

# RITE UP

SCOTTISH RITE



## Ayden the Inspiration

Resilience and Determination  
Despite Trauma





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On the cover: Ayden, of Valley View, and his horse Kiko  
Above L to R: Ayden; Holden, of Dallas; and Lawrence,  
of Richardson

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# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



**ROBERT L. WALKER**  
President/CEO

At Scottish Rite for Children, we have the awesome responsibility of caring for children who seek our help. We learn about them as people, discover their interests and get to know their families. We appreciate our patients for who they are and for the unique gifts that they bring into the world.

Transformative care is achieved not only through the expertise of our talented multidisciplinary staff but also through our recognition of each child's value. Excellence in leadership begins by valuing every child and creating an environment where they may flourish. This child-centered approach changes lives in extraordinary ways. It is a joy and a cause for celebration.

In March, Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Matt Chance, FACHE, and Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer Angie Buckmeier, M.H.A., B.S.N., R.N., presented to a national audience at the NRC Health 2023 Pediatric Collaborative. They shared what makes Scottish Rite a place our patients and families can count on, as well as the place they recommend to their families and friends.



DFW Great 100 Nurse Teresa Brimer, M.S.N., R.N., visits with Paola, of El Paso, in the Inpatient Unit.

In May, we celebrated Hospital Week to acknowledge our staff members who work tirelessly each day to give children back their childhood. We also celebrated Nurses Week to thank our nurses who selflessly serve our patients with compassion and strength. Leading up to Nurses Week, *D Magazine* honored Sarah Dronzek, R.N., with a 2023 Excellence in Nursing Award. The DFW Great 100 Nurses recognized Teresa Brimer, M.S.N., R.N., for being a role model, leader, community servant, compassionate caregiver and significant contributor to the nursing profession.

The Pediatric Orthopaedic Society of North America (POSNA) recently inaugurated our Chief of Staff Daniel J. Sucato, M.D., M.S., as its 40<sup>th</sup> president.

He will lead nearly 1,600 surgeons, physicians and allied health members in advancing pediatric orthopedics by promoting education, research and quality care.

Congratulations to Matt, Angie, Sarah, Teresa and Dr. Sucato! Thank you for your leadership, and thank you to all of our staff members, volunteers, trustees, donors and friends for championing our patients. We see you, we know you and we value you.



# CONNECTED TO THE CARE

Congratulations to Chief of Staff **Daniel J. Sucato, M.D., M.S.**, who was installed as the 40<sup>th</sup> president of the Pediatric Orthopaedic Society of North America (POSNA) in April. Immediate Past President Jeffrey Sawyer, M.D., (right) transferred the presidency to Dr. Sucato (left) at the 2023 POSNA Annual Meeting in Nashville, Tennessee.



Scottish Rite for Children and UT Southwestern Medical Center established a Sports Medicine fellowship designed with a specialized pediatric focus that begins in August. Led by Program Director **Henry B. Ellis, M.D.**, (right) and Associate Program Director **Philip L. Wilson, M.D.**, (left), Scottish Rite serves as the primary training site. The first of its kind in North Texas, the program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education. Also, congratulations to **Dr. Ellis**, who was recently named **president of the Texas Orthopaedic Association**.



Presented by the Scottish Rite for Children Orthopedic department, the **45<sup>th</sup> Annual Brandon Carrell Visiting Professorship** welcomed visiting professor Henry G. Chambers, M.D., a pediatric orthopedic surgeon at Rady

Children's Hospital-San Diego® and a professor of clinical orthopedic surgery at the University of California San Diego. The program gathers staff and alumni to discuss the latest advancements in pediatric orthopedics.



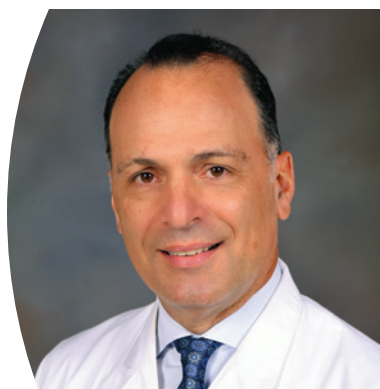
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of Prosper



The Scottish Rite for Children Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Center in Frisco celebrated the unveiling of a state-of-the-art outdoor basketball **Dream Court™**. Thank you to Basketball Hall of Famer Nancy Lieberman, Nancy Lieberman Charities and the Adleta Corporation for making this dream a reality. »



Earlier this year, 12 Scottish Rite amputee patients enjoyed the **40<sup>th</sup> Annual Amputee Ski Trip in Winter Park, Colorado**. The teens spent a week at the National Sports Center for the Disabled where they experienced the adventure of a lifetime, bonding with each other on the slopes and making lasting memories.



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

## Investing in Research for Future Generations

A world-renowned leader in the treatment of pediatric orthopedic conditions, Scottish Rite for Children is also a pioneer at the forefront of discovery and innovation. Advances in research are essential to not only finding the causes of pediatric orthopedic disorders but also developing protocols and technologies to treat them.

What are the important clinical questions that we have about our patients? This is a fundamental but critical question that we continue to ask to strategically guide us in our research efforts. What answers do we not have currently that we can research today in order to have better answers tomorrow? Decades of these questions and their answers have led to amazing breakthroughs and treatments — from gene discoveries to techniques used in clinic or the operating room to surgically implanted devices — and each day, our pursuit continues.

Today, Scottish Rite holds more than 50 patents. Through our six Centers for Excellence, including Foot, Hand, Hip, Limb Lengthening and Reconstruction, Scoliosis and Spine, and Sports Medicine, our researchers investigate complex problems and translate the solutions into leading-edge treatments, which directly

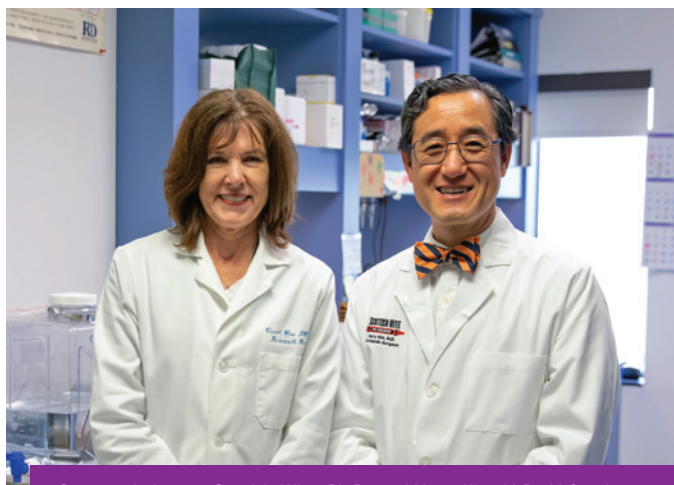
impact the lives of our patients. Forwarding this research requires time and funding.

Through rigorous and competitive processes, our principal investigators apply for funding and are awarded significant grants from prestigious institutions that put their trust in us, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Earlier this year, Blue Ridge Institute for Medical Research (BRIMR) released its 2022 Rankings of NIH Funding. An independent nonprofit organization, BRIMR annually publishes a nationwide ranking of institutions, departments and investigators based on the funding that each received from the NIH.

Scottish Rite for Children in collaboration with UT Southwestern Medical Center ranked No. 19 out of more than 150 academic orthopedic surgery programs in the country.

Two of Scottish Rite’s principal investigators earned individual rankings, including Carol A. Wise, Ph.D., at No. 13 with more than \$1.5 million, and Harry Kim, M.D., M.S., at No. 66 with nearly \$590,000. With support from institutions like the NIH and other generous contributors, we can continue to further our research goals, which transform the lives of children across the globe. «



Congratulations to Carol A. Wise, Ph.D., and Harry Kim, M.D., M.S., who ranked No. 13 and No. 66 respectively in the Blue Ridge Institute for Medical Research 2022 Rankings of NIH Funding.





## BEHIND THE SCENES

### Fabrication Lab

Medical breakthroughs and new technology developed at Scottish Rite for Children dramatically impact the lives of children treated here and throughout the world.

Scottish Rite for Children's Dallas campus is home to an innovative Fabrication Lab that is part of the state-of-the-art Orthopedic Biomechanics suite, a space that allows our team of expert bioengineers, physicians and researchers to design and engineer new tools and devices that advance health care and improve patient outcomes. The lab is equipped with a wide range of tools and specialized equipment that help bring basic science research into a clinical setting, allowing our experts to set the standard for modern orthopedic care.

Our experience in treating rare and complex spine, hip and extremity disorders positions our team to solve the most challenging orthopedic problems. Scottish Rite holds more than 50 patents, with many of our scoliosis and limb difference devices beginning in the Fabrication Lab. Projects include developing the next generation of surgical implants and instruments, therapeutic devices, and occupational and rehabilitative aids.



# AYDEN THE INSPIRATION

Resilience and Determination Despite Trauma | by Kristi Shewmaker





**Ayden**, age 13 of Valley View, describes himself as outdoorsy. He learned to ride horses before he could walk. Every day after school, he feeds his flock of sheep that pasture next to the house his father built for the family. When his dad gets home from work, they drive across the highway to feed their horses, ponies, cows, chickens and homing pigeons. Born and raised in the country, Ayden lives with his parents Liz and Sergio and his younger sister and brother on some land they simply call home.

Ayden's family is close-knit. His grandparents, Liz's parents, live just across the pasture. Every Sunday, Ayden hops the fence and runs to their house where his grandma makes breakfast for everyone. After their family meal, the guys get to work doing chores around the property.

In February of 2022 while working on the farm, Ayden suffered a traumatic injury with heavy farm equipment and lost his arm. He was transported by CareFlite® to Children's Medical Center Dallas, a Level 1 Trauma Center, where pediatric orthopedic surgeons Corey S. Gill, M.D., M.A., and Jaysson T. Brooks, M.D., performed an amputation and reconstruction of Ayden's right arm above the elbow. "I didn't think anything could be done to save any part of his arm," Liz says, "but they did an amazing job, and I'm thankful for that."

A few weeks after surgery, Ayden and his family reunited with Dr. Gill at Scottish Rite for Children Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Center in Frisco. They also met the multidisciplinary team of experts who would care for Ayden, including pediatric psychologist Emily Gale, Ph.D., prosthetist Dwight Putnam, C.P., L.P., and occupational therapist Lindsey Williams, O.T.R., C.H.T.

"When you lose a limb, the family goes through a process of grief," Dr. Gill says. "So, it's really important for our Psychology team to work with them early on."

During his recovery, Ayden and his family toured the Prosthetics Lab at the Dallas campus to learn about the possibility of wearing a prosthetic arm and how it could be customized for him. "It was important for Ayden to know that whether he has a prosthesis or not, it does not define him," Dr. Gill says. "He could do things with it or without it, but he was going to be great regardless." Ayden decided to move forward with the arm. After his limb had time to heal, he would return for an evaluation with Dwight.

In the meantime, Ayden began occupational therapy with Lindsey twice a week. Initially, she focused on caring for his residual limb, including massaging his scar to desensitize the limb in preparation for wearing a prosthesis.

"The day I met Ayden, he was very quiet," Lindsey says. "He was trying his best, but he didn't yet know the potential that he had. We were just trying to get rid of his phantom limb pain, trying to cope in that way." Phantom limb pain occurs when the brain perceives tingling and painful sensations in the limb that is no longer there. To resolve the pain, Lindsey used mirror therapy to trick his brain into thinking his right hand was there.

Because Ayden lost his right arm, and he was right-handed, they also focused on dominance retraining, or training his left hand to become the dominant hand. They worked on strengthening the grip of his left hand, as well as coordination, fine motor skills and handwriting.

After the swelling subsided in Ayden's limb, Dwight recommended a body-powered prosthetic arm. Built specifically for Ayden, the arm attaches to a prosthetic socket that fits onto his residual limb. The prosthesis is worn with a harness that loops around his left arm. The movement of his shoulder creates tension in the harness that is transferred to a cable system, which moves a terminal device in the form of a hand or a hook. Initially, Ayden chose the hand so that it would look like his fingers. The hand has a tripod grasp, meaning the first two fingers and thumb pinch together to grab objects.



Prosthetist Dwight Putnam explains the mechanics of Ayden's prosthetic arm.

*Continued on the next page*



"We started Ayden on a body-powered device to get him used to wearing a prosthesis," Dwight says. "We started simple, so he could figure out how to work it without getting too frustrated in the beginning."

For many months, Ayden worked with Lindsey on completing tasks with his left hand as well as learning how to use his prosthesis. They problem-solved daily activities, like how to get dressed, button buttons and zip zippers. In one session, he learned to tie his shoes with one hand. They also worked on two-handed tasks, like scooping ice cream, opening a sauce packet, and cutting apples and avocados.

"Ayden has grown so much," Lindsey says. "He comes to appointments prepared with a list of things he wants to work on. Early on, he wanted to help his mom. He brought in clothes to fold and hang. He wanted to be able to take out the trash."



Occupational therapist Lindsey Williams teaches Ayden how to button his shirt cuff using his prosthetic arm.

After a year, Ayden decided to try the hook on the end of his prosthetic arm. He wanted to use it to feed his sheep. The pinch on a hook is stronger and can grasp heavier items. Before his injury, Ayden fed his sheep by pouring grain out of a five-gallon bucket into a trough. Lindsey taught him to use the hook to hold the handle while his left hand tilted the bucket. "Almost instantaneously after we added the hook," Dwight says, "it has increased his abilities to do the things he used to do and contribute to his family."

"I think he will continue to explore and find things he wants to do with his prosthesis," Dr. Gill says. "Whether it is for things around the farm or adaptive sports, it's our job to help him succeed in whatever he wants to do, and I think he will."



Corey S. Gill, M.D., M.A., inspects the hook on the end of Ayden's prosthetic arm.

Now, Lindsey is preparing Ayden for high school. She is teaching him one-handed typing using a Dvorak keyboard, which locates the important letters directly under your hand. They just put new stickers on the keys. "Lindsey has really been a blessing to us," Liz says.

The best part of his care journey, Ayden says, has been getting help from Lindsey. "I've learned that I can still do everything the same," he says. Liz adds that Ayden says he wants to be Dwight, and later in his life, he wants to build prosthetic limbs.

"At Scottish Rite, they care more about the kids than anything else," Sergio says. "They actually take care of you. They don't care if you're Hispanic, White, Black — whatever color you are — they treat everybody the same."

In a recent session, Ayden and Lindsey played Jenga®. Ayden grasped a block with his hook. As he wiggled it, it looked like the tower might fall. "But, he got it out," Lindsey says, "and when it didn't fall, he had the biggest smile on his face."

"Nothing is off the table for Ayden," she says. "The injury was so traumatic for him. It could've defeated him, but he has just soared."

"We can't thank everyone at Scottish Rite enough," Liz says. "Something that has been horrible and tragic is turning out to be something wonderful and positive for our child." <<



Sergio, Ayden and Liz



## Expert Care for Extra Fingers and Toes

"Holden is very much the baby of the family," says Ashley, his mother. "He likes being the center of attention and being constantly held. He's also a little mischievous." The youngest of three children, Holden, of Dallas, turned 1 in April and, according to Ashley, is into everything. "He's in that 'I now can get myself anywhere I want to be, so I'm going to explore anywhere I can' phase," she says. But, for the first nine months of his life, he could not wear a shoe on his left foot.

Holden was born with polydactyly, a condition in which a baby is born with extra digits. In Holden's case, he had an extra pinkie finger on each hand and an extra toe on his left foot that sat on top of his other pinkie toe.

Ashley was prepared for the extra toe because her doctor had spotted it in her 20-week ultrasound. He said that they would have a pediatrician at her delivery who would put a clamp on it, and it would fall off like an umbilical cord. The two extra fingers were a surprise. "When Holden was born, the pediatrician said that given the number of extra digits and the way some of them were connected, they weren't confident clamps would work," Ashley says. Within 24 hours, they were referred to Scottish Rite for Children.

Hand surgeon Chris Stutz, M.D., evaluated Holden when he was just 3 weeks old. A leader in training hand surgeons from around the world, Scottish Rite was the first pediatric orthopedic facility in the nation to employ full-time hand surgeons. Dr. Stutz recommended surgery to remove the three extra digits at 9 months of age. The timing of surgery was scheduled late enough in Holden's development to mitigate the risk of complication due to anesthesia and early enough to ensure that he could learn to walk.

"The idea of handing over your 9-month-old baby for surgery is terrifying," Ashley says, "but it was so much easier knowing that he was with people who specialized in that."

Holden came out of surgery with soft wraps on his hands and a hard cast on his foot. "As soon as the cast came off, we put him in a hard-soled shoe," Ashley says. "His ability to stand and move around has been really great."

"While this is a common procedure for our team, it is uncommon for the patient and family," Dr. Stutz says. "We were happy to provide the comfort, confidence and expertise for this wonderful, sweet family."

"We loved our Scottish Rite experience," Ashley says, "and we're glad that Holden can move on with being a 1-year-old who can wear shoes!" <<





# GAME CHANGER



## Surmounting Setback Through Strength

Running intensely down the long runway, Lawrence launched into a roundoff, followed by five no-handed back handsprings and then a back handspring into a double pike. Landing sharply on the mat with all of the pressure on her ankles, she fell to the ground. "I was in terrible pain, and I just remember paramedics coming over," says 16-year-old Lawrence, of Richardson. That day in June of 2022, Lawrence broke both of her ankles at the USA Gymnastics® Championships in the trampoline and tumbling event in Des Moines, Iowa. "I was really scared that I wouldn't be able to tumble anymore," she says.





An elite power tumbler, Lawrence has been a gymnast since she was 5. "I would flip all around the house," Lawrence says. "I'd flip off the couch, make up routines on my bed and outside with my friends at recess. I've always had a passion for it."

After a trip to the emergency room in Des Moines, Lawrence and her family decided to wait until they got back to Dallas to have surgery. "It was the longest car ride ever," says Hollis, Lawrence's mother, "but I knew the wonderful reputation of Scottish Rite for Children because I used to work there as a physical therapist,

and I had heard that Dr. Ellis was the person we needed to see."

A few days later, Lawrence found herself in the care of pediatric orthopedic sports medicine surgeon and medical director of clinical research Henry B. Ellis, M.D., and a multidisciplinary

team of experts at the Scottish Rite for Children Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Center in Frisco. After having surgery on both ankles, Lawrence underwent a treatment plan that included having splints on both legs and then successively wearing casts, boots and braces before she could walk without aid. For many weeks, she was in a wheelchair until she could use crutches. "The lack of things I could do made me feel pretty hopeless," Lawrence says. "I stayed in bed all day. I couldn't do anything on my own, even go to the bathroom or take a shower."

During her visits at Scottish Rite, Lawrence received a continuum of care in body, mind and spirit, including support from physician assistant Ben Johnson, P.A.-C., A.T.C., pediatric nurse practitioner Heather Barnes, D.N.P.,

child life specialist Marissa Willis, CCLS, and pediatric psychologist Emily Stapleton, Psy.D. "Dr. Stapleton talked to me every visit about how I was feeling mentally, which I didn't take into consideration before the injury," Lawrence says. "I thought I'd just be lying in bed, and then I'd get up and be fine, but it was a lot harder than I expected mentally. She really helped me discover things that I like to do besides tumbling, like reading and doing crafts."

Hollis says that for her as a parent, Scottish Rite for Children means trust. "I totally and completely trust the doctors, nurses, support staff and therapists," Hollis says. "Once we were in the hands of Scottish Rite, I knew Lawrence would be okay."

After a few months, Lawrence started walking and began the recovery process. "I was so excited to get strong, work out and do normal things that I took for granted like walking with my friends," Lawrence says.

"It might take a village to get elite athletes back after a bad injury," Dr. Ellis says, "but the truth is that it takes a special patient with resilience, strength — both mental and physical — and perseverance."

Today, Lawrence is back in the gym taking power tumbling classes and learning a new specialization called acrobatics and tumbling, a sport that combines gymnastics and the athletic aspects of competitive cheerleading. She takes private lessons from Hope Bravo, the 2019 U.S. tumbling bronze medalist who also competed in the Acrobatics and Tumbling program at Baylor® University. Lawrence says that Baylor's program is the best, and she aspires to join the team when she graduates from high school.

"The care I received at Scottish Rite was amazing," Lawrence says. "Though the injury set me back and that was really difficult, I'm glad I am where I am now because I didn't think that would be possible. I love what I'm doing now. I have new goals, and I'm happier than I've ever been." <<



Lawrence's X-ray after surgery

Lawrence with her mentor and private coach, Hope Bravo, the 2019 U.S. tumbling bronze medalist





## TRUSTEE PROFILE

“THE WORK WE DO  
FOR CHILDREN —  
YOU’VE GOT  
TO BE PROUD  
OF THAT.”

**JOHN E. WOOD**  
Trustee Since 2017

**John E. Wood** believes that a society is known by how well it takes care of its people. “Historically, societies that didn’t take care of those in need have gone away,” Wood says. “Those that took care of the group have flourished, and Scottish Rite for Children is a part of that. You can’t be human and not have that tug at your heart when you see a child who needs help.”

Wood joined the Scottish Rite for Children Board of Trustees in 2017. “I feel an obligation to work for the betterment of society, and you can’t do it without thinking about the young children who have orthopedic conditions,” Wood says. “Scottish Rite for Children is the premier provider for children with orthopedic needs. The doctors are unparalleled. The work we do for children — you’ve got to be proud of that.”

Throughout his life, Wood has worked to better society through his service and his entrepreneurial spirit. Born in Chickasha, Oklahoma, Wood grew up in Cement, a town of about 1,000. A self-professed science and math geek in school, he taught himself how to repair TV sets and electronics. He received his commercial operator license with the Federal Communications Commission when he was just 17. In 1967, he served in the U.S. Air Force as a ground radio communications specialist during the Vietnam War. He was stationed at multiple stateside bases as well as Clark Air Base in the Philippines

and K2 Air Base in Korea. During that time, he studied business books, which laid the groundwork for his career in store management, and later, as an entrepreneur.

When Wood completed his military service, he returned to Oklahoma, interviewed with Sears® and entered their management training program to become a store manager. He managed multiple stores across Texas and New Mexico. While managing a store in Carlsbad in 1974, he joined Freemasonry, and shortly thereafter, became a Scottish Rite Mason. After more than six years of managing Sears® stores, Wood resigned and began buying and selling his own stores. One in particular caught his eye in El Paso, a general store called Joe’s. “The public loved Joe’s,” Wood says, “so I kept the name, and they all called me Joe.” He owned Joe’s for 30 years and would go on to buy and sell a jewelry store, multiple collateral loan businesses and a furniture company before retiring. After 50 years of living in El Paso, Wood calls it home and continues to serve in Masonry there. Regardless of his extensive professional successes and service, Wood says that his three children are his proudest accomplishments.

Wood’s heart for children, including his own and those he helps at Scottish Rite, exemplifies kindness, a virtue that is foundational to the betterment of society — one that flourishes for generations to come. «

## A Promise Kept in Abundance

"Scottish Rite for Children provides the best care in the world, regardless of a family's ability to pay," says retired Texas State Senator Troy Fraser. Fifty years ago, Troy and his wife, Linda, experienced this world-class care firsthand — at a time when they needed it most. It changed the trajectory of their lives and inspired them to become champions for Scottish Rite.

The Frasers had their first child, a son, in 1972. Chase was born with clubfoot, a surprise to the family. "His foot was totally upside down," Linda says. "The doctor said, 'We just hope that he can walk,' and I said, 'No. Chase will be able to walk.'" The Frasers discovered Scottish Rite for Children and found answers for Chase's condition with the chief of staff at the time, the late Brandon Carrell, M.D.

"Linda was pregnant with our second child, and the company that I was working for went bankrupt, so I lost my job and our health insurance," Troy says. Anticipating a new addition to the family and Chase's care, Troy tried to make arrangements with Scottish Rite to pay for Chase's surgery over time, unaware that Scottish Rite would cover

his care. When they learned that they would not receive a bill, it was a profound moment that stuck with them. "Scottish Rite was like an angel that came down from heaven," Troy says. "Linda and I made a commitment that we would pay them back."

The Frasers have graciously kept their promise and then some. For decades, they have supported Scottish Rite. Troy helped start the Central Texas Golf Classic, a golf tournament in Austin that has raised significant funds to benefit Scottish Rite patients. "To witness the heart that Troy, Linda and their family have for Scottish Rite for Children is truly amazing," says Vice President of Development Stephanie Brigger. "They have experienced what Scottish Rite is all about, and now they are living out their commitment to support others who need our services and expertise."

The Frasers' favorite time of year is when a group of Scottish Rite patients participate in the Amputee Ski Trip in Winter Park, Colorado. Since 2015, the Frasers have hosted a dinner for the participants at their Colorado home. "To see those big smiles on their faces when they're coming down that mountain," Linda says, "it's magical." Moved by the experience, the Frasers established the Fraser Family Fund, which provides funding for the ski trip, prosthetic limbs and rehabilitation for Scottish Rite patients. To date, the Frasers have contributed nearly \$1 million.

"What Scottish Rite did for our family was such a blessing," Linda says. "They gave our son the ability to walk and become the man he is today. Our lives would not be what they are without Scottish Rite." «



Chase, Linda and Troy Fraser



# SCOTTISH RITE



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### ABOUT SCOTTISH RITE FOR CHILDREN

Scottish Rite for Children is a world-renowned leader in the treatment of orthopedic conditions, such as scoliosis, clubfoot, hand differences, hip disorders, limb lengthening, sports injuries and fractures, as well as certain related arthritic and neurological disorders and learning disorders, such as dyslexia. Patients receive treatment regardless of the family's ability to pay.

For more information about services available at the Dallas or Frisco campuses, visit [scottishriteforchildren.org](https://scottishriteforchildren.org).

Are you receiving duplicate mailings or need to correct your name, title or address? Please send corrections to P.O. Box 199300, Dallas, Texas 75219-9842 or call 214-559-7650.

Scottish Rite for Children is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

