LEADERS IN care
STORIES OF THE MOST AMAZING CARE ANYWHERE
SPRING 2022
Believing & Achieving
Shriners Children’s patients set their sights on success
ABOUT SHRINERS CHILDREN'S

OUR MISSION
At Shriner’s Children’s, our three-part mission has one goal: to change and improve lives. We do this by caring for our patients, conducting research to gain knowledge and develop new treatments, and providing educational opportunities for physicians and other health care professionals.

WHO DO WE TREAT?
Children under age 18 may receive care and treatment when there is a reasonable possibility they could benefit from the specialized services we offer. All services are provided regardless of a family’s ability to pay or insurance status.

WHAT ARE OUR PEDIATRIC SPECIALTIES?
+ Treatment for orthopedic conditions
+ Burn care
+ Spinal cord injury rehabilitation and management
+ Cleft lip and palate care

GROUNDBREAKING RESEARCH
We strive to discover answers that will one day improve lives. Our innovative researchers have made significant breakthroughs in all four of our service lines, improving patient care and adding to the global body of medical knowledge.

CONTINUING EDUCATION
One way we help improve the lives of children worldwide is by offering educational opportunities to medical professionals. We maintain relationships with several medical teaching facilities, and our clinicians are known for sharing their experience and knowledge with other medical communities.

THE SHRINERS FRATERNITY
Shriners International, a fraternity based on fun, fellowship and the Masonic principles of brotherly love, relief and truth, founded Shriner’s Children’s as its official philanthropy in 1922. What began as one hospital is now a world-renowned health care system with locations in three countries. The fraternity, which has nearly 200 chapters in several countries and thousands of clubs around the world, continues to support this unique health care system. To learn more, please visit shrinersinternational.org.
Dear Readers,

It’s spring, always a refreshing time of year, full of hope and promise. While we continue to struggle with the pandemic, describing this season so positively might seem to be a bit of a stretch – but it isn’t.

Our Shriners Children’s locations continue to be places of hope, where dreams are achieved and lives are changed every day. Our researchers continue to work patiently and diligently to discover new knowledge that will lead to greater understanding and improved treatments.

We love to celebrate our patients’ successes – and we will do that on a much larger scale this year. The year 2022 marks the 100th anniversary of our health care system, which began in 1922 in Shreveport, Louisiana, as a single hospital opened primarily in response to the polio epidemic, offering care regardless of the ability to pay. Shriners Children’s has grown to include locations across the United States, Canada and Mexico, and is respected worldwide. Our patients continue to achieve personal successes – from achieving specific goals, to becoming more independent, to gaining confidence. And all care and services are still provided regardless of families’ ability to pay or insurance status. I’d say that’s a history well worth celebrating!

This year is also the 150th anniversary of Shriners International, the fraternity that founded and continues to support our amazing health care system. We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to those visionary, generous gentlemen who cared enough – and hoped enough – to create a health care system that has made a difference in the lives of more than 1.5 million children – so far.

As you read this issue, full of stories of success, commitment and innovation, you may see a thread of hope connecting all of us, today and for another 100 years.

Sincerely,

Mel Bower
Chief Marketing and Communications Officer
Shriners Children’s

AVERY. 5, was burned in a car accident last year. When she arrived at Shriners Children’s Ohio, she couldn’t walk or sit up. After just a month of treatment, she was sitting up and even worked up to a jog! Her amazing courage and hard work have earned her many followers on Shriners Children’s social media pages, with lots of fans cheering her on.

One of those fans, Leah, the 5-year-old daughter of a Shriner in Newfoundland, Canada, saw some of Avery’s posts. She was inspired to send her a card, which included a note, a picture of herself, a drawing she made and even a small donation. Leah and her brother hand-delivered the card to the post office to send to Avery in the U.S.

WATCH a video of Avery reading the card here: fb.watch/8FvFi6X6Vg/
The year 2022 marks a special milestone for Shriners Children’s: 100 years of improving the lives of more than 1.5 million children, and counting.

Since our first hospital opened in Shreveport, Louisiana, in 1922, Shriners Children’s has been a unique health care system with a reputation for finding answers and giving families hope. At our locations in the U.S., Canada and Mexico, children receive excellent care for orthopedic conditions, burns, spinal cord injuries, and cleft lip and palate.

Children under the age of 18 are eligible for care from Shriners Children’s if there is a reasonable possibility they could benefit from the specialized services available. All services are provided regardless of families’ ability to pay or insurance status.

State-of-the-art specialty care
The first Shriners Hospital was opened primarily to help children who had contracted polio. Today, most of our locations provide care for children with all types of orthopedic conditions.

In the mid-1960s, we opened three hospitals specializing in pediatric burn care. We believe these are the only hospitals in the country that were initially established exclusively for the treatment of pediatric burns and related conditions. Burn care is now offered at Shriners Children’s locations in Boston, Massachusetts; Dayton, Ohio; Galveston, Texas; and Sacramento, California. These hospitals continue to be pioneers in pediatric burn treatment and research and are recognized as leaders in the development of treatment techniques.

In the early 1980s, our organization began the United States’ first pediatric spinal cord injury rehabilitation programs. These initiatives offer patients a complete range of services that help promote recovery to the fullest extent possible.

Shriners Children’s also offers care for cleft lip and palate. Despite the frequency of its occurrence and its severity, comprehensive care for patients with cleft lip and palate can be difficult to obtain. Shriners Children’s is committed to improving care for children with this condition through a coordinated program of clinical excellence, teaching and research.

Groundbreaking research and discoveries
Shriners Children’s strives to discover answers that will one day improve lives by conducting innovative research. The Shriners Children’s Genomics Institute is working to discover genetic causes for the conditions we treat and to develop new therapies. Our researchers have made significant breakthroughs, improving the care and quality of life for countless children worldwide while adding to the global body of medical knowledge.

Educating health care professionals
We are also proud of our role in medical education. By maintaining relationships with several medical teaching facilities, Shriners Children’s fosters an academic environment committed to providing superior education for medical professionals and quality care to all patients. (See page 15 for more about how we’re fulfilling this mission.)

The next 100 years
Everyone connected with Shriners Children’s appreciates the privilege of caring for children and looks forward to the next 100 years of service to patients and families.
Specialized pediatric rehabilitation programs for spinal cord injuries prove that amazing things are possible

Kahari sustained a spinal cord injury when he was 17. A healthy, multisport athlete, Kahari played defensive end and linebacker. After a tackle at an August 2021 football practice, he was unable to move his arms and legs. Emergency doctors confirmed he had a spinal cord injury (SCI), which included swelling of the cord and a narrowing of the canal. Over the next few weeks, Kahari began to have some recovery in his limbs. He went to Shriners Children’s Chicago for spinal cord injury rehabilitation treatment about a month after his injury.

Sue Mukherjee, M.D., a physical medicine and rehabilitation physician, supervised his medical care. “Kahari initially demonstrated more leg strength than arm strength, and he especially had difficulty using his hands,” she said.
In addition to providing care for children with spinal cord injuries, Shriners Children’s conducts research to understand the long-term impact of these injuries and ultimately offer even better treatments, insight and assistance.

Shriners Children’s Chicago has managed a spinal cord injury research study for nearly a quarter-century. Long-term Outcomes and Life Satisfaction of Individuals with Pediatric-onset Spinal Cord Injury began in the ’90s, led by medical director emeritus of SCI at Shriners Children’s Chicago, Lawrence C. Vogel, M.D.

Participants include former patients ages 19 and older who sustained a spinal cord injury as a child and received SCI rehabilitative care at one of three Shriners Children’s SCI programs, which are located at our hospitals in Chicago, Philadelphia and Sacramento, California. To date, over 520 current and former Shriners Children’s patients have participated. Seventy-five of them were injured more than 30 years ago.

Kathy Zebracki, Ph.D., took over as principal investigator 10 years ago. “There is no comparable study that has followed such a large population of individuals with pediatric-onset SCI longitudinally into adulthood,” said Zebracki. “Knowledge of psychosocial outcomes, such as attainment of employment, is critical to developing targeted state-of-the-art interventions addressing the current needs of aging adults living with SCI, as well as creating effective evidence-based rehabilitation and educational/prevention programs for those newly injured.”

Zebracki said participants also keep in touch with researchers, sharing important milestones like job promotions, getting married, having children and even winning Paralympic gold medals.
specialized care. They felt strongly that having other young people around him would help Jesse’s morale and drive him to do his best during therapy.

Jesse spent the remainder of the summer in the Philadelphia hospital’s specialty spinal cord injury intensive rehabilitation program. His care team created an inclusive plan that would build up his ability, confidence and independence.

“We cannot say enough positive things about Shriners Children’s Philadelphia,” said Jesse’s mother, Stephanie. “They handled all of his physical needs, of course, but they also took care of everything else by supporting his mental and emotional health.”

Stephanie was also impressed by the different types of support she and her family received during Jesse’s stay and how well the staff prepared them to return home after he was discharged.

“They made sure we had emotional support as well,” said Stephanie. “They allowed us to decorate his room and bring his favorite blankets and food from home. They trained us thoroughly in his care for when he came home and made sure we had all the equipment we needed.”

In less than two months, Jesse was able to walk, using forearm crutches, out of the doors of the hospital to his family’s car. This experience alone was far more than Jesse ever expected when he first came to the hospital.

“When I first came to Shriners Children’s, I could barely move my left leg or toes, and I really didn’t think that I would walk again,” said Jesse. “But the amazing staff at Shriners Children’s pushed me, believed in me and made me believe in myself. And after about six weeks, I could walk again.”

“So the amazing staff at Shriners Children’s pushed me, believed in me and made me believe in myself. And after about six weeks, I could walk again.”

– JESSE

Jesse works with his physical therapist to improve his ability and confidence.
Believing and Achieving

Shriners Children’s patients set their sights on success

From the very start, Emilynn’s family knew she was special. It would take almost a decade to learn exactly how special she is, though.

“We had a completely normal pregnancy with Emilynn,” her mother, Morgan, said. “She was born at 36 weeks, so she just spent a little time in the NICU [neonatal intensive care unit] because of respiratory issues.”

As Emilynn grew, though, her feet began to turn inward, a condition called clubfoot. After the child had undergone multiple surgeries, doctors told Morgan something she just wouldn’t accept.

“The more they did, the worse she seemed to get,” Morgan said. “A doctor told me that the surgeries weren’t successful and Emilynn would never walk, that she’d use a wheelchair for the rest of her life. They told me that I needed to just come to terms with that.”

But Morgan wanted a second opinion. “My mom instinct told me that it wasn’t simply clubfoot and that they weren’t looking at every possibility,” Morgan said.

A change in course

When she was about 2½, Emilynn, who lives in Ohio, had her first appointment with Vishwas Talwalkar, M.D., a pediatric orthopedic specialist and surgeon at Shriners Children’s Lexington in Kentucky.

Emilynn wears custom braces built by Pediatric Orthotic and Prosthetic Services (POPS) – Midwest at Shriners Children’s Lexington.
“Dr. Talwalkar changed the trajectory of her whole life in that first appointment,” Morgan said. “He told me it would be a long process, but that he thought Emilynn could walk someday. That’s all I needed to hear. It reassured me that my instinct was right.”

They did not know yet what was causing Emilynn’s orthopedic problems, but Dr. Talwalkar was able to help by developing a plan involving custom ankle-foot orthotic (AFO) braces and surgical intervention.

“She took her first steps when she was 4, and by 5, she no longer needed a wheelchair,” Morgan said.

Compassionate care
Genetic testing eventually gave the family some answers. Emilynn has a rare genetic condition called Distal Spinal Muscular Atrophy, or DSMA, which is characterized by weakness and wasting of the muscles and primarily impacts the arms and legs.

Now Emilynn gets the care she needs for her condition, including orthopedic care at Shriners Children’s Lexington.

Emilynn wears custom braces built by Pediatric Orthotic and Prosthetic Services (POPS) – Midwest at Shriners Children’s Lexington. The braces help support her ankles and straighten her feet. Emilynn’s insurance only covers one set of braces a year, but Shriners Children’s provides care, including replacing prosthetics or orthotics as needed, regardless of families’ ability to pay. Morgan said she’s been thankful.

Finding his smile
Born with cleft lip and palate, Griffin has been treated at Shriners Children’s Boston for most of his life. His parents learned their baby would have the condition during an ultrasound when his mother, Jennifer, was 24 weeks pregnant. Now a student at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Griffin is an avid golfer who also enjoys video editing and production. He is scheduled to have surgery on his jaw this summer, which will be his final surgery. Jennifer believes the challenges of managing a cleft lip and cleft palate diagnosis made her family stronger. “As I look back on our experience, I truly feel that Griffin’s cleft lip and palate was a gift,” she said. “We never took our health for granted, and we never judged people based on their physical appearance. We feel like part of the Shriners family.”

Success Stories

Griffin will soon have his final surgery for cleft lip and palate.

Riding high
Doctors told Tommy’s parents at their 20-week ultrasound that he had a rare condition known as fibular hemimelia, a missing lower leg bone. “These doctors had only seen this condition three times ever,” said MaryKay, Tommy’s mom. But the family found hope at Shriners Children’s Chicago. Jeffrey Ackman, M.D., an orthopedic surgeon there, said, “Families are reassured to learn their child’s rare condition is nothing new to us.”

Tommy’s family and care team eventually decided that amputation and a prosthetic would allow him the best quality of life.

Tommy, now 10, is the youngest of four siblings and loves to be outside. MaryKay said that for years, Tommy couldn’t quite master how to ride a bike with his custom-made prosthetic leg. His parents felt like he was missing out, even though their son happily ran along while his friends rode bikes. During the pandemic, Tommy found the confidence to learn to ride with his special leg! Now his family jokingly calls him Lance, as in Lance Armstrong.
over the years to not have to worry about the cost of her
daughter’s care.
“She comes every six months to get new braces because
she is so active that she literally destroys them,” Morgan
said. “We’ve never outgrown a brace. She always is ready
for a new one when we come because she’s able to do so
much that she snaps a strap or cracks them.”

**Impacting the whole family**

Morgan has gone on to pursue a career in pediatric nurs-
ing because of her and her daughter’s experience.
“I knew what it was like to not be heard as a parent,”
she said. “I didn’t want others to feel that way, and
I’ve told many parents who felt hopeless that Shriners
will be there for them.”

While Morgan sings Dr. Talwalkar’s praises every
chance she gets, Emilynn’s perseverance and her family’s
support has been integral in her
successes, too.

“Emilynn would not be where
she is today if it weren’t for
Dr. Talwalkar and Shriners,”
Morgan said. “But we’ve also
never made her feel like anything
was impossible. She’s always been
curious and wanted to try every-
thing her big sister does. It might
take her a little longer to do it
or we might have to do it a little
differently, but her condition has
never held her back.”

Emilynn wants other kids fac-
ing difficult physical challenges to
know they don’t have to be held
back either.

“Dr. Talwalkar never gave up,”
Emilynn said. “I don’t give up
either. I can walk today when
others said I wouldn’t. Don’t let
anyone tell you that you can’t.”

Emilynn, now 12, does much
more than walk. She shimmies
and shakes on stage as a compet-
tive hip-hop dancer. She jumps
and stomps on the sidelines as
a cheerleader. She throws strikes on her bowling team,
speeds down the driveway on her bike, swims the length
of her family’s pool and scores a goal or two on the
soccer field.

“All these things that some other parents might take for
granted have meant so much to us,” Morgan said. “We
watched Emilynn climb the steps of the school bus on
her first day of kindergarten when we thought she’d have
to be lifted into the bus in a wheelchair. Her first soccer
game and the first time she took the stage to dance, I just
cried because at one point we were told she would never
do those things.”

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**Success Stories**

“**In fighting shape**

“Well, yeah, we can make you walk better again.” Orthopedic Surgeon
Bryan Tompkins, M.D., of Shriners Children’s Spokane, spoke the
words Yakobo’s family had crossed the globe to hear. When he was
very young, Yakobo, who is from Tanzania, sustained a severe leg
injury that healed improperly. Doctors in Africa suggested amputating
his leg below the knee. Seeking an alternative, Yakobo’s family moved
to the United States when he was 4. Through a series of surgeries and
observations in the Spokane hospital’s motion analysis center, physi-
cians were able to correct his leg injury and avoid amputation. Now 18,
Yakobo is a senior in high school who stays active by boxing in a local
club and playing basketball.

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– MORGAN,
EMILYNN’S MOM
The morning 13-year-old Parker’s life changed forever began just like any other. He rushed out the door, hopped in his mom’s car, helped settle his baby brother, and they all headed to school, chatting excitedly about the day ahead. Less than 20 minutes later, paramedics were pulling the family from a heap of metal.

That morning on the road, Parker’s mom, Sharonda, had a seizure and lost consciousness. As her car sped out of control, Parker jumped into action.
“Parker was sitting in the back, but when he realized something was wrong, he unbuckled his seatbelt and got to the front to take over the wheel,” Sharonda said. “He saved our lives.”

While Sharonda walked away with a few broken fingers and a fractured tailbone, and her youngest son was unscathed, Parker was transported to the hospital with a broken ankle, broken ribs, punctured kidneys and a perforated gallbladder.

Nineteen days into his two-month-long hospital stay, Parker was told he would need to have his leg amputated—his broken ankle hadn’t allowed blood to circulate properly. He was devastated. For months after the amputation, Parker’s mental health rapidly declined.

“He developed severe depression and anxiety,” Sharonda said, explaining that the once avid athlete was convinced he would never feel like a kid again. But he was going to try.

**Fighting the fight**
Parker decided he would fight for the life he loved. A few months later, he found himself at Shriners Children’s Greenville, where an in-house Pediatric Orthotic and Prosthetic Services (POPS) team fabricates thousands of custom-fit assistive devices for kids every year.

With consultation from physician David Westberry, M.D., a team of highly skilled physical therapists and orthotists began working to ensure Parker would make as full a recovery as possible. He was fitted with a prosthetic leg designed for comfortable support and, of course, lots of physical activity.

**The mental/physical connection**
Recovering physically had a tremendous impact on Parker’s mental health.

“These days, Parker is as strong as ever,” said Sharonda. “He rides bikes and four-wheelers with his friends. He plays basketball on his middle school team. He perseveres with a positive outlook. The team at Shriners Children’s helped break the chains off Parker, and now he’s limitless! They gave him his personality back.”

And he’s not taking that for granted. Filled with a hard-won sense of compassion for those who are struggling, Parker never shies away from a friend in need.

He recognizes and relates to physical pain as well as emotional pain. He knows what it’s like to hurt, and he wants to let others know they’re not alone in their experience. “Parker is using his story to comfort others,” Sharonda said.
Working as a team for overall well-being

The staff of Shriners Children’s is concerned for our patients’ overall well-being, including helping them cope with devastating changes that can cause emotional or mental pain. Some of our locations have psychologists and/or psychiatrists on staff to help with these issues. It is just one aspect of what we call “wrap-around care.”

For example, the Boston location has a psychiatry and psychology team that sees all patients admitted to the inpatient unit for serious burns. “We follow them through every stage of their care: from their stay in the hospital to outpatient care, and until they go back to their communities, families and schools,” said Ellen O’Donnell, Ph.D., director of clinical psychology services at Shriners Children’s Boston. “We also see patients who come in for ongoing surgeries or outpatient rehabilitation. We work very closely with the medical staff, rehabilitation therapists, and especially with nursing, care coordination, child life and, given our very large international patient population, our medical interpreters, to support our patients and their families. We work closely with the team to help patients cope with anxiety and manage pain, so they can meet their goals and recover as quickly as possible.”

Our patients and families often need support adapting to their “new normal.” They may need help adjusting to scars, assistive devices or other physical appearance issues, and practicing how to tell others about their injuries, conditions and experiences during treatment and recovery.

“We work closely with the team to help patients cope with anxiety and manage pain, so they can meet their goals and recover as quickly as possible.”

– DR. ELLEN O’DONNELL

Shriners Children’s is committed to providing a full range of resources and services to help our patients recover to the fullest extent possible and achieve their goals.

Shriners Children’s Philadelphia is one of our locations that has a psychologist on staff who is available to the care teams when psychosocial and/or emotional issues get in the way of a child’s ability to meet their goals. Psychologist Heather Russell, Ph.D., provides examples of situations when it may be time for patients to receive help:

▶ The child’s perceived anxiety and/or depression is interfering with their ability to get through the day (i.e., full participation in therapies, eating and sleeping well, taking recommended medications, completing activities of daily living, giving consent/assent for surgeries).

▶ The child appears to be angry or is acting out a great deal of the time so that it is interfering with their ability to get through the day.

▶ The child is having difficulty sleeping or eating, and it cannot be explained medically.

▶ The child is having a difficult time coping with their pain.

For more stories about patients reaching their goals, visit myleadersincare.com.
Receiving Recognition

Shriners Children’s is honored for providing excellent care

Our health care system is known for leadership and for providing excellent care and treatment to the children and families who depend on Shriners Children’s. We are especially honored by Press Ganey awards, which are determined by surveys completed by patients and families. Nine of our locations received Press Ganey awards in a variety of categories. The following hospitals received a 2021 Press Ganey Guardian of Excellence Award in Patient Experience:

- Shriners Children’s Boston
- Shriners Hospitals for Children — Canada
- Shriners Children’s Greenville
- Shriners Children’s Hawai’i
- Shriners Hospitals for Children — Mexico*
- Shriners Children’s Ohio
  
*Received multiple awards for various Patient Experience categories

We are especially honored by Press Ganey awards, which are determined by surveys completed by patients and families.

The Guardian of Excellence Award honors health care organizations that have reached the 95th percentile for patient experience, employee or physician engagement, or clinical quality performance. It is awarded annually based on one year of data. Our locations in Canada; Chicago; Sacramento, California; and Portland, Oregon, also received the Pinnacle of Excellence Award, which recognizes those that have maintained consistently high levels of excellence over three years.
When is a young athlete with a broken ankle ready to safely return to a sport? What therapies might be necessary for a patient with burn injuries? How do doctors gain the training and experience they need to practice specialty pediatric care?

In addition to providing hope and healing for patients, Shriners Children’s is dedicated to offering high-quality educational opportunities for medical professionals. By maintaining relationships with several medical teaching facilities, the health care system can share answers to these questions and many more.

Shriners Children’s offers opportunities for medical professionals to continue their education, enhance their knowledge, hone their skills and enrich their careers through lectures, seminars, workshops and podcasts. Physicians from many of our locations often speak at conferences, attend grand rounds and participate in staff in-services. In addition, our health care system offers a variety of fellowship opportunities.
Some Shriners Children’s facilities have local partnerships and educational programs. For example, Shriners Children’s Spokane provides its surrounding community with a comprehensive sports health and medicine program consisting of physicians, physical therapists and athletic trainers. As part of the program, the hospital has contracted with Mount Spokane High School to provide the services of an athletic trainer.

**Partnerships and collaborations**

Through special collaborations, we share our expertise with the next generation of medical professionals. For example, residents and fellows from more than 10 leading academic medical centers in the Chicago area receive training at Shriners Children’s Chicago.

Shriners Children’s Chicago orthopedic spine surgeon Michal Szczodry, M.D., who specializes in scoliosis and spinal deformities, was a resident at Shriners Children’s Chicago in 2003. “Training at Shriners Children’s was the factor that convinced me to work here,” Dr. Szczodry said. “Shriners Children’s approach cemented my internal belief that you always should do what’s right when it comes to patient care.”

Shriners Children’s Portland spine surgeon Michelle Welborn, M.D., did a general orthopedic residency at Shriners Children’s Chicago as well, as part of her award-winning residency at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Dr. Welborn also trained in spine care at Shriners Children’s Northern California.

At Shriners Hospitals for Children — Canada, an affiliation with McGill University, a public research university in Montreal,
Quebec, allows the hospital to deliver on its mission to educate and train the next generation of orthopedic specialists.

All orthopedic residents in the McGill orthopedic program rotate through the Shriners Children’s hospital for pediatric orthopedic teaching, spending six to nine months of their residency there. The Pediatric Simulation Center at the hospital serves as a critical educational tool in residents’ curriculum. The affiliation with McGill University also allows researchers, nurses, physiotherapists and occupational therapists to be trained at the hospital.

Knowledge-sharing and virtual learning
The Abraham Thall & Sadye Stone Thall Educational Symposium, held annually since 2016, is one example of knowledge-sharing by Shriners Children’s Boston. The program is an important platform for highlighting all aspects of pediatric burn care, from treatment to recovery.

The symposium held last fall, which featured a panel of Shriners Children’s Boston clinicians, focused on outpatient burn care and meeting the variety of needs of young patients with burn injuries. Regardless of burn size and severity, many children require care beyond acute burn treatment, including physical and occupational therapy or reconstructive surgery. The panel spoke about the multidisciplinary needs of young burn patients and how they can help patients recover more quickly, improve long-term functionality and reduce scarring.

Other Shriners Children’s locations offer virtual learning as well. The Chicago Shriners Hospital began a Virtual Grand Rounds.

From Student to Teacher
Growing up, Vincent Prusick, M.D., admired his father. Dr. Prusick saw how his dad, who was an orthopedic surgeon, was changing people’s lives. “I thought that it was a really meaningful profession. I was always drawn to that and never really considered doing anything else,” he said.

And so, the younger Dr. Prusick followed in his father’s footsteps. Today, he is a pediatric orthopedic surgeon who transforms the lives of children who seek treatment at Shriners Children’s Lexington. He also takes an active role in educating the next generation of pediatric orthopedic surgeons.

Dr. Prusick completed a residency at Shriners Children’s Lexington through the medical center’s academic partner, the University of Kentucky College of Medicine and UK Healthcare. Each of the physicians at the Lexington medical center are also physicians at UK Healthcare, and many of them are professors of pediatric orthopedics at the college. The partnership allows residents to rotate through the Shriners Lexington facility three times for 10 weeks at a time. Dr. Prusick rotated from 2012 to 2017, and then became a staff physician at the medical center in 2018. He has special interests in spinal deformities and trauma.

Dr. Prusick knows firsthand how medical training opportunities can change the trajectory of one’s career. He works to provide those opportunities to other young physicians. “Because we see such a wide variety of orthopedic conditions and a large volume of patients, there are a lot of opportunities to get hands-on experience,” he said. “The ability to work in the Shriners system is unique. Our staff puts a huge emphasis on education.

“it’s gratifying and rewarding for me to be able to give back to the system that gave me so much and to contribute to that continuous educational process that we’re all going through as physicians.”

Dr. Prusick cares for patients and works to educate the next generation of surgeons.
Nearly 40 pediatric orthopedic surgeons, physical therapists and research coordinators from 13 Shriners Children’s locations attended a SCORES national meeting at the Chicago hospital last fall.

Sharing research to improve treatments
To help improve the care and quality of life of injured young athletes and reduce re-injury rates, Shriners Children’s has a group called SCORES, or Shriners Consortium for Outcomes, Research and Education in Sports.

SCORES capitalizes on the knowledge and expertise of our large group of pediatric orthopedic surgeons and physical therapists. It also taps into the data and expertise that is gathered at our motion analysis centers. Nearly 40 pediatric orthopedic surgeons, physical therapists and research coordinators from 13 Shriners Children’s locations attended a SCORES national meeting at the Chicago hospital last fall, led by Corinna Franklin, M.D., director of sports medicine at Shriners Children’s Philadelphia. The two-day meeting included hands-on demonstrations in the motion analysis center and important planning to help standardize future research.

“The goal of the consortium is to unify all the Shriners sports medicine programs for the best possible research and clinical care,” said Dr. Franklin. Currently in the building stages, SCORES is “implementing procedures for patient-reported outcomes and creating a standardized intake form across the system. We are also standardizing comprehensive return to sports testing (in our motion labs) and creating a data registry,” she added.

Kelsey Davidson, M.D., orthopedic surgeon, and Karen Kruger, Ph.D., director of the Chicago hospital’s motion analysis center, hosted the meetings at the Chicago hospital.

Physicians and clinicians are already using the data from SCORES to perform multiple prospective and retrospective research studies. “We had such a productive meeting talking motion analysis, multi-center studies and more within the Shriners Sports Medicine program,” said Kruger, who is also a biomedical engineer.

Through our mission to educate, we reach our ultimate goal: empowering more people to help more kids around the world.

* From left: Courtney Mullen PT, DPT, PCS, board certified pediatric physical therapist Emily Nice, sports research coordinator Ross Chafetz, PT, DPT, Ph.D., MPH, corporate director of motion analysis centers Corinna Franklin, MD, pediatric orthopedic surgeon Camille Brown, clinical research coordinator
Our Community
Providers and Patients Making Us Proud

On a High Note

NAME: José
CONDITION: Cerebral Palsy
LOCATION: Philadelphia

“I feel happiness and joy when I play the piano because music is life for me!”

Since age 3, José’s (stage name Jose Andre) passion has been music. He plays by ear, and he’s performed in Washington, D.C., at the Kennedy Center, the Blues Alley Club and the Library of Congress. At just 16, José has shared the stage with notable artists and captivated listeners around the world.

José’s success is all the more impressive because he is challenged by both blindness and cerebral palsy. When his parents were seeking treatments to help him walk, his mother, Giovanna, saw a Shriners Children’s TV commercial, encouraging her to reach out to the hospital. Now a patient of Shriners Children’s Philadelphia, José has had surgeries to align his legs and rehabilitative therapies to gain strength, mobility and independence.

“José is an incredible young man with a huge heart. It’s always a pleasure working with him to walk with his walker, so he can be more independent when not in his wheelchair,” said Mallory Meyer, DPT, senior physical therapist at Shriners Children’s Philadelphia. “Regardless of what he is going through, he always ensures that people around him are doing well. He can bring a smile to anyone’s face by simply saying hello and using his incredible talent of playing the piano so beautifully.”

José’s walking has improved significantly. At times, he experiences pain, and he uses his wheelchair for long distances. He also has a customized wheelchair to use at school.

“The care he has received at Shriner’s made a huge difference in his life,” Giovanna said. “José has a special journey, and he has been fortunate to meet people that care for him and have helped him achieve his goals. His goal is to have a life that is not defined by his disabilities but modeled by his abilities.”

WATCH José perform here: instagram.com/p/CSMgG3LD__C/
On Parade: Celebrating 100 Years of Believing in Dreams

Our Rose Parade float represents hope, healing and the confidence to succeed

We are proud to celebrate 100 years of being a place where hope and healing meet, compassion and expertise come together, and lives are changed.

We began our centennial celebration on Jan. 1, with our 11th consecutive appearance in the Rose Parade. Our float, Celebrating 100 Years of Believing in Dreams, honors Shriners Children’s century of providing quality care to children with complex medical conditions regardless of the ability to pay or insurance status. Equally, the theme recognizes the power of hopes and dreams, and celebrates our patients’ resilience and determination as they discover how much is possible, begin to believe in their dreams and gain the confidence to achieve their goals. Helping our patients discover how much they can accomplish has been a hallmark of the philosophy of Shriners Children’s throughout its history. National Patient Ambassadors Seth, Sydney, Mia and Connor rode on the float and represented Shriners Children’s patients.

Some might consider the challenges faced by our patients to be devastating or insurmountable. However, with the encouragement and support of their care teams, our patients believe in their dreams, achieve their goals, and take their places in their communities with a grace and confidence that is nothing short of stunning.

We look forward to a second century of transforming the lives of children.