

NADS

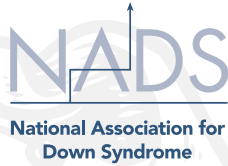
National Association for  
Down Syndrome

PRESENTS

*Togetherness*  
Is Always In *Style*

2020  
NADS  
[ VIRTUAL ]  
FASHION SHOW

November 1, 2020



## Thank you for [virtually] attending the 15th Annual NADS Fashion Show.

Thank you for supporting the National Association for Down Syndrome's 15th Annual Fashion Show: "Togetherness Is Always In Style." **As you share pictures throughout the day, please tag NADS on social media and use #FashionShow2020.**

We appreciate you joining us virtually today, as we showcase the beauty and talent of individuals with Down syndrome. Although it is not possible for our models to walk the runway this year, you will be able to see and hear their inspiring stories. Organizing this event is never an easy task, but with the amount of creativity that went into this, we hope that you will enjoy, appreciate, and embrace the love and level of commitment in every piece of this show. A big thank you to Lindsay Robertson for being our committee chair for this spectacular event, the NADS staff for their continued hard work, and to the NADS Board of Directors for all their time, effort, and contributions.

Most of all, as NADS approaches its 60th Year as an organization, we would like to thank all of our members, models, families, friends, and companies that have come together to support the Down syndrome community and make this day a success. Without you, none of this would be possible. NADS very much appreciates your kindness and generosity.

Stay Safe & Warmest Regards,

Linda Smarto  
NADS Executive Director

# Welcome!

## **12 Noon**

Welcome from Lindsay Robertson,  
Fashion Show Co-Chair, Board of Directors

Thank you from Don Hubert, Board President

Programming presentation by Linda Smarto, Executive Director

Bridget Brown - piano entertainment

Center Stage entertainment

Self Advocates presentation

Melissa Bond,  
Advocate and Motivational Speaker

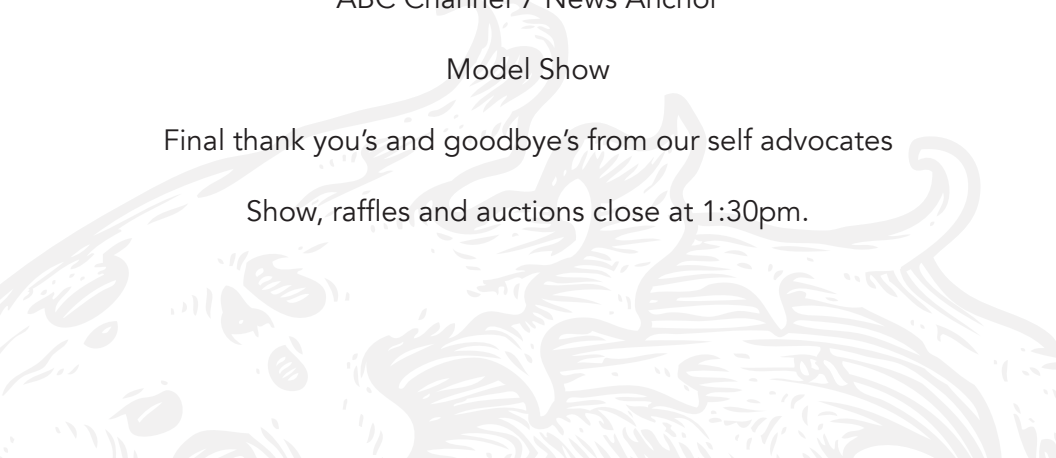
Brian Donovan,  
Actor, Voice Actor and Director of Kelly's Hollywood

Stacey Baca,  
ABC Channel 7 News Anchor

Model Show

Final thank you's and goodbye's from our self advocates

Show, raffles and auctions close at 1:30pm.



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## **Maria Alzamora (Age 12)**

Maria is an energetic 12 year old girl who enjoys spending time with her family and friends. She loves horseback riding, cheerleading, cooking and traveling. She loves listening to music and going to concerts. Her favorite singers are Taylor Swift and Martina McBride. Go Cubs!

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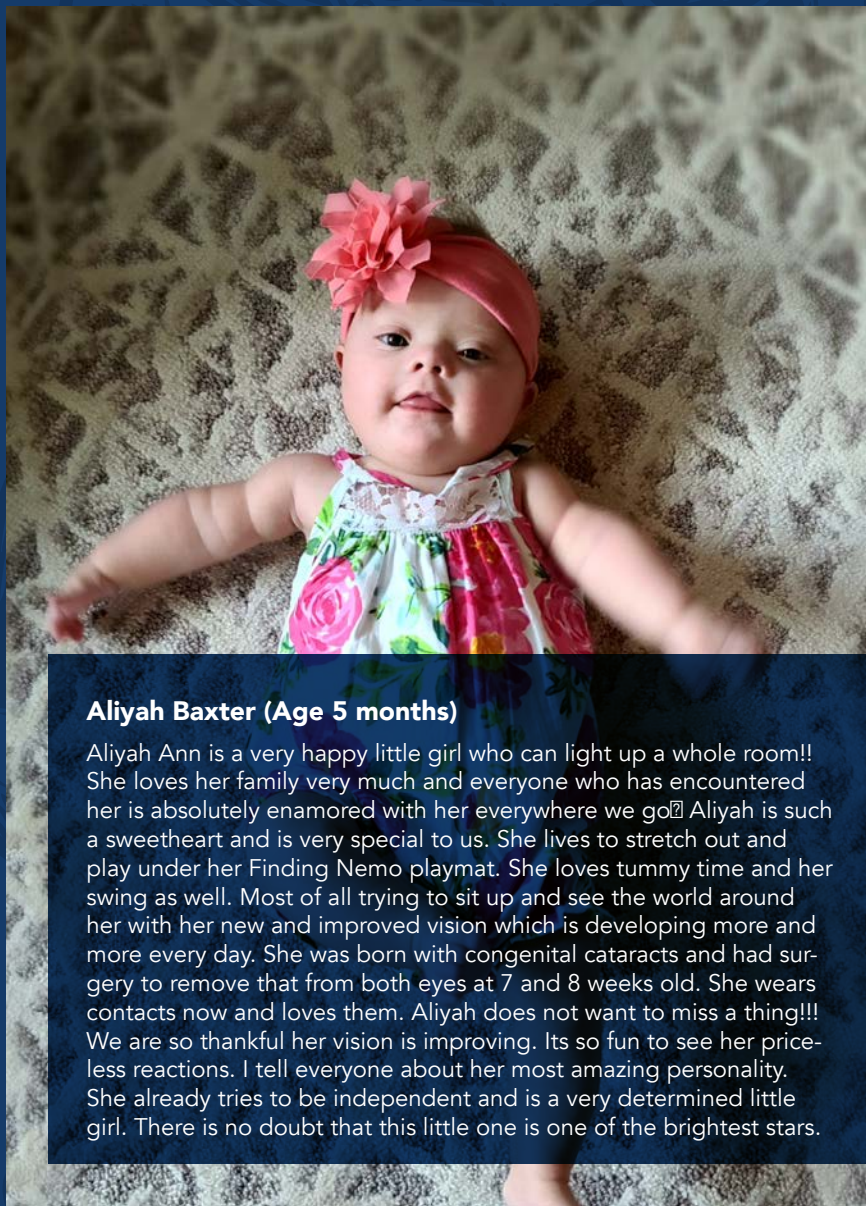


## **Ezbella Andrews (Age 3)**

Ezbella is a very smart and independent 3 year old. Her favorite color is pink and her favorite food is bananas. Her favorite things to do include reading books, taking care of her baby dolls, and practicing gymnastics with her big sister.

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## **Aliyah Baxter (Age 5 months)**

Aliyah Ann is a very happy little girl who can light up a whole room!! She loves her family very much and everyone who has encountered her is absolutely enamored with her everywhere we go! Aliyah is such a sweetheart and is very special to us. She lives to stretch out and play under her Finding Nemo playmat. She loves tummy time and her swing as well. Most of all trying to sit up and see the world around her with her new and improved vision which is developing more and more every day. She was born with congenital cataracts and had surgery to remove that from both eyes at 7 and 8 weeks old. She wears contacts now and loves them. Aliyah does not want to miss a thing!!! We are so thankful her vision is improving. Its so fun to see her priceless reactions. I tell everyone about her most amazing personality. She already tries to be independent and is a very determined little girl. There is no doubt that this little one is one of the brightest stars.

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## **Ryan Carden (Age 11)**

Ryan is 11 years old and in 5th grade at Onahan School in Chicago. He is the youngest of six children and is the undeclared family favorite. From the time he was born, Ryan has displayed an incredible ability to make those around him happy. He loves being the leader of Team Carden at the Chicago Polar Plunge and participating in Special Olympic events. He loves his friends and enjoys spending time with family. Ryan loves Power Rangers, Ninjago, Disney movies and his dog, Scout.

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## **Liam Doyle (Age 17)**

17 year old Liam Doyle has 4 older siblings and 7 nieces & nephews. He is passionately pursuing his dream as an Elvis Tribute Artist and loves to perform for a variety of parties, assisted living homes, fundraisers and talent shows.

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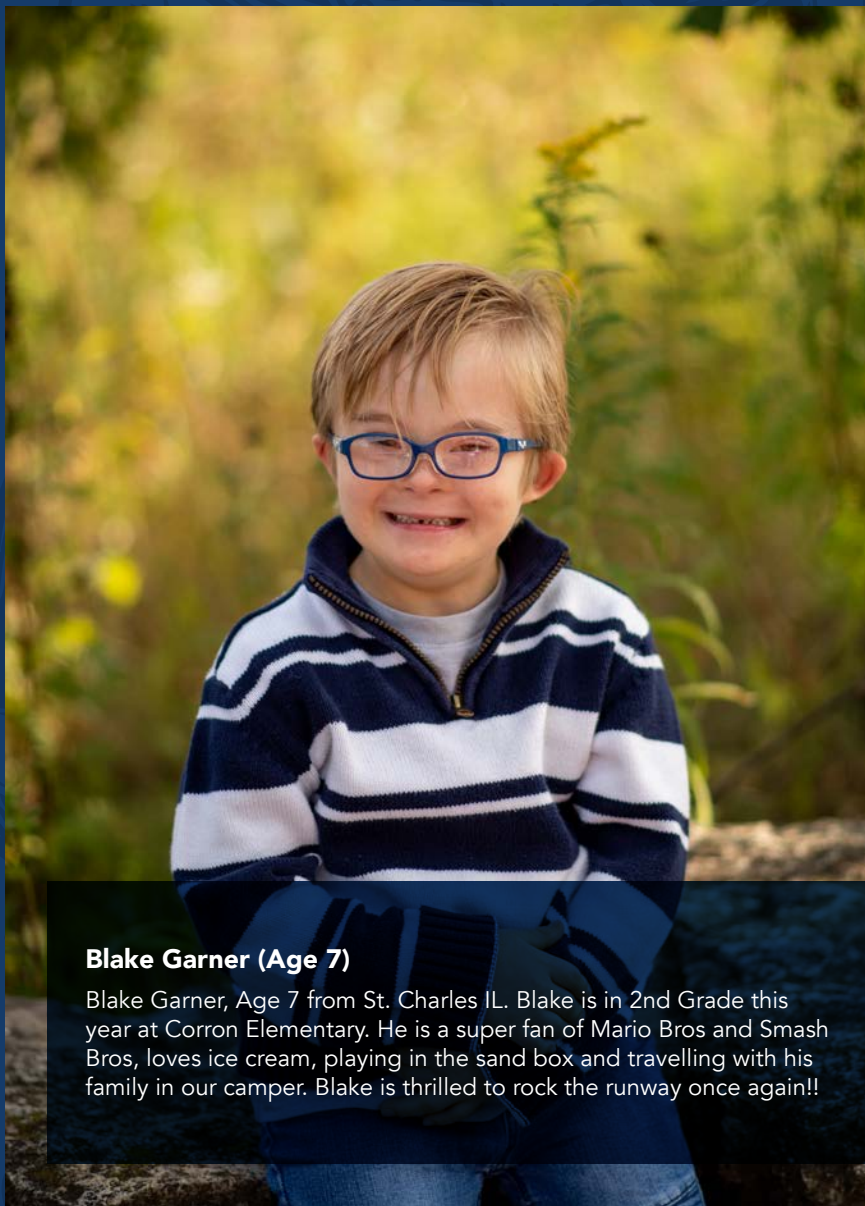


## **Miles Evans (Age 24)**

Miles is active young adult who loves his life! He attends the Transition Program at Glenbard District 87 and classes at College of DuPage. In his job at Blackberry Market Cafe, Miles busses tables and takes care of customers. Miles is an avid community volunteer as a Lions Club member, usher at McAninch Arts Center, Congressional campaign intern, and NADS Self-Advocate in Action. In his free time, Miles listens to classic rock and blues, takes photos, engages with friends, and keeps fit.

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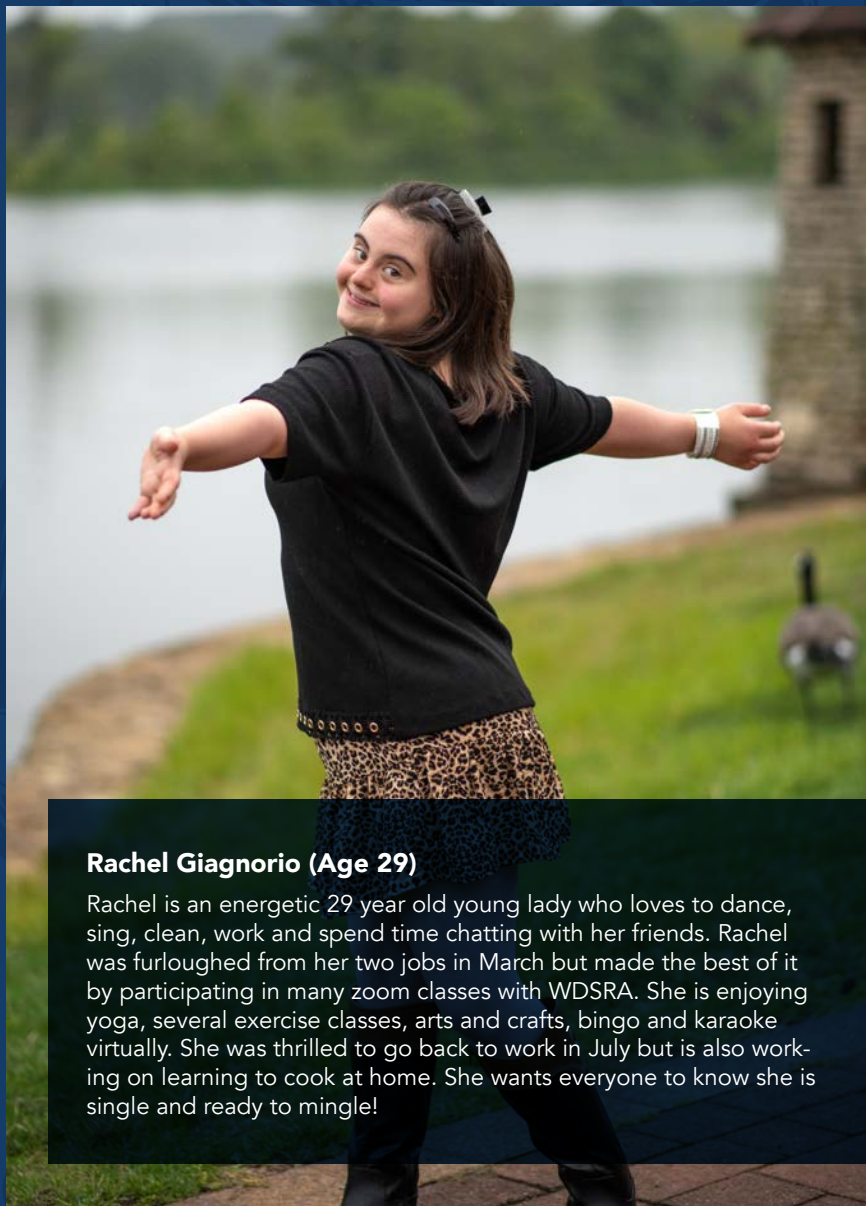


## **Blake Garner (Age 7)**

Blake Garner, Age 7 from St. Charles IL. Blake is in 2nd Grade this year at Corron Elementary. He is a super fan of Mario Bros and Smash Bros, loves ice cream, playing in the sand box and travelling with his family in our camper. Blake is thrilled to rock the runway once again!!

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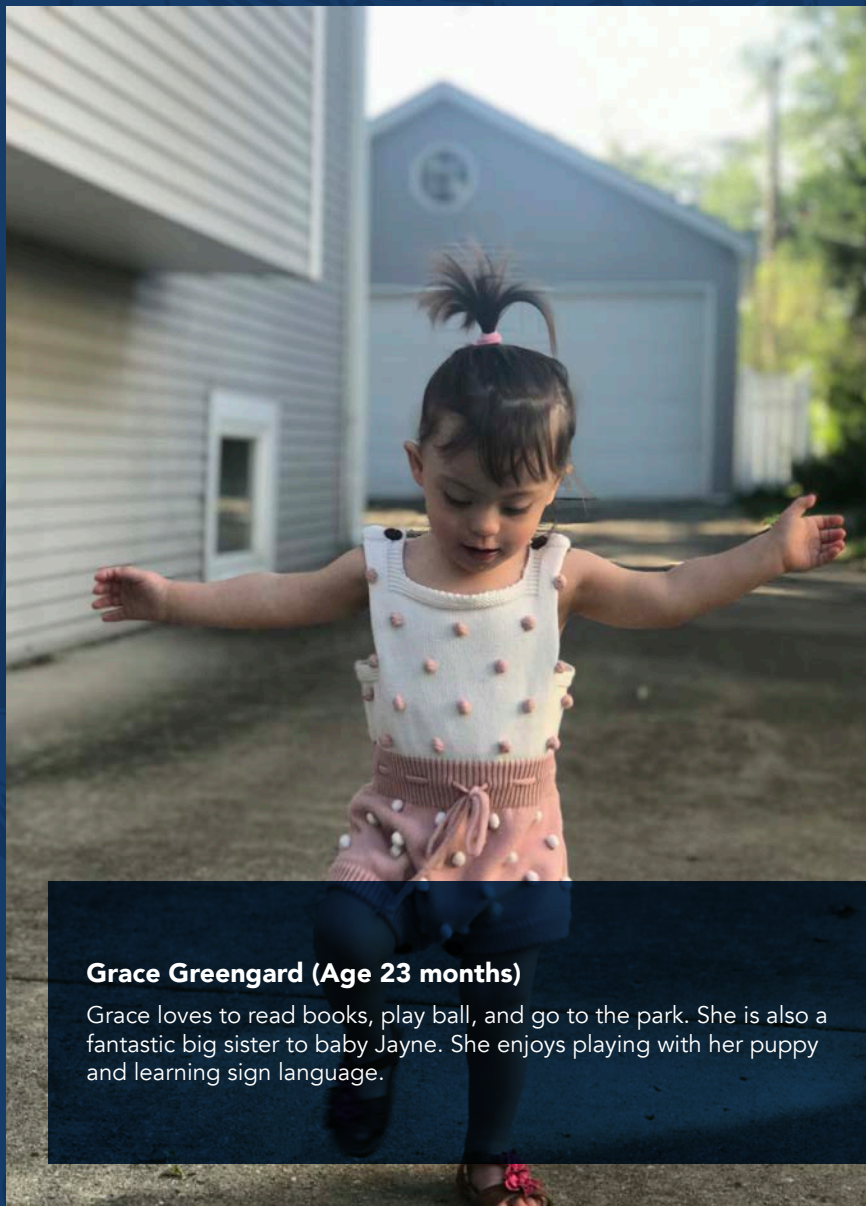


## **Rachel Giagnorio (Age 29)**

Rachel is an energetic 29 year old young lady who loves to dance, sing, clean, work and spend time chatting with her friends. Rachel was furloughed from her two jobs in March but made the best of it by participating in many zoom classes with WDSRA. She is enjoying yoga, several exercise classes, arts and crafts, bingo and karaoke virtually. She was thrilled to go back to work in July but is also working on learning to cook at home. She wants everyone to know she is single and ready to mingle!

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## **Grace Greengard (Age 23 months)**

Grace loves to read books, play ball, and go to the park. She is also a fantastic big sister to baby Jayne. She enjoys playing with her puppy and learning sign language.

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## **Nabiha Hamidani (Age 16)**

My name means smart & love in Arabic. I'm 16 and a Junior at West Chicago High. I have made the honor roll every semester. Last semester I was on the High Honor Roll with a GPA of 5.0! I'm on two cheerleading teams and also compete. I won gold & bronze medals for rhythmic gymnastics in Special Olympics. I've been dancing live solos on stage since I was 7. I dance ballet & contemporary. I want to learn Bollywood style. I'm in dance camp at my school. I want to be a veterinarian and a dancer!

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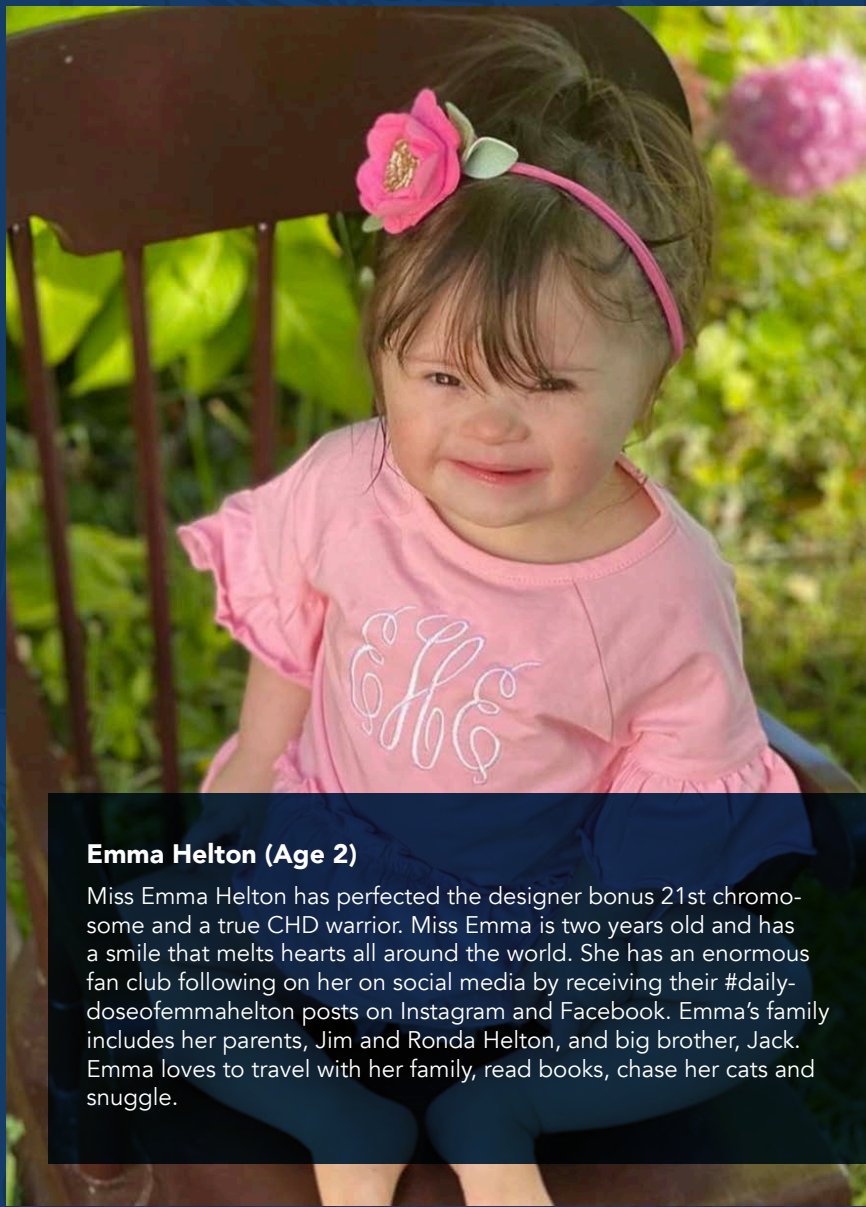


## **Hudson Hammond (Age 3)**

Hudson is 3 years old with the sweetest smile and the best dance moves you've ever seen. He loves rainbows, ice cream, and trains. Hudson lives in Libertyville with his parents, 3 siblings, and 2 dogs.

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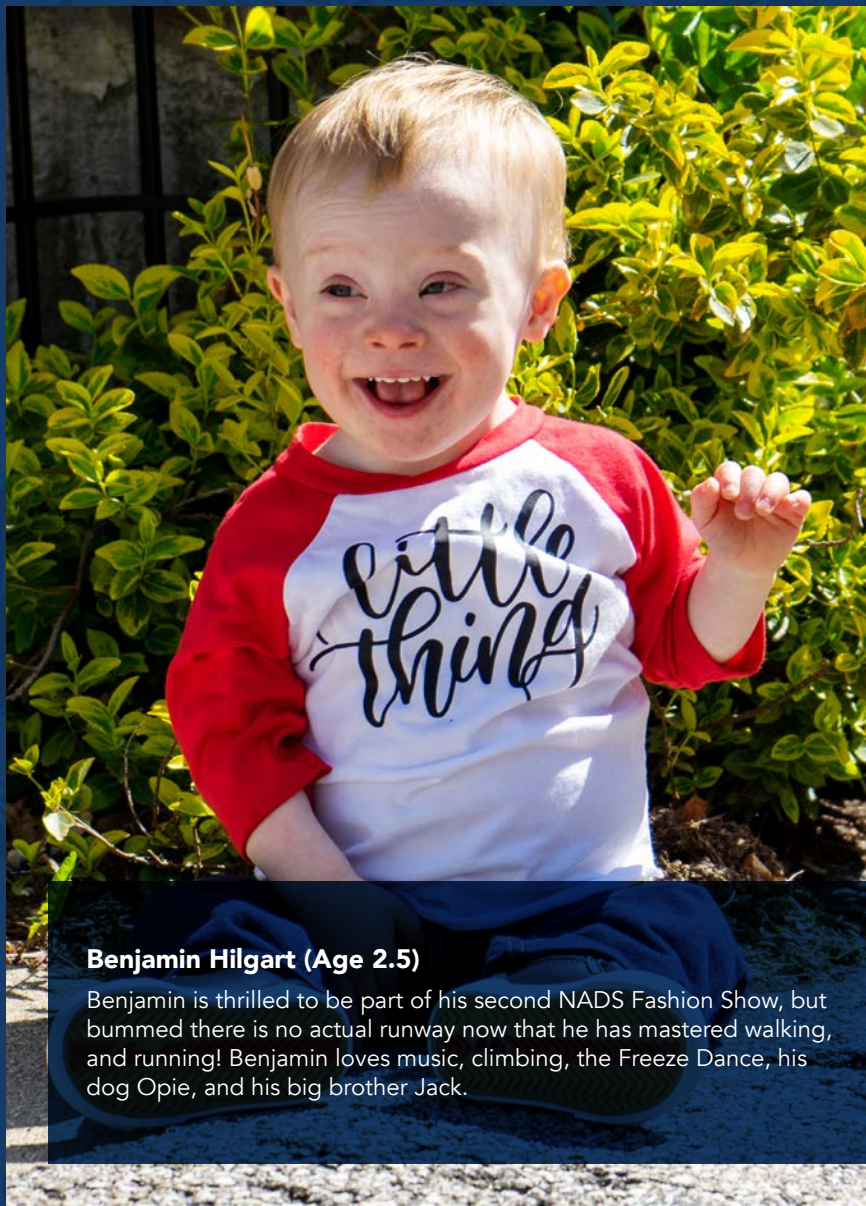


## **Emma Helton (Age 2)**

Miss Emma Helton has perfected the designer bonus 21st chromosome and a true CHD warrior. Miss Emma is two years old and has a smile that melts hearts all around the world. She has an enormous fan club following on her on social media by receiving their #daily-doseofemmahelton posts on Instagram and Facebook. Emma's family includes her parents, Jim and Ronda Helton, and big brother, Jack. Emma loves to travel with her family, read books, chase her cats and snuggle.

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## **Benjamin Hilgart (Age 2.5)**

Benjamin is thrilled to be part of his second NADS Fashion Show, but bummed there is no actual runway now that he has mastered walking, and running! Benjamin loves music, climbing, the Freeze Dance, his dog Opie, and his big brother Jack.

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## **Grace Horton (Age 3)**

Grace, also known as Amazing Grace, is a three year old little girl. She loves singing, dancing and learning new things. Grace is a little firecracker. Her family and friends are very proud of her and can't wait to see all the amazing things she does in the future! Go get em, Grace!

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## **Natalie Hubert (Age) 7**

Natalie is 7yrs old and just started 2nd grade at Woodland Elementary in Gurnee. She has been participating in NADS Fashion Show since she has been 8 months old and is something her and her sisters (Samantha and Lily) look forward to each year. Natalie's highlight over the past year was our family trip to Disney World in Florida. Not only was it her first plane ride, but she got to meet her favorite princesses as well as discovered her love for riding roller coasters.

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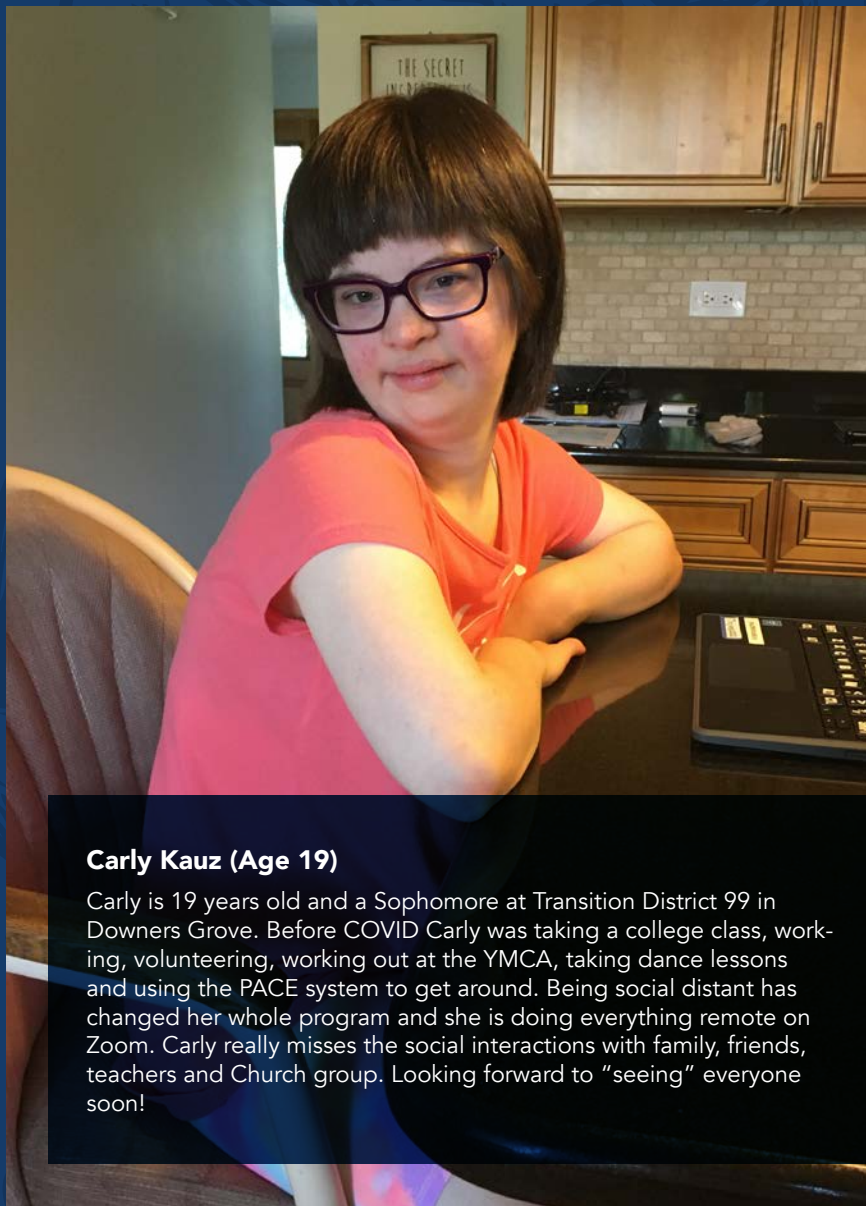


## **Layla Iverson (Age 2)**

Hello My name is Laylah and I am 2 years old. Something special about me is that I was not born alone. I have a twin brother named Logan. I am an amazing little girl and am very strong. I have 5 siblings and I am the baby sister. I love to laugh, play, and go for nice long rides.

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## **Carly Kauz (Age 19)**

Carly is 19 years old and a Sophomore at Transition District 99 in Downers Grove. Before COVID Carly was taking a college class, working, volunteering, working out at the YMCA, taking dance lessons and using the PACE system to get around. Being social distant has changed her whole program and she is doing everything remote on Zoom. Carly really misses the social interactions with family, friends, teachers and Church group. Looking forward to "seeing" everyone soon!

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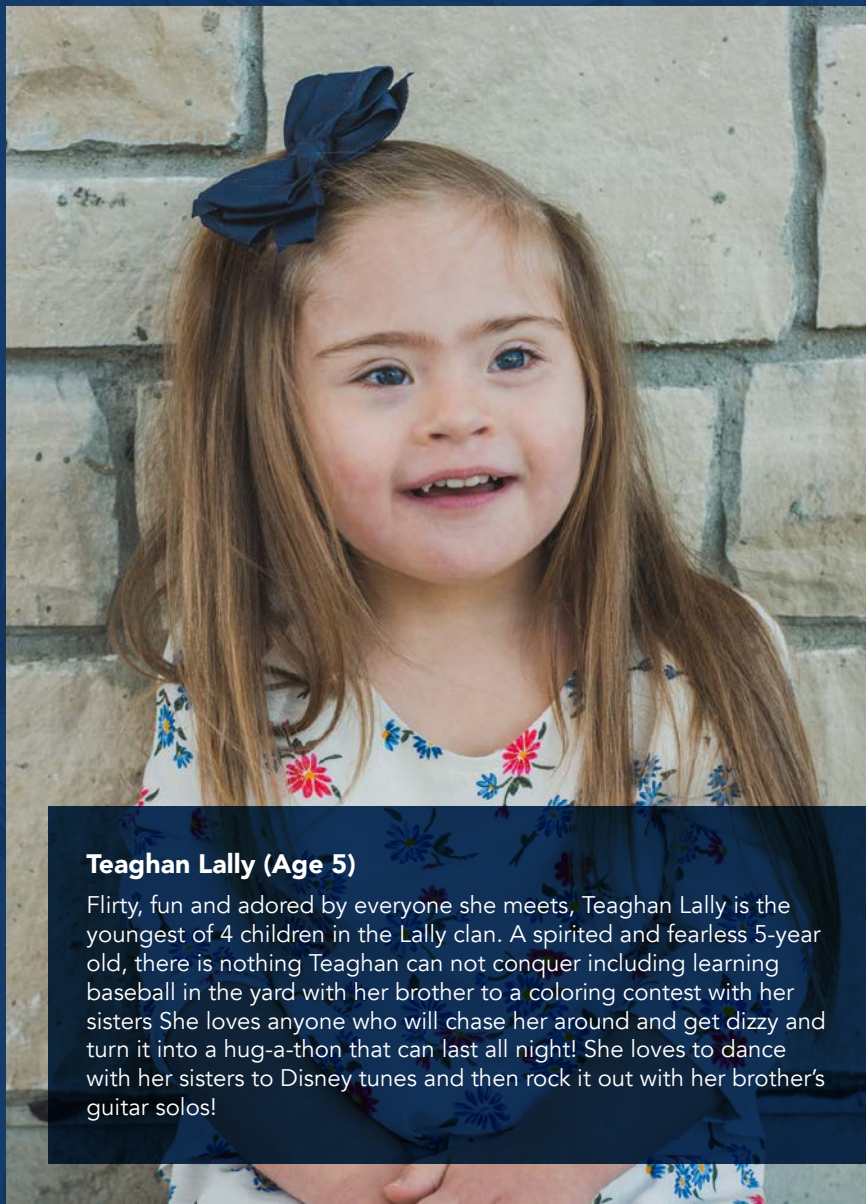


## **Anthony Kreml (Age 7 months)**

My name is Anthony! I love my family, especially my crazy mom and dad! I am known for my stellar mohawk and my silly faces. I am a very active baby. I bring so much joy to everyone I am around.

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## **Teaghan Lally (Age 5)**

Flirty, fun and adored by everyone she meets, Teaghan Lally is the youngest of 4 children in the Lally clan. A spirited and fearless 5-year old, there is nothing Teaghan can not conquer including learning baseball in the yard with her brother to a coloring contest with her sisters. She loves anyone who will chase her around and get dizzy and turn it into a hug-a-thon that can last all night! She loves to dance with her sisters to Disney tunes and then rock it out with her brother's guitar solos!

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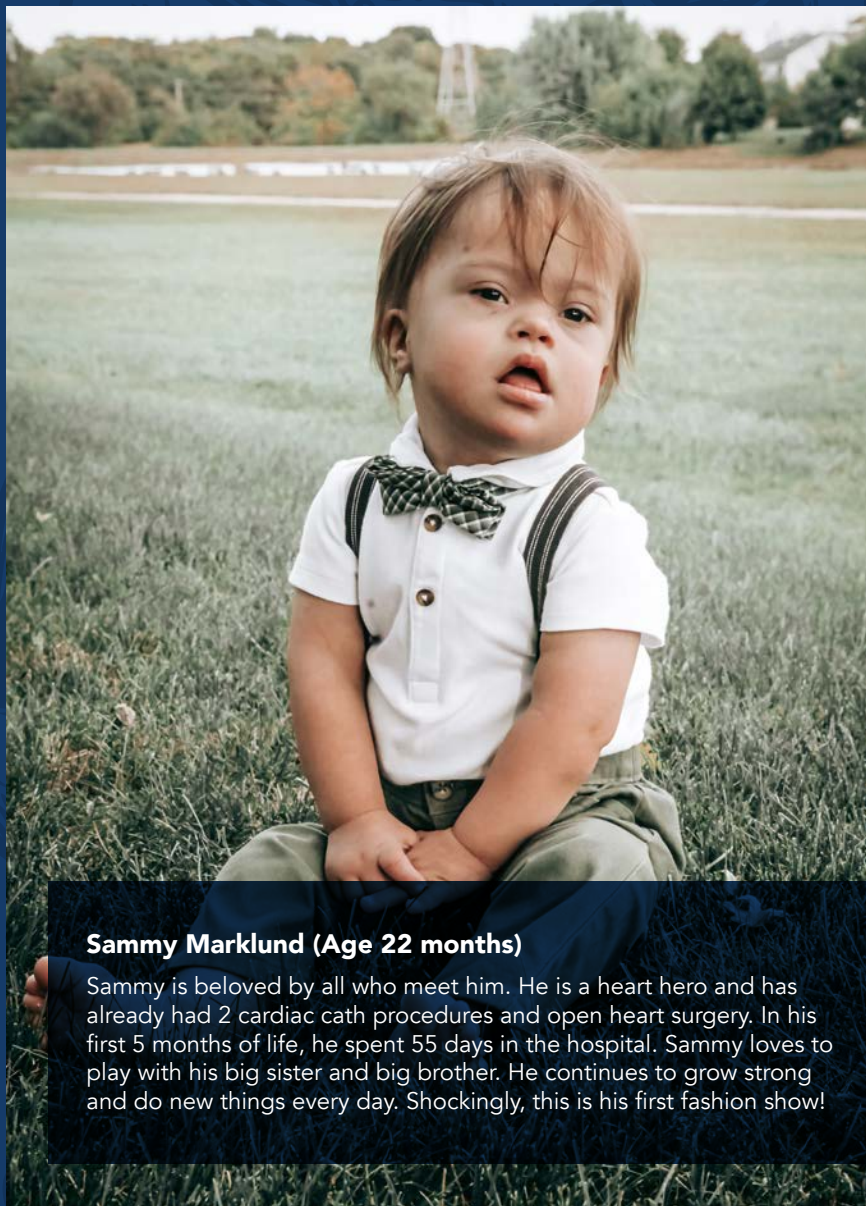


## **Casey Manzella (Age 23)**

Casey Manzella is 23 years old and attends the College of DuPage COACH program for students with special needs. Casey works two restaurant jobs in Glen Ellyn - Fire & Wine and Two Hound Red. In his spare time, Casey loves listening to music, watching movies, playing basketball and working out with his personal trainer.

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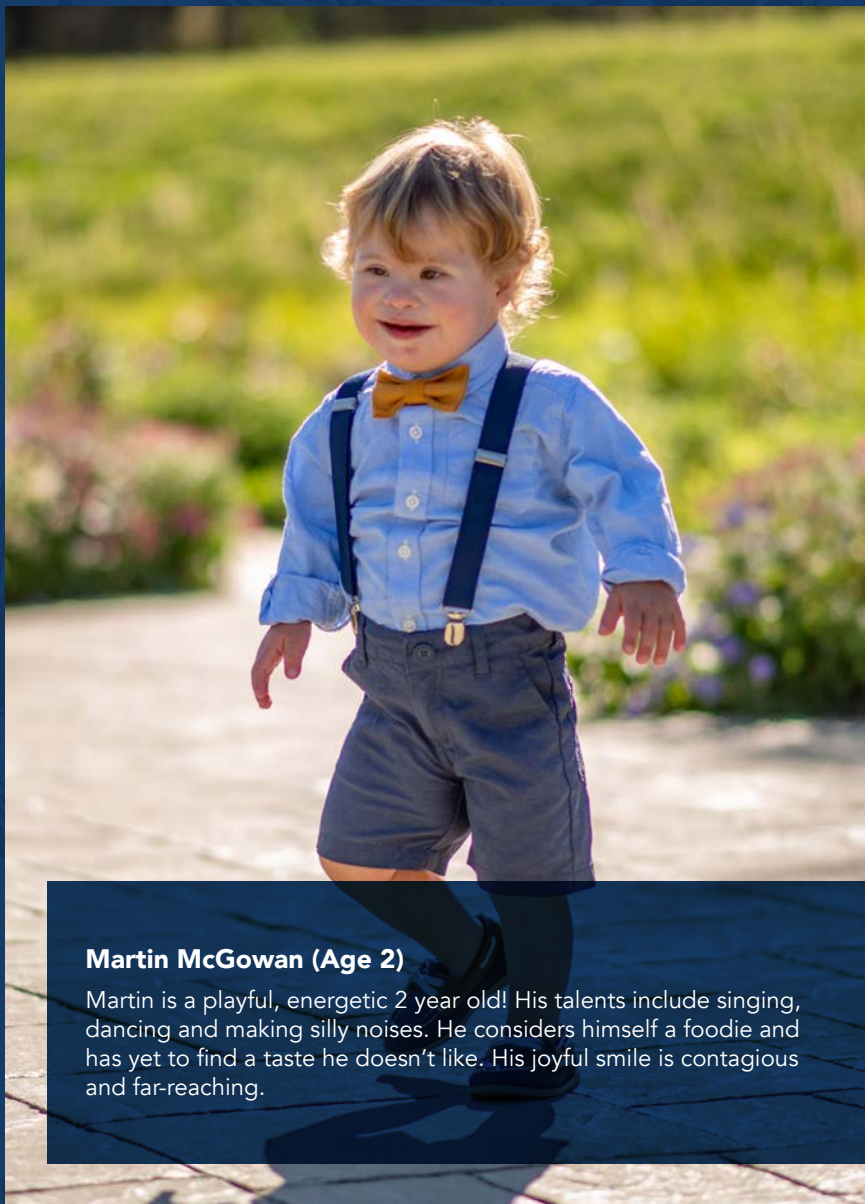
## **Sammy Marklund (Age 22 months)**

Sammy is beloved by all who meet him. He is a heart hero and has already had 2 cardiac cath procedures and open heart surgery. In his first 5 months of life, he spent 55 days in the hospital. Sammy loves to play with his big sister and big brother. He continues to grow strong and do new things every day. Shockingly, this is his first fashion show!

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## **Martin McGowan (Age 2)**

Martin is a playful, energetic 2 year old! His talents include singing, dancing and making silly noises. He considers himself a foodie and has yet to find a taste he doesn't like. His joyful smile is contagious and far-reaching.

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## **Maria Meyer (Age 21)**

Maria is a young lady who enjoys life and all of the people that surround her. Her spirit is contagious and will always make you smile! Maria is an amazing athlete, We were so proud of her as she competed in swimming in the National Special Olympics in Seattle, Washington. Maria also had the opportunity to be the 2019 Special Olympic Ducky Derby Ambassador where she truly shined. Maria's time with her family and friends is the high point of her life!

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## **Gabrielle Miller (Age 14)**

Gabby is officially a teenager!!! She loves to sing, dance, and loves to cook and bake! She is big sister to Josie and Antonio. Gabby will be graduating from 8th grade this year and is looking forward to starting High School. She just started singing lessons this summer and loves to give concerts for her family.

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## **Autumn Rae Molloy (Age 1)**

Autumn Rae Molloy is One Year Old! Autumn loves her Big Sister (Josie), Dogs, and Family so much! She enjoys clapping and singing songs, reading, playing with toys, and eating food! Autumn is the light of our lives and brings so much joy to everyone she meets!

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## **Tony Natale (Age 17)**

Tony is 17 years old attending Kirk School he is in his senior year of high school even with the shut down he is still involved in sports golf powerlifting and dance he's also still taking drum lessons and playing bocce ball he also has a part-time job dismantling keyboards and sorting out the parts for recycling he loves the Black Hawks Chicago Cubs cubs Bears. and the Bulls and music he loves hanging out with his family and having fun He has a big heart loves to make people smile

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## **Kelly Neville (Age 29)**

Kelly is 29 and has had a business called Special Sparkle for the past 9 years. She makes beautiful jewelry and has a passion for fashion! She enjoys everything "girly" and misses getting dressed up and going to dances and seeing her friends and boyfriend. She is most excited about standing up in her sister's wedding next year.

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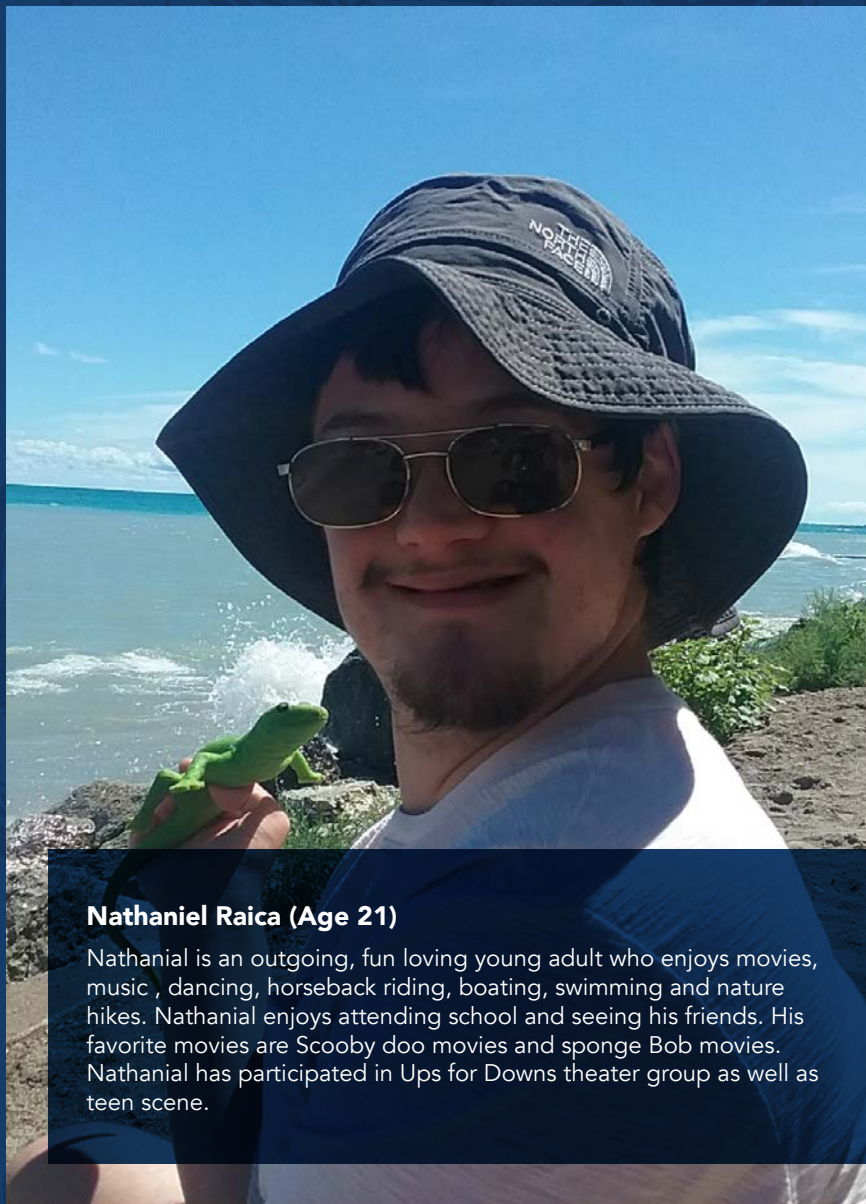


## **Patricia Claire O'Leary (Age 21)**

Claire O'Leary just turned 21 and is thrilled! Claire is so tired of the Virus, but happy to be a model today. She has been keeping very busy with virtual activities at the Chicago Park District, and her drama group ABLE Ensemble. Each day is filled with virtual classes at Jackie Vaughn Occupational High School. Claire is excited to cross off each day on the calendar, as each is one day closer to her Graduation!!

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## **Nathaniel Raica (Age 21)**

Nathaniel is an outgoing, fun loving young adult who enjoys movies, music , dancing, horseback riding, boating, swimming and nature hikes. Nathaniel enjoys attending school and seeing his friends. His favorite movies are Scooby doo movies and sponge Bob movies. Nathaniel has participated in Ups for Downs theater group as well as teen scene.

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## **Camden Roberson (Age 7)**

Camden is 7 years old and loves to read. He loves riding his new bike and going to school. He loves his family and meeting new people. Camden is the oldest. He has one brother who is 4 and a sister who just turned one. Camden has been in remission from leukemia for 5 years on September 8th. He is an amazing kid and inspires us every-day. We are so lucky to be his parents.

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## **Charlie Robertson (Age 5)**

Charlie is a fun-loving five-year-old little girl living in Aurora, IL who loves dancing, playing with her sisters and running from her parents whenever she's outside. She has her own apparel line through Jake Max and attends educational seminars about Down syndrome with her parents and her older sister. Her favorite things to do are swimming, hugging trees and binge watching Sophia the First. Charlie is working on becoming a self-advocate and is associated with numerous Down syndrome organizations.

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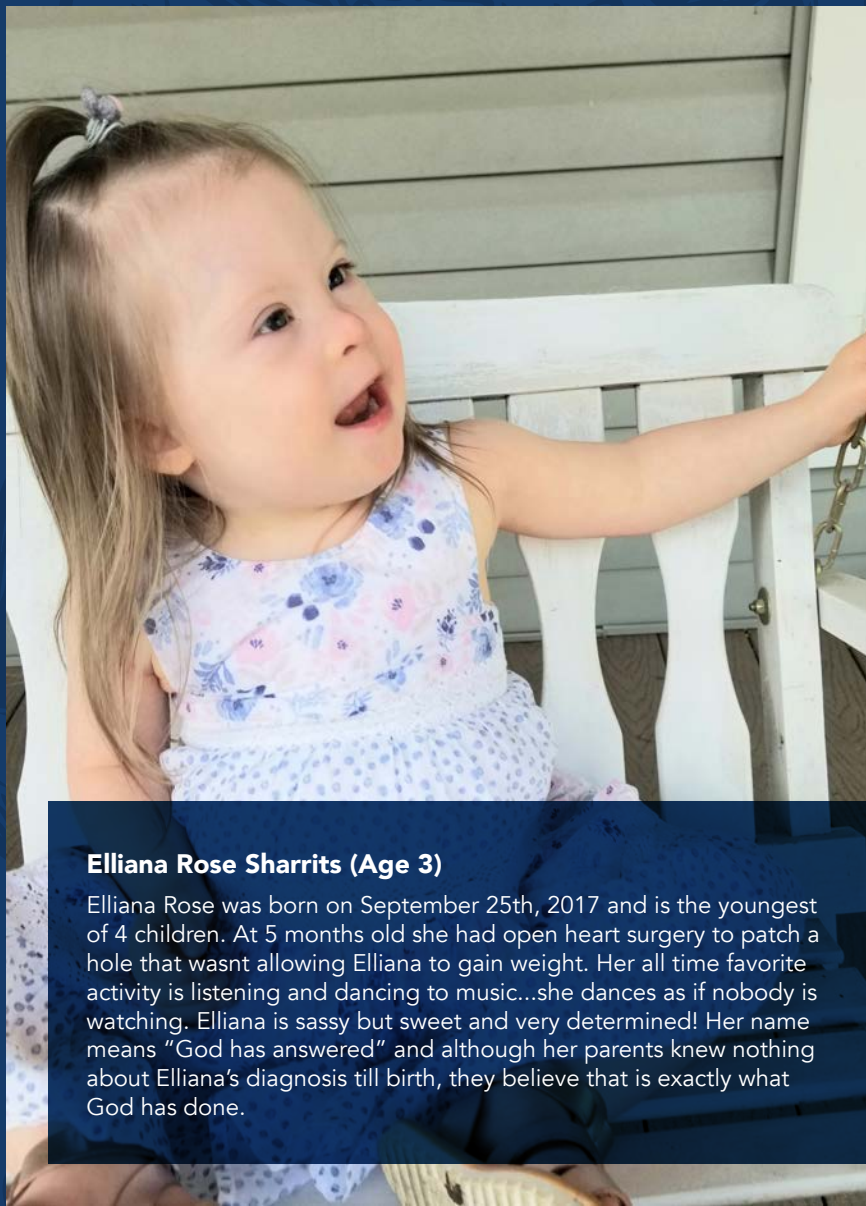


## **Isaiah Seibert (Age 8 months)**

Isaiah is a very happy baby. He loves to smile, laugh, talk (babble) and blow raspberries. He is very active and is doing all he can to crawl. He enjoys music, reading books and being entertained by his big brother.

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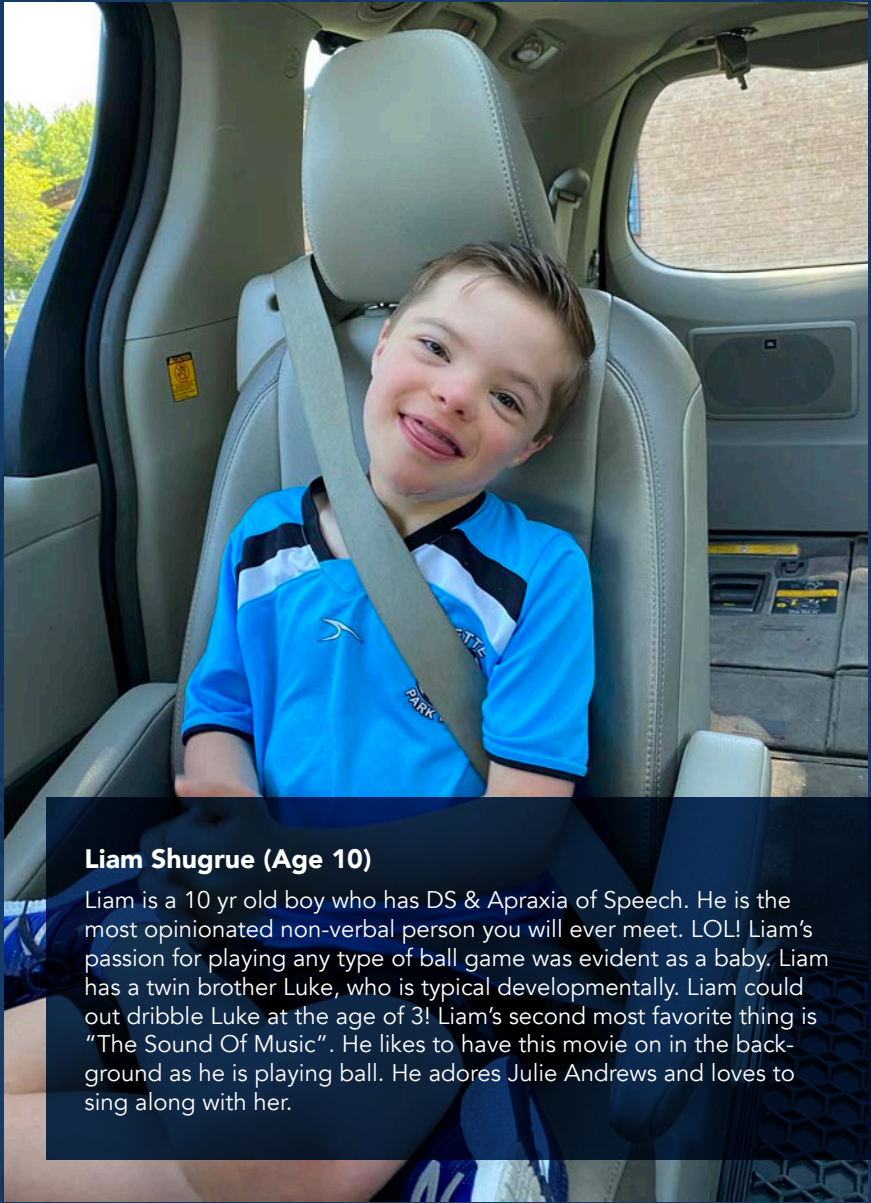


## **Elliana Rose Sharrits (Age 3)**

Elliana Rose was born on September 25th, 2017 and is the youngest of 4 children. At 5 months old she had open heart surgery to patch a hole that wasn't allowing Elliana to gain weight. Her all time favorite activity is listening and dancing to music...she dances as if nobody is watching. Elliana is sassy but sweet and very determined! Her name means "God has answered" and although her parents knew nothing about Elliana's diagnosis till birth, they believe that is exactly what God has done.

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## **Liam Shugrue (Age 10)**

Liam is a 10 yr old boy who has DS & Apraxia of Speech. He is the most opinionated non-verbal person you will ever meet. LOL! Liam's passion for playing any type of ball game was evident as a baby. Liam has a twin brother Luke, who is typical developmentally. Liam could out dribble Luke at the age of 3! Liam's second most favorite thing is "The Sound Of Music". He likes to have this movie on in the background as he is playing ball. He adores Julie Andrews and loves to sing along with her.

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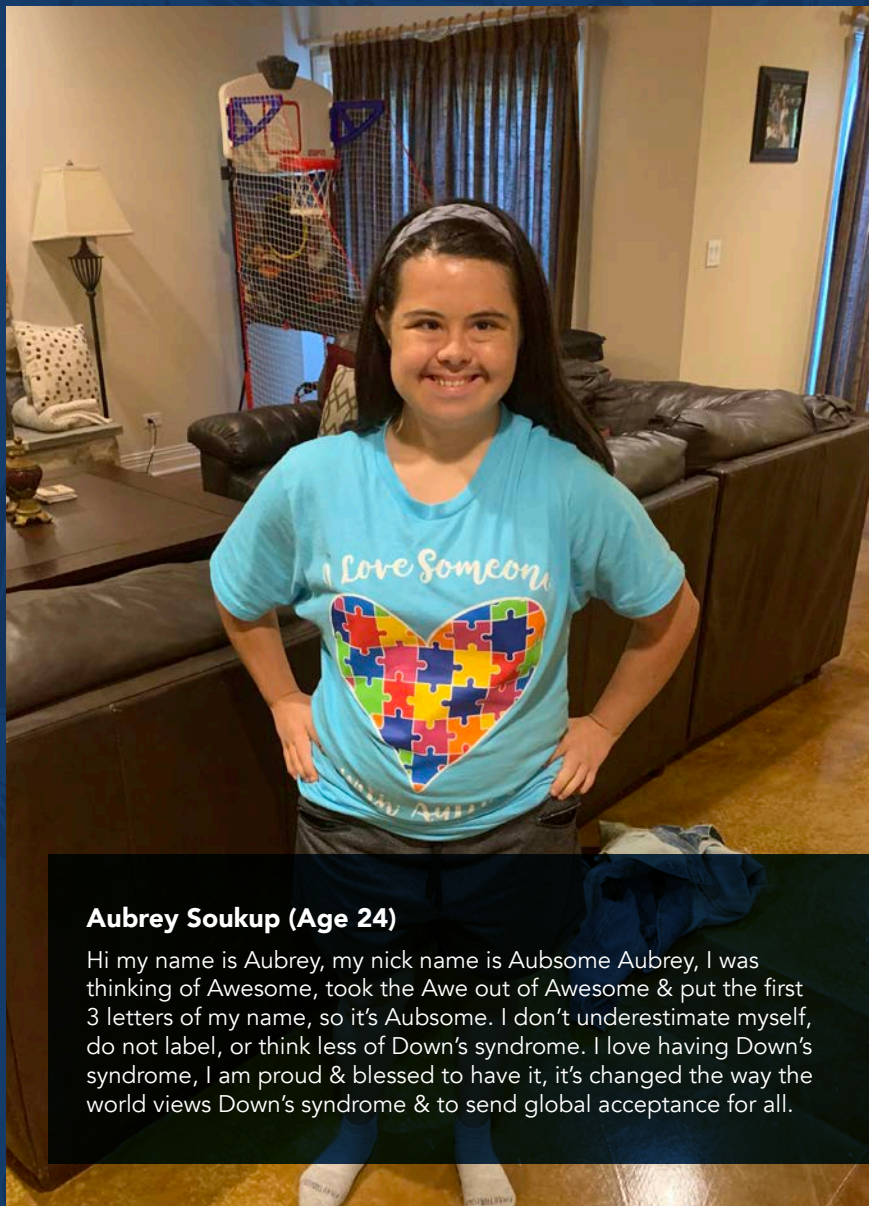


## **Julia Smarto (Age 26)**

Julia Smarto is the oldest of three sisters and lives with her family in Bartlett, Illinois. Julia keeps herself busy as a NADS Self Advocate Volunteer and enjoys public speaking all over the Chicagoland area with her mom Linda. In some instances, she also travels out of state to present. Julia has inspired many and has captivated her audiences by sharing her personal story to thousands of people over the years. In addition, Julia loves working with children and has been employed by a local preschool as an Assistant Pre-School teacher for 8 years. Julia has many interests and thrives on activities that have given her the "thrill seeker" title in our family. Julia cherishes all of her relationships including the loves of her life: her family, friends, and boyfriend! Many Thanks to all of her supporters!

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## **Aubrey Soukup (Age 24)**

Hi my name is Aubrey, my nick name is Aubsome Aubrey, I was thinking of Awesome, took the Awe out of Awesome & put the first 3 letters of my name, so it's Aubsome. I don't underestimate myself, do not label, or think less of Down's syndrome. I love having Down's syndrome, I am proud & blessed to have it, it's changed the way the world views Down's syndrome & to send global acceptance for all.

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## **Jacob Spenadel (Age 21)**

Jacob Alan Spenadel is a handsome, smart, funny 21 year-old who recently returned to taking piano lessons and loves listening to a variety of music including songs by Elvis, The Beatles, The Beach Boys and The Jonas Brothers. He likes to perform on stage, and some of his performances include Madagascar and The Wizard of Oz. He is an accomplished artist whose work has been printed on Creative Souls merchandise. He loves watching golf and Chicago pro sports, HGTV and game shows.

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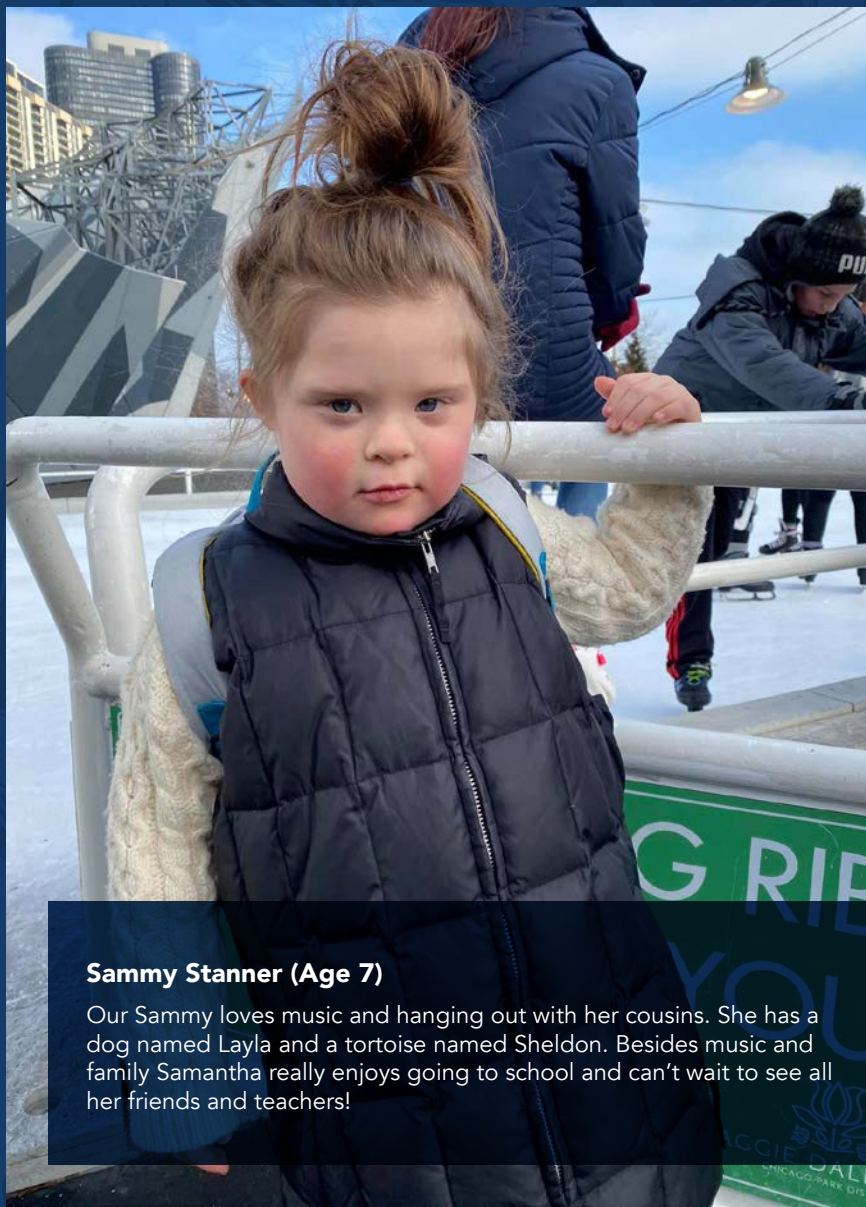


## **Shawn Spera (Age 23)**

Shawn Spera is making his debut in the NADS Fashion Show. His infectious smile and charismatic personality spread sunshine wherever he goes. The 23-year-old Oak Brook resident, formerly of Brookfield and Tinley Park, works at Portillo's in Downers Grove. A 2016 graduate of Riverside-Brookfield High School and a 2019 graduate of Project Search at AMITA La Grange Hospital, he is an avid sports fan and player. Shawn loves music, basketball and dancing and has more than 1,000 hits on YouTube performing "Greased Lightnin'". Check out his dance moves! Since moving to Oak Brook last year with his parents, he participates in Gateway Special Rec and works out at the Oak Brook Park District. Shawn's parents say Shawn and they would not be where they are today if it weren't for NADS.

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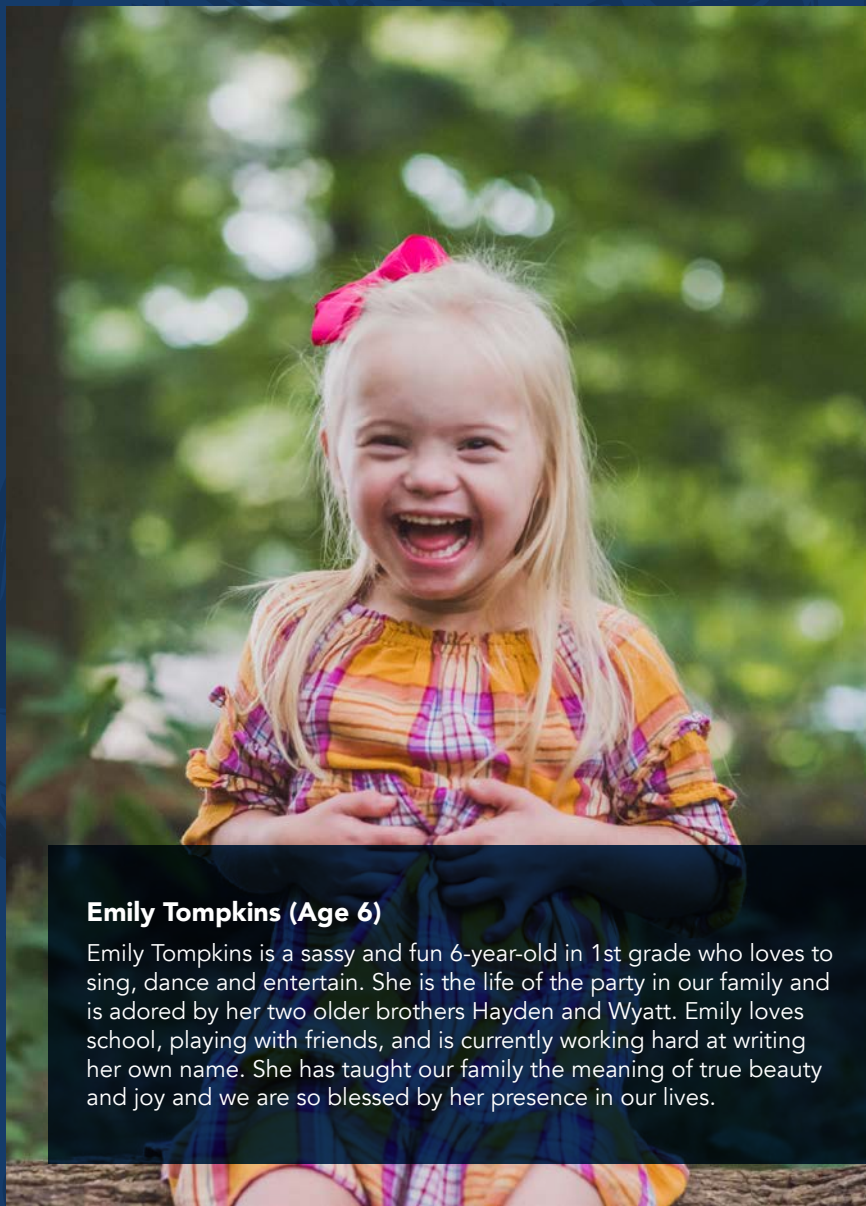


## **Sammy Stanner (Age 7)**

Our Sammy loves music and hanging out with her cousins. She has a dog named Layla and a tortoise named Sheldon. Besides music and family Samantha really enjoys going to school and can't wait to see all her friends and teachers!

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## **Emily Tompkins (Age 6)**

Emily Tompkins is a sassy and fun 6-year-old in 1st grade who loves to sing, dance and entertain. She is the life of the party in our family and is adored by her two older brothers Hayden and Wyatt. Emily loves school, playing with friends, and is currently working hard at writing her own name. She has taught our family the meaning of true beauty and joy and we are so blessed by her presence in our lives.

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## **Tommy Van Eekeren (Age 11)**

Tommy has two older brothers, two older sisters and a recently added sister in law. He loves basketball, the trampoline, and listening to music. He brings joy, laughter, and a little bit of mischief wherever he goes!! He also loves to be the center of attention, so being in a fashion show is absolutely perfect for him. He is 11 years old and in 5th grade at McClure Jr. High.

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## **Finley Varner (Age 4)**

Finley is a fearless 4 year old who loves school and loves her family. Her secret power is making people smile. You can find her playing doctor or dancing.

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## **Angel Woessner (Age 17)**

Angel is a bright young lady that loves her 3 dogs and her pet guinea pig. She loves to help in the kitchen cooking with her mom. Angel loves pizza and gimmie bears. She hopes one day to have a big party with all her friends together!

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Cutco	Izabella's Gourmet Chow
CVS	Johnson's Real Ice Cream

# Thank You to Our Generous Donors:

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# Please consider NADS

Leaving a gift to National Association for Down Syndrome in your will or by beneficiary designation is a great way to make a lasting difference in the Down syndrome community.

Your gift will help us provide support, education and resources to individuals, families, medical professionals, and communities, making the world a better place for all those individuals with Down syndrome.

Naming National Association for Down Syndrome as the beneficiary of an account is a simple way to give and doesn't cost you any money or a trip to your attorney's office to create. You can name a charity as the beneficiary of any of these accounts:

- Life insurance policies
- Commercial annuities
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Simply contact your bank, insurance company or retirement account holder and request a beneficiary designation form.





AMINA GRACE

MEMORIAL FUND

A huge thanks to  
**The Amina Grace Memorial Fund**  
for their commitment to our  
basket and hospital program



# COMING SOON!

## 2021 NADS Fundraiser

Watch **nads.org** for more info



### The NADS Mission:

The National Association for Down Syndrome supports all persons with Down syndrome in achieving their full potential.

In fulfilling our mission, we will:

**Provide** families with Down syndrome members with information and resources to enable them to access and evaluate appropriate services.

**Educate** the public about Down syndrome.

**Address** social policy issues and challenges facing the Down syndrome community.

**Facilitate** and encourage active participation by self-advocates and families in the delivery of education, vocational, residential and other services for persons with Down syndrome.

The logo for the National Association for Down Syndrome (NADS) features the letters 'NADS' in a white, serif font. A thin white horizontal line is positioned below the letters. A small white arrow points upwards from the top of the letter 'A'.

NADS

National Association for  
Down Syndrome

[WWW.NADS.ORG](http://WWW.NADS.ORG)