

Hello –

October 1, 2013

Everyone who knows Ilyse Levine-Kanji knows that she is a genuine, caring, giving person. Ilyse's son Sam and my son Mark both have autism. Sam and Mark have been in the same class together at school since they turned three. They are now 15 years old.

Last October Mark was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia. Our friends and family rallied around us in many ways, including providing meals and helping with household chores. Ilyse asked me if she could hold a fundraiser for our family since I had to take a leave of absence from my job in order to care for Mark. I really didn't want a fundraiser or charity from other people. Ilyse kept thinking and came back to ask me if she could organize a blood drive on Mark's behalf and, if people wanted, they could make a monetary donation too. Since I know how important it is to have donated blood, I agreed.

On the day of the blood drive, more than 80 people came to donate blood and we collected more blood than the Red Cross' target (65 units). Ilyse did a great job publicizing the blood drive and worked with other friends to organize volunteers to help the Red Cross staff throughout the drive and to solicit monetary donations.

Ilyse organized the blood drive/fundraiser solely to be kind to our family, without looking for anything in return. Truthfully, while Mark and Sam are in the same class and Ilyse and I are friendly, we aren't particularly "close friends." She simply decided she wanted to do something nice for someone else and reached out to me. This is the type of person Ilyse is.

Sincerely,



Ruth Ann Kotosky

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