

RITE UP

Brock's Brigade
Fighting Perthes
Step by Step



SCOTTISH RITE



SCOTTISH RITE

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On the cover: Brock, of Lee's Summit, Missouri
Above L to R: Brock; Mikaylin, of Forney; and
Nevaeh, of Gravette, Arkansas

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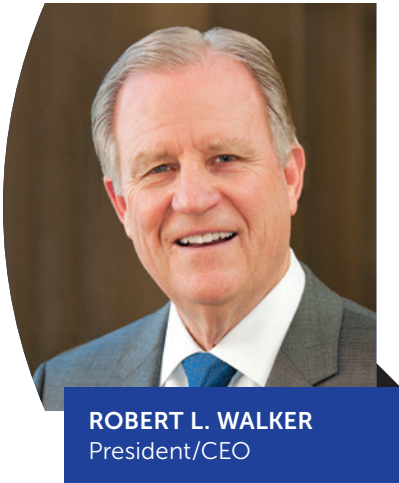
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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



At Scottish Rite for Children, a great first impression is the beginning of a patient experience that we believe should be extraordinary from start to finish. How we treat our patients and families characterizes who we are. Our patients are the center of everything we do.

When a patient family arrives, their every observation and interaction is an opportunity for us to show how much we care. As they approach, they notice the colorful playground and the lush, green lawn. It is not uncommon to get a wave from our amazing grounds crew or help crossing the street from one of our friendly security officers. Inside, the aroma of popcorn fills the air, and our visitors receive a warm welcome from volunteers around every corner. Staff from all departments work to keep our facility in excellent condition, and our Environmental Services team tirelessly sanitizes and cleans from the clinics to the operating rooms and everywhere in between. By the time patient families check in, we hope they not only feel welcomed but also have a sense of peace, safety and assurance that they are in the right place.



Every person who works at Scottish Rite has been given an amazing responsibility, or what we prefer to call a gift – the tremendous honor and privilege of caring for children. Staff members use their specific talents to serve the needs of our patients and families and to fulfill our promise to be good stewards of our resources. Together, our skills, expertise and experience combine to create a culture of care that is excellent in every way. From beautiful grounds to secure buildings and from polished floors to delicious meals, we are all here to serve our patients and give them hope.

In recognition of these efforts, NRC Health presented Scottish Rite for Children with the 2022 Excellence in Patient Experience Award. We received the highest patient satisfaction rating in the pediatric category nationwide among participating pediatric hospitals.

Scottish Rite for Children is a special place because of people – our compassionate staff, dedicated volunteers, generous supporters and, of course, our patient families who entrust us with their precious children.

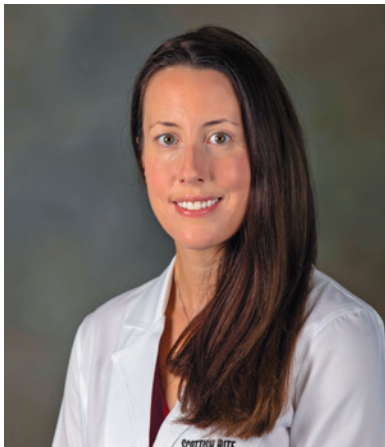
CONNECTED TO THE CARE



The Dallas and Frisco campuses celebrated the NRC Health recognition.



NRC Health honored Scottish Rite for Children with the **2022 Excellence in Patient Experience Award**. For the sixth time, Scottish Rite received the highest patient satisfaction rating in NRC's nationwide pediatric category. NRC Health recognizes health care organizations for their commitment to enhancing care experiences for every patient.



Welcome to our newest medical staff member – **Elizabeth W. Hubbard, M.D.**, pediatric orthopedic surgeon.



Lainey, of Richardson



Scan the QR code to watch her introduction video.

Did you know that you can give to Scottish Rite for Children, and your gift will give back? You can ensure that children like Lainey receive the care they need by investing in a **charitable gift annuity (CGA)**. When you create a CGA, you support the mission of Scottish Rite and receive regular payments throughout your life. A CGA is a great way to further the work of Scottish Rite and feel confident that you will receive dependable income in your retirement years. For more information, scan the QR code or call 214-559-7886.





Chief of Staff Daniel J. Sucato, M.D., M.S., President/CEO Robert L. Walker and fellow staff members participated in a ribbon cutting on the Dallas campus to celebrate the opening of the **new state-of-the-art surgical suite**. (See details on page 7.)

The **Dorothy & Bryant Edwards Fellows** for 2022 – 2023 joined the team this fall and will spend the next year in an in-depth, comprehensive program gaining a strong foundation in all aspects of pediatric orthopedics.



Fellows Shane Strom, M.D., Kelsie Coe, M.D., Stephanie Goldstein, M.D., Michael O'Sullivan, M.D., and Aaron Shaw, M.D.



Fabio, of León, Mexico

Scottish Rite for Children's **Amazon Wish List** is available year-round, but the holiday season is a wonderful time to support our amazing patients. Scan the QR code to peruse a list of items that have been requested by our staff to bring comfort and joy to children of all ages.





DANIEL J. SUCATO, M.D., M.S.
Chief of Staff

Committed to Collaborative, Customized Care

From straightforward to complex pediatric orthopedic cases, Scottish Rite for Children provides an individualized treatment plan for each child. To ensure this specialized care fits each patient's needs, our clinical teams approach their cases with unceasing determination to be the very best providers in their respective specialties. What does it take to accomplish that level of commitment?

From the start, it takes a strong desire to connect on a personal level with our patients and truly hear what concerns they have. Working in pediatrics offers not only an amazing opportunity to help a child regain functionality and get back to doing what they love, but it also provides some incredible challenges medically while small muscles, joints and bones are still growing.

Another crucial area for our team is a never-ending pursuit to learn and find answers to complicated questions. From the start of our clinicians' education, it is important that they have a strong foundation in the tenets of patient care coupled with the curiosity to continue learning and asking big questions. Scottish Rite's multidisciplinary approach places experts together in each clinic who work on healing

the body, mind and spirit. This encourages collaborative problem-solving, which helps our patients and their families find the hope and healing they need.

We know we have something special at Scottish Rite for Children, and our colleagues at hospitals across the country and around the world do as well. Our staff fosters relationships with these organizations and shares knowledge and expertise to ensure all children have access to quality care. Our team participates in and provides leadership in some of the most prestigious orthopedic medical organizations in the world. Recently, Scoliosis Research Society's (SRS)



Student physical therapist Jack O'Neil works with patient Johnny, of Odessa.

Traveling Fellows visited our Dallas campus on their journey to other exceptional facilities in the United States. The culmination of their trip lands them in Stockholm, Sweden, for the 57th SRS Annual Meeting, and members of our team will also attend and present at the podium.

Whether in clinic or abroad, our accomplished clinical team and staff from every corner of Scottish Rite make it their mission to provide only the best care to our patients and their families. «



BEHIND THE SCENES

The Scottish Rite for Children Dallas campus is now home to a 42,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art surgical suite. Take a look inside one of our six new operating rooms (OR).

1

A warming cabinet is used to store and warm sterile fluids, linens and blankets. Items can be loaded into the cabinet from the sterile core without having to enter the OR.

2

A sterile pass-through allows items to enter the OR from the sterile core, reducing the chance for contamination.

3

Each of the three light booms consist of 72 LED bulbs that create a complete light patch. This ensures a light field that is free from shadows or obstructions.

4

Ultrasuite® is an air distribution and lighting system specifically engineered for operating rooms. Its design ensures a contaminant-free surgical zone, which reduces the chance of infection.

5

Indigo-Clean® uses visible light to continuously disinfect the air and surfaces, killing viruses and bacteria. Motion sensor purple lights turn on and off automatically.



Scan the QR code to take a video tour of a new OR with Dr. Sucato.



The creators of Brock's Brigade include Brock's father, Joshua; patient Brock; Brock's brother, Brayden; and Brock's mother, Rachel.

BROCK'S BRIGADE Fighting Perthes Step by Step

by Kristi Shewmaker

Kickball, wiffle ball, four square, taking hikes and riding bikes are a few of the activities 10-year-old Brock, of Lee's Summit, Missouri, enjoys. But, his first love is baseball.

"Baseball is his world," his mother, Rachel, says. "He has played competitive baseball since he was 4." In the spring of 2021, Brock played shortstop for a local team called the Baseknocks until midseason when he was diagnosed with Legg-Calvé-Perthes disease (Perthes), a rare childhood hip disorder, that temporarily took him out of the game and into a wheelchair.

Brock's symptoms began with a pain in his groin. Then, he started to limp. "It was really bad," Rachel says. "He couldn't not limp." She took Brock to visit his pediatrician who examined him but found nothing obvious like a broken bone. The doctor suggested trying physical therapy. "We thought maybe he had pulled a muscle," Rachel says. After almost two months of physical therapy, Brock was still limping, and Rachel noticed that the thigh muscle in his right leg was two inches smaller than the thigh muscle in his left leg. "That was pretty alarming to me," Rachel says. "I thought, 'There's something going on. It's not just a pulled muscle.'" Later, an X-ray revealed that Brock had Perthes, a disease unknown to the family.



STEP 1: FINDING AN EXPERT

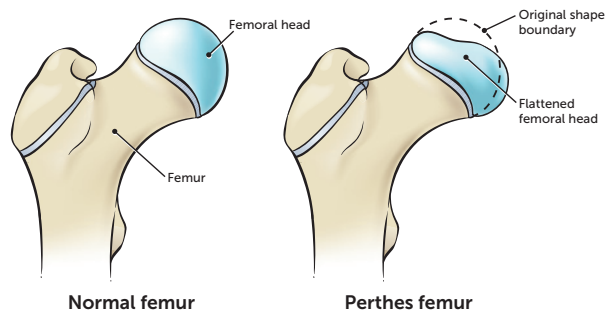
Perthes disease is a hip disorder that primarily affects the ball of the hip joint. The ball, or femoral head, is the upper part of the thighbone, or femur. The femoral head is normally round and fits inside the round socket of the pelvis. Perthes disease occurs when part or all of the femoral head loses blood supply. Without adequate blood flow, the femoral head bone dies. Over time, the body removes the dead bone and replaces it, initially, with softer bone. This bone is weaker, and the femoral head is more likely to collapse into a flattened position leading to deformity of the hip.

Perthes is rare, affecting approximately 15 children per 100,000 and is more common in boys than in girls, with a ratio of 5:1. The cause of Perthes is unknown, and currently, there is no cure. It typically occurs in children between 4 to 8 years old. Brock was diagnosed just before he turned 9.

"When you're diagnosed with something that's rare, and there's not a ton of information, you feel like it's a death sentence," Rachel says. "I remember crying for the first three or four days because there were no answers, and no doctor could get us in. It was like a big, giant question mark."

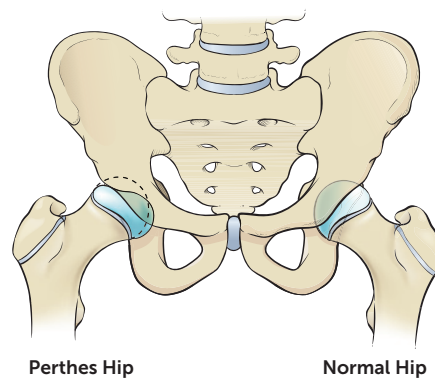
Rachel asked a friend, a physical therapist in nearby Kansas City, if she could recommend someone. Her friend said, "If it were my child, I would go see Dr. Kim at Scottish Rite."

"Late at night, I sent a message to Scottish Rite and received a call the next day," Rachel says. "Dr. Kim had an opening the day that we were going to be driving back through Dallas after a spring break trip to Galveston. It was clear that it was meant to be."



Normal femur

Perthes femur



Perthes Hip

Normal Hip

STEP 2: GETTING EXEMPLARY CARE

A leading expert in Perthes disease, Harry Kim, M.D., M.S., is a pediatric orthopedic surgeon and director of the Center for Excellence in Hip at Scottish Rite for Children. Dr. Kim met with Brock and his family and confirmed the diagnosis.

"A perfusion MRI shows how much of the femoral head has blood flow," Dr. Kim says. "Normally, it should be 100%. In Brock's case, about 90% had no blood flow, which caused about 90% of his bone to die. His case was severe based on the amount of bone death and his age."

Children ages 6 and younger tend to have better outcomes from Perthes disease because they have greater potential for developing new bone. Also, if half or more of the femoral head dies, the potential for regrowth without deformity is lower.

During the family's initial visits, Dr. Kim and his team, including registered nurse Kristen Odom, explained the disease and Brock's specific case and outlined the treatment options.

"When we came out of that first appointment, Brock said the best thing was that Dr. Kim looked at him, talked to him and asked him questions about how he was feeling, rather than just talking to me," Rachel says. "It's so important when you're scared and uncertain, especially when you're a kid, and the doctor makes you feel like you truly matter."

Continued on the next page

After returning to Missouri, Rachel had more questions as the family processed the information. "Kristen spent an hour and 45 minutes on the phone with me," Rachel says. "When I hung up, I told my husband we won't ever go anywhere else. That kind of care simply doesn't exist. When you're dealing with a rare disease and your baby, that care is priceless."

In May of 2021, Dr. Kim performed surgery on Brock's right hip. "Brock presented with a mild collapse or deformity of the femoral head," Dr. Kim says. "Without treatment, it would have degraded much further. We intervened before further collapse occurred."

During the procedure, Dr. Kim cut the bone and positioned it so that he could tuck the femoral head securely into the hip socket. This containment procedure allowed the blood flow to come back naturally. He stabilized the bone with a metal implant that was removed in a later surgery. Over time, the body would remove the dead bone and generate new bone. To ensure healing, Dr. Kim prescribed a controlled weightbearing regimen, meaning Brock was unable to put any weight on his leg.

"He couldn't play baseball, couldn't run up the street to a friend's house, couldn't ride his bike," Rachel says. "He went to school in a wheelchair, and kids stared at him and asked questions. We thought about ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accommodations everywhere we went. We had to rethink everything."

STEP 3: FIGHTING FOR OTHERS

Despite all of these changes, Brock has taken it in stride. "He is my hero," Rachel says. "Has he complained? Absolutely. Did he hate certain minutes, days and weeks? 100%. But overall, he was relieved to have an answer and a plan and no more pain. He has handled it better than I could have ever imagined."

Last Christmas, Brock wanted to express his gratitude by designing and selling T-shirts as a fundraiser for Scottish Rite. "We called ourselves 'Brock's Brigade,'" Rachel says, "and put 'His Fight Is My Fight' on the front." When the family traveled to Dallas for Brock's second

surgery in December, they presented a check for \$1,000 to his care team. "Dr. Kim has really made an impression on Brock," Rachel says. "This was Brock's way of giving a little back so that hopefully it's easier for kids in the future."

"This family is so special," Dr. Kim says. "They have gone through such difficulty, yet they want to help others improve their knowledge and support research. They are not just thinking about themselves but thinking about others."

For more than a year, Brock completed a series of progressive exercises to restore muscle strength and range of motion. He went from using a wheelchair to bearing more and more weight on his crutches. In August, the answer the family had been holding their breath for finally came. Brock was given the all clear to walk.

"After we got the A-OK, Brock took his first walk with his dad and his brother," Rachel says. "They do these 'football walks' where his dad throws the football, and they go up ahead and catch it. They got to do that for the first time in a long time."

Brock is especially excited for the day when he is cleared to play the sport he loves most. "Dr. Kim felt confident that Brock would be able to start winter practices and be 100% for spring baseball, which has been his goal from day one," Rachel says. For now, Brock is easing back into his active life. He walks his dog, Pepper, and plays on the playground with his friends.

"The Scottish Rite team has been the biggest blessing to our family," Rachel says. "Even being eight hours away and having to drive and fly multiple times throughout the last 18 months, I would drive four days to get to Scottish Rite. Our experience has been nothing short of amazing." <<

Brock presents Dr. Kim with a T-shirt and donation. L to R: Brock; Harry Kim, M.D., M.S.; Kristen Odom, R.N.; Lizette Rodriguez, R.N.; and Stephanie Brigger, Vice President of Development.



MOMENT OF IMPACT



Scan the QR code to watch a video about the SAFE program.



Sophia Ulman, Ph.D., division director of the Movement Science Laboratory, assesses Kalista, of Lake Dallas.

Keeping Young Athletes SAFE

What if you could prevent a sports injury before it happens? That is exactly what the experts in the Center for Excellence in Sports Medicine at Scottish Rite for Children aim to achieve. Led by Sophia Ulman, Ph.D., the SAFE (Sports-specific Assessment and Functional Evaluation) program uses 3D motion capture technology — the same technology used to create special effects in movies and video games — to assess injury risk by studying the movements of young athletes.

The goal of the SAFE program is to develop injury prevention tools that will reduce sport-related injuries in young athletes here and beyond, creating a new standard of care. “Current injury prevention methods are falling short, as sports injuries in young athletes are skyrocketing,” Ulman says. “We are the first to use machine learning techniques to assess a young athlete’s risk for injury by considering risk factors, such as movement characteristics, demographics, sports participation characteristics, psychological measures, nutrition and sleep patterns.”

Uninjured athletes are invited to Scottish Rite’s Movement Science Laboratory, where they are fitted with reflective markers. The markers are used to collect the athlete’s movement patterns to evaluate their mobility, speed, agility and power in 3D. Participants are asked to jump, squat, run, pivot and perform sport-specific movements like penalty kicks, layups or back

handsprings. “The data is analyzed to learn more about how young athletes move and to determine if certain movement patterns lead to future sports injuries that would require treatment,” Ulman says.

The SAFE program has tested the movements of approximately 340 athletes across sports, such as baseball, gymnastics, softball, track and more. “After initial testing, we follow athletes for one year and note if any athlete experiences an injury,” Ulman says. “This data is helping us compare the movements of athletes who remained healthy versus athletes who were subsequently injured to determine what may have led to the injury.”

Researchers at Scottish Rite have already identified findings that might help predict injury risk in young athletes. “We have found that current tools for assessing injuries of the knee may be unreliable in some instances,” Ulman says. “Current methods commonly rely on 2D video to assess injury risk, but our research using 3D modeling is identifying potential risk factors that the 2D assessment cannot.” Through this innovative program, Scottish Rite researchers collaborate with medical professionals and sports medicine experts across the field to advance the treatment of young athletes throughout the country.

The SAFE program is poised to change the way health care professionals assess athletes for injury risk and, best of all, will help keep young athletes in the game. ◀

“LEAVE YOUR
CAMPGROUND
BETTER THAN
YOU FOUND IT.”

PATSY WOODS MARTIN
Trustee Since 2021

Patsy Woods Martin lives by a phrase she learned in Girl Scouts: “Leave your campground better than you found it.” A fourth generation Texan, Martin has moved the needle in Central Texas philanthropy and empowered women in politics across the state.

After working as a chemist and head of an analytical lab for a major Houston oilfield service company, Martin married her high school sweetheart Jack and moved to Austin where they raised three children. There, she served as vice president of resource development at United Way Capital Area where her team raised millions of dollars annually. But, her passion for giving has deep roots.

“Advancing generosity is a way of living my faith,” Martin says. “It began with my faith community. Then, I joined the Junior League, and I became very interested in intentional, thoughtful philanthropy.”

In 2007, Martin founded her own nonprofit — I Live Here, I Give Here — with a mission to elevate philanthropy across Central Texas. “Our job was to engage more people and increase the level of giving,” she says. The organization launched Amplify Austin, a 24-hour giving day that has since raised almost \$100 million to benefit hundreds of local nonprofits. “I’m so proud of what we were able to build,” Martin says. “Today, they have a young, dynamic CEO and board. It’s fun to see that it will make a difference in the community for a long time.”

Martin later served as executive director of Annie’s List, a political action committee that works to “change the face of power” in Texas by targeting, recruiting and

supporting women to run for elected office. “When folks with different backgrounds and perspectives are at the table making decisions, the outcomes are significantly better,” Martin says. “I became active in politics to advance those perspectives.” To date, the organization has trained more than 1,000 women, raised \$20 million in support and won 160 races. Martin retired in 2018.

In 2017, the Association of Fundraising Professionals Greater Austin Chapter honored Martin with the Philanthropist of the Year award. The same year, she was inducted into the Austin Women’s Hall of Fame for “breaking barriers for women and girls through her significant contributions” to the city. Martin was also appointed to serve on the 2016 Democratic National Convention Platform Committee.

Martin connected with Scottish Rite for Children through her longtime friend, The Honorable Lyndon L. Olson, Jr., Chairman of the Board. “At Scottish Rite, patient family values are front and center,” Martin says. “I see a real commitment to continue that culture of excellence in treating children, and I look forward to bringing my experience and skillset to help make life better for others.”

Today, Martin splits her time between Dallas and Montague County where she and Jack own and operate JPM Ranch Company, a portion of which has been in her family since the 1800s. Whether she is managing the family homestead or championing a movement, Martin is a pioneer — one who leaves her campground better than she found it. ◀

Overcoming Hardship With Humor and Hope

“Why do nurses like red crayons?” says 17-year-old Mikaylin, of Forney. She pauses. “Sometimes, they have to draw blood.”

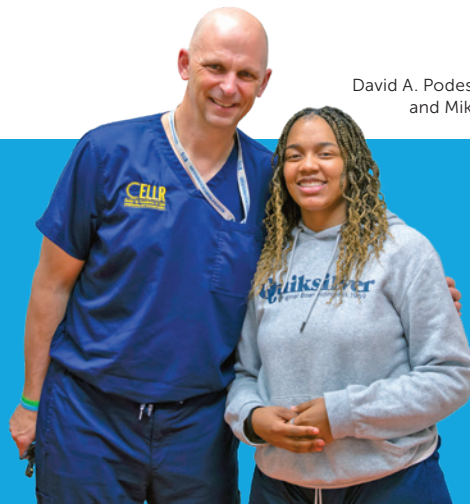
Exchanging dad jokes, eye rolls and laughs with pediatric orthopedic surgeon David A. Podeszwa, M.D., became a tradition after Mikaylin came to Scottish Rite for Children in the spring of 2021. She has looked forward to every appointment since.

Before finding Scottish Rite, Mikaylin endured years of extensive treatments and setbacks that left her and her mother, Laneesha, feeling despondent. What began as pain in her legs while playing basketball turned out to be stress fractures. A doctor surgically implanted rods into her legs, but the bone in her right leg became infected. They tried to fight the infection through multiple surgeries without success. Finally, the doctor said that she needed to consider amputation.

“I was at a point where I was like, ‘I just want to get this over with. Just take the leg away from me,’” Mikaylin says. Laneesha researched other options and consulted with another physician who referred Mikaylin to Scottish Rite. “When we arrived, Mikaylin was really down,” Laneesha says. “But after our first visit, her outlook completely changed because they gave her hope.”

Experts from Scottish Rite’s Center for Excellence in Limb Lengthening and Reconstruction (CELLR) designed a customized treatment plan to save Mikaylin’s leg. Dr. Podeszwa and a team of specialists surgically removed more than four inches of infected bone from her leg and attached the TRUE/LOK™ External Fixation System, a device that would support the reconstruction of her bone throughout the next year.

Below: Wearing her customized fixator, Mikaylin talks with Brie Odum, child life specialist.

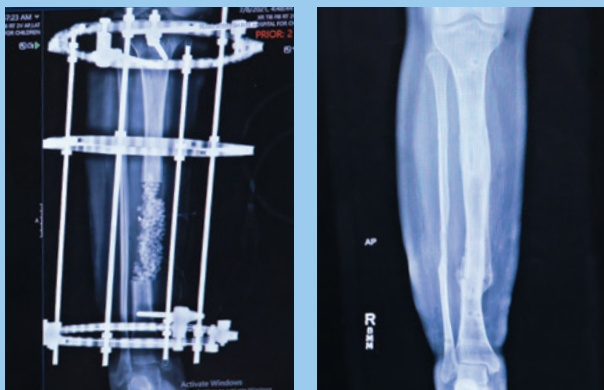


“The day after surgery, Mikaylin got out of bed and put weight on her leg for the first time in 18 months,” says Emily Elerson, R.N. “When I saw the look in her eyes, I knew that was the turning point for her.”

Next, the team conducted a bone transport — a procedure to grow new bone where the infected bone was removed. To facilitate this surgery for Mikaylin’s specific case, new equipment was invented and attached to the fixator. “Mikaylin will be remembered long after we’re gone,” Dr. Podeszwa says, “because of the complexity of her treatment and how resilient she was with postoperative rehabilitation.”

In August, Dr. Podeszwa removed the fixator from Mikaylin’s leg. For a month, Mikaylin was on crutches, but at her next appointment, she received the big news — she could finally walk on her own. “We talk about how sad we’ll be when we don’t get to come to Scottish Rite anymore,” Laneesha says. “Mikaylin loves everybody there. They’ve become a huge part of her life.”

“I’m going to miss them a lot,” Mikaylin says. She hopes to keep in touch and possibly volunteer one day. When asked what she most looks forward to doing after recovery, Mikaylin says — without missing a beat — “shave my legs!” Laneesha laughs and says, “And, she can’t wait to wear pants.” <<



The first X-ray from July of 2021 shows the external fixator attached to Mikaylin’s leg. The infected bone was removed and filled with antibiotic beads to heal the infection. The second X-ray from September of 2022 shows Mikaylin’s healed bone after the fixator was removed.

GAME CHANGER

A Second Chance to Dance

Two-year-old Nevaeh, of Gravette, Arkansas, begins her mornings with a dance party. Marriah, her mother, says Nevaeh is a bubbly, outgoing toddler who enjoys moving her hips around to the beat. Her father, Angel, started “dance mornings” when Nevaeh was just a baby.

Tragically in the summer of 2021, Nevaeh and her father were in a car accident in West Texas that took Angel’s life and almost took Nevaeh’s leg after a fence post impaled it. Nevaeh was 11 months old.

Life Flight™ rushed Nevaeh to a trauma center in Lubbock, Texas, where she underwent multiple surgeries, but her leg was lifeless. “It was cold, like a piece of ice, for three days,” Marriah says. “Her major nerve endings, the main blood artery, everything in that leg was torn apart.”

Doctors said that they would have to amputate, but Marriah asked them to wait. Miraculously, Nevaeh’s leg began to warm up. When they realized that her leg was alive, one of the doctors said that he had a colleague at Scottish Rite for Children who could help. The next day, Marriah and Nevaeh were transported by ambulance to Dallas to see Scott Oishi, M.D., FACS, pediatric orthopedic and microvascular surgeon.

“Though the big artery to her leg was transected, or cut, and wasn’t functioning,” Dr. Oishi says, “there was enough of what is called collateral floor, that her foot was still “pink” or still had some blood supply in it.” Through surgery, Dr. Oishi and his team repaired the artery and the nerve by grafting a donor vein and a donor nerve from Nevaeh’s healthy leg into the damaged one. The grafts connected the two ends of the damaged artery and the two ends of the damaged nerve with the goal that both would function again. Through this delicate procedure, Dr. Oishi and his team were able to save Nevaeh’s leg.

After surgery, cast removal and multiple follow-ups throughout the next year, Nevaeh is doing well. “She’s running, jumping, spinning around, something that I never thought would happen,” Marriah says. “Nevaeh was given a second chance. For us to lose someone so close to us, it relaxed us to know that we were in safe hands at Scottish Rite.”

Today, Marriah and Nevaeh do lots of things together like going to the park or on a hike. “She’s my little sidekick,” Marriah says. And, Nevaeh continues her father’s tradition — dancing each morning to music with an uplifting beat. “I jump in with her,” Marriah says, “but she starts it, she starts the dance party.” ◀



EMI'S COLOR SHOOT

Giving Back in a Big Way

Fun, fellowship, fantastic auction items and a love of clay shooting are just some of the reasons Emi's Color Shoot is a success. But, the main reason people participate in the annual fundraiser is to support Emi and the event she and her family created in 2015 to benefit Scottish Rite for Children. Held in Amarillo, Emi's Color Shoot brings the Texas Panhandle community together to celebrate the remarkable mission of Scottish Rite and help give children back their childhood.

When Emi was 7, she was diagnosed with juvenile dermatomyositis, an autoimmune condition that includes muscle inflammation, weakness and other symptoms. Her pediatrician referred her and her parents, Bekah and Tom Schooler, to Scottish Rite, and after a weeklong stay in the hospital, Emi began her road to recovery.

"Your biggest fear is having to go through something like that with your children," Bekah says. After realizing that her parents never paid out of pocket for her medical care, Emi told them she wanted to hold a clay shoot, an important hobby to Tom and her sister Ashley. She also wanted to sell lemonade at her own stand. "Eight years later, we've raised more than \$1 million for the place that gave me my life back," Emi says. "Thank you!"

Scottish Rite has treated thousands of patients from the Panhandle, and many former patients volunteer at the event as a way to give back to Scottish Rite for the care they have received. A favorite staff member is also in attendance every year. "He's the first guy you see when you walk in the hospital, he's a big Aggie fan, and Emi's a big Aggie fan," Tom says, describing Ron Prater, a security officer at Scottish Rite that has made a lasting impression on the family. Ron helped coordinate an Aggie care package in Emi's room when she returned from a muscle biopsy procedure, and they have been close ever since.

The Schooler family works together with a board of dedicated friends and family, as well as volunteers,



Brayden, volunteer; Ashley, Emi's sister; Emi; and Bekah, Emi's mother

supporters and underwriters to hold the event. This year's shoot welcomed 497 participants and grew to include a third advanced clay shooting course. The live auction provided endless entertainment with one-of-a-kind packages and awe-inspiring acts of generosity by supporters who have purchased items and donated them back to the auction to be sold again and again.

"This year, we are in a position to make our biggest donation to date — in excess of \$250,000," Bekah says. "Scottish Rite was put in our lives for a reason. We give Scottish Rite a check every year for what they've done for our family, so they can help other children. Not only did they help Emi, but they help a lot of kids who wouldn't be okay otherwise." <<



Emi and Ron Prater, Scottish Rite security officer

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For more information about services available at the Dallas or Frisco campuses, visit scottishriteforchildren.org.

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