



Michael W. Frerichs
ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER



**Shriners Hospitals
for Children®**
Chicago

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
December 22, 2021

CONTACT:
Paris Ervin 217.685.2584
Greg Rivara 217.685.2380
Kara Miller 773.399.9156

Treasurer Frerichs Returns \$90,000 to Shriners Hospitals for Children *\$2.1 Million Returned to Non-Profits on Behalf of Chicago WWII Army Veteran*

CHICAGO – Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs announced today the return of more than \$90,000 to Shriners Hospitals for Children in Chicago. The proceeds were turned over to the Illinois Treasurer’s Unclaimed Property Program from the estate of Army veteran Ernest Ulrich, who named the non-profit as a beneficiary. Ulrich passed away in 1999.

“We are proud to carry out the final wishes of Mr. Ulrich,” Frerichs said. “He left his entire estate to several nonprofits that were special to him and it brings us great joy to return these unclaimed funds to Shriners Hospitals for Children on behalf of Mr. Ulrich during the holiday season.”

Ernest F. Ulrich died in Chicago on Dec. 21, 1999. He was 85 years old.

The U.S. Army Veteran served in World War II and earned the Purple Heart for wounds suffered in France in 1944. He fought in Normandy and the Ardennes and earned a Silver Battle Star. His rank was First Sergeant.

Back in Chicago after his deployment, Ulrich worked as a stationary engineer maintaining boilers. He never married. He had a will, but his final wishes were never executed for unknown reasons.

“What an amazing story of generosity by Mr. Ulrich. The State of Illinois made it their business to return this gift to Shriners Hospital for Children, which will make a big difference in the lives of children in need of specialty care,” Daniel Winter, Development Officer, Shriners Hospitals for Children – Chicago said.

Ulrich left \$2.1 million to several non-profits, including Shriners Chicago. The Treasurer’s Office has successfully returned the monetary gifts to The Salvation Army, Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly, The Chicago Lighthouse for People Who Are Blind, Goodwill Industries of Metro Chicago and Shriners Hospitals for Children on behalf of the Ulrich estate.

“Our children’s hospital is thrilled to be part of the happy ending of this amazing story about a late WWII hero who worked a blue-collar job for decades and managed to leave behind more than a million dollars for charity in Chicago,” Mr. Winter said.

Winter said the \$90,000 gift can cover the cost of two patients receiving spine rods to surgically correct scoliosis and other surgical procedures to help orthopedic patients from across the Midwest have healthy, full lives whatever their condition or physical differences.

An estimated one-in-four people in Illinois find unclaimed property and the average claim is \$1,000. Since 2015, \$1.3 billion in unclaimed property has been returned, the most that has been returned in the program’s 58-year history. To find out if you have unclaimed property, visit www.illinoistreasurer.gov/ICASH.

Unclaimed property refers to money or accounts within financial institutions or companies in which there has been no activity for several years and the legal owner has not responded to inquiries by the business. In Illinois, the state treasurer is tasked with safeguarding unclaimed property, such as unpaid life insurance benefits, forgotten bank accounts and unused rebate cards.

Because unclaimed property is reported to the treasurer’s office twice a year, it is recommended individuals check the database every six months.

About the Illinois Treasurer

As Illinois State Treasurer, Michael Frerichs is the state’s Chief Investment and Banking Officer and actively manages approximately \$52 billion. The portfolio includes \$27 billion in state funds, \$16 billion in retirement and college savings plans and \$9 billion on behalf of local and state governments. Frerichs’ office protects consumers by safeguarding more than \$3.5 billion in unclaimed property, encouraging savings plans for college or trade school, increasing financial education among all ages, assisting people with disabilities save without losing government benefits, and removing barriers to a secure retirement. The Treasurer’s Office predates Illinois incorporation in 1818. Voters in 1848 chose to make it an elected office.

About Shriners Hospitals for Children

Shriners Hospitals for Children - Chicago offers specialized care for hundreds of pediatric orthopedic, bone and joint conditions with one of Chicago’s largest groups of pediatric orthopedic surgeons and therapists. Other specialties include scoliosis treatment, plastic surgery, cleft lip and palate repair, rehabilitation including spinal cord injuries, and wound care.

Our hospital located on the outskirts of Chicago, has a pediatric intensive care unit and a full line of inpatient and outpatient services to support all aspects of the child and family’s related needs. All care and services are provided regardless of families' ability to pay or insurance status.

Shriners Hospitals for Children is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and relies on the generosity of donors. All donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent permitted by law.

For more information visit shrinerschicago.org.