



GEEKS FOR KIDS

YEARBOOK
2021

With another year in our rearview mirror, we are celebrating the joy, hope and freedom our Super Geeks have left in their tracks as they designed, built and delivered custom, electric cars for kids with movement limitations.



Every year is a good year at Geeks for Kids. How could a year be anything else when so many kids drive away in their new hot rods with giant grins and thrilled laughter?

Still, 2021 was a hard year. COVID laid our country low. Most of our team leaders came down with COVID early in the pandemic. Our volunteers, kids and families were locked down at home. All our fundraisers and most of our build events were cancelled. And, we were producing more cars than ever with only a skeleton crew.

Yet, every single person involved in Geeks for Kids showed strength and determination. Our Design Team built car assemblies, our seamstresses put together seat cushions and specialty supports, and our Advisory Board developed outreach and crowdfunding campaigns - all from home - over the long, dark months. Thanks to their efforts, production went up, not down. After producing 18 cars in 2019, we built 30 in 2020 and 36 in 2021. Our Super Geeks out-geeked themselves.

Their heroism, though, pales in comparison to our kids. They are - this year and always - the true heroes of the Geeks for Kids story. We often meet our kids after major surgeries, while they are in casts or slings and when they are struggling to learn how to use walkers and wheelchairs. Through challenges that would knock many an adult flat on his or her back, they are raring to go. They drag those casts, pump those wheelchair wheels or army-crawl across the floor as if nothing is wrong. And, they smile through it all! Our kids teach us the meaning of resilience. And, they have inspired us to keep hoping and building.

I hope they inspire you, too! As you read through this year's Geeks for Kids yearbook, remember that life is filled with more hope and possibility than you know.

Rebecca Kidwell, President



ALICIA.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Joystick

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Core Belt; Action Challenge (Simon Says) on Right side

When Alicia's mom filled out the Geeks for Kids application, she said that a car would allow Alicia to get around without rolling on the hard floor, being pushed in a stroller or having someone carry her. This is the most common wish our parents express - a chance for their kids to explore, learn and play on their own. And, now, Alicia is whizzing along independently in her new car.





ALISA.

Age: 4 years

Drive System Needed: Go Button

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Leg Protection; Action Challenge (Airzooka) on Right Side

Just a few months before we met, Alisa was a happy, typically-developing 3-year-old. Then, a sudden infection left her paralyzed from the waist down. Her mom wrote to us and said, "This car would let my child be a child again. It would give her so much mobility to play with her sister, and it would help her enjoy life again. She was very independent before her diagnosis, and she tries her best to still be. A car would definitely change her life for the better."

Who can resist an appeal like that? And, mom was right! Alisa is doing great in her new car.





ARROW.

Age: 3 years

Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Action Challenge on Left Side (Spinner)

While we would like to say that Arrow's smiles and laughter were all for the car we built for him, at least initially he got the greatest thrill from the spinner we added to the side of his car. (It encourages him to use his weaker, left hand. While he was in the hospital for a long, long stay, he found comfort in spinning the blades of his toy helicopter. He even slept on the hard, plastic toy every night! So, we came up with a spinner to his new hot rod.) We almost worried that he liked it too much to bother with driving, but Mom says that Arrow is now zooming around in his car like a pro.

ARTHUR.

Age: 4 years

Drive System Needed: Go Button

Other Specialty Devices Needed: None

Arthur is the middle child in a trio of brothers, and he lives in a neighborhood with 20+ kids around his age. His balance and field-of-vision challenges make it nearly impossible, however, to play with the other kids. His mom wrote, "Being social and connecting with others is such an important part of not just childhood, but being human." They wanted Arthur to be part of life, not just sit on the sidelines and watch. Now, he is racing alongside his brothers and the other kids.





AVAREY.

Age: 3 years

Drive System Needed: Joystick + Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed: None

Avarey, an adventurous, strong-willed, happy-go-lucky soul, loves being outdoors, exploring and feeling the wind on her face more than almost anything. The only thing holding her back from free-wheeling adventure was weak muscles. (When we met, she had just learned to walk, but she couldn't travel more than a few steps.) In her new car, she's now dashing around her neighborhood.

BOBBY.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Joystick + Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed: None

Bobby may have been born tiny, but he is mighty. In his quiet, shy way, he is one determined fellow. Using just his left side, he does most things that his peers do - he simply has to do big things like getting around differently. Maybe that is why he drove like a pro minutes after getting in his car. He was ready to move!





CAMERON.

Age: 3 years
Drive System Needed: Go Button
Other Specialty Devices Needed: None

Cameron's therapists referred him to us because they believed a car would help him with all three types of therapies he is receiving - physical, occupational and speech - by allowing him to play independently with others. They were undoubtedly right, but it is not what thrilled Cameron the most. He was most tickled to zoom around with his twin - something he had never been able to do.





CHLOE.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Go Button

Other Specialty Devices Needed: None

Though she's only 2, Chloe rules! Chloe had our whole team hopping from the moment she arrived for her Needs Assessment. Within minutes, she had our team playing ball, going "night-night" and giving her a tour of our cars. She is so ready for the world. Now, she has the freedom to get out there and explore it.



DAVIS.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Control Panel + Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Control Panel Cushion;
Action Challenge (Airzooka) on Right Side

On 6/12, Davis received his car - and got to rocket about on his own for the first time. (Until that day, he could only roll across the floor.) His mom called to say how much he loved his new-found freedom, but two weeks after he received it their garage, which contained his car, burned down. We will build him another just as soon as we can raise the money.



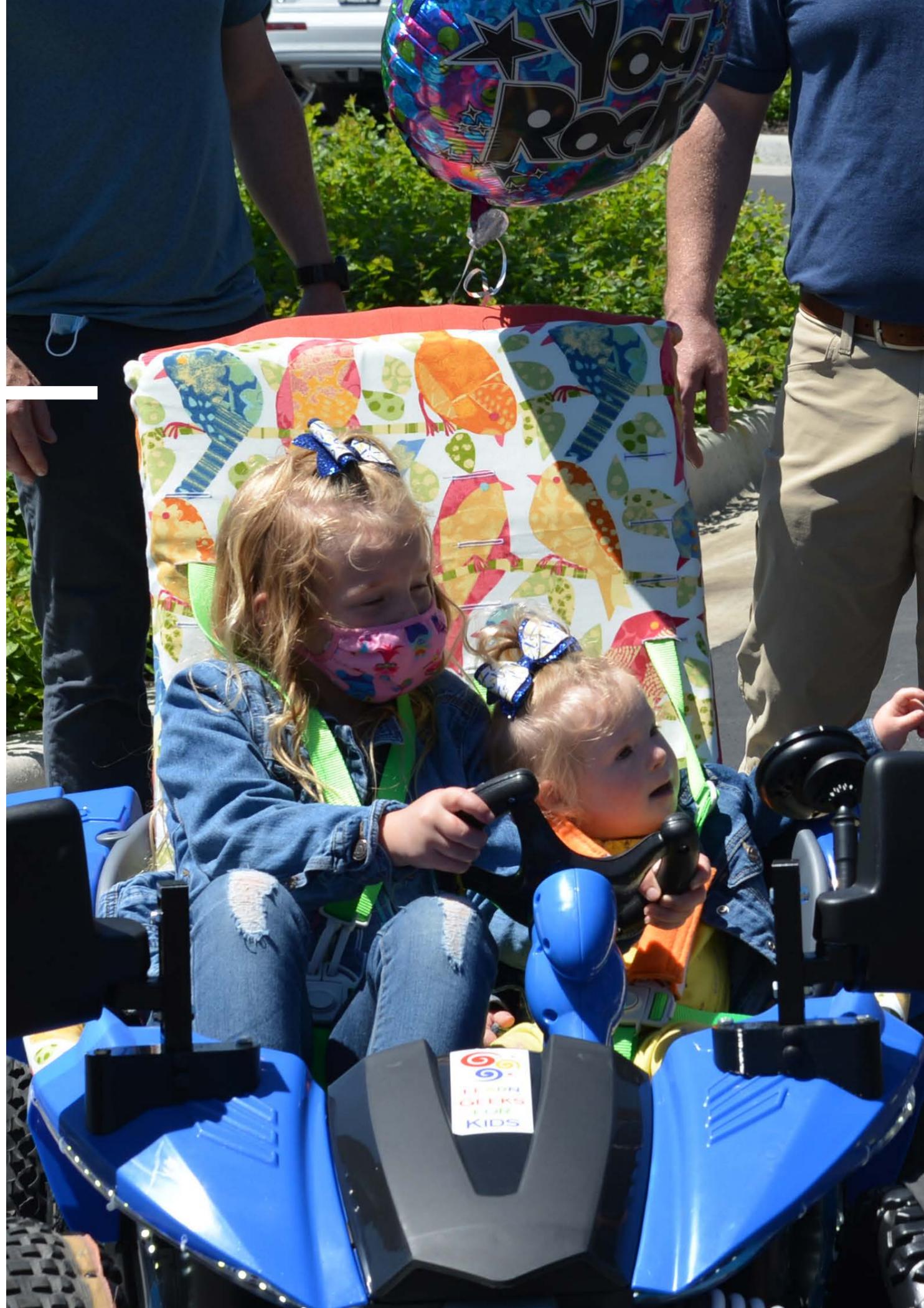
EVERETT.

Age: 8 years

Drive System Needed: Go Button

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Action Challenge
(Airzooka) on Right Side

As the "old man" amongst this year's recipients, Everett showed the other kids how the pros drive a car - no training or explaining required. He hopped right in his car and sped around, lapping all the others on the test track. It was exciting to see how ready he was to get on the move. He reminded us, though, how important it is to complete the designs for our next gen vehicle. Everett, like all the older kids we have served, will soon out-grow his current hot rod. We hope to have a new car ready for him to "trade up to" soon!



EVIE.

Age: 1 year

Drive System Needed: Go Button

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Action Challenge (Simon Says) on Left Side

Evie is one of the youngest kids we have served, but - like all of our kids - her native curiosity and determination got her moving quickly. With a few quick pointers, she learned the power of the Go Button, and she was off to the races. It did not take her long to grasp cause-and-effect. Her action challenge also tempted her to use her weaker left hand to reach out and play. Her experience was a win-win-win!





FLORA.

Age: 3 years

Drive System Needed: Go Button

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Action Challenge (Airzooka) on Left Side

Since Flora is not able to walk without braces, a walker, and a support person, it has been very difficult for her to navigate outside. Her mom and dad are constantly trying to find innovative ways she can play at a park, in the backyard or on the driveway with her twin sister and her little brother. Her new car makes her feel included and so special!





HUDSON.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Joystick + Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Action Challenge
(Simon Says) on Left Side

Though Hudson has made leaps and bounds since brain surgery, she still cannot walk nor use her left arm well. This has not, however, dampened her two year old spirit. She loves to go on walks in her stroller and gait trainer. The breeze makes her giggle. "Car" happens to be one of the few words she can say. Her mom says that the smile on Hudson's face when she goes outside to drive her own "ca" makes her teary.

JACK.

Age: 1 year

Drive System Needed: Joystick

Other Specialty Devices Needed: None

Boisterous, curious Jack never seems to be still - not even for a moment. Though he is missing some fingers and his elbows do not bend well, this guy was ready to cannonball off on new adventures! He was pressing all the buttons, checking under the chassis and offering to help our mechanics get all the cars rolling on Delivery Day. He loved his first drive on the test track. We hope that his new car will be just the motivation he needs to grow stronger and more flexible as he reaches out to use his joystick.





JENSEN.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Action Challenge (Ping Pong Ball Shooter) on Left Side

An early brain injury caused Jensen to suffer left-side weakness, but he does not let much get in his way. He had both hands on his new steering wheel moments after he received his car; he was determined to press the sound button on the left side! It did not take him long to figure out how to shoot ping pong balls with the action challenge we mounted on his left side either. Like all our kids, Jensen proves that where there is a will, there is definitely a way!



JOSIAH.

Age: 4 years

Drive System Needed: Go Button

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Action Challenge
(Airzooka) on Right Side

As of this writing (August 8), we are waiting for the U.S./Canada border to open so that we can deliver Josiah's car. Our team plans to head out for the final fitting, training and delivery on August 12 if the border opens as scheduled.

For now, Josiah and his family - not to mention our team - are sitting anxiously on the edges of our chairs. Josiah has been waiting since May to jet around on his own for the first time. (Though Josiah is an active preschooler, he cannot move his lower body.) With luck, Josiah will soon be whizzing about on his own.

KENZIE.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire
+ Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed:
Action Challenge (Ping Pong
Ball Shooter) on Left Side

Kenzie desperately wants to run and play with her big sisters, but she is not yet walking. A custom car is just the ticket. Not only can Kenzie get around on her own now, her sisters can hop in and ride along with her. We are betting that she will enjoy being in the driver's seat for a change.





LENI.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed: None



When we met Leni, her mom said, "Leni desperately wants to follow her big brother and sister around. We play outside nearly daily and she watches them ride bikes, power wheels, skate boards, etc. She gets very frustrated when she isn't able to play with them and isn't able to move around." When she arrived for her final fitting, though, we did not see any of that frustration. Leni was so chill - reclining in her chair with her leg thrown over the side - while her big brother drove. We think, though, that she will soon take over the controls.

LUCAS.

Age: 1 year

Drive System Needed: Joystick + Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Core Belt

Lucas has had a tough first year. He has fought through heart, brain and motor development challenges. His family and therapists believe that getting him moving as soon as possible will help him overcome these challenges and get back on track. We think so too, especially with his brother lending Lucas a hand.





MACY.

Age: 6 years

Drive System Needed: Joystick + Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Core Belt; Head Support; Arm Support; Leg Support

Macy was developing typically - crawling, walking and talking - until about the age of 2. Then, she started losing skills. Today, she has very little control over her body. She wows us all, though, with her spirit. She tells the best knock-knock jokes, using her speech pad. She works so hard to get her body to do what she wants. And, she shows such grace and humor through all the road bumps.

We built a car with a variety of support devices to help her keep her hands and arms near the control system. We added a remote control that will allow her parents to assist her if needed. We have also launched an initiative to build an eye-gaze-controlled drive system so that Macy will have even more control in her next generation vehicle.



MADDIE.

Age: 3 years

Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Umbrella

Maddie, who has a twin sister and a big brother, often found herself sitting in the stroller while the other kids played. (She has a condition that causes balance problems and motor delays.) But, she is off to the races now. All three kids enjoy zooming around in her fancy car.





MAEVE.

Age: 1 year

Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Umbrella; Booster Pillows;

Action Challenge (Airzooka) on Right Side

Sweet Maeve is one of the littlest kids we served this year. She needed a booster just to reach the steering wheel. But, she still knew just what to do when Dad lifted her into her car for the first time. She jumped into action, pressing the Go Button and the sound button. It was not clear, then, which she liked best - moving or making noise. When we visited her last, though, it was very clear that she loves buzzing around her neighborhood.





MARYELLEN.

Age: 6 years

Drive System Needed: Go Button

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Sound Control thru Foot Pedal; Action Challenge (Airzooka) on Right Side

Maryellen is just as determined as she looks hunkered over that steering wheel. Our kids have to be. Maryellen, for example, was born with almost all of her joints dislocated. Yet, she does pretty much everything that other kids do. She just has to work harder - to run, explore and play. Her new car, though, makes those things easier.





MICHAEL.

Age: 3 years

Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Action Challenge (Airzooka) on Right Side

Michael, who arrived exhausted in Kansas City after a 26-hour drive from Portland, OR, was none too sure that he wanted to have anything to do with our Pit Crew or even his car. (His parents applied for a car because Michael has a condition that delays motor development, and they really wanted him to be able to explore and play on his own.) One of our students, 7-year-old Quinmby, saved the day. He hopped in the car with Michael and went for a spin. After that, all was well.

That is one of the things we like best about Geeks for Kids - it brings people together. Kids help kids. The pros help students. Folks stop and ask our little ones about their cool cars. It is hard to leave a Geeks for Kids event without feeling uplifted.





MILA.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Joystick + Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Core belt; Feeding Backpack and Feeding Tube Holder

Some serious heart problems have slowed Mila down, but she is making progress. She can now sit with support, roll over and grab objects. With a little bit of extra support and her big brother's help, Mila is now sprinting around in her joystick-driven car.





MILES.

Age: 5 years

Drive System Needed: Go Button

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Speech Device Mount

Miles handed us a puzzle this year. Building his car was easy. Coupling driving with talking was not. We had to figure out how to keep him safe while traveling with his speech device. We thought we could mount his pad off to the side easy-peasy... until we realized that he adores watching Home Depot construction videos. We did not want him to crash into something while he was enjoying the latest birdhouse-building video; so, we designed a mount that lifts his pad up and over his steering wheel. He can stop and use it to talk, but he has to put it away before he can drive. Crisis averted! Miles is trotting along safely now.



MILO.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Go Button

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Action Challenge (Ping Pong Ball Shooter) on Left Side

Like so many parents who contact us, Milo's mom worried that did not have anything he could do independently when they went outside to play with his sister or neighborhood kids. Since he received his car, his mom has sent us lots of videos and pictures. And, Milo is doing so much more than watching the other kids now. He is galloping across the yard and around the family's cul de sac on his own. Even better, the neighborhood kids - big and small - are lining up to ride along with him.



OLIVE.

Age: 6 years

Drive System Needed: Modified Foot Pedal

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Action Challenge (Airzooka) on Right Side

Olive utilizes a wheelchair to get around, and it pushing those wheels exhausts her. So, she has very limited independence. She used to have a small electric, toy car. Mom and dad said that it brought her so much joy to drive that car around on neighborhood walks and to the park. Unfortunately, she has outgrown her mini-car. It was time to trade up, and we built a car for her that will keep her racing for another couple of years.





PARKER.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Joystick + Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Arm Support; Expanded Console; Wrist Support

We were floored when we met Parker. Though many of her joints fused before birth and many surgeries to repair those joints leave her in a cast a lot of the time, she simply does not give up. She finds new ways of doing the things kids do. In our initial interview, she hopped along on her tush, grabbed the Binky out of her newborn brother's mouth with her toes and hid it from mom and dad. She played with her peg board game with her mouth. After watching her in action, we knew that she would conquer driving. She is zipping along now!



PAXTYN.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Feeding Backpack & Feeding Tube Holder

Paxtyn has been watching from the sidelines as his twin runs, rides a trike and plays with friends. Global motor delays have held him back - but not anymore. Now, he is part of the action. With his new car, he can do more than keep up with his brother. He can be in the driver's seat.



REAGAN.

Age: 3 years

Drive System Needed: Go Button

Other Specialty Devices Needed: None

Reagan's driving style - donning her shades, checking mirrors, cornering like an Indy driver - had us wondering if she had secretly trained at the Danica Patrick School of Driving. It seems, though, that she was just that ready to get moving. Low muscle tone sure did not keep her from grabbing that wheel and rocketing down our speedway.



WYATT & WILLIAM.

Ages: 2 & 5 years

Drive System Needed: Joystick + Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Control Panel Pillow

Wyatt and William, two brothers who share the same motor-development-limiting condition, were so joyful when we rolled their car out for their final fitting and first test drive. Wyatt, who was in the driver's seat that day, quickly grasped the idea that buttons mean "go" and off they went - grinning and giggling the whole way.





BECKETT.

Age: 3 years

Drive System Needed: Bumper Car with Joystick + Remote Control

Other Specialty Devices Needed: None

We built a car for Beckett last year, and he has done just great zipping around his neighborhood. This fall, his family called and said he also needs some way to get around indoors. He spends a lot of time in the hospital and clinics, and he wanted the same freedom to move while there as he now has outside. We modified this little bumper car for him so that he could drive it with his stronger hand. Watching Beckett zoom around left us laughing nearly as hard as he. His joy is infectious!



OUR SUPER GEEKS.

Number of Volunteers: 106

Number of Hours Worked: Over 10,700 hours

Despite COVID, over a hundred volunteers invested their time and energy in getting our kids racing. They came from many companies, schools and universities. Local Rotary Clubs turbo-charged our campaign to get kids with movement limitations. Three clubs - Downtown, Overland Park South and Waldo-Brookside - turned out a third of all this year's volunteers. The amazing Super Geeks on our Design Team and Advisory Board, too, gave Geeks for Kids their all; they have worked almost non-stop for the last two years, as they stepped in to replace all the hundreds of past volunteers who could not lend a hand during the pandemic. We are so thankful for everyone's kindness and generosity.



BUILD EVENTS.

- February 13

- March 6

- March 27

- April 3

- April 24

- May 22

+ Every Monday & Thursday Evening Year-Round





D-DAY @ PORSCHE KC

- May 29

FAMILY PICNIC

- June 12



THANK YOU!

Thirty-seven kids received the #Power2Play this year, thanks to the corporate and individual supporters who made Geeks for Kids possible. We are deeply grateful for each and every supporter. Read on to learn more about the folks that made the magic happen.

Sponsorships: \$28,579

Individual Donations: \$8,536

Donations of Goods & Services: \$39,700

Total Investment in our Kids: \$76,815



2021 SUPPORTERS

Fourteen companies provided corporate sponsorships to Geeks for Kids this year. Together, they provided much of the fuel needed to get our kids racing.

Copaken Brooks

Copaken Brooks, a full-service commercial real estate company, has provided free space for our workshop and discounted space for our build events in the Downtown Underground for the last three years.

Hyland Software

Hyland Software, a developer of enterprise content management software, has been a corporate sponsor for the last four years.

The Kansas City Exotics Car Club

The Kansas City Exotics Car Club, a group of cool car buffs, has been a sponsor for the last two years. They also helped coordinate this year's Delivery Day Celebration and provided a large group of volunteers to staff our test track.

Mariner Wealth Advisors

The Mariner Wealth Advisors, a wealth management firm that provides estate and tax planning, trust services and more, gave LEARN's Geeks for Kids program a substantial grant this year.

Mazuma Credit Union

Mazuma Credit Union's master BBQ team has rolled their food truck out to feed our team twice in the last two years. Yum!

My Source Solutions

My Source Solutions, an outsourcing service, became a corporate sponsor this year. Their volunteers have also played important roles on the Geeks for Kids Design Team and Advisory Board.

Pololu

Pololu, a leading provider of robotics and electronics supplies, provided a steep discount on key electronics parts for this year's cars.

Porsche Kansas City

Porsche Kansas City provided space and planning support for this year's Delivery Day celebration. It was an amazing location for the event!

Rotary Clubs

Three local Rotary Clubs - The Downtown Club, The Overland Park South Club and The Waldo-Brookside Club - each made significant grants to LEARN's Geeks for Kids program this year. They also fielded large crews of volunteers to help with building and delivering the cars.

ServoCity

ServoCity, another leading supplier of robotics and electronics equipment, provided vital electronics parts for the last two years for free.

Shadow Buddies

Shadow Buddies, a nonprofit that provides emotional support to children with serious medical conditions, donated dolls and super hero capes for this year's recipients. They also helped plan this year's Delivery Day Celebration.

Synthesis Solutions

Synthesis Solutions, a web application development company, has provided LEARN and its Geeks for Kids program with free web development, hosting management and marketing services for the last 18 years.

Thad Bell Photography

Thad Bell Photography, a photographer who shoots many of life's special moments, has provided free or discounted services to LEARN's programs for the last 7 years. His photos fill this yearbook.

Wagner Logistics

Wagner Logistics, a top 100 third-party logistics company, delivered our cars to this year's Delivery Day Celebration. Their VP of Sales has also played a vital role on the Geeks for Kids Advisory Board.



OTHER SUPPORT

Many generous individuals also donated to our campaign to get kids with movement limitations racing. And, the physical and occupational therapists who referred children to Geeks for Kids played a vital role. We might not have met our wonderful kids without them. This year's referring agencies include:

- Ability KC
- Advent Health
- Children's Mercy Hospital
- Playabilities
- St. Luke's Children's SPOT
- Walkin & Rollin Costumes

GEEKS FOR KIDS



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Let's give every kid the #Power2Play!