

## Shelton's wish to meet the first responders from 9/11.

He's brave. He's energetic. He's a fighter. Now, he's a 15-year-old honorary New York City fireman and policeman.

One to three people per one million people are diagnosed with Synovial Cell Sarcoma each year, and wish kid Shelton is one of those people. He was diagnosed with this critical illness, in his left lung in March of 2016. Since his diagnosis, he has undergone multiple surgeries, radiation and chemotherapy, and his family has been traveling to and from Children's of Alabama to Sloan Kettering Memorial Hospital in New York for treatment.

Since he was a little boy, he has loved and admired the bravery and comradery that was displayed by the men and women who responded to the terror attacks on that tragic day in September of 2001, before Shelton was even born.

Many times, it takes days or weeks for a child to determine his or her one true wish. For Shelton, his wish was something he's always dreamed of—to meet the first responders from 9/11: "I've wanted to do that since day one," Shelton said about his wish.

After spending the first day of his wish relaxing at Central Park with his family, Shelton walked out the front doors of his hotel on day two and was greeted by Carl, a New York City Fire Department fireman who would be chauffeuring them for the day in an official FDNY van. First, they went to the FDNY headquarters where Shelton was sworn in as an honorary fireman and underwent official firefighter training. Shelton said, "My favorite part was getting on the truck and going on calls." Before the day was over, Carl took Shelton and his family to the 9/11 Memorial, which was one of the most important parts of Shelton's wish.

The next day, Shelton woke up and went outside, just like the day before, but this time he was greeted by a new face—a New York City police officer, Tony. Tony and the NYPD had a day full of surprises planned for Shelton. He toured the NYPD headquarters, got to meet some of New York's finest, including horses and some of the K9 dogs. He also met officers from the Aviation and Harbor Units and ended the day at the top of the Empire State Building.

Robby, Shelton's mom, said, "Seeing his wish come true meant a lot. Even today, the picture of Shelton sitting in the fire truck with the happiest face on, just living in the moment. Seeing him happy was the best part. Everything about the trip was amazing and beautiful. It was overwhelming seeing the support of Shelton and people letting him do everything he had dreamed of doing."

Shelton said that having his wish granted and meeting people that care so much for him means the world to him. "Kids like me, we don't ask for much. For y'all to make our wish come true, it means a lot to all of us kids," he said.

