

August 1, 2008

Lubbock, Texas

Merchant Services Helps to Make Child's "Storm Chaser" Dream a Reality

Merchant Services joined with the Make-A-Wish Foundation® of Orange County/Inland Empire for a unique and exciting opportunity to turn the wish of Christian B., a 9-year old from Stanton, CA, into a reality. Christian's wish – to join in a daring race across Texas to track down an amazing feat of nature – the tornado.

Christian, an inspiring 9 year-old from Stanton, California, was diagnosed with Burkitt's Lymphoma in the second grade. Around that time, Christian saw the movie *Twister* for the first time. From that point forward, Christian was fascinated with tornadoes. Christian and his dad even conducted their own tornado experiments at home.

When Christian met with the wish granters from the Make-A-Wish Foundation®, they quickly landed on what he'd most like to do - to be a storm chaser and see a tornado! Christian, his parents, and his younger brother were flown to Lubbock, Texas for Christian's wish. They headed to KAMC news station to join Ron Roberts, the top meteorologist in the region. From there, Christian and his father began their 13-hour adventure with Al Hardin, who has 20 years of storm chasing experience.

Over the next few days, Christian met with several meteorologists who taught him about weather balloons and tracking storms. He then went to the Texas Tech University Wind Science and Engineering Center where he was shown a tornado simulator. Christian nearly reached celebrity status in Texas after appearing on a local newscast to talk about his storm chasing experience. While he did not see a tornado, he did have the opportunity to see the forming of a funnel cloud in the sky, which he described as "very exciting."

Christian's wish experience was greater than he could have ever imagined and he still talks about it whenever he can. He is thrilled that he had the opportunity to fulfill his dream of becoming a storm chaser!

The Merchant Services family was proud to be a part of helping to make Christian's dream of becoming a storm chaser a reality. Merchant Services' corporate culture is grounded in a firm commitment of giving back to the community, and the company stands firm in its commitment to donate a portion of its proceeds to deserving not-for-profit organizations, including its proud support of the Make-A-Wish Foundation®.

Founded in 1995, Merchant Services is a leading provider of e-commerce solutions to businesses throughout the United States. Recognized in 2009 by Inc. Magazine as one of *The 5000 Fastest Growing Privately-Held Companies in the U.S.*, Merchant Services provides sound, reliable and cost-effective bankcard and e-commerce support to tens of thousands of business partners nationwide.

Since 1980, the Make-A-Wish Foundation® has enriched the lives of children with life-threatening medical conditions through its wish-granting work. Since its beginning, the organization has reached more than 174,000 children around the world. The Foundation's mission reflects the life-changing impact that a Make-A-Wish® experience has on children, families, and entire communities. To learn more about the Make-A-Wish Foundation® of Orange County and the Inland Empire please visit www.wishocie.org.