

THE ANNIKA CAROLINE LUNDGREN FOUNDATION

Unbreakable Harmony

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Plainfield Family Launches Foundation Honoring Annika Lundgren on What Would Have Been Her 18th Birthday

New foundation will carry forward the passions of a Plainfield South student through support for music and the arts, girls' sports and wrestling, and cats

PLAINFIELD, IL — August 19, 2026 — A Plainfield family is preparing to publicly launch the Annika Caroline Lundgren Foundation this week, in honor of what would have been their daughter Annika's 18th birthday on August 21.

Annika passed away in April at age 17, but her family hopes the foundation bearing her name will ensure that the passions, joy and generosity that defined her life continue to make a difference for others.

Known to many of her friends as Toby, Annika was a musician, singer, actor, choir member, theater performer and member of the Plainfield South wrestling team. She loved music of nearly every kind, from showtunes to jazz and hip-hop to metal. She loved Chicago, the Cubs, Abraham Lincoln, her cats and, above all, the people who became part of her world.

"Annika had so many different passions, and she never seemed to think she had to choose between them," said her family. "She could spend one day singing in choir, the next day at a wrestling match, taking in a Broadway show or spending time in Chicago, and then come home and devote herself to her cats. We wanted to create something that reflected all of those pieces of who she was."

The foundation will support causes that were deeply meaningful to Annika, with its work organized around several areas:

General Fund — Supporting the foundation's broader charitable efforts and emerging opportunities to make a difference in the community.

The Toby Fund — Supporting music, theater and the arts, particularly opportunities for students.

The Giggles Fund — Supporting girls' sports, particularly wrestling.

The Bjork Siouxsie Fund — Supporting cats and organizations dedicated to their care and adoption.

The foundation's first initiatives are already taking shape, including a birthday partnership with The Kitty Squad, a local cat rescue, and plans to support students and programs connected to the arts and athletics.

The family chose Annika's birthday as the foundation's public launch because they wanted the day to be about more than remembering what was lost.

"We know we can't bring Annika back," her family said. "But we can make sure that the things she loved keep creating something good in the world. If another kid gets the chance to make music, perform on a stage, discover a love of wrestling, pursue an opportunity they couldn't otherwise afford, or bring a cat home because of something we do in Annika's name, then a little piece of her continues."

The foundation will also pursue scholarship opportunities in the future, with the goal of helping students continue their education and pursue the passions that make them feel most alive.

The Annika Caroline Lundgren Foundation is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Contributions may be directed to the General Fund, Toby Fund, Giggles Fund or Bjork Siouxsie Fund.

More information about the foundation, its mission and opportunities to support its work is available at www.aclfoundation.org.

ABOUT ANNIKA CAROLINE LUNDGREN

Annika Lundgren was a Plainfield South High School student who filled her life with music, theater, athletics, friendship and an extraordinary love for cats. She was an honors and AP student, member of the National Honor Society, and a participant in choir, theater, her church's worship team and wrestling. She had been accepted to six colleges and planned to study music therapy.

Annika died on April 14, 2026, at age 17. The foundation was created by her family to ensure that her passions and the joy she brought to others continue to make a difference.

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