



Michael Cherry Memorial Run
Sponsorship Information Packet

Letter From Our President

Dear Grafton Neighbor,

When I started Oddball Magazine, Michael was 5 years old.

I was 15 when I began Oddball Magazine, I held on to this zine for over 25 years, and it ended up evolving into a persona, to a website, and then a podcast, and now to a Foundation. The Oddball Foundation was created from the original idea of Oddball Magazine and its ideals, but with a stronger sense of urgency to make change within the community through art, advocacy and collaboration.

Never in my wildest dreams would I ever think that I would be writing to you to ask for your support to honor my nephew Michael Cherry, and it is still hard to acknowledge that, I am writing to you, to memorialize him, and still harder to say...because he took his life.

From walking him in his royal blue stroller, to warm holiday get togethers, to his brave father's fight with cancer, and spray-painting a mural of messy green palm trees and a comforting yellow sunset after his father's funeral, to watching him dirt bike up and down the hills on Follet street, to visits with him that may or may not have ended up with tattoos, all the way up to my last few Facebook messages from him, asking him how he was doing, and how he would say that his anxiety was unbearable and how he was proud of me, and all the stuff I was doing with oddball and my books and everything. He would tell me his anxiety was so bad, I would tell him to hold on. Things would be ok, life would go on, I would check in with him again, "You got this, I love ya man, hold on, try this meditation app, if you need anything, I am always here for you, we got to get together soon Mike, soon." I would say. Soon the texts fell silent, the phone calls stopped, and one day I heard from my mother, that she had spoken to him, and that he missed us, wanted to come home, and was "doing ok". He was living in Florida at the time. Not two days later, would I find that Michael had tried to end his life, was on life support, and that my sister, my mom and the rest of the family were flying down to Florida, to say goodbye to him. There were moments of hope, and with prayer that Michael would regain consciousness, yet he never did. They took him off life support, and his body seized, and on that fateful day in October, with family beside him in his Florida hospital room, Michael was pronounced dead.

Michael was 27. Just a kid, one of many, who suffered with debilitating anxiety and addiction issues. Though he had hit his sober benchmark, it was ultimately the anxiety and isolation, and being away from friends and family, with no other options that would eventually cause Michael to feel there was no other option but to take his own life.

Unfortunately, this is a common trend. And often after someone takes their life, those left in the aftermath often are left wondering "why" and asking "what could I have done, to help them," or "I wish they spoke to me, I could have helped.", or getting mad and endlessly wondering "why they did not ask for help". Me, I understand suicide, and not wanting to reach out for help, because when you are feeling hopeless, sadly you often don't want to feel like a burden, "dramatic" or "asking for attention", but you are slowly dying. And some go ahead and end their pain, instead of reaching out for help.

I do not want to let my nephew Michael's memory to fade, and that was one of the reasons I formed my Foundation. And with the help of numerous volunteers, the Grafton community, and your support we are planning the first ever Michael Cherry Memorial Run, on October 2nd in Grafton MA, his hometown and where I spent the first few years of my life as well. It is my hope that we can remember Michael on this day, and bring awareness to the havoc that mental health and addiction can have on someone, and to ease the comfort of the Grafton community, who sadly has dealt with many similar losses. It is also my hope on this day that we can come to terms, with forgiveness and understanding, and acknowledgement why some chose to end their lives. My hope is that October 2nd, is a crisp fall morning, the leaves will have turned preparing for a long winter, and my family and Michael's friends, along with the support of his community, will simply walk together, or run together. Not to win a race, but simply to remember him, and all those we have lost to something that is beyond all of us. This day, my hope is one of healing, remembering, and family, laughter, and love, and a day that can be one to remember, and simply enjoy life.

Join me, my family, and Michaels' Friends and their families, to honor a life gone way too soon, and to grieve, and celebrate, and enjoy the life we have, to live in the moment, that we have, while we have it, with family and friends, for a day of remembrance, awareness, and understanding.

If you are interested in becoming a sponsor or donating, please contact us. We would love to set an appointment to discuss the levels and benefits of becoming a sponsor. Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Jason Wright

Uncle of Michael Cherry

President of the Oddball Foundation



Our History

The Oddball Foundation Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit, was founded by Jason Wright in 2020. The foundation was developed to strengthen Oddball Magazine's mission of embracing what makes everyone odd, celebrate and uplift every artist's voice, and to advocate for community change via a cutting-edge literary magazine. The Oddball Foundation has the goal of promoting and diversifying Oddball Magazine, hosting community events, spreading awareness and joining the fight to end mental health stigma, and to fight for social justice issues and environmental change.

What We Do

Starting the Oddball Foundation has allowed Jason to work even further in the artistic community he is so passionate about. The foundation seeks to provide continued exposure for diverse creators and artists, continuously advocate for change in the mental health community, and provide mentorship to rising artists and community activists. The following are just a few examples of how the Oddball Foundation promotes change and supports artist:

- Featuring community leaders and literary artists on our internationally broadcasted podcast.
- Providing an avenue for authors to publish their poems, articles, and books.
- Partnering with Massachusetts colleges and universities to provide internships and volunteer opportunities.
- Hosting community workshops to help budding writers and advocates hone in on their craft.

Help Make a Difference

We strive to provide a safe, creative space that can promote change within communities with community based leaders. We believe that by providing people with education, outlets, and support for their visions, we can change the world. You can get involved today by donating or volunteering your time! We appreciate your support!



Michael Cherry Memorial Run Overview

Michael Cherry was born as a gift on Christmas and spent his formative years growing up in Grafton, Massachusetts. A proud graduate of Grafton High School, Michael loved being a part of his community, be it spending time with his numerous friends and family or working on his motorcycles, even if it terrified his mom. Michael spent a majority of his adult years giving back to communities in need, be it in his travel to Haiti in 2011 or supporting humanitarian efforts in Peru. He was described by all that knew him as a kind soul in an angry world.

On October 5th, 2017, Michael tragically lost his life following a battle with depression and anxiety. On average, 130 people a day will lose their lives to suicide in the United States. Many feel as though there are no options for help or support. Here at the Oddball Foundation, we are ready to change that.

In remembrance of Michael, The Oddball Foundation is organizing the Michael Cherry Memorial Run, a 5k run or walk intended to show the importance of remembrance, prevention, and awareness in conversation concerning mental health and suicide. We want to use this run as an opportunity to highlight the ongoing suicide crisis, expand the conversation around mental health and suicide, and be a beacon of hope for those struggling to find resources.



Letter From Michael's Mom

What can a mother possibly say about her son who died by suicide?

He was my world.

I had so many dreams and expectations for his future. I loved him with all my heart.

Michael was so well-loved. I know all moms think their kids are beautiful, but Michael had been stopping traffic since he was a baby. I remember even going to kindergarten orientation and another parent came up to my late husband and me and said jokingly "Oh My God, you're Michael Cherry's parents? My daughter doesn't stop talking about him." We laughed about that for years because we knew we were in trouble.

Michael was a good kid. He loved all sports and had the funniest sense of humor. He loved to joke around and be a goofball. He always had lots of friends and made new ones everywhere he went. I still can hear his contagious laugh and that's what I miss the most.

I try not to think that I will never hear it again.

I am still so broken hearted and want to thank you all for honoring my boy, and walking with us on October 2, 2021.

Andrea Cherry
Michael's Mother

Levels of Sponsorship

Sponsorship Benefits	Any Donation	Supporter of Oddball (\$50+)	Friend of Oddball (\$100+)	Family of Oddball (\$250+)
Business name or logo listed on official website donor list.				
Business name or logo on our corporate donation banner				
Business name or logo on the back of t-shirts worn on race day				
Business Promotion on Oddball Facebook and Instagram.				
Ability to choose one (1): -Become a guest speaker on the Oddball Show podcast for one episode -Business promotion on 4 episodes of the Oddball Show -Ability to host a table at the 5K to be able to promote your business.				

If giving an in-kind donation please provide a receipt of how much the items cost so you can receive your appropriate sponsorship benefit.

Sponsorship Form

Date of Event: October 2nd, 2021

Event starts at 10am and ends at 2pm

Deadline for Sponsorship: September 8th, 2021

Please use the following form to become a sponsor of the Michael Cherry Memorial Run in support of the Oddball Foundation.

Contact Name:

Contact Title:

Company Name:

Address:

City, State, & Zip:

Phone:

Email:

Who should be acknowledge for the contribution:

Sponsorship level:

- Custom Donation**
- Supporter of Oddball**
- Friend of Oddball**
- Family of Oddball**

(Please select one)

Please return the sponsorship form and make check payable to:

Oddball Foundation
12 Giles Ave #1416
Mansfield MA, 02048

If donating via gofundme, please indicate that in your response email and submit this form via email to cherryrun@oddballfoundation.org

Gofundme:

https://www.gofundme.com/f/michael-cherry-memorial-run?utm_campaign=p_cf+share-flow-1&utm_medium=copy_link&utm_source=customer