



A Kid Again.
Giving illness a time out

National Chapter
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Columbus, OH 43085

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LOOK INSIDE!

We've enjoyed spending time
with our kids at all of
our chapter Adventures!



Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be on a competition cooking show...with a celebrity judge? Just ask our Central Ohio Chapter kids and families, they'll tell you! For their Adventures in a Box, they hosted the Great A Kid Again Cook-Off and teamed up with former Ohio State Basketball player Greg Oden as a guest chef. For this Adventure in a Box, families were provided with all of the ingredients needed to make Eggs in a Basket for breakfast, Grilled Cheese and Tomato Soup for lunch and Spaghetti and Meatballs for dinner. During pickup, each kid also received an A Kid Again apron and a chef's hat. Kids and families were encouraged to submit their own tutorial videos and pictures after watching Greg Oden's cooking videos, produced by our friends at M+A Architects. **Congratulations to our winners!** 3rd Place – Devin & Dorsey, 2nd Place: Annaleise & Danielle, 1st Place: Jackson



MAY 2021 | Vol 2, No 1

THE Adventurist

A Kid Again's very own magazine about Adventures!

Why we do what we do p. 4

Fast cars and fast friends p. 7

2nd generation family p. 8



A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



A Kid Again.

Giving illness a time out

Dear friends,

Welcome to the May edition of The Adventurist Newsletter!

I'd like to start by wishing you all a happy Spring! I'm excited to share with you the latest edition of The Adventurist Newsletter. Inside you'll find stories of inspiration from our local kids, families, sponsors, donors, and volunteers!

As we move further into 2021, we're working to deliver in-person Adventures when and where it's deemed safe. Our newsletter will highlight both in-person and from afar Adventures – this is for the benefit of all involved. The safety of those we serve is our number one priority. But I can say with absolute certainty – the creativity of our staff, volunteers, sponsors, and donors is shining through during these challenging times. I'm proud of the way our entire organization has been pivoting to continue delivering joy through the power of Adventures to our kids and families when they need it most.

I'm excited to share with you that A Kid Again has expanded our reach to the North Carolina area in early 2021, opening the Central Carolinas Chapter serving Charlotte and the surrounding areas including the northern tip of South Carolina. This new chapter is a positive next step in a long-term plan to provide every child and family dealing with a life-threatening condition the hope and support that Adventures offer.

I hope the stories in this issue of the Adventurist Newsletter inspire you and remind you why we do what we do every day!

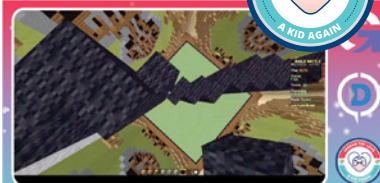
Enjoy!

Oyauma Garrison

Oyauma Garrison,
President and CEO



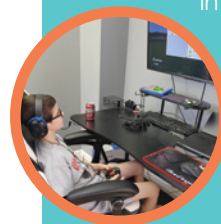
Indy Spreads the Love



\$2117.75

In February, our Indiana Chapter hosted a 72-hour charity streaming event that featured colleges and universities across the Midwest. The event raised over \$3,000 and players enjoyed a variety of games throughout the stream. To help them hit fundraising goals, they participated

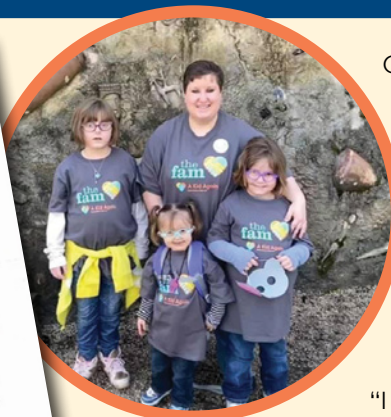
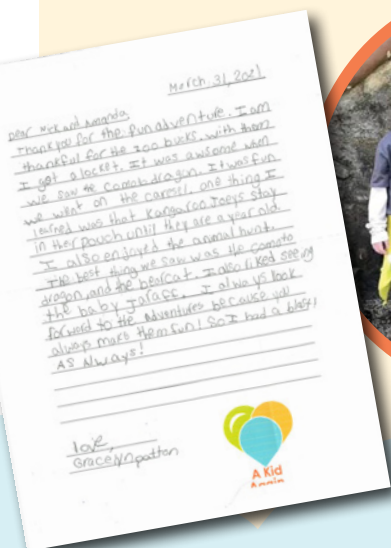
in challenges
and contests
– including a
Paqui Chip
Challenge!



Host your own charity
stream for A Kid Again at

akidagain.org/streaming-for-adventures/

Cincinnati Goes WILD for Adventure



Our Southwest Ohio Chapter recently teamed up with the Cincinnati Zoo to host "Go Wild for Adventure!"

Kids and families were invited to take part in a scavenger hunt and see the zoo animals. A Kid

Again Kid Gracelyn said,

"I always look forward to the Adventures because you always make them so fun! So I had a blast, as always!" ♥

THANK YOU!

We appreciate all of our families! Aiden's grandmother reached out to us on social media. Thank you for the kind words and generous donation!

"A Kid Again was always there for my daughter's family while my grandson, Aiden, was undergoing treatment for leukemia. Your efforts provided a needed break for his parents and truly, truly let Aiden and his siblings just be kids again, even if just for a little while. Keep doing what you are doing, you are wonderful! Aiden beat cancer and celebrates his eighth birthday next month! Thank you for being there for him."

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Cards of encouragement bring smiles

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Get Social...From a Distance

Follow our social channels for feel-good moments and the latest Adventures with our families. You'll also stay connected with event announcements and opportunities to get involved! Thank you for helping us with shares and likes! Check us out on Facebook – Twitter – Instagram – LinkedIn.



FB: akidagain



LI: a-kid-again



IG: a_kid_again



T: @akidagain



Why we do what we do

In the midst of a chaotic and unprecedented time, it's always a good idea to take a step back and remind ourselves why we do what we do. Kids and families are at the heart of the A Kid Again mission. Their struggles and stories drive staff, volunteers, donors and supporters to step up to the plate when help is needed. Enjoy these stories as a reminder of why Adventures are needed.



Meet Shivay

Shivay is 3 years old and lives with several life-threatening conditions, the most serious of which is a rare and complex heart condition. In 2020, he underwent phase 1 of a complex medical surgery to treat his heart condition. He is only the 6th person in the world to undergo this surgery and in August he will find out if he is a candidate for the final phase.

A lover of all things cows and farms, his mother Courtney says "While he is small in stature, he is BIG in heart. He is incredibly compassionate to others." Shivay and his parents Courtney and Chandous are one of the first families to join our



Central Carolinas Chapter. They have already been wonderful advocates for A Kid Again, sharing the mission with other families who may be interested.

Mila

When Mila was nine months old, she was diagnosed with spinal muscular atrophy type 2 (SMA2), a genetic neuromuscular disorder that affects her nervous system and all the muscles in her body. Mila is now three years old and one of her mom's biggest



challenges has been figuring out how to give Mila environments that are inclusive – until A Kid Again came into the picture. Mila and Holly found A Kid Again at a local Muscular Dystrophy Family Foundation (MDFF) expo in 2019. Her first Adventure was at the Microsoft store for a coding camp with the Colts. Mila was given a Surface opened to a paint app. "She was in heaven," Holly says.

Holly credits A Kid Again with helping her push her boundaries for Mila. "It's

very easy to get into a place with Mila, especially during Covid, where I'm going to keep her in a bubble and keep her safe, not let her out of this comfort zone," Holly says.

"So having a group of people who say, 'No, we are going to make it extremely safe for you to do this fun thing,' you lean on that and trust it, and I've done it, which has been great for her."

Henry

Two years ago, shortly after Henry turned two, his family found out he had a brain tumor. This once smiling, laughing, outgoing child was having to relearn everything, from crawling, to eating, to talking.

Henry and his family love A Kid Again because it gives them different things to look forward to, especially his older siblings. "When he was going through treatment for those couple years in and out of the hospital, we didn't do near as much as we had with them the years prior, so they missed out on a few things," Emily says.



The family has participated in two Adventures in A Box, and visited Kings Island last summer, where Henry was able to fully participate for the first time. "He rode so many rides, he loved it, he loved every part of it," Emily says

The Feltners

An A Kid Again mom recently shared her gratitude for the joy that Adventures bring, saying,



"Thank you A Kid Again for allowing our family to just be 'A Kid Again.' This past year has been a tough one so having an organization to plan an Adventure for our family and many other families with medically complex kiddos is truly a blessing."

- The Feltner Family ❤️

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"Having a group of people who say, 'No, we are going to make it extremely safe for you to do this fun thing,' you lean on that and trust it, and I've done it, which has been great for her." — Holly, Mila's mother

MAY IS Mental Health Awareness MONTH

In May, our Central Ohio Chapter is teaming up with M+A Architects and Easton to bring a Mental Health Awareness focused week of Adventures. Now more than ever in our world, it's important that parents and kids feel comfortable having open discussions about mental health and how to manage feelings they have. There will be activities throughout the week that will focus on mental health, including a virtual or in-person yoga class for parents, a mobile movie day at Easton, building workshops with M+A Architects and talking points to help connect kids and parents. ❤️



GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

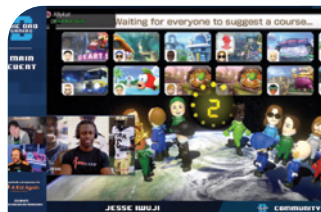
Why A Kid Again Matters During Mental Health Awareness Month

Dr. Markita Suttle shared her perspective on A Kid Again and Mental Health Awareness Month:

"A Kid Again supports the mental health of families of children with life-threatening conditions in many amazing ways. We know from scientific research that promoting play for children with life-threatening conditions is important to their health and well-being (Jasem et al, 2020). We also know that parents of children with these conditions deal with continual uncertainty, but that this uncertainty can emerge into hope and moving forward when provided support (Bally et al, 2017). Hope can be supported by connecting with other families and simply expressing positivity (Smith et al, 2018). A Kid Again meets all of these needs!

From the friendly smiles and helping hands of our volunteers, to the joyful laughs and playful spirits of our kids and families; A Kid Again Adventures provide an atmosphere for children to play and an environment where they are surrounded by positivity. Adventures also allow families with similar journeys to make connections, share experiences, and establish lifelong support. In every way, A Kid Again is helping families battle mental illness through their ongoing commitment to fostering hope, happiness, and healing." ❤️

6 May 2021



Racing for Adventure!



While there may have been dad jokes at this unique fundraising event, Mario Kart racing is no joke for the gaming community! A Kid Again recently teamed up with The Dad Gaming to host an online fundraising event to bring Adventure to local kids. A raffle

was held for a 'Mario Kart Main Event' where randomly chosen winners could race against NASCAR driver Jesse Iwuji!

Editor in Chief of The Dad, Joel Willis, and Gaming Twitch Announcer Justin Hinchcliffe emceed the event. A Kid Again kids had a blast competing against Jesse in three different series. Jesse raced hard, but many of the kids would agree his talents seem to be more fitted for the live race-track than Mario Kart!

The goal was set at \$1000 but the event helped reach well over that, with a grand total of \$2,244 raised!



Joel shared these words following the event, "Giving back has always been an important part of The Dad and our community. The values, mission, and goals of A Kid Again are exactly in line with what we're all about. They strive to provide opportunities for every child with a life-threatening condition to be A Kid Again. At The Dad Gaming we're all about family, and using gaming to bond with our kids and create unforgettable memories and experiences. What better way to be a kid again? Proud to help raise money and awareness for this important organization." ❤️

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FAST CARS AND FAST FRIENDS

The national partnership between Kalitta Motorsports and A Kid Again has been a meaningful one from the start. Their support of Adventures and raising awareness for the mission has connected A Kid Again with countless new donors, families, and opportunities. In 2021 Kalitta Motorsports will be partnering with A Kid Again for the 2021 NHRA Camping World Drag Race Series, inviting kids and families to attend the events and other opportunities.

Everyone knew the partnership would bring awareness to the mission of A Kid Again to the NHRA community, as well as their sponsors and supporters. They didn't realize they would inspire one of their own racers to get even more involved... and go all in!

Keegan is a 6th grader and a NHRA JR Circuit racer! He saw what Kalitta was doing to support A Kid Again and felt so inspired by the mission that he wanted to do even more to help local

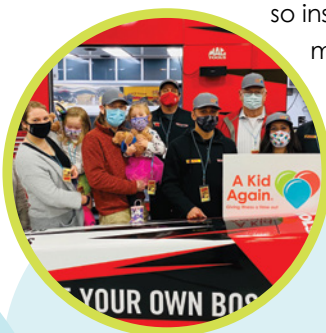
kids and families. He made the decision right then and there to go full speed on supporting A Kid Again! He will be donating his winnings to A Kid Again so

kids with life-threatening conditions can go on Adventures.

But the story gets better! Kalitta MotorSports learned what Keegan was doing and decided they wanted to give him a special surprise to thank him for supporting A Kid Again. On a recent Zoom call, Keegan was shocked to see two surprise guests, dragsters JR Todd and Shawn Langdon! JR Todd was coming off a win at the GATOR National competition a few weeks back, so Keegan was in the presence of racing royalty!

His heroes wished him luck this year and invited him to be their guest at an NHRA National event in Norwalk later this year. Keegan was also invited by Kalitta MotorSports to go to their headquarters in Michigan for a tour of the facilities and race cars. Keegan was ecstatic, to say the least!

As part of Keegan going all in this year, he'll be racing in a car branded with A Kid Again and will even have a specially designed racing suit for A Kid Again! His efforts, along with the support of Kalitta MotorSports will raise awareness of A Kid Again and help local kids get Adventures. ❤️





Two generations of HOPE, HAPPINESS & HEALING

The mission of A Kid Again and local Adventures brings kids and families together for events that remind them what it is to live carefree. Staff, donors, volunteers and supporters work together to deliver meaningful and fun Adventures with the hope that the hours and dollars donated make a difference. Every now and then, a story comes along that reaffirms that these Adventures do matter, and they most certainly make a difference.

Josh and Devin are parents to their four kids Simon, Alexandria, Titus, and Blaise. Simon is 7 years old and began having seizures as an infant. However, his official diagnosis of epilepsy came at two years old when they were living in Tennessee. When they decided to move back to Ohio, it gave Josh more hope for Simon's childhood because he knew that A Kid Again would create memories for their family and they'd always be surrounded by families that truly understood.

How did he know A Kid Again would help? When Josh was 7 years old, he experienced the power of Adventures

because his sister, Samantha, was diagnosed with leukemia at four years old. Josh reflected on his experience then as



Josh and Simon enjoying a zoo Adventure

it relates to his son Simon, "When my sister was sick, A Kid Again provided hope by letting us see what sorts of fun experiences we could still have even when the situation seemed bleak. It gave us happiness to enjoy these experiences as a family, and I'm sure there was a therapeutic component to it as well. During that time, we forgot about the hardships and were "in the moment" having fun as a family again.

Now, as a parent, I can better understand the stress that my parents faced. There is the major fear of losing your child, but also stress that comes with all the medical bills. Many times, I felt guilty because my children would ask to do activities and I had to tell them no. A Kid Again really helped fill that gap, giving our children these great experiences without having to think through how to plan it all out or how we would afford it. We could attend these events and see our children experiencing some of these activities for the first time and build great memories together. It gave us hope



Josh and his sister, A Kid Again kid, Samantha

for our children to still have a fun-filled childhood, and we think it contributed to their health as well – both physically and mentally."

Josh shared that Samantha is in remission now and has autism as a result of her illness. He went on to share, "As a sibling in A Kid Again, I remember feeling like the events were for me. I never felt like they were doing this for my sister and I just happened to be there. I got to play with my siblings, meet new friends, and enjoy events where we all understood how important it was to create positive moments for everyone involved. As a parent in A Kid Again, I see my kids create memories together. So much of our attention has to go to Simon just to try and keep him alive, and that impacts

his siblings. When we go out on adventures as a family, the siblings always leave talking about how much "those people loved us! I think when your kids are always in a traumatic situation, you appreciate so much more the moments that pull them out of that."

A Kid Again has deeply affected my family in a positive way. We stress the importance of experiences, and have implemented some traditions that the kids look forward to. Thank you all for all the hard work and love that you put into these events. It is impacting so many families, and now multiple generations."

A Kid Again is proud to bring Adventure to local families like Josh. It's stories like these that remind us that the work of our



Simon watching the lion at the Cincinnati Zoo Adventure

volunteers, staff, donors, and supporters truly makes a difference. ❤️

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VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

It takes a community of donors, volunteers, and staff to bring the mission of A Kid Again to local kids and families. In this issue of the Adventurist, we're highlighting a dedicated supporter who has made volunteering a family affair.

Debbie Taylor-Lacher and her family have been donating their time to Adventures since 2018. It's important to Debbie that her sons learn the value of helping others, whether it's money or time. She also wants to teach them to be grateful, gracious, and humble.



A Kid Again Staff shared, "Debbie has the biggest heart and treats our families like her own. She shows up with the biggest smile



DEBBIE TAYLOR-LACHER

and ready to make the day perfect for our families! All this while having a career at Swagelok and raising her four sons with her husband. She always makes time for A Kid Again families and rarely misses an Adventure!!"

Debbie says she volunteers because she believes in the value of Adventures and the smiles, hope, and community that they bring. She enjoys being part of the care and attention to detail that AKA provides so families can spend time together creating fun memories. Debbie's passion for A Kid Again has even inspired her coworkers at Swagelok to get involved and they raise approximately \$2,500 annually.

Thank you to Debbie for her dedication to the A Kid Again mission! ❤️



Debbie has the biggest heart and treats our families like her own.
She shows up with the biggest smile.

ADVENTURES ARE COMING TO THE CENTRAL CAROLINAS



In early 2021, A Kid Again launched a new chapter in the Central Carolinas, welcoming new volunteers, donors, families, partners – and Executive Director Ed Paat.

A Kid Again is excited to have Ed on the team, considering his extensive background in non-profit management. After receiving his Master's degree in Public Administration specializing in Non-profit Management from Clemson University, Ed began his non-profit career with the Boy Scouts of America, where he served as the Director of Endowment. Later, he served as Director of Development for The Able Trust, the CAGC Foundation, and Carolinas AGC. Most recently, Ed served as the President and CEO of Catherine's House, a transitional housing program for women and children who are homeless. He currently lives with his wife, Megan, and their four children in Rock Hill, South Carolina.

Ed and the A Kid Again team have already been making moves in the Central Carolinas! They've been working with national partner Cedar Fair, who has generously provided office space for Ed, with the first ever in-person Adventure at Carowinds soon to come! The longtime partnership between A Kid Again and Cedar Fair has supported many Adventures through the donation of thousands of tickets at their parks, and employee involvement as board members across multiple chapters.

Ed and the Central Carolinas Chapter are excited to welcome one of the first families to the joy and smiles that Adventure brings. Three-year-old Shivay was adopted by his parents, Chandous and Courtney, from India when he was 19 months old. They adopted him with a full understanding

of Shivay's medical conditions, the most serious of which is a rare and complex heart condition. Shivay loves everything cows and farms and his mom shared, "While he is small in stature, he is BIG in heart. He is incredible compassionate to others." The Central Carolinas Chapter is thrilled to be bringing Adventure to kids and families just like Shivay's for many years to come.



At A Kid Again, the mission would not be possible without the dedication and support of local volunteers and donors. The Harris family has already stepped in as both! Cavan,



Cathy, MacKenzie, and Cameron have all committed to donating time and dollars to help bring Adventure to local kids and families in the Central Carolinas area.

Cavan, who is the Sr. Vice President at Wells Fargo, recently shared, "We have known and worked with Ed Paat (Central Carolinas Executive Director) in other important missions. The confidence that we have in his leadership, combined with the amazing mission that A Kid Again has, we were excited to be the first donors to this organization. Our girls are thrilled to begin their volunteer time with A Kid Again and look forward to helping make an impact in the lives of these kids and their families."

Get ready Central Carolinas, we're putting smiles on thousands of families living with life-threatening conditions one child at a time; and we're about to bring that very same joy to you as well! A Kid Again is excited to be bringing the power of Adventure to kids, families, volunteers, donors and partners in the Central Carolinas area! ❤️

Recent trips to visit the chapter had staff checking out all the local hot spots!



I think when you deliver a message that is authentically compassionate and meets a clear need within the community, people will be excited to join that mission." — Ed Paat

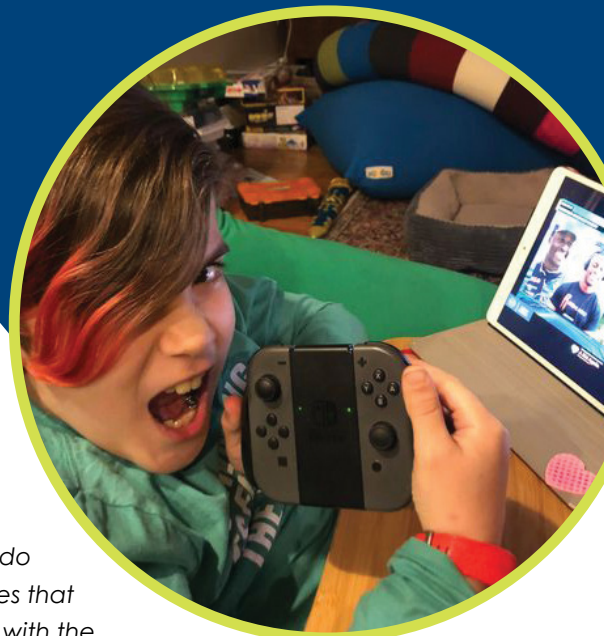
MEET CIARLO

Greater Philadelphia Chapter is celebrating their first year! Check out this note from Kid Again kid, Ciarlo's mom!



"Ciarlo has loved everything so far! The drive thru Jurassic quest was the highlight of Ciarlo's summer! It's still pretty new here in the Philly area so we haven't really been able to be 'in person' yet except for driving through the lights at Diggerland (which was awesome!) We so look forward to getting to do in person adventures, being with other families that

understand our struggles is sooo helpful! Ciarlo has loved playing bingo over zoom with the other kids and the Adventures in a box have been so fun! Getting to do fun things as a family that we could otherwise not afford or accomplish because of life circumstances has been so wonderful for Ciarlo! We've spent many days at the hospital this past year and any time we can do something to distract from that helps Ciarlo feel a bit like a kid again, not just a patient! It's also been wonderful to begin to connect a little bit with other local family's that have similar struggles. I can't wait to be able to be in person so more and deeper connections can be made!" ♥



The Joy of Adventures in a Box

In 2020, A Kid Again launched the Adventures in a Box program to continue delivering joy, hope, happiness and healing through the power of Adventures, from a safe distance. In one year-round example, A Kid Again staff and volunteers worked with local church groups and other supporters to send letters of encouragement and support to A Kid Again families.

For Valentine's Day, our Northern Ohio Chapter wanted to bring an Adventure that would show them some love, so they put together a very special Valentine's Day Adventure in a Box! 195 of our Northern Ohio Families received a special package that included all the items needed to create the perfect family movie night. Each box was filled with a RedBox movie code, a Domino's gift card, bags of popcorn, a variety of candy, special games and more! A group of dedicated volunteers helped package all 195 boxes and even signed special Valentine's cards for each of the families.

If you're interested in participating in writing letters or supporting Adventures in a Box with time or a donation, reach out to letterwriting@akidagain.com. ♥



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