In loving memory of John Daniel Shay, an extraordinary soul who graced our lives for 20 precious years. Born on March 7, 2003, he departed this life on December 13, 2023, after a valiant and dignified four-month battle with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia.

John spent his earliest years in Londonderry, NH until moving to Cornville, ME, at age six. He briefly attended Bloomfield Elementary before transferring to the Community Regional Charter School. It was there, ohn began to truly flourish, both as a student and individual. Inspired by an extraordinary math teacher, joining the Lego Robotics team and mentored by his Uncle Kenny, John quickly developed an interest in computer programming and mathematics. He started dual enrollment courses at KVCC his sophomore year and went on to graduate from Overman Academy in 2021 with nine college courses under his belt. At the time of his passing, John was completing a double major in Computer Programming and Mathematics at UMaine Orono where he consistently made the Dean's List, while participating in both math club and a machine learning research project under the direction of his most admired professor. There was no doubt he would fulfill his dream of obtaining a PhD.

John was a true gift to his close family and friends. His sweet “old soul” embodied an easy-going, genuine, unpretentious demeanor that captured the hearts of all who knew him. An introvert, he had an unusual capacity to stand alone. It was common to find him, tucked away in the background, listening to music or podcasts on YouTube and reading, content to quietly observe the world from a distance. Seemingly wise beyond his years, John was reserved, steadfast in “doing the right thing”, intentional in avoiding “drama”, and grateful for a simple existence. He was dedicated to the pursuit of the best version of himself and found value in the aspects of life that are earned, not bought. A consummate deep thinker, he loved learning and all matters of logic. He loved talking about complex ideas and abstract math, which frequently exceeded the comprehension of his audience. He relished a hard won chess game, a flawless attack on LOL or Valiant, and challenged himself to solve complex math problems in his head. He appreciated alternative/ different perspectives and always enjoyed a good debate, especially satisfied if he felt he prevailed with wit and sound reasoning. He savored new foods and fine dining, often rating family dinners on a 1-10 scale against Gordon Ramsey (which never fared well for the cook). Most importantly, John was loyal to family. His gentle personality, and helpful, considerate nature stood out, quickly making him the nucleus of our family. His efforts to stay connected created special relationships with those he loved, especially “The Uncles” and his beloved “Nana” whom he spent each summer at his favorite place (besides his bedroom) at the family camp on Lake Winnipesaukee. Although John’s journey was brief, he earned the admiration of many for his humble spirit and depth of character. His ability to maintain integrity and grace throughout his arduous, painful and relentless battle with cancer is a testament of his strength and conviction. John's exceptional intellect, passion for the unusual, and willingness to take on challenges, coupled with his candid, astute and often sarcastic observations of the world brought fresh perspective, many laughs and much delight/pride to our family. He set a high bar for those around him. He was just plain special.

Though John's physical presence is no longer with us, his spirit will forever reside in our hearts. The profound grief we feel is a testament to the extraordinary love he brought into our lives. John, you added an indelible, unique, and brilliant light to our world, and your legacy, “Shay 2.0”, will live on in us all.

May your spirit find eternal peace, and may we strive to carry forward your character, strength, integrity and the selflessness you so generously shared with us. You are deeply loved, forever missed and will always be remembered as the best version of our family. Until we meet again.

John is predeceased by his loving “Papa”, Daniel James Shay and survived by his parents, November and Curi Poulin, his grandparents “ Nana” Laureen Shay, Greg Hopkins, “Grammy” Dianne Corson, "The Uncles" Danny, Kenny, and Kevin Shay, and many other loving family members and friends.

In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation in his honor to:

Ronald McDonald House

250 Brackett Street

Portland Maine 04102

This is a wonderful organization, supported only through donations, which provides a “a home away from home,” for families with sick children. It was a vital resource that allowed our family to remain by John's side throughout his entire 4 month hospital stay.