

It's odd how your heart can still beat when it's broken. I learned this the day I lost my little brother Corbin to his four-year battle with leukemia. I sat next to Corbin's bed on his left side, the side closest to his heart, holding his hand...waiting. Our brother Joey held me as I held Corbin...waiting. Our mom lay next to Corbin, loving him in her own unimaginable pain. When Corbin's heart stopped beating, I thought mine would too. A moment of terror came over me as I imagined life without him.

This is the first time I have shared my story like this, so please bear with me. I have chosen to share it with you, because as a major donor to Jacob's Heart, you have helped create a safe place for people like me to heal.



Thank you for opening your hearts as you read...

That day, when my family walked out of the hospital without Corbin, life seemed unbearable. So, to move forward, I did what I do best: I poured my heart into work. I spent five grueling years alongside a group of start-up entrepreneurs helping raise what is now \$42M in private capital, all the while, desperately hoping that success in socially responsible business would mask the pain of my grieving heart. It didn't. I earned certifications in yoga and massage for cancer patients and became an Emergency Medical Technician hoping to heal the trauma of not being able to save Corbin. Then, just as I was considering nursing school as a way to honor my brother's life, Lori Butterworth called.

Those of you who know her, know that when Lori calls, it's a calling...your life is about to change.

Lori shared about how Jacob's Heart was looking for ways to deepen support for siblings who were grieving the loss of a brother or sister. She shared stories about bereaved children - isolated, confused, terrified, broken-hearted and in need of hope...I knew.

As we talked on the phone, I felt my heart and mind meld, and I heard myself speak with a clarity and wisdom that surprised me. As the conversation flowed, even before Lori invited me to come to Jacob's Heart for a job interview, I knew.

It's hard to describe what it's like for family members like me when we walk through the doors of Jacob's Heart. There's a warm, loving presence that defies definition. For us, it's hard to even imagine that a place like Jacob's Heart exists... a place where we can open up to our experiences with safety and acceptance.

After spending time talking with Lori and the team, I knew. For the first time in many years, I heard Corbin's voice. I made a decision to join Jacob's Heart in whatever capacity became available.

I am proud to share with you that I have joined the Jacob's Heart staff as Deputy Director, and am walking alongside Lori, our devoted staff, inspired board, faithful donors, and most importantly, the children and families, including my growing tribe of forever siblings. It's both humbling and inspiring to step into a professional role that honors my unique blend of personal and professional expertise and experience.



For my business background brain, the timing of joining the Jacob's Heart team was perfect. Within the first few months, I was able to participate in strategic planning with the Jacob's Heart board and staff at our annual retreat. I am working with some of the best hearts and minds to forge a plan to ensure that the outcomes and data points presented here in our Impact Report are sustainable and will continue to improve the quality of life for kids like Corbin and families like mine for years to come.

I never thought one could thrive with a broken heart. But, at Jacob's Heart, that's what I'm doing. Thank you, <First Name>, for helping to create such a place.

With a grateful heart,

Brittany Maldonado-Gosline

*Deputy Director and Forever Sibling to Corbin
Jacob's Heart Children's Cancer Support Services*