

COURAGE KENNY REHABILITATION INSTITUTE®

Onward

FALL 2021

A newsletter from
Courage Kenny Foundation for friends of Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute



Celebrating your dynamic impact!

Your support has positive and life-changing ripples through our community. Tejosh and Leo are two athletes benefiting from donor-funded Adaptive Sports & Recreation programs like power soccer. Read more about their stories on pages 4-5.

A sincere *Thank You*



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Dear Courage Kenny Friends,

As we look toward the changing seasons, we are reminded of the many changes over the past year. Yes, there has been a change at Courage Kenny Foundation and it is with immense gratitude that I write to you as the new Courage Kenny Foundation President. Serving in this role is incredibly meaningful to me, both personally and professionally, and I am excited to work alongside you, our dedicated and generous donors, as we continue to make an impact on the lives of clients and their families, through the many ways we support this amazing community.

Having spent the majority of my career in philanthropy, I've been asked numerous times what is it that keeps me inspired to do this work. My answer is tied to the origins of the word *PHILANTHROPY*... A Greek term which directly translated means "love of humankind." When I observe interactions of Courage Kenny clients and their therapists, physicians, or volunteer assistants, the love of humankind is front and center. It is the heart of Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute's mission, and it is possible because of you, and your generous support.

As we adjust to the "new normal" resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, we are seeing a greater than ever need for rehabilitation services. Some clients are recovering from the lasting effects of COVID, others are returning to care after delaying treatment during the pandemic. Many lost strength, endurance or function and require a higher level of support to return to their pre-pandemic levels. Your support makes these services possible for those in need of care. A client recovering from a serious COVID-19 case recently shared, "The hospital saved my life, and Courage Kenny gave me my life back." What a powerful example of the love of humankind.

Your support also makes it possible to provide programs like the incredible Adaptive Sports & Recreation offerings featured in this issue. Thank you for helping to create such important opportunities.

With much gratitude,

Linda Ortner, MA, CFRE
President, Courage Kenny Foundation

Courage Kenny athletes at the Tokyo Paralympics!

Once again, Courage Kenny is proud to see five former Courage Kenny athletes at this year's Paralympic games in Tokyo! Former Courage Kenny athletes competing this year included wheelchair rugby players, Chuck Aoki and Joe Delagrave, and wheelchair basketball players Josie Aslakson, Rose Hollermann and Abby Bauleke. The summer Paralympics ran from August 24th through September 5th 2021. Doug Dixon, coach of the Junior Rolling Timberwolves team at Courage Kenny has coached three members of the Team USA wheelchair basketball team including Aslakson, Hollermann and Bauleke.

Josie Aslakson

In 2018 Aslakson took 6th place at the World Championship and this will be her first Paralympic Games.

"I can say with confidence that I wouldn't be where I am today without the doors that Courage Kenny opened for me. Coming from one of the best junior wheelchair basketball programs in the nation catapulted my game to the next level. Not only that, but playing wheelchair basketball at Courage Kenny also provided a source of community I desperately needed as a kid with a disability growing up in rural Minnesota."

Coach Dixon says of Aslakson, "Josie Aslakson is all about intelligence and anticipation. She is often three steps ahead of her competition. She has come so far."

Rose Hollermann

This is Hollermann's third time on the Paralympic team. She holds a gold medal from the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio.

"Courage Kenny is a huge reason why I've been able to compete at the Paralympic level, and local adaptive sports are why I fell in love with playing basketball."

Dixon says, "Rose Hollermann's work ethic and knowledge is unmatched. She will out work you, out strategize you and will not stop until she is the best in the world. In my opinion she already is."

Abby Bauleke

20-year-old Bauleke is a newcomer to the Paralympic Games and the senior national team. Currently playing collegiately for the University of Alabama, Bauleke is from Savage, Minnesota.

Bauleke reflects, "Adaptive sports are so important because being around kids who are going through similar things as you when you're young can be life changing. You learn how to push yourself and those around you. Having a team and building it into a family is one of the most rewarding feelings."

Dixon says of Bauleke, "Abby Bauleke grew so fast as a player. Abby is quietly super competitive and is an incredibly intuitive defender with an emerging offensive game."



Left to right, Aslakson, Hollermann and Bauleke.
Photo courtesy of Abby Bauleke.

The Power of Power Soccer



“Power soccer is just like normal soccer except you see people doing it in a wheelchair,” TJ explains.

Tejosh (TJ) was an avid soccer player as a young child. After his diagnosis of muscular dystrophy, his dad, Mani, heard about power soccer through a parents support group. He knew right away that this was the sport for TJ, “so he could continue playing soccer and enjoy it just like he did before his diagnosis.”



TJ (right) with his family

Now a player for eight years, TJ plays on the Courage Kenny Blizzards power soccer team. “Power soccer is just like normal soccer except you see people doing it in a wheelchair,” TJ explains.

TJ’s family has noticed a lot of positives in him as a result of playing power soccer. They have seen him grow more mature and confident and he has become even more passionate about soccer

Katie, one of TJ’s power soccer coaches, observes that he has grown into a phenomenal leader on the team. “He plays with a lot of grace. And he’s always first in line to congratulate the other team at the end of a game.”

What TJ enjoys most about playing power soccer is that there is always room for improvement, “I am always striving to do more and get better every time.”

His power soccer games have become important family events. The family is always there cheering him on, and often they plan family vacations around his tournaments.

Four-year-old Leo is a new power soccer player at Courage Kenny. He says he likes it because “it’s so fun.” He likes to go fast, do spins in his chair, and he enjoys being a part of a team.

Denis, Leo’s dad, is thankful that his son has access to sports that fit his abilities. He can’t always participate in other sports when he’s using a wheelchair, he says, “so this gives him that normal part of life. To feel like you’re a part of something is huge.”

Power Soccer is an important component of the Adaptive Sports & Recreation programs that your support makes possible. Participation only requires the ability to control a power wheelchair, so it is a sport that’s accessible to people with less upper body strength and mobility.



Leo with his father and brother

The 2021 Discover Abilities Expo was a success!

On April 24, 2021, the Courage Kenny Sports & Recreation Department hosted the 2021 Discover Abilities Virtual Expo, presented by Coloplast. More than 300 individuals joined in the virtual presentations, classes, webinars, and virtual booths to learn about adaptive sports and recreational opportunities throughout Minnesota.

You can view recordings of the presentations on the Allina Health YouTube channel. Multiple Courage Kenny departments presented at the Expo, including Assistive Technology, Aquatics & Fitness, and of course, Adaptive Sports & Recreation. Your support and the support of generous event sponsors made this enriching event possible! Thank you!



A Work of *HeArt*

A Work of 'HeArt' represents all who came together at the Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute - Golden Valley vaccine hub from January through June of 2021 to vaccinate more than 56,000 people, working together to protect our community's health and combat the Coronavirus pandemic. This stunning, inclusive painting was created by employees and volunteers from Allina Health hospitals, clinics, and temporary support staff from across the country. "When we come together we create an incredible picture of energy, hope and purpose." - Lindsey Spitzer, an Allina Health Registered Nurse



An original acrylic painting created by Vaccine Hub Employees and Volunteers

2021 EMPOWER Scholarship Recipients

Courage Kenny's annual EMPOWER Scholarships support students of color who are pursuing careers in a medical or rehabilitation field. The scholarship is made possible by philanthropy through a gift from the David M. Hersey Endowment Fund of the Courage Kenny Foundation. The 2021 recipients are Sruthi Subramamian and Tierra Prescott.

Subramamian will be a freshman at the University of Minnesota this fall. She will have an interdisciplinary major in Biology, Society and the Environment with a goal of becoming a pediatric Neurologist. She created an eleven-minute video recognizing the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act and has been active at the U of M Center for Orphan Drug Research.

Prescott is pursuing her Doctorate in Physical Therapy at the University of Minnesota. She has worked as a physical therapist at Regions Hospital where she helped lead research comparing functional outcomes between patients of color and white patients. She is passionate about empowering women and decreasing racial bias in medical care.

Congratulations and best wishes to both women on their educational goals.



Sruthi Subramamian



Tierra Prescott

Thank you for making the Encourage Breakfast Donation Drive Thru and the Virtual Celebration of Courage a success this year!

Our spring events continued to look a little different this year as we navigated the challenges of COVID-19. The pandemic, however, has not diminished your support, and for that we are tremendously grateful!

On May 11th we held the Encourage Breakfast Donation Drive Thru to benefit Courage Kenny St. Croix. More than 70 donors drove up to the Courage Kenny St. Croix parking lot, were greeted with a string quartet, smiling faces of staff and volunteers and a breakfast treat!

Special thank you to our sponsors RBC Wealth Management and Andersen Corporation. Thanks to our generous community we surpassed our goal and raised more than \$128,000.



We also held a virtual Celebration of Courage event, broadcast live from Target Field to benefit Adaptive Sports & Recreation programs. Emceed by KMSP TV reporter Courtney Godfrey, this event raised the most support ever from a Celebration of Courage, almost reaching our stretch goal of \$200,000! Special thank you to our sponsors Minnesota Twins, Apple Automatic, Coloplast, Plymouth Lions, Thomson Reuters, Atlas Staffing, Moss & Barnett, and Bituminous Roadways.

SAVE THE DATE!

The annual A Toast to Courage gala will be held virtually on Friday October 8th at 7 p.m. This year's event will expand access to critical rehabilitation technology across multiple locations. The need for this equipment is especially urgent now that we are seeing increased rehabilitation needs in our communities from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stay updated, make a gift, and register at allinahealth.org/ToastToCourage

**COURAGE KENNY
FOUNDATION**

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If you would like to be added or removed from our mailing list or receive an email version, please contact Courage Kenny Foundation at **612-775-2589** or e-mail CKFoundation@allina.com.

**Leave a *lasting*
and *meaningful*
legacy** by including
Courage Kenny
in your estate plans

Stevens Health Services by Kristin Dheng

A gift of any size can help ensure that future generations have access to Courage Kenny's life-changing and life-enriching services. You can designate your gift to a program or service that's important to you.

Making a planned gift is easy. Here are a few ways:

- a charitable bequest—specifying a percentage of your estate or a dollar amount in your will or trust
- including Courage Kenny as a beneficiary of your IRA or life insurance
- many more options at allinahealth.org/cklegacy
- Talk with your financial advisor to explore the options and benefits of planned giving.

Learn more at allinahealth.org/cklegacy or contact **Jim Besst**, Planned Giving Director at **612.775.2581** or james.besst@allina.com



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