

Dear Friends,

I am writing this letter to all of you on behalf of the Lancaster Division of the American Heart Association to ask for your help. I have been selected to be the spokesperson for the 2012 Lancaster Heart Ball, the biggest fundraiser for the local chapter of the American Heart Association. As most of you know, I was born with a congenital birth defect in my heart called a ventricular septal defect, or VSD. The hole in my heart was the size of a quarter, but fortunately I was able to have surgery about a year after I was born that has allowed me to lead an otherwise fulfilling and carefree life. Apart from a few restrictions of certain activities, I was able to lead an active life and was fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to play football in college.

I am writing to ask for a small donation as part of the "Open Your Heart" appeal portion of the Heart Ball. I know many of you have just graduated and are still in college, so the funds are certainly limited. I would ask that you please consider donating \$10-\$20 dollars so that future children born with similar heart issues are able to continue living full lives. This money goes towards research and will help advance the health care options that are available for people like myself. The Heart Ball has a sponsor that has agreed to match a donation of \$10,000 if it can be raised through this campaign. I ask that you think of me and the 36,000 children born with heart defects each year and give a small gift to the American Heart Association.

The amount of money raised through campaigns like these has contributed to major advances in the way that defects like mine are treated each year. Those of you that know me know that I have a 10-12 inch scar running down my chest. Today, because of donations like this, children with my condition can be repaired in the womb without any hint of any operation whatsoever. The tremendous advances in medical technology can be directly related to contributions from people like you.

On behalf of the Lancaster Division of the American Heart Association I would like to personally and sincerely thank each and every one of you from the bottom of my heart for taking the time to read this and hopefully choose to give a small gift as part of the Open Your Heart campaign.

Sincerely,

Jay Ridinger