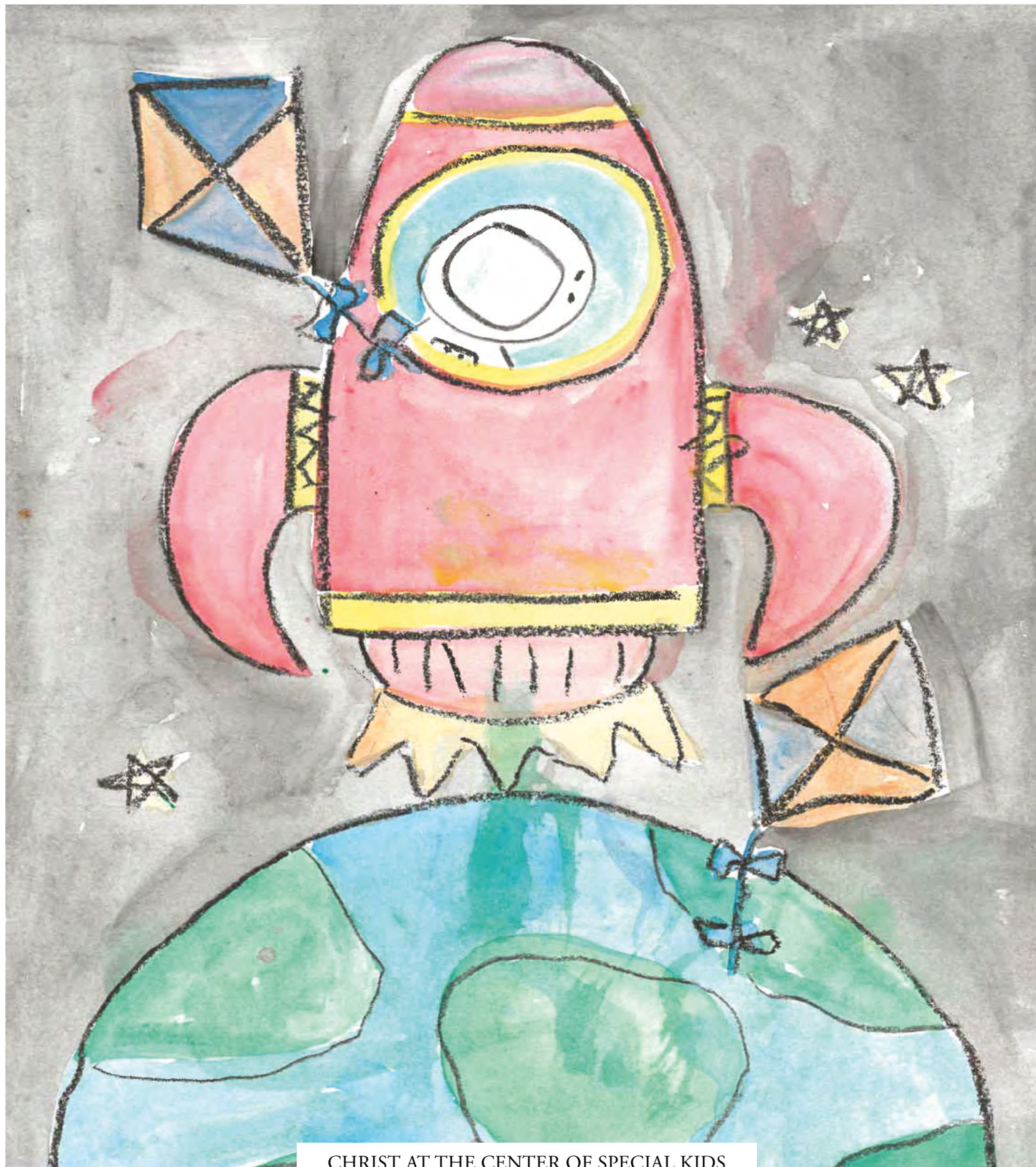


AT THE CENTER



CHRIST AT THE CENTER OF SPECIAL KIDS



*"Be strong, and do not give up,
for your work will be rewarded"*
2 Chronicles 15:7

blessed_____

A Letter from Special Kids

Board Director, AJ Goodwin



Special Kids was founded with a clear vision: create a facility where those with special needs would be able to receive the nursing treatment and therapy they need. Special Kids has maintained a commitment to care for the children and offer a sliding scale for payment if needed. I am proud to say Special Kids not just lives up to its vision, but exceeds it! Today they provide speech, occupational, physical and feeding therapy in addition to professional nursing services, recreation therapy, summer camp and peer modeling.

Most companies would describe 2021 as quite a difficult year if not the most difficult year they have ever had. Everyone has experienced a myriad of obstacles and challenging trials; Special Kids included. With that said, we believe our Savior has a plan and as long as we give 100% effort while

at the same time trusting 100% in Him, our mission will continue. I feel convicted we have the best staff any organization could be blessed with who continue to persevere regardless of what life throws their way.

To those who are actively involved with us, I just wanted to say thank you! I think we should all be good stewards of everything we have been given and so I applaud those who sacrifice their time, energy, and finances to support this ministry. Special Kids is currently based in Murfreesboro, TN and I firmly believe they will one day positively impact the entire world.

If you're not currently involved with us I invite you to partner today. Here are a few ways you can support this amazing mission:

-Pray for the children, families, staff, and board.
We genuinely believe in the power of prayer!

-Volunteer at one of our facilities or an event in 2022:
www.specialkidstn.com/volunteer

-Help fundraise to make a difference:
Contact us at info@specialkidstn.com

-Donate to change a child's life:
www.specialkidstn.com/donate

Thank you for your support!

AJ Goodwin,
Board Director

Meet Our Newest Featured Child, Jovan

Our dreams won't work until you do... It's a saying Fred Frazier Jr. lives by as a motto... As the father of seven children including Jovan, the 2021-2022 Special Kids "Featured Child", Fred says he learned early on as a parent never to restrict his children on what they dreamed they could do. Even for simple tasks, like playing ball or making new friends as the "face" of Special Kids, Jovan never lacks for encouragement from his father or the rest of his family.

Fred served for more than 22 years in the United States Navy, visiting over 150 countries including a majority of the United States. Retiring in 1978, he says his time spent serving brought him more than just a love for travel, including a natural gift for teaching and counseling. One could say Jovan carries on his father's gift of empathy, as Fred describes it... *"He's never met a stranger. It's like he's always known you."*

Jovan came to learn about Special Kids years ago through Camp Ability, a summer program designed to create a true summer camp experience for children with special needs. Fred says his first tour of campus, looking for a place for Jovan to continue his therapy care, was overwhelming: *"I had found the place my son was meant to be..."* A recent graduate from the Special Kids speech therapy program, Jovan continues with treatments in occupational and physical therapy with the help of telehealth technologies. Fred, as well as Jovan's mother and siblings, ensure his progress continues at home. Everyday tasks like tying shoes, making up the bed and other household chores are an opportunity to continue Jovan's development.

Fred says Jovan has continued blooming as a "social butterfly" when it comes to the year-long process of being the Special Kids Featured Child. Spreading the word with relatives, friends and members of his church congregation, Jovan has no problem sharing HIS dreams with the growing world around him. Of the many stories Fred proudly shares of his son, none better fits Jovan's larger-than-life profile than his first appearance at the 2021 Special Kids Race. As Fred addressed a crowd of runners, volunteers and other supporters of the local mission... Jovan asked Fred for a chance at the microphone so he could repeat a message he's heard not just from Special Kids, but within his household his entire life... *"Dream big!"*

"I had found the place my son was meant to be..."



Building for the Future

The size and scope of the Special Kids mission continues to grow, including the foundation taking shape for the patient services team at the therapy and nursing centers across campus. Overcoming the challenges presented throughout both 2020 and 2021, Special Kids Director of Therapy Cameron Campbell speaks highly of his team: *“Day by day, members of our staff show up with a smile... Committed to encourage and support one another and our patients!”*

Looking to the future, new grants and other awarded funding will continue to add to the patient experience for children at both the therapy and nursing centers and provide for much-needed technologies, including several new laptops, iPads, and other devices. From added funding to provide for new equipment, to the developing mindset of his team growing together, Campbell says the **“dream big”** motto is being fulfilled through what he plans for the future of Special Kids: *“To me, dreaming big means forgetting the limitations of ‘we’ve always done it this way’ and instead, stepping back to take a look at the big picture. Doing so allows us to see with fresh new perspectives and discover how we can challenge old patterns or habits and press into new dynamic ways of meeting our mission... I hope we always dream big and adapt to new ways of meeting that mission in a changing world.”*



hopeful





*"I've seen businesses, both big and small, make
selfless sacrifices for the sake of Special Kids."*
- Daisy Montgomery





A Place to Call “Home”

For more than two decades the campus of Special Kids has been a part of many Murfreesboro & Rutherford County residents’ “picture” of home. A short walk away from a sign that spells “Special Kids” in colorful stenciled letters... Visitors find a similarly special playground. While it has all the fixtures any kid’s “wish list” would feature - slides, swings, and more - it offers much more in the hundreds of stories it could tell if given the chance; miracles and milestones of children learning to walk and talk, reaching and setting new expectations beyond what a family thought possible. Just a few miles from the exact “center point” of the Volunteer State itself... This campus acts as the “center point” for many families’ stories now told; among others waiting to be shared.

A picture painted with words to compliment the visual creations of *Daisy Sue Designs*, Special Kids Seasonal Development Assistant Daisy Montgomery’s essay about “home” earned the organization \$5,000 in a nationwide contest organized by *Shelter Insurance*. Her penned tribute spoke to the “calling” one feels toward home... Something virtually all supporters, volunteers and partners of the Special Kids campus over its growing history can identify within themselves.

Complimenting her early exposure to the local mission growing up in Murfreesboro, Montgomery says it wasn’t until a tour early in her professional career with the non-profit that her appreciation for their work - and the community of supporters around it - truly took shape. As she puts it, *“Working here has only grown my love for this community including those that support Special Kids... Whether it’s offering up a conference room for our committee meetings, providing meals and supplies for our events, donating time to volunteer or money to help what we do, I’ve seen both big and small businesses make selfless sacrifices for the sake of Special Kids.”*

To bring a creative spark to campus and illustrate some of what she witnessed during her inaugural tour, Montgomery made weekly trips to the Special Kids Kleinau Nursing Center to create artwork with children. Calling her visits the highlight of every week, Montgomery complimented the young artists she got to work with: *“I watched them light up as they got to choose what colors they wanted, swirling their paintbrushes and seeing their own creations come to life.”* Creations like these are featured prominently in Special Kids marketing materials both past and future... From colorings framed in the lobby of the Special Kids development office to drawings used as templates for thank you cards and other promotional pieces.

While these miniature masterpieces will surely have their own impact for years to come, it was Montgomery’s written word that earned Special Kids the \$5,000 reward... Selected by thousands in a contest against other inspired stories from hometowns across the country. Visiting the campus to present the check in September, local Shelter Insurance representative Blake Finney says Montgomery’s essay represents the same spirit that helped the organization win five of the last six annual essay competitions: *“At Shelter, we’re very thankful for the opportunity to serve our customers. Our ‘Thankful for Communities’ contest grew out of that spirit of gratitude that has given us a chance to honor the communities we serve... One of the things the judges look for in the essays and video entries we receive is whether the piece would make them want to visit a community, and Daisy’s essay did just that.”*

grateful



*"We **marveled** at how individuals were out there, in the cold and in the rain, as if there wasn't a care in the world..."*
 - Charlie Apigian, Race Director



Celebrating a Decade of “Dreaming Big”

Reuniting after the longest wait between races in event history, the tenth annual Special Kids Race was given a proper welcome on the last Saturday of October 2021. Postponed from the typical spring window due to lingering concerns around COVID-19, participants savored the sense of reunion and restoration they'd longed for since the last event in March 2020. While the 2021 edition of the fundraising event won't be remembered for its ideal weather conditions - steady rain and cold temperatures provided adversity for many participants, organizers and staff early on and throughout the day - the tenth annual race will be commemorated for what it represented: overcoming obstacles for a common cause.

Long-standing Special Kids Race Director Charlie Apigian summarized the strenuous process of planning an event during a pandemic with an idea he says came to him during a six-mile run in the fall of 2020. “*We had to have a race in 2021... [At some point] I decided let's dream big, let's make this year a year of hope and dreaming and getting things back to normal!*” Fast forward almost a year with another race now in the books, Apigian takes joy in an event that presented unique challenges: “The fact that we put on a race is the most special part of this year's event... We had to postpone the event twice and deal with a packed October schedule. But, we did it! Of all the years to thank the people that came out and supported Special Kids, this is the year. We marveled at how individuals were out there, in the cold and in the rain, as if there wasn't a care in the world...”

Not to overlook the significance of an event's tenth year, many participants made their own history this October. Among them, Special Kids parent Marie Patterson who calls the annual run a “family tradition”. Now the mother of eight children, Patterson remembers pushing her oldest daughter Isabella in a stroller during the first Special Kids Race in 2012.



“Having a daughter with special needs and having her go through the challenges of her life... She's always ‘dreamed big’, it's about an attitude you use to live your life. Now, I get a lot of my inner motivation from seeing her and the things she's achieved throughout her life and at Special Kids.” Isabella's grandfather and fellow member of the run group “Team Isabella”, Ron Harper puts it in his own words: “The world is made better by those who have big dreams...”

While new to the Special Kids spotlight, Fred Frazier, Jr. - parent of the 2021 Special Kids “Featured Child” Jovan Frazier - beautifully embodied the “dream big” way of thinking in a speech he delivered at this year's starting line. “Dream big, and have fun while doing it!” While the theme of “dream big” may be officially recorded as the theme for the 2021 event alone, the same attitude will forever be a part of bringing this event to life - including the eleventh annual [Special Kids Race now scheduled for March 19, 2022!](#)

Special Kids would like to express their continued appreciation toward the presenting sponsor of the Special Kids Race, MurFREESboro Medical Clinic & Surgicenter, for their outstanding involvement making this event possible for ten years and counting!

thankful



“Despite the uncertainty... Our community, our families and our staff have big plans for the things the children we serve can do. That’s how we ‘dream big’ and cheer on those we support!”

-Rachel Braziel, Event Coordinator



Fall Golf Teams “Dream Big”

A busy event season for Special Kids came to a close on a beautiful fall day at the third annual Special Kids Fall Golf Classic presented by SRM Concrete and hosted by Cedar Crest Golf Course in early November. Dozens of teams came out to savor the long-awaited feelings of fall - changing leaves decorating the course and the chill of an autumn breeze made for ideal conditions to tee off for a wonderful local cause. Capping off a three-event “marathon” for Special Kids staff (following the Special Kids Banquet in August and the Special Kids Race in October) Event Specialist Rachel Braziel says she’s thankful to end the year on a high note: “Our community is always so generous towards what we do for Special Kids and this fall season has been a great example of that!”

Several contributing teams continued their year-round support by playing “fore the kids” in both the two-day edition of the Special Kids Spring Golf Classic as well

as the Special Kids Fall Golf Classic. Golf teams on the course expressed their gratitude just for a day to be out on top of the ultimate reason for showing up: supporting the children and families served at Special Kids. While all the golfers enjoyed a day to refine their game, only a few select groups took home top honors - teams from Genesis Investments, The Tedder Company, Jackie Crowell, and Team Otterbase, alongside the many honored for specialty promotions and single-hole contests.

In a year where the planning process for several events required last-minute changes and contingency plans, Braziel says she appreciates the consistent support of those like our fall golfers: “Despite the uncertainty... Our community, our families and our staff have big plans for the things the children we serve can do. That’s how we ‘dream big’ and cheer on those we support!”

community



“Invest in your community, in these children that need your help... If someone didn’t invest in me, I wouldn’t be standing here, gratefully and abundantly...” - Scott Hamilton



Scott Hamilton Inspires At-Home Banquet Audience

Olympic gold medalist Scott Hamilton brought a message of inspiration to an at-home audience of the Special Kids Banquet, the second-ever all-virtual event kicking off a busy season of fall events. Due to the sudden rise of the COVID-19 delta variant, event organizers were forced to transition the banquet last minute to an online format.

Sponsors and other supporters of the event were given the opportunity for a private “meet and greet” photo opportunity with Hamilton as they picked up their meals provided by local caterer Tasty Table and Chick-fil-A of Murfreesboro. Instilling new tradition for the annual event, long-time supporter of the Special Kids campus and CEO/Founder of Ole South Properties, John Floyd was specially honored with the first-ever “Ruby Award” for his outstanding generosity including his service through the 2020 Special Kids Hope Drive. The “Ruby Award” is named after a Special Kids patient close to Floyd’s experience with campus that helped encourage his giving.

While the room may have been mostly empty without a crowd to see and react to his words in person, Hamilton’s address filled the auditorium with an inspiring series of stories about his adversities through childhood that prepared him for the largest stage in sports. Hamilton

compared his upbringing, from being put up for adoption to facing an unknown diagnosis that challenged his development, to what families in middle Tennessee live out every day at campus: “When I see these parents [at Special Kids] pouring themselves into these children, like my mother did for me, I’m convinced that incredible things can happen and are happening... My family invested in me so that I could reveal the best part of myself. Just like you can invest in Special Kids, revealing the best potential...”

Toward the end of the program, Hamilton used a portion of scripture found in Romans 5, reading, “... We also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.” (verses 3-5) His message of hope, dreams and achieved goals wasn’t always about the ease of the journey; instead, it was a reminder that dreams are always worth dreaming. “*Dreaming big is what this is all about. When we lean into the Lord and we listen to Him and His life-affirming word, we know that everything ultimately is going to be ok...*”



"We're dreaming big to help all the families that are coming after us..."

- Amy Ayer, Special Kids parent



Hope Drive Fundraiser Ends “Big” Year

With 2022 now in sight, members of the Special Kids development team have one last goal in mind to fulfill the “dream big” mission of 2021. By the time calendars change and the year comes to a close on Friday, December 31, organizers behind the year-end “Hope Drive” plan to have raised more than \$200,000 for the future of Special Kids. Donor Management Specialist Nancy Whitman speaks highly of what the annual campaign represents, saying, “As I look around at our community of donors, staff and families, I see kindred spirits.... They’re all partners in continuing that same shared spirit of trust, faith and continuing our ministry and our mission...”

Visitors to the Special Kids website and social media pages will notice the work of local photographer Lindsay Kate, also shared within the pages of this year-end magazine. The inspiration for the “photo shoot” being the dreams of the children - the face of Special Kids. Supporters can see written out what each child carries as their aspiration and goal while receiving care at the Murfreesboro campus... What they look forward to, what they plan on achieving some day thanks to the help of a family formed by Special Kids staff. “My dream is to become a cheerleader... My dream is to stand on my own... My dream is to use my words to tell jokes...” They all tell the story of the impact being made at Special Kids far better than any postcard or website could ever manage. Every dollar donated goes toward making these dreams a reality.

Testimonies spoken by Special Kids families have been shared on social media, speaking to the life-changing impact of this same campaign. Special Kids parent Amy Ayer speaks in one of the videos about how the progress her son James made at campus helped him get ready to enter school. As she puts it, *“We’re so thankful for the families that have come before us... Their dreams, their goals and the way they helped Special Kids get to where they are today and the way they helped James... We’re dreaming big to help all the families that are coming after us...”*

Partnering donors this year have agreed to match up to \$100,000 in gifts. Interested participants can make a donation to the 2021 Hope Drive in multiple ways:

By texting “**HopeDrive2021**” to **91999**

By visiting us online at specialkidstn.com

By mailing a check to **2132 East Main Street, Murfreesboro, TN 37130**
(include “Hope Drive” on the memo line)

By scanning the **QR code** you’ll see on this page



SCAN ME

impact

Mission Partners

benefit everyone involved

Special Kids Therapy & Nursing Center exists to offer hope and share the love of Jesus Christ with each family that comes through our doors. We serve children with special health care needs from birth to 21 years of age. Our services include a day-long program for parents returning to work, an outpatient therapy program, and a summer day camp.

When Mission Partners work with a non-profit, it benefits all that are involved: the church, the organization, and the surrounding community. We invite you to be a part of what we do!

Visit www.specialkidstn.com/missions-partners for more details

partnership opportunities

Special Kids would like to express its appreciation by recognizing the many who have gone above and beyond throughout 2021 to be a part of our mission. We continue to thank those who have sought out opportunities to donate their resources - whether it be money, time, talents, or other supplies. For more than 20 years, the impact and reach of Special Kids has grown through the love of its investors - serving more than 5,000 children since 1998!

We'd like to honor those this year that reached a special milestone in 2021 - surpassing \$100,000 in overall donations and thereby receiving the *Dick Kleinau Lifetime Giving Award*. This year's recipients include Andy & Karen Adams, Robert & Susanne Adams, Robert Haynes & Haynes Brothers Lumber, and Gregory Arnold. In a year dedicated to "dreaming big", we thank you for living by a "big" example in your Christ-like compassion for the heart of what we do.

#dreambig



ENGAGE

Schedule a time for a Special Kids representative to visit and speak with your congregation or small group.



AWARENESS

Spread the word and recruit others from work, school, church or your neighborhood to volunteer with Special Kids!



RESOURCES/SUPPORT

Speak to a Special Kids representative about setting up your own special needs ministry or providing space for local programs.



EVENTS

Participate in any of our year-round events, like the Special Kids Race, including chances to host an onsite church-sponsored booth!



INVESTMENT

Every dollar helps support local families, including the children served within our on-campus therapy and nursing programs.



PRAYER

Pray for our on-campus staff and the work they do, along with the children they serve!

support



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Our mission is to serve Jesus Christ
by caring for His children.

One child. One family. One community at a time.