfunding campaign to raise support for a short-form documentary on the journey of Ethan Hallmark, a 13-year-old from Midlothian, Texas, who has captured the hearts of his entire community and inspired them to live every day to the fullest.

Hallmark has been battling stage 4 neuroblastoma, a rare type of childhood cancer, since being diagnosed in 2010. The crowdfunding campaign, which began on Friday, has a goal of raising \$40,000 by Oct. 6.

Four years ago, Ethan was just another kid baseball player with the dream of becoming a doctor. Since his diagnosis, he has become an involuntary hero who has demonstrated to his family, friends and community incredible courage and shares a message of hope greater than this terminal disease.

"With the current treatment options, our son's disease is not curable," said Ethan's mother, Rachel. "Its complex genes are just too smart for us at this point. Our son is slipping from our grips. We're trying to get him to 14. We're trying to give him the best quality of life possible. Each day without pain is a gift, and we're trying to give him many more of those."

The Hallmarks and their small hometown of Midlothian have forged a deep bond, sharing equal measures of despair and optimism in an extraordinary relationship of mutual encouragement.

"Obviously I want to beat this disease," said Ethan. "But I'm not going to be that sad if I don't. I mean, heaven is not a

pretty good place. Heaven is a perfect place. Of course I want to live a long life—who doesn't? I want to watch my sister and brothers go to middle school with me. Go to high school. Watch them graduate. Even I want to graduate. It's not my plan though. It's His plan. And His plan is perfect. So really in the end, I will win either way."

The film, produced by I am Second and Ditore Mayo Entertainment, will share the inspiring story of Ethan's journey through interviews with Ethan, his parents and members of the Midlothian community interspersed with documentary-style footage.

"We don't want to waste this cancer," said Ethan's father, Matt. "I mean, he has it. And there's absolutely nothing this world can do to take it away. So the question is, 'What are you going to do with it?' So we choose to make the most out of every day, and making the most out of every day is enjoying what days God gives."

As explained on the IndieGoGo crowdfunding page, "Ethan's story is bigger than one boy. It's about a family and a community intertwined in something larger than life. It's about a journey that millions can relate to ... and millions deserve to see."