

GEEKS FOR KIDS



This year brought great joy as well as a series of unexpected losses. We delivered joy, freedom and growth to the 64 kids for whom we built cars and assistive devices. We coached 7 Invent for Good teams as they designed and prototyped solutions to the challenges our Geeks for Kids face. We hosted nearly 1,000 people at our 3 annual Delivery Day celebrations - our All-Abilities Halloween Trunk or Treat, and our spring delivery events in Merriam, KS and Cleveland, OH. Plus, we delivered a number of cars in one-on-one sessions for families whose children were too sick or who lived too far away to attend the celebrations. There was much to celebrate:

- We gave more kids than ever the #Power2Play, increasing car production from 43 last year to 62 this year.
- Our Invent for Good teams designed new assemblies for our cars that are sure to delight and engage our recipients.
- We also achieved a long-saught goal. We now have a suite of solutions from drive systems to

support and assistive devices - that meet nearly every applicant's needs. As a result, we can now focus on an all-new vehicle for kids up to the age of 18 and for indoor as well as outdoor use.

This year also reminded us how profoundly fragile our kids can be. We lost 3 kids this year in quick succession. Two passed away shortly after they received their cars, and one died before we could complete her car. This spurred us to launch our Love Bug program - a new car design that we can quickly adapt and deliver for kids who need to get moving right away.

Read on to learn more about this year as well as our wonderful kids, volunteers and donors. And, thank you for helping us give kids with movement limitations the Power 2 Play!

Rebecca Kidwell President, LEARN



AIDEN.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Standard Joystick with standard grip Other Specialty Devices Needed: Ping Pong Ball Shooter

"Aiden is a very active and adventurous toddler. He is always on the move and exploring around the house. So far, he is only army crawling and is delayed with hands/knees crawling, pulling to stand, walking, etc., but he doesn't let that stop him! Aiden wants a car so that he can move around more quickly and express his adventurous side!"

Aiden is the life of the party - ready to yuck it up with anyone who will sit and visit with him. And, he was so clearly ready to get racing when we met him. He crawled to and dived into every car we had on the floor. Now, he can race on his own.

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AMIA.

Age: 11 years Drive System Needed: Drive by Wire with Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Feeding Backpack & Tube Holder, Spit-up Pads; Bigger Battery

"Amia is unable to walk, but she loves to be outside."

We quickly learned that though Amia cannot talk, she was so tired of and frustrated with being stuck in her wheelchair. She wanted to get moving! She zipped around whenever she could break free of her helpers and popped wheelies like Evel Kenevil. With her own hot rod, she can now go on adventures and walks every day (weather permitting). Plus, she can explore and interact with friends.



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BRAYDEN.

Age: 12 years Drive System Needed: Go Button Other Specialty Devices Needed: A more powerful battery and charger

"Brayden is unable to walk and uses a wheelchair for mobility. While he is physically limited, he strives to be independent and push his limits. Brayden loves to be outside. He has a younger brother that he tries his best to keep up with. Having a car would allow them to have an activity outside they can do together!"

Brayden's new ride gives him the freedom to play with his brother and explore his neighborhood on his own.





BREXTON.

Age: 1 year Drive System Needed: Joystick + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Head Support, Core Support, Arm Support

"To have my son be able to become mobile would be an amazing experience. I see the drive he has behind his eyes already at a young age, and I really think he would benefit greatly."

Brexton was such a little guy when we met him for the first time. It was hard to imagine that he was ready to tool around on his own, but his lovely, determined mom convinced us that Brexton was ready to go. And, she was right! Though he might be bitty, Brexton grasped driving quickly and can now move about on his own.



BRODY.

Age: 1 year

Drive System Needed: Industrial-Strength Joystick + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Holders for Ventilator/Tube, Oxygen Tank, Ostomy Bag/Tube, Vitals Monitoring Equipment and Emergency Resuscitation Bag; Hood Ornament Action Challenge, Arm Support, Buckle Buddy, Core Vest

"Because of his complex medical needs, Brody has lived in the hospital his whole life and he has extremely limited mobility, but he loves to be on the go. He adores the little car they have in the hospital, and we believe that having his own car will help him learn to control his hands more."

All our visits with Brody were at the hospital where he was connected up to wires and tubes everywhere. Though his care team was so devoted, he seemed like a bored, unhappy little guy. But, he sure perked up every time we went for a stroll. We could easily imagine how powerfully exciting it would be for him to race around in his own cool car. So, we built him a very fancy car with space to carry all his life-saving equipment.

As of this writing, Brody has been too sick to pick up his car. We are holding it for him and will deliver it just as soon as his family and care team say it is safe for him to be up and about.





BRODY.

Age: 8 years Drive System Needed: Go Button Other Specialty Devices Needed: None "Brody is a very active boy, but we cannot keep him safe. He races around doing the things kids do, but his balance and multi-system gross and fine motor skills are still developing. He falls often. He loves car rides, though, and could tool around more safely in one of his own!"

Today, Brody no longer has to wait for someone else to give him a ride. He can jet off around his yard and neighborhood whenever he likes.



Age: 2 years Drive System Needed: Control Panel + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Head Support, Control Panel Pillow, Core Pillows, Arm Support "Due to an injury, Brooklyn has a hard time moving her right side. She has to work hard to respond to stimuli. Brooklyn completely relies on assistance to move. " That is, Brooklyn had to depend on others until she got her new ride. Now, she can zip around on and play her own. Age: 5 years Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Oxygen Tank & Ventilator Holders, Line Holders, Core Belt, Head Support, Leg Support

"Charlotte is very ill. We want her to get as much joy out of the next few months as she can; we plan to take her on many adventures including a long-anticipated visit to Disney World. Charlotte's favorite thing is the feeling of movement, of wind on her face. So, we think she would really enjoy a car."

Charlotte only had the chance to use her car for a few weeks. During that time, she enjoyed being outside and sharing precious moments like this one with her siblings.

CHERYL.

Age: 1 year

Drive System Needed: Joystick mounted low on an articulating arm + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Umbrella, Feeding Backpack & Tube Holder, Hood Ornament Action Challenge, Head Support; Side Support Pillows

"Cheryl's legs did not grow properly prior to birth, and she cannot walk. Until 5 weeks ago, Cheryl was severely neglected, and she has been very ill with a septic infection as a result. She has been in the hospital 4 of the last 5 weeks. We [Cheryl's new parents] want to show Cheryl that life can be joyful and full of hope, not just hardship. And, we think a car would give her the independent mobility and joy."

There was no doubt that Cheryl approached new situations with caution. She didn't smile and talk, and she didn't jump into action very quickly. But, she grasped the purpose of her new Joystick right away. With a quick push, she was racing! She left all of us - her parents and many of our volunteers - in tears.





CHLOE.

Age: 4 years Drive System Needed: Joystick with Ball Grip Other Specialty Devices Needed: Feeding Backpack & Tube Holder, Simon Says Action Challenge, Side Support Pillows

"Because strain can damage Chloe's muscles, she cannot move easily on her own. A car would allow her to play with her friends without hurting herself. And, this form of mobility, would be fun and exciting - not just utilitarian."

Chloe was already a pro at driving with a joystick when we met her; she zipped around in her wheelchair with ease. So, we knew that she could handle the same sort of drive system in her new car. Chloe quickly proved us right. She took off like an Indy 500 driver...once she got started. (She had just landed from a trip to Disney World and was a totally exhausted.) She's doing great now that' she's recovered from all the excitement.



CRUZ.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Standard Joystick + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Airzooka Action Challenge, Arm Support, Right-Side Support

"Cruz loves to be outside, but he is limited to his gait trainer which can't go on grass. He loves moving around and bumping into stuff. It has been super difficult to get Cruz the resources he needs because his diagnosis is so very rare. So, a car would be a huge help - just perfect for cruising around our big yard." Cruz has been doing just that every evening and weekend...when Michigan weather permits.









C.C.

Age: 3 years

Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Globe Spinner Action Challenge "Due to a birth injury and years of extreme neglect, C.C. is unable to walk, talk or use her left side much. Being able to get around on her own, to play with other children, and go on walks with her new family might be just the things C.C. needs to heal and grow."

Who could refuse such a request? Not our team! We were delighted to build C.C. a car that would give her her first taste of freedom and independent exploration.

By the time this Yearbook went to print, we had not yet met with C.C. and her family. They hope to travel to Kansas City later this year to get her car.

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ELI.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Industrial-Strength Joystick + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Feeding Backpack and Tube Holder, Whack-a-Mole Action Challenge, Side Support Pillows

"Though Eli suffered a brain injury that limits his movement, he is always raring to go. He would have so much fun being able to zip around as he pleases. It's so much work for me to constantly be holding him just so he can experience and explore things a normal child can. Plus, this car will last him for years!"

As of this writing, Eli's family has been unable to meet with us to do his final fitting and test drive. We hope we can still get together this fall.



ELLA GRACE.

Age: 1 year Drive System Needed: Standard Joystick Other Specialty Devices Needed: Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenge

"Ella is incredibly strong and has overcome so many odds already in her first year! She has advanced receptive language and cognitive skills and has a great understanding of cause and effect. She can sit unassisted for short periods of time and really wants to be mobile! She has discovered how to operate button-activated toys and loves seeing the reaction when she pushes the buttons to make them go. After an incredibly rocky start, she deserves the best chance at normalcy in toddlerhood, and having an adapted vehicle would allow her independence in mobility and increase her motivation to become more mobile."

Due to a series of hospitalizations, Ella Grace has not been well enough to pick up her car yet. Her family plans to get it at our annual All Abilities Trunk or Treat this fall.







EMILIA.

Age: 3 years

Drive System Needed: Control Panel + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Feeding Backpack & Tube Holder, Oxygen Tank Holder, Control Panel Pillow, Core Pillows

"Emilia has very limited limb mobility and no hand/finger control, but she can sometimes lift her arms slightly and touch/slap at an object. She is very medically fragile and gets sick frequently. She is a happy baby, though, and finds joy in many things - including in light, sound and movement. With a car, she would be able to move around and see things."

Emilia has not been well enough to travel to Kansas City yet to pick up her car. They hope she will be able to do so later this year.



EMMA.

Age: 6 years

Drive System Needed: Joystick with Standard Grip + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenge "We live in a cul-de-sac full of children who are always outside riding bikes and little cars. I would love for my child to be able to join them. Emma loves other kids, and it would fill my heart to see her included in their play."

Emma proved on first meeting to be one of those kids that is so easy to please, so excited to do just about anything on offer. We knew that she would love exploring a bigger world and meeting new people. She is now a part of her community, racing and playing with the neighbor kids.





ERICK.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Industrial-Strength Joystick + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Simon Says Action Challenge with Foot Controls "Having a car would allow Erick to have more independence, to move from one place to another when he wants to. He'd be able to follow his sister around like he desperately wants to do, and he could feel free."

During his first drive, Erick seemed to find his new car made a better bed than a mobility toy. (As soon as it started to move, he fell instantly asleep.) But, with time and focus, he caught on that his new hot rod can do more than lull him to sleep. He's now racing around with his sister and making new friends.

EVELYN.

Age: 7 years

Drive System Needed: Industrial-Strength Joystick + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenge

"Evelyn has a really hard time getting around on her own. We live in the country and use a wagon to pull her around because she cannot push her wheelchair over hill and dale. Having a car would greatly ease Evelyn getting around on her own. And, it would allow her to enjoy our animals and spend more time outside!" Her parents were right! Evelyn took off for the hills as soon as we buckled her in.









GIGI.

Age: 5 years

Drive System Needed: Joystick with Shaft-Handle and Hand Support + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Umbrella, Feeding Backpack & Tube Holder, Globe Spinner Action Challenge, Arm Support

"Gigi has been immobile and non-verbal since she was 6 to 9 months old. She spends the majority of her day watching TV and occasionally reaching out for nearby toys. With a car, she would be able to get out and play with other children including her brother and sisters who like to ride their bikes and play outside daily. She would be so happy to be able to do the things that other kids her age can do, and it would make her feel more included."

Clearly, Gigi's smile on D-Day says it all. She loved the thrill of the road. She loved it so much, in fact, that we weren't sure we could persuade Gigi to get her out of her car so we could load it into her parents' vehicle and send it home with her family!

Age: 12 years Drive System Needed: Joystick on an Articulating Arm Other Specialty Devices Needed: Bigger Battery, Tall Flag for Visibility

"Gwen has had over 25 surgeries in her short lifetime, but she pushes every day to be more, do more, and be more independent. She is the strongest kid I know. She is 13 now and craves more than ever being able to keep up with friends and family, but she cannot use a bike or just go for a walk. We were just outside as a family today, and I could see the frustration and disappointment in Gwen's eyes when she had to watch her sisters pedal their bikes away on an adventure down the street. I can't even begin to tell you how much the gift of this car would do for our girl." Not only did Gwen's mom inspire us to build a car for her; she reminded us why it is so important to get our Next Gen vehicle ready for the day when Gwen outgrows this car.

Shea

Braely

Gwen

Chuck





HADLEY.

Age: 2 years Drive System Needed: Joystick on Articulating Arm Other Specialty Devices Needed: Globe Spinner with Foot Pedal, Head Support

"Hadley cannot sit unassisted or use her hands much. She loves to play and activates things with her feet, though. We thought she would love to be able to move independently, and doing so might encourage her to reach out and use her hands more. And, it would be great if you could build something that she could activate with her feet."

So, we built just that. Hadley has a light-touch, easy-to-reach drive system and a fancy Globe Spinner that she can activate with a foot. She and her sister can now take spins around their neighborhood together.

Age: 2 years Drive System Needed: Control Panel + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Airzooka Action Challenge, Control Panel Pillow

"A brain injury at birth left James with limited mobility. He would love to have the freedom to move about on his own, and we would love for him to do so in something safe. Even if he needs assistance driving, his car, it would be amazing to see him moving about without someone carrying him all the time." His parents needn't have worried, though. James took to driving like a duck to water. He can get around on his own now.





JAMES.

Age: 2 years Drive System Needed: Go Button Other Specialty Devices Needed: Feeding Backpack & Tube Holder, Globe Spinner Action Challenge

"James is a busy, funny, active, strong-willed guy, but his illness makes him too tired and weak to get around most of the time. Yet, it is clear that he has a need for speed."

James is such a hoot - always finding ways to get a laugh and engage those around him in his play. But, he couldn't run up and engage others in his play; he had to wait for everyone to come to him. Now, he can barnstorm around his neighborhood, sharing his joy with everyone.





Age: 3 years Drive System Needed: Go Button Other Specialty Devices Needed: Shifter/Engine Noises & Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenges

"Jameson is so smart, but he's stuck not being able to walk. The excellent therapists at Children's Mercy - Jen and Emily - told me I really, REALLY should reach out to you. And, I am amazed at your services. They are life-changing for these poor kids.

We live on a dead-end street, and Jameson wants to go! He is getting so annoyed and frustrated that he's not mobile; a car would give him that freedom. So, that's my story. If he qualifies, great! If another child needs it more, believe me, that I will understand. But, if Jameson gets one of your cars, I can just imagine his face when he takes off in it...."

No need to imagine! The look on Jameson's face when he drove for the first time thrilled us all.



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JASMINE.

Age: 6 years Drive System Needed: Go Button Other Specialty Devices Needed: Globe Spinner Action Challenge

"Jasmine can walk, but she fatigues easily. She tends to drag her right leg and falls often. Yet, she loves to move around and is constantly on the go. A car would give her more freedom without having to use just her wheelchair."

Jasmine's parents were not kidding: She seriously loves moving. She laughed. She hooted. She repeatedly stopped her car to hug everyone on sight. She was thrilled with her newfound mobility!



JOHNNY.

Age: 5 years Drive System Needed: Go Button Other Specialty Devices Needed: Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenge "Johnny would love to be more independent, and a car would boost his confidence when going places outdoors. Right now, needs a lot of help when going any place outside. He has trouble walking; he gets his legs crossed sometimes, and he often loses his balance. Plus, high muscle tone in his legs affects his ability to stand and keep up with his peers. He often falls. He frequently requires rest breaks, and sometimes he needs his wheelchair so he travel long distances. Having a car would help him avoid falls and prevent him from getting hurt by pushing past his fatigue. Plus, he would have so much fun!"

We sure hope that Johnny is having a blast in his new car. During D-Day, though, Johnny was so serious and focused that he hardly ever cracked a smile. He was clearly determined to be the best driver on the test track.

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JONATHON.

Age: 6 years Drive System Needed: Control Panel + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Oxygen Tank & Tube Holder, Control Panel Pillow, Core Support Pillows, Head Support

"Jonathon cannot walk or talk, but he LOVES motion. We made him a bumper car from his old high-chair, and he loves it. The bigger the bumps and the bangs, the more he laughs. He wants us to push him around in it constantly. A car would be a little less work for us and a whole lot more freedom for him."

Jonathon arrived at Hyland Software for our Cleveland D-Days, and he was exhausted. He could not even keep his head up, but he still worked like a Trojan to figure out his Control Panel. It did not take him long to learn that those buttons gave him power!





JOSEPH.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Globe Spinner Action Challenge "Joseph hasn't yet learned to scoot or crawl, and he just recently learned to roll over; so, he has had essentially no freedom to go anywhere independently. His gait trainer has given him some freedom which has been wonderful for him, but even with the trainer he is very limited. Because of his lack of strength/coordination in it, he is limited to the porch and our living room/kitchen area. Having a car would enable him to keep up with his twin brother on our neighborhood walks, play in our yard, and give him more freedom to explore our neighborhood."

As you can see, "freedom" is one of our parents' most common wishes. After all, the ability to explore and play is how we learn about ourselves, our community and our world. And, now Joseph has the freedom to do just that.

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KALISE.

Age: 2 years Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Feeding Backpack & Tube Holder, Arm Support





"Though Kalise can walk, her gait is unsteady and she falls often. It would be amazing if she could play outside this summer with her big sister and her friends without getting hurt. Having a car would let her be part of the fun instead of watching from the sidelines. And, having a new way to experience the world would build new skills and new connections in her brain. That's such an amazing gift!"

It's hard to imagine Kalise being anywhere other than the center of things. As she drove around the race track for the first time, she waved like the Queen on parade. She continued to engage and entertain everyone she met throughout the afternoon. Kalise is ready to tackle the world.



KARIS.

Age: 6 years

Drive System Needed: Control Panel + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Umbrella, Control Panel Pillow "At about age 2, Karis began losing her ability to use her left side. She could no longer walk and eventually was forced to rely on a wheelchair to get around. Having a car would restore some of the freedom she has lost."

When Karis arrived at our Kansas City D-Day, she was limp and bedraggled after a long drive from the northeastern US. Still, as exhausted as she was, seeing her new hot rod lit a spark. She listened intently to her pit crew's instructions on how to use her new car. And, she drove like a she had been doing it all her life - right out of the pits and onto the test track.

KEIRA.

Ages: 2 years Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: None

"Keira was born with lots of challenges, but nothing keeps her down. She cannot walk, can barely crawl and is physically fragile, but she is always in the thick of things - smiling, pointing and making sure everyone knows what she wants them to do. It would be so good for her to be able to play along with her siblings instead of relying on having them to do everything for her."

From the moment she arrived in our workshop, Keira charmed the pants off every Super Geek she encountered. She is one sweet baby. Now that she can get around on her own, we are betting that she has a gaggle of kids following her and asking for a chance to ride with her while she is out for a drive.





LANE.

Age: 2 years Drive System Needed: Go Button Other Specialty Devices Needed: Ping Pong Ball Action Challenge

"Lane is an active, happy kid. He loves to race and play just like any other toddler, but he has significant balance issues. These make it hard for him to go up and down stairs, step over objects and other complex balancing challenges. He would absolutely get so much enjoyment out of a car! Plus, Lane loves to pretend to drive." As you can see, Lane loves his car just as much as his parents anticipated. And, now he can keep up with all the other kids without getting hurt.





Age: 7 years

Drive System Needed: Control Panel + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Feeding Backpack & Tube Holder, Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenge, Core Belt, Leg Support Laura May's family speaks only Burmese; so, her physical therapist applied for a car on her behalf. She wrote, "Laura would greatly benefit from a car for independent mobility. She has no way to explore on her own today. (She cannot crawl, stand or walk.) Laura May loved driving the car that Geeks for Kids provided to Children's Mercy PT/OT department, and she did great driving it...even if she only went backwards." With a button-controlled drive system, Laura May can now get around on her own, play with her brother, and have some fun. Plus, we programmed it according to her preference; so, she can now drive forward!

LAWSYN.

Age: 3 years Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Umbrella, Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenge

"Lawsyn has a hard time controlling his muscles. Both gross and fine motor movements are hard, and his muscles will deteriorate over time. So, he falls often, tires easily, and can get seriously hurt doing even ordinary things. A car would allow him to keep up with his friends safely and still have fun." And, today, that's just what he is doing. Lawson studied his car intently, listened to every instruction, and carefully checked out every button and switch. He was super motivated to learn how to get moving.




LEONARDO.

Age: 4 years

Drive System Needed: Joystick + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Globe Spinner Action Challenge, Side Supports

Leo's family only speaks Spanish; so, his physical therapist applied for a car on his behalf. She wrote, "Leo cannot move the left side of his body well; as a result, he cannot crawl, stand or walk. But, he loves being independent. He rolls around the classroom. He is starting to learn how to use a wheelchair and a switch-operated speech device. Having a car would give him the freedom he so desperately wants" Today, Leo can race around with his twin brother.

LINCOLN.

Age: 2 years Drive System Needed: Go Button Other Specialty Devices Needed: Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenge

"Our son cannot walk, and he would love to be able to get around without always crawling everywhere. Lincoln has good control of his upper legs; his condition only affects his lower legs and feet. A car would give him more independence to explore the outdoors with his siblings. He is always on the go, and I know he would love a special car designed just for him."

In the beginning, Lincoln was not too sure he wanted anything to do with all the people and busy-ness of Delivery Day. With his dad helping, though, he quickly got the hang of things. Now, he can go just about anywhere he wants to go.





Age: 7 years Drive System Needed: Go Button

Other Specialty Devices Needed: Leg Support, Large Buckle Buddy, Nerf Gun & Holster (We don't normally "do" guns, but we couldn't deny Logan's dad, a former Marine, a chance to play Nerf wars with his boys.), "Logan was born with has limited sensation from his hips down and none from his knees down. He uses a wheelchair for most of his mobility needs and can't stand on his own. Logan tires easily, especially trying to keep up with his older brother and his friends in the neighborhood. There are places that he can't get to in his wheelchair without help. Having a custom car would open up his world and his interaction with others." As you can see, Logan was driving like a pro in minutes. And, now, he can hold his own in those Nerf wars.

MACIE.



Age: 3 years

Drive System Needed: Control Panel + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Umbrella, Globe Spinner with Foot Pedal Action Challenge, Core Support Pillows

"Macie loves moving around, being outside and playing with other kids. Her dad and grandpa bought golf carts just because she loves feeling the wind on her face. She just can't get around on her own. So, a car that she could drive herself would give Macie such joy." As you can see, Macie loved her car from the moment she saw it. Once her big brothers helped her master the controls, she was off to the races! We hope that she will enjoy the wind in her face for years to come.





MARGOT.

Age: 2 years Drive System Needed: Joystick + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Ping Pong Ball Shooter

"Margot is a typical 2-year-old intellectually, and she wants to go and explore like all the other kids her age. Her body just won't let her. She is able to sit unassisted, but she has no mobility. She has to rely on others to change her position or move her to other places. Having a car would give her more independence and maybe even let her chase her big brother (and best buddy) around our house."

Margot and her brother quickly made clear that "they had this" when we showed them Margot's new car. They didn't need us to show them the ropes. They had Margot's car racing in no time.





Age: 3 years Drive System Needed: Control Panel + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Hood Ornament Action Challenge, Head Support, Control Panel Pillow, Core Support Pillows Because Mateo's family only speaks Spanish, his physical therapist applied on his behalf. She wrote, "Mateo is a funny, sweet and very social kiddo. He loves making new friends, making funny faces and interacting with those around him. Mateo currently has no independent mobility, and his family has no insurance. We have borrowed an Activity Chair for Mateo, and it has been so exciting to see all of the ways that being in a supported upright position has allowed Mateo to make gains not only in physical health, but also independent eating, communication and play. Mateo loves to be pushed around; so, I believe that he would love the chance to move and control his own adaptive car. This would not only give access to independent mobility for the first time ever, it would also give him opportunities to practice cause/effect, make new friends, and access the world around him." Today, Mateo can do all those things.



MATTHEW.

Age: 8 years

Drive System Needed: Standard Joystick on an Articulating Arm Other Specialty Devices Needed: More Powerful Battery and Charger, Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenge, Leg Support, Wedge Back Support "After repeated surgeries and months of bed rest, Matthew is finally able to sit up and use his wheelchair. Because he cannot walk, he cannot keep up with his best friends - his brothers. Matthew would benefit from a car to help him move around and play with his brothers."

When we met Matthew, he was still so sore from surgery that every movement must have hurt. Yet even when his dad lifted him from his chair and placed him in one of our demo cars for a fitting, Matthew just smiled and chatted with us. He is such a happy, easy-going guy who desperately needed to relax and have some fun. And, boy, did he! When we visited him weeks later, he was racing about his yard, playing with his brothers, and having a ball.



Age: 5 years Drive System Needed: Go Button Other Specialty Devices Needed: Ping Pong Ball Shooter & Airzooka Action Challenges, Core Support Pillows

"Murray was born super early and suffered a host of complications as a result. All lower body movement is hard for him. He is learning to use a gait trainer, but it is a struggle to use his legs and he tires so easily. But, Murray loves to go! He loves to ride anything that moves. Motion is one of his greatest joys. He would delight in having his own car."

We could almost feel Murray's joy as he took his first lap around our test track. He was bursting with excitement. We hope that he feels that joy every day for years and years.



ODIN.

Age: 2 years Drive System Needed: Joystick with Stick Grip and Hand Support + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Feeding Backpack & Tube Holder, Oxygen Tank & Line Holder, Arm Support, Head Support, Core Support Pillows

"With lots of serious health problems, Odin has extremely limited mobility, and he needs oxygen around the clock. He's unable to move on his own, but he is a wild child that loves movement: bouncing, swinging, swaying, going around traffic circles, etc. What a thrill it would be for him to move on his own!"

Odin had been practicing using a joystick to blow bubbles and spin paint into pictures before we met him. So, he was primed to drive a joystick car. And, once his car started moving, he loved it every bit as much as his parents expected.

Odin received his car on June 1. His parents wrote on July 25, " Sadly, our Odin passed away on July 7th from liver failure. Unfortunately he didn't get much time in his car, but in the short time we had it provided so much joy for him and us. Thank you for all your organization does, it was truly a magical experience for us." It was for our team, too.







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OLLIE.

Age: 7 years Drive System Needed: Standard Joystick Other Specialty Devices Needed: Equipment Tray for Ventilator, Hooks to Guide Tubes, Ping Pong Ball Action Challenge

"Ollie uses a walker with his vent strapped to the back to get around at school and short distances elsewhere. He would love to drive the car around the neighborhood and be able to keep up with his sister and the neighbors!"

When Ollie's parents applied for a car, they sent us a picture of him in his soccer uniform and a red cape. That picture was so accurate. Ollie truly is a super hero - so willing to give anything a try, to get involved.







"Paul is a bright kid, and he wants to do everything his big brother and other kids do. He can get around with a posterior walker, but it really only works for him on even flat surfaces. He falls a lot with it even inside. Paul has been asking to go outside a lot lately; he's restricted, however, to our small patio. Whenever he tries to take his walker into the yard, it usually tips over. I want him to be able to explore our yard and community the way his older brother does."

As you can see, Paul is serious and focused - checking out each component of his new car carefully. He proved himself a fine driver from the get go.

PAUL.

Age: 2 years Drive System Needed: Standard Joystick Other Specialty Devices Needed: Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenge, Core Support Pillows



PENNY.

Age: 3 years

Drive System Needed: Standard Joystick + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Fan; Oxygen Tank & Line Holder, Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenge, Core Support Pillows

"Over the last 6 months, Penny has been declining, and her mobility is one of the areas that's being affected. She loves to move around and explore, but it's becoming more challenging and unsafe for her to do so. When she walks, she falls frequently, has little awareness of what could be dangerous, and often doesn't realize that she's hurt herself. When she moves around, she requires pretty constant supervision. She wears a protective helmet, supportive leg braces, and her rehabilitation doctor recently ordered a special needs stroller along with a walker. Having a car would help Penny stay mobile while the disease progresses. It would also help her overcome the feelings of frustration that come from not being able to move as well as she used to. It would help relieve a burden on our family as the car would not only help keep her safe, but it might also be able to carry the oxygen she uses."

We met Penny when we were delivering one of our Clinic Cars to Children's Mercy. As we were teaching the physical therapy team how to use the car, Penny just jumped right in and zoomed off. She did a better job demonstrating the car than we could have done! And, given her delight in using it, we knew she needed a car of her own.

When her parents told us that she needed it right away, we built faster than ever before. Unfortunately, it was not fast enough. Penny never got to use her car.



Age: 10 years

Drive System Needed: Control Panel + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Umbrella, Feeding Backpack & Tube Holder, More Powerful Battery & Charger, Globe Spinner Action Challenge, Core Support Pillows "Quinn would benefit greatly from having a car. She loves being outdoors. I would love for her to experience "walks" in something other than her wheelchair, for her to feel like a kid, and to have some fun. Racing and playing is just not something she wouldn't normally be able to do, and we could help with a remote control. That would be amazing!!"

Quinn took to driving like a duck to water. As soon as her mom got her settled in the car and our team completed the final fitting and training, Quinn headed for the door. She was ready to roll!





Age: 7 years

Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenge "With his own car, Roscoe would be able to keep up with his siblings and not sit on the sidelines watching kids having fun on their bikes and other wheeled things."

Roscoe has such a big, bold personality, always busy, animated and engaged. He so wants to be in the thick of things - visiting with folks, telling his stories and hamming it up. Now, he can be involved in all the neighborhood fun.



ROSS.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenge

"On our first visit, the first thing our physical therapist told me was that Ross would really enjoy having a Geeks for Kids car. Due to his developmental delays, Ross lacks the freedom and mobility that other kids his age enjoy. His therapist believes having more control over his mobility will not only be great for Ross mentally but also continue to encourage him to work hard at therapy."

Initially, Ross seemed none-too-thrilled with his new ride. As a shy, quiet little guy, the crowd of cheering, enthusiastic people around him may have been a bit too much. We are thrilled to report, though, that Ross's dad wrote a few days later, "We can't thank you and everyone at Geek's for kid enough. Ross is still learning to drive the car himself, but he just loves being driven around." The photos he sent, including the one at right, says all we needed to know.



RYDER.

Age: 7 years Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenge

"Ryder is a happy, healthy, constantly busy little boy. He can do most things other kids his age can do, but he is not strong and fatigues easily. We would love for him to race around without wearing himself out or getting hurt."

We did not have a chance to get together with Ryder and his family in our 2022-2023 Build season. (His dad works long hours, and his family travels a lot.) They hope to visit us soon to pick up Ryder's car.



Age: 5 years Drive System Needed: Control Panel + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Head Support, Control Panel Pillow, Side Support Pillows

"Sawyer has five siblings and would love to keep up with their pace. They do a great job in including her, but having her own car would make it a lot easier for them to include her in the fun." As you can see, Sawyer had lots of help from the moment she got in her car. We're just hoping that her brothers and sisters give her a chance to drive once in a while!



SAWYER.



Age: 8 years

Drive System Needed: Control Panel + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Ping Pong Ball Shooter and Airzooka Action Challenges, Control Panel Pillow "We have a big family. At our house, there are always lots of people Selali would like to race around and play with, but he cannot walk independently. Yet, he loves action and adventure. He would love to explore our neighborhood with the rest of our kids."

Selali can now go on just about any quest (so long as it is parent-approved, of course)! Within minutes of getting in his car, he was the master of its controls and of our race track.

SKYLER & BRAXTON.

Age: 8 and 2 years Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Feeding Backpack & Tube Holder, Globe Spinner Action Challenge



"My sons, Skyler and Braxton, share a rare genetic condition. In Skyler, this condition makes it hard for him to move his lower body. In Braxton, it has damaged his heart and makes him tire quickly. Skyler loves cars, and Braxton wants to do everything Skyler does. Their favorite movie is Lightning McQueen. They watch it every night before bed. The boys love being outside, but they have a hard time getting around. A custom car would really help them learn new things, go new places, and make friends. (Skyler doesn't have even one friend since he is mostly non-verbal and connect easily with other kids.) It would mean so much to us to see our boys doing all the things kids do." As you can see, they hopped right into their new hot rod and were ready to go!







TOPHER.

110

Age: 9 years Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenge

"Topher is a go-getter, excited and enthusiastic about just about everything. And, he can do lots of things well; he's strong, can sit, stand and play ball. He just can't walk unassisted yet. That means he cannot do many of the things he most wants to do like be outside and play with his brother and friends." Since Topher got his car, that is no longer a worry. He can race around and play independently.

WILLIAM & TUCKER.

Drive System Needed: Go Button Other Specialty Devices Needed: Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenge "Tucker & William share a diagnosis that causes muscle weakness and makes it hard for them to communicate and connect with others. In addition, William was born with a bone deformity that made it hard to walk." They could not attend delivery events over the summer because their mom was sick and the family moved out of state. They will pick up the boys' car at our All Abilities Trunk or Treat.



Age: 7 years

Age: 9 years

112

WILLA.

Age: 2 years

Drive System Needed: Drive-by-Wire + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenge

"Willa is a bright and determined two-and-a-half year old who desperately craves independence. She cannot crawl or walk yet, but she longs to keep up with her older sister, baby brother, classmates, and friends. A car would grant Willa the ability to move about freely and enjoy playing outdoors."

Willa may not be strong in body, but she is powerful in spirit. When we first met, she was so excited to play with our Tinker Toys that she dived headfirst into the giant bin - literally - to get to them. And, she approached her new car with the same joy, enthusiasm and unbounding determination. We just hope her parents can keep her from jetting off to Baja in her new hot rod!



Age: 2 years Drive System Needed: Standard Joystick + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Feeding Backpack & Tube Holder, Globe Spinner Action Challenge, Core Support Pillows

"For months at a time, William takes medication that makes him feel so ill that he can barely stay awake much less sit up or toddle around. As a result, he is not as strong as his peers. When he is off the medicine, however, he blossoms - sitting, toddling and starting to talk. Anything that can help him get outside, strengthen his muscles and have fun would be so amazing for him."

William and his mom came to pick up his car during one of the "good times." William ricocheted from car to car, pushing buttons, making "vroooommm" noises and attempting to shove the cars about...but he absolutely REFUSED to sit in his or any other car. That was simply too scary. Even when we later delivered the car to his house, he was happy to touch every part of it, pretend to make the horn beep and show us all the treasures in his garage, but he was not going to get in it. We worried that his car might be a bust. But, after several days, William finally decided he could trust it. His mom says that since then, he has put it through its paces!

Age: 15 months

Drive System Needed: Standard Joystick + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: Simon Says Action Challenge, Arm Support, Core Support Pillows

"Shortly after he was born, William was sent home to hospice with little hope of survival, but he has shown the world that he is strong! He is already sitting and standing with support, and he loves to kick his feet and play with his toys. And, he would be so thrilled to get outside and 'help' mom and dad with farm chores and play with his many cousins. Plus, driving would help him grow his motor skills."

While William may not help much with those farm chores, we are absolutely certain that he is having a blast tooling around in his car, scaring those chickens and playing with all the other kids.





WILLOW.

Drive System Needed: Industrial-Strength Joystick + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed:

Age: 3 years

Feeding Backpack & Tube Holder, Globe Spinner Action Challenge

"Willow cannot walk, and she is showing no signs of being able to do so for a while yet. She currently relies on school staff to pull her around in a wagon or carry her. The staff wants her to be placed in a wheelchair, but her care team fears that once the school puts her in a wheelchair, they won't take her out of it. Willow would benefit from a car because it can be a source of mobility - one that the school cannot leave her in for hours at a time. Willow needs a mode of transportation to and from school (2 blocks from home) and around the building to get to and from her classroom and therapy rooms. Willow currently scoots around on her bottom, but the school won't allow her to move from classroom to classroom next year as she enters full time preschool." Now, Willow can get around on her own.



WYATT.

Age: 2 years Drive System Needed: Standard Joystick + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed: None

"Wyatt will be 2 soon, and he isn't standing on his own or walking yet. I can tell in his eyes and face that he is ready to do big boy things, but his little body can't keep up. He would love to ride around next to his sister when we go on walks or play outside."

Wyatt's joy in his new car was magical and totally contagious. He had everyone laughing, clapping, cheering and high-fiving. There can be no doubt that he will enjoy every minute of his new-found freedom.



ZAYLEE.

Age: 3 years

Drive System Needed: Standard Joystick + Remote Control Other Specialty Devices Needed:

Feeding Backpack & Tube Holder, Spinner and Ping Pong Ball Shooter Action Challenges

"Zaylee is a smart, cheerful kid, but she has had a super hard time. She doesn't give up, though. She works incredibly hard to be part of things. She scoots across the floor, using just one leg to propel herself. Having a car would make life a little easier and a lot more fun. She could play with other kids more easily and gain some independence."

We were wow'ed by Zaylee from the moment we met. She talked a blue streak, sharing the alphabet, songs and silly jokes. She kept us hopping as we played with toys together. She was so ready to meet people, get involved in life's adventures. And, now she can.



NTROD H

This year, for the first time in Geeks for Kids' history, we lost three recipients - in quick succession. Two of these kids only got to use their cars for a few weeks, and the other never got to use her car at all.

The loss floored us. And, imagining what the kids and their families went through was devastating. Wishing we could have done more for these kids and their families and done it faster lit a fire underneath us. While we could not significantly reduce the amount of time a car takes to build (about 400 labor hours), we set out to find a way to get kids who need help now in their cars faster.

Our new Love Bug program allows us to quickly provide mobility to kids who need immediate rehab or who are in hospice. We have built a fleet of cars to near-complete and have created an inventory of common supports and specialty devices that we can add to the cars on demand. Now, we can help a child in days rather than weeks.

In the months ahead, we will roll out the Love Bug program to kids who are in longterm rehab and hospice. Join us in spreading the word. If you know a child or children who need help, tell them that we stand ready.



OUR SUPER GEEKS.

Number of Volunteers: 270 Number of Hours Worked: Over 75,700 hours Number of Events: 164 strategy, design, build & delivery sessions

As COVID faded, volunteers roared back into our workshop. 270 volunteers invested their time and energy in getting our kids racing. They came from many companies, schools and universities. Student engineers and their teachers from a variety of schools and robotics teams as well as many Rotary Club members turbo-charged our campaign. The amazing Super Geeks on our Design Team and Advisory Board, too, gave Geeks for Kids their all; they have worked so many nights and weekends to give our kids the #Power2Play. We are so thankful for everyone's kindness and generosity.



BUILD EVENTS.

-9/10 -10/1 -10/2 -11/5 -12/3 -1/7 -2/4 -3/4 -4/1 -5/6 + Every Monday & Thursday Evening & Lots More























































INVENT FOR GOOD

Middle School thru College Teams Design & Prototype Assistive Devices for a Semester or a School Year To Help Kids with Movement Limitations

Goal: Engage student entrepreneurs in "doing good" Launched: Spring 2021 Number of Teams: 31

Participants

- Basehor-Linwood High School
- Blue Valley CAPS
- LEARN's robotics and engineering students
- Pittsburgh State University
- Rockhurst University
- Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
- Shawnee Mission Center for Academic Achievement
- University of Missouri Kansas City

Projects

- Next Gen Vehicle
- Powered Casters
- Eye-Gaze-Directed Drive System
- Sip & Puff Drive System
- Clinic Cars
- Head-Controlled Drive
- Collision Prevention System
- Glare Reduction
- Action Challenges
- Better Batteries
- Drive System Training Device
- Foot-Controlled Drive
- Improved Sensor Integration
- Rumble Strips
- Geo-Fencing
- Way-Finding Beacons



































- June 3, Merriam, KS

D-DAY @ PORSCHE KC

D-DAY @ HYLAND

- July 10 & 11, Cleveland, OH



1-ON-1 DELIVERIES

- June 24







On October 27, in partnership with the Kansas City National Security Center managed by Honeywell, we hosted our annual All Abilities Trunk or Treat. 300+ people had a wonderful time. After our kids received their cars and assistive devices, they led our other little ghosties and ghoulies out to trick or treat. Everyone had a howling good time!





























THANK YOU!

Sixty-four 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 & Donations: \$150,329 Donations of Goods & Services: \$90,190 Total Investment in our Kids: \$240,519

2023 SUPPORTERS

Twenty-five organizations provided grants and sponsorships to Geeks for Kids this year. Together with many generous individual donors, they provided the fuel needed to get our kids racing.

Betty Rae's Ice Cream

Betty Rae's, a locally-owned ice cream shop, provided much-needed cold treats at our annual Kansas City Delivery Day Celebration for the last 2 years.

Capstone Insurance Agency

Capstone, a local independent insurance agency located in Overland Park, KS, acted as a corporate sponsor for the KC Exotics Car Show & fundraiser.

Chicane Motorsports

Chicane, Kansas City's premier European vehicle specialist, designated LEARN's Geeks for Kids program the beneficiary of their annual fundraiser/Open House. Their technicians also volunteered at Build events.

Copaken Brooks

Copaken Brooks, a full-service commercial real estate company, has provided discounted space for our workshops in the Downtown Underground for the last four years.

The Dunn Family Foundation

The Dunn Family Foundation, formed by Kelly and Ray Dunn to share from their financial abundance with persons and communities in need, lived up to their mission. They provided a much-needed grant that helped us finish the last car of 2023.

Elan Industries

Elan Industries, an ISO 9001-certified designer and manufacturer of electronic appliance controls, provided us with vital electronic components when none were available anywhere in the world.

Fidelity Bank

Fidelity Bank, a fourth generation family-owned bank with locations in Wichita and Overland Park, KS, provided both vital funds and volunteers this year.

The Huff Realty Group

The Huff Group, the #1 Keller Williams Group in the 5-state region, has provided corporate sponsorships Geeks for Kids on several occasions over the last four years.

Hyland Software

Hyland, a developer of enterprise content management software, has been a corporate sponsor for the last six years. They have provided funds, hosted our Cleveland Delivery Days and fielded volunteers.

JenTer Technologies

JenTer, a leading provider of flexible heater solutions, has produced wiring harnesses for our cars at cost for the last 2 years.

The Kansas City Exotics & Super Cars Club

This year, our long-time friends at KC Exotics U& Super Cars Club rode to the rescue when several sponsorships fell short. In 2 weeks, they pulled together a Car Show that put long-planned car shows to shame and raised over \$32,000 with the support of the following foundations as well as hundreds of their members:

- Aaron & Shelby Brooks Foundation
- The Kolkin Family Foundation
- The Shapiro Family Foundation

OEC Group

OEC, a freight-forwarding group, helped us organize transportation for more cars than ever before to our Cleveland, OH Delivery Day Celebration this year.

Overland Park Awards

Overland Park Awards, a local company that provides awards of all types, printed personalized license plates for every child over the last 2 years.

Polo Custom Products

Polo, a company that specializes in custom industrial sewing, RF welding, and thermoforming, joined our list of corporate sponsors this year, providing much-needed funds.

Porsche Kansas City

Porsche Kansas City provided space and planning support for our Kansas City Delivery Day Celebrations for the last 3 years. It is an amazing location for these events!

Downtown & Overland Park South Rotary Clubs

These Rotary Clubs made significant grants to LEARN's Geeks for Kids program over the last 3 years. They also fielded large crews of volunteers to help build and deliver the cars.

ServoCity

ServoCity, another leading supplier of robotics and electronics equipment, provided vital electronics parts for the last 3 years for free.

Synthesis Solutions

Synthesis Solutions, a web application development company, has provided LEARN and its programs with free web development, hosting management, and marketing and administrative services for the last 20 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 8 years. His photos fill this yearbook.

USA Logistics

USA Logistics in Houston, TX partnered with OEC Group to get cars to this year's Cleveland, OH Delivery Day Celebration.

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.

Waldo Pizza

Waldo, Kansas City's Great Little Place, has provided the fuel our volunteers needed to keep on building on many occasions over the last 3 years.

OTHER SUPPORT

Hundreds of generous individuals also donated to our campaign to get kids with movement limitations racing.

In addition, the many physical and occupational therapists who referred children to Geeks for Kids played a vital role. Our referrers include:

- Ability KC
- Advent Health's Britain Development Center
- Center for Cortical Vision Impairment (CCVI)
- Children's Mercy Hospital
- Children's Place Physical Therapy
- The Down Syndrome Guild
- Mighty Kids Pediatric Therapy
- Minds Matter
- Missouri First Steps
- Playabilities

- Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital (Case Western University)
- St. Luke's Children's SPOT
- Therapy in Motion
- Walkin & Rollin Costumes
- Wyandotte County Infant Toddler Services

GEEKS FOR KIDS



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Giving every kid the #Power2Play!