



LOMA LINDA
UNIVERSITY
HEALTH

PossAbilities & you

Winter 2021

www.teampossabilites.org

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Find us on
Facebook

PossAbilities at LLUMC

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On Our Cover
Mason Murillo
PossAbilities member and
cancer survivor

Benefits of Membership

- Social, recreational & community activities
- Peer mentoring
- Support groups
- Recreational & competitive adaptive sports
- Arts & crafts activities
- Annual celebrations
- Health & fitness activities
- Women's, youth & family activities
- Grant & scholarship program
- Quarterly newsletter
- Discount prescription program
- Discount to on-campus cafeterias
- Discount gym membership to the Drayson Center, located at 25040 Stewart Street, Loma Linda, CA 92354

About PossAbilities

PossAbilities is a community outreach program of Loma Linda University Health East Campus. Membership in PossAbilities is free, and there are no age restrictions. PossAbilities provides resources and opportunities for people with disabilities and Veterans. Membership gives you the opportunity to find new direction and hope through physical, social, educational and spiritual interaction with your peers and the community. Visit our office or our website to learn how PossAbilities can benefit you.

STAYING ACTIVE

You will have many opportunities to get active and stay healthy while making new friends. If you are interested in wheelchair sports, recreational activities, support groups and more, we have the connections for you. You can even get a discounted gym membership to the [Drayson Center](#) as a member of PossAbilities. Take advantage of adaptive workout equipment at a world-class facility.

BELONGING

We want you to feel connected. Whether you received care at Loma Linda University Medical Center or heard about us later, you can be a part of PossAbilities. Our goal is to provide you with the opportunities and tools you need to thrive.

PEER SUPPORT

Many people with disabilities are looking for encouragement, emotional support and a firsthand positive viewpoint from someone who has been there. Participate in the peer support program by volunteering your time to reach out to someone who needs it most.

BECOME A SUPPORT MEMBER

Rehabilitation health care professionals, physicians, therapists, family members and friends are all welcome to join PossAbilities as support members. Your time, resources and financial contributions are vital to the ongoing success of PossAbilities.

Connect with Us

Office Location

PossAbilities
Professional Plaza
25455 Barton Road
Suite 109A
Loma Linda, CA 92354

Phone and Fax

909-558-6384 phone
909-558-6334 fax

Website

www.teampossabilities.org



Learn more about featured PossAbilities members and becoming a member or volunteer. Just snap a photo of this icon with your smartphone.

Providing new direction and hope for people with diverse disabilities

COVID-19

CORONAVIRUS

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

SUPPORT

In the midst of the pandemic we have remained committed to the continued safety and health of all patients, families and community members. To minimize the spread of COVID-19, as recommended by local health authorities, we are currently hosting only virtual events and activities until further notice.

To find a variety of resources including virtual support groups, upcoming events, COVID-19 resources, mental health support and more visit www.teampossabilities.org.

RESOURCES

In the recent months we all have been faced with many unforeseen challenges due to COVID-19. Your basic necessities may be in jeopardy, and it may be difficult to find resources. Loma Linda University PossAbilities in conjunction with Loma Linda University Institute for Community Partnerships is offering an avenue to access support. If you need assistance in any of the following areas (see below), please contact the PossAbilities office at possabilities@llu.edu or call (909) 558-6384. We will do our best to connect you with the necessary available resources.

- Housing
- Food
- Groceries
- Transportation for Medical Appointments
- Paying for Utilities
- Signing up for Health Insurance



Thank You

to the sponsors and individual donors that continue to support PossAbilities.



Pediatric Brain & Spine Tumor Support Group

By Tanya Minasian, DO, FACS
Pediatric Neurosurgeon

"We treat a large pediatric brain and spine tumor population here at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital (LLUCH)"

While the neurosurgical and oncologic care in the hospital is crucial, the patients and families are often left with unanswered questions. Given the lack of outpatient support sometimes expressed by patients and their families, I decided to begin a pediatric brain and spine tumor support group here at LLUCH. It is a monthly support group, led by PhD students in the Department of Psychology, Child Life Specialists, and me.

We offer encouragement, education, coping mechanisms, emotional support, and hands-on activities. These activities educate and empower the children through discussion and play.

Recent topics for the parents and families have included: mindfulness, coping with stress and PTSD, providing resources to navigate through the education system after their child has been diagnosed with a tumor.

The support group is powerful, far reaching into the community, and is making quite an impact on patients, their families, staff, and even myself.

It is not enough to provide excellent patient care. It is not enough to have pristine surgical outcomes. It is a requirement

to provide holistic care. The mission of Loma Linda is "To Make Man Whole". I stand by this mission. I work, every single day, to provide this for my patients and their families.

PEDIATRIC BRAIN AND SPINE TUMOR SUPPORT GROUP

First Monday of every month, 4:30 – 5:30 pm.

Virtual Zoom group

<https://llu.zoom.us/j/96290373359?pwd=eGJjbmRmTURxbUdXVjN3c0xiME9PZz09>

Meeting ID: 962 9037 3359

Passcode: 2020

Dial in: 669-900-6833

For more information contact Janine Davis at (909) 651-4721

Join our  Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/PediatricBrainSpine>

MASON'S HEROES

In June 2018, Alejandro Murillo's son Mason was admitted to Loma Linda University Medical Center upon finding a brain tumor in the ER. Mason was diagnosed with a Choroid Plexus Papilloma. After months of treatment, Mason underwent successful brain surgery by Dr. Tanya Minasian for removal of the tumor. After a life changing experience, Alejandro felt compelled to do something fun for these kids that are also fighting brain tumors. Alejandro got involved with Dr. Minasian's tumor support group where he met very special children and created Mason's Heroes. With his background of photography and editing, he decided to start **"HERO SHOTS"**. Each month a child chooses their favorite superhero and participates in their own photo shoot. He donates their poster size photo to the family and gets prepared for the next hero-shoot. It is a fun and creative way to give back to these children, who are fighting battles every day. Mason is currently tumor free and thriving!



MASON MURILLO

Diagnosed at 2 years old with a Choroid Plexus Papilloma brain tumor. Mason is currently tumor free. Mason was 2 years old at the time of his photo. His favorite superhero is Spider Man.



JULISSA PALACIOS

Diagnosed at 10 years old with a Pilocytic Astrocytoma brain tumor. In progress to recovery. Julissa was 11 years old at the time of her photo. Her favorite superhero is Wonder Woman.



GAVIN BULLINGTON

Diagnosed at 6 years old with a Pilocytic Astrocytoma of Cerebellum brain tumor. In progress to a full recovery. Gavin was 7 years old at the time of his photo. His favorite superhero is Batman.



LUCIE LESUEUR

Diagnosed at 10 years old with a Diffuse Astrocytoma brain tumor. In progress to recovery. Lucie was 11 years old at the time of her photoshoot. Her favorite superhero is Captain Marvel.



NEHEMIAH BARAJAS

Diagnosed at 10 years old with a Craniopharyngioma brain tumor. In progress to recovery. Nehemiah was 12 years old at the time of his photo. His favorite superhero is Aquaman.



ROMAN BURCH

Diagnosed at 2 years old with a Ependymoma brain tumor. He is currently tumor free. Roman was 3 years old at the time of his photo. His favorite superhero is Spider Man.

To find information about all of the PossAbilities support groups visit www.teampossabilities.org/support-groups

Rolling Cubs Receive Academic Recognition

by Carl Vereen

Head Coach, PossAbilities Rolling Cubs



Each year, the National Wheelchair Basketball Association (NWBA) and the Junior Executive Committee recognize athletes of the Junior Division for their academic success. The 2020 awards mark the 23rd time the Junior Division has recognized its best student athletes for their work off the court. The all NWBA Junior Division academic recognitions are in memory of Dr. Timothy Nugent the dedicated and visionary founder of the National Wheelchair Basketball Association.

The Dr. Nugent Academic Achievers program is for grades 5-9. The goal is to get athletes interested in the importance of academics at an earlier age with the goal of attracting more students to college and obtaining a degree. The High School Academic All-American program presented by Toyota recognizes athletes in grades 10 through 12 and has been a great opportunity for accomplished athletes of the Junior Division to showcase their talents off the court.

THERE ARE 3 LEVELS OF RECOGNITION FOR PLAYERS WHO WORK AT BEING GOOD STUDENTS:

- ✦ 1st Team with a grade point higher than 3.33 GPA
- ✦ 2nd Team with a grade point between 3.0 – 3.33
- ✦ 3rd Team with a grade point between 2.75 – 3.0

This season, four members of the PossAbilities Rolling Cubs Junior Wheelchair Basketball team received recognition at the West Coast Championships held at Stanford University.

THE MEMBERS ARE:



Jesus Ramirez
First Team



Josiah Rios
First Team



Daniel Serrano
Second Team



Alexis Wall
Second Team

Please join us in congratulating these young athletes for their off the court achievement.

The PossAbilities Rolling Cubs is wheelchair basketball team open to anyone 5–21 years old with mobility challenges.

**To learn more about the team visit
<https://teampossabilities.org/rolling-cubs>**

Rolling Cubs Team Member Highlight

Davis Galluzzo, 12, a cancer survivor and player on the [Rolling Cubs PossAbilities](#) wheelchair basketball team, is a powerful example of perseverance and positivity despite immense challenges. In 2010, Davis was only two years old when he was diagnosed with cancer — one of the nearly 16,000 children in the U.S. to be diagnosed with cancer each year, according to the American Childhood Cancer Organization

His diagnosis was T-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia, a type of cancer of a person's bone marrow and blood that affects white blood cells and is the most common type of childhood cancer. This rare cancer is known to be more aggressive. Davis began his treatment at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital immediately. Doctors told Davis' mom, Darcy, that if his cancer hadn't been discovered, he could've died in a matter of weeks.

"It was a whirlwind," Darcy said. "He went from having a fever to being diagnosed with leukemia — we were in shock. There was no time to digest the news or even sit and cry. We had to make huge, life-saving decisions for Davis right away."

Davis was placed on chemotherapy, with his treatment plan mapping out the next three and a half years to completely eradicate the cancer. However, after only 30 days of treatment, Davis seemed to show no signs of cancer. His chemo treatments continued as scheduled in efforts to decrease chances of the leukemia reappearing.

Two years and seven months after his first treatment, the unthinkable happened. Davis collapsed, unable to walk. He hasn't walked without assistance since. He was diagnosed with drug-induced paraplegia. "It was beyond tragic and heartbreaking," Darcy said.

Davis has been cancer-free for 10 years. Darcy said, despite frustration and disappointment, Davis continues to persevere and doesn't lose hope.

"It's been very hard, but Davis has had an amazing attitude," she said. "He doesn't feel sorry for himself. It's been one gigantic trial that has not ended but having the comfort from Jesus to get through sustains us."

Now in seventh grade, Davis said he loves playing video games and sports. He recently received a grant from [PossAbilities](#) — a free, non-profit, community outreach program operated by [Loma Linda University Health](#) — that provides support and resources for those with physical disabilities, allowing them to stay active and healthy. The grant funded a basketball wheelchair for Davis. Prior to the pandemic, he played regularly on the Rolling Cubs wheelchair junior basketball team.

"For so many years he had to watch his siblings play sports and wasn't able to," Darcy said. "Now he absolutely loves playing basketball — it's one of the bright spots in his life. He gets to play on the team with kids of all ages. He has the light of Jesus, and, despite everything, he continues to overcome."



Davis Galluzzo
a cancer survivor
and player on
the PossAbilities
wheelchair basketball
team, is a powerful
example of
perseverance and
positivity.



2020 IMPACT REPORT

Providing new direction and hope!



Virtual Support Groups & Activities

Number of support groups & activities: 106
Number of people served: 1375

FOOD GIVEAWAY

Total number boxes distributed: 250
Total individuals in households: 780

In partnership with



Virtual Women's Luncheon

Meals provided: 60
Number of disabilities represented: 12
Caregivers: 6
Veterans: 1

Paralympic Training Program

Sponsored athletes 7
Number of different sports 5
Athletes on Team USA 3
National Champions 5



PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT DRIVE THRU

Total number of masks distributed: 2000
Total number of sanitizer bottles distributed: 200
Total number of households: 480

VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS EVENT

Total online views: 896



Christmas Gift Drive Thru

Children with disabilities that received Christmas gifts: 105
Siblings that received Christmas gifts: 180
Age range of children: 2 to 18
Total families served: 105
Volunteers: 7

MONEY RAISED

Total: \$128,885

MEET OUR MEMBER – PAIGE STOWE

Hi! My name is Paige Stowe. I'm a 10-year old girl who has overcome a world of hurdles and struggles to become the strong girl that I am today. My story begins on June 15th of 2008. I was born six weeks early and have struggled my whole life with medical problems that no one seems to understand until recently. My doctors diagnosed me with a speech delay and seizures at a young age, but it wasn't until I was in 3rd grade that my doctors discovered my genetic hearing loss known as sensor neural hearing loss. This was the cause of my speech delay and struggles with reading. My difficulty reading, speaking, and seizures finally made sense and we finally had the answers we had been searching for. I have to wear a headset at school to hear and making friends and keeping them is hard and I've also struggled with bullies. Even so, outside of school is where I shine!

Three years ago, I got the opportunity of a lifetime to begin pageants! I started my new journey at the Jr. Pre-Teen Sun City through California Regional Pageants (CRP). Through CRP I won my first state pageant and was crowned Miss Golden State for my age division.



With my state title I got the chance to compete through USA Ambassador for a National title! When my year with CRP ended, I joined USA Ambassador with a state title. I loved this pageant line because of their strong focus on community service. The pageant works with Big Brother and Big Sister, but I mainly focus on working with veterans. I like working with veterans because my father is a veteran that served in the Navy and the Army. I spend most of my free time volunteering with an organization called Homes for Our Troops. They build adapted homes for severely wounded veterans and give them to veterans mortgage free!

I also volunteer at Animal Friends of the Valley where I spend time with shelter animals and help clean the cages. I volunteer at assisted living centers and read with veterans and other senior citizens that do not get many visitors. In my spare time, I help PossAbilities when needed. Everything I do outside of school gives me strength to stick up for what I believe in. I am a stronger and better person every day and will always stand up for what is right no matter what others say or think.

Nice to meet you!

Paige

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE YOUR STORY WITH OTHERS?

Email your biography and a high-resolution photo to
possabilities@llu.edu.

Learning Made Real: **Your Power to Contribute**

by Michel Davis

LLU MSOP Patient Model Coordinator

Loma Linda University's Master of Science in Orthotics and Prosthetics (MSOP) program has had patient models participate in prosthetics classes for ten years. In the 2019 school year we decided to do the same for our orthotics classes which then meant patient models wearing braces were needed. This has been wonderfully successful!

PossAbilities members rose to the occasion and came to support our students, agreeing to volunteer as patient models. They allowed the students to evaluate, shape, capture, and fit them for varied brace designs as well as evaluate the outcomes of those braces.

The orthotic students appreciate the time the patient models invest in their learning. The excitement surrounding the application of all they've learned was shared when presenting the patient model with the newly created device to their fellow classmates.

The patient models also enjoyed the experience. One volunteer mentioned that seeing something good come from her struggles contributed to her healing. Another said, "The final presentation of the project was amazing and seeing the eagerness of the students to learn gives me a renewed hope for the future."

The time a PossAbilities volunteer invests with the students contributes to a bigger picture. The students will use vital clinical skills learned with the patient models throughout their careers. As these students become certified clinicians, they will impact the lives of hundreds of people with what they learn while at LLU with these PossAbilities members.

Loma Linda University - MSOP program is looking forward to inviting additional patient models to participate in future orthotics classes. This rich learning experience was possible thanks to the help of PossAbilities. Great things can happen when people work together.



**TO VOLUNTEER AS A
PATIENT MODEL CONTACT:**

**Mdavis2@llu.edu
or call 909-456-0223.**

Pictured from left to right:
Justin Pryor (student), Brandon Carr (patient model),
and Daniel Benson (student).

SUPPORT GROUPS

ANGELES ESPECIALES PARENTS SUPPORT GROUP

A Spanish-speaking support group for parents of children with special needs

Second Wednesday of each month from 9-11:30 a.m.

Join the meeting:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/nerihm71/?ref=share>

The focus of the group is to teach parents how to access resources related to: Special education, grants and scholarships, children's and adult's rights, recreation, adaptive sports, and more.

For more information call 909-699-3614 or email helen2508@yahoo.com.

EPILEPSY SUPPORT GROUP

Second Tuesday of every month, 5:30 to 7 p.m.

For virtual group information please contact Melissa Pajarito at 909-558-9415.

HEAD INJURY AND TRAUMA SPINAL SUPPORT GROUP (HITSS)

Adult and Pediatrics Group Meeting

Virtual group information coming soon. Call 800 986 HITSS (800-986 4487).

INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE SUPPORT GROUP

Second Thursday of the month, 6-7 p.m.

Join Zoom Group:

<https://llu.zoom.us/j/97808819861>

Meeting ID: 978 0881 9861

Dial in: 669-900-6833

For more information contact the Digestive Disease Center at 909-651-4996.

LARYNGECTOMY SUPPORT GROUP

Virtual group 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month from 1 to 2 p.m.

For more information and to obtain the Zoom link email jdatema@llu.edu or call 909-558-2325.

PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP

Third Wednesday of the month

For more information contact LLUH ORC at 909-558-6144 or ssanlucas@llu.edu.

PEDIATRIC BRAIN AND SPINE TUMOR

First Monday of every month, 4:30 – 5:30 pm.

Join Zoom group:

<https://llu.zoom.us/j/96290373359?pwd=eGJjbmRmTURxbUdXVjN3c0xiME9PZz09>

Meeting ID: 962 9037 3359

Passcode: 2020

Dial in: 669-900-6833

For more information contact Janine Davis at (909) 651-4721 or Adriana Martinez at (909) 558-6388.

SICKLE CELL EDUCATION SERIES

Adult and family Support Group and Education Series

Second Thursday of the month, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Join Zoom Group:

<https://llu.zoom.us/j/97477866381?pwd=RkJRdUQ1YzdNQStzWkxGd0ZjZUYYQT09>

Meeting ID: 974 7786 6381

Password: 116399

Dial in: 669-900-6833

For more information email sicklecell@llu.edu or call (909) 851-8194.

STROKE/ANEURYSM SUPPORT GROUP

Join us for Life Enriching: Information, motivation, education, connections, relationships, and encouragement.

Third Tuesday of the month, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Join virtual Zoom Meeting:

<https://llu.zoom.us/j/93824289271?pwd=NGI1dno5clhZL2J2K3NsdVB5cW9FQT09>

Meeting ID: 938 2428 9271

Password: 061620

Dial in: 669-900-6833

Led by Dr. Promod Pillai (Department of Neurosurgery)

For more information contact John Purifoy at jpurifoy@llu.edu or (909) 558-4726.

TOTAL SPINE HEALTH SUPPORT GROUP

Second Monday of every month, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://llu.zoom.us/j/97962031058?pwd=TjZLVWw2ck85bzF0b1djc2FrNDEvUT09>

Meeting ID: 979 6203 1058

Password: 052820

Dial in: 669-900-6833

For more information contact Korina Lopez at (909) 651-4725.



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Cotie Williams
Editor

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Cotie's Corner



We are all living in difficult times and are struggling to find peace in a world that is riddled with pain and suffering. Our everyday lives are not "normal". Our work lives and home lives have been impacted by this pandemic. We haven't had the human connections we so long for with our friends, our families, our neighbors, and churches. There has been political and racial unrest in our communities. Children have been misplaced in the new system of learning. Our whole lives have been impacted by one thing or the other. Today I challenge you to find moments to be thankful. Be thankful for life. Be thankful for healing that is to come. Be thankful for hope. Be thankful that we are loved by a God that died for our sins so we could have eternal life. Right now, He is preparing a place for us with Him in heaven. A place where there is no pain and no worries and no strife. I pray today that God will give you peace and hope in your days ahead.

Our most precious Father, You are the wellspring of life-giving love. Fill us each once more with your Holy Spirit and your peace and let it renew our spirit, transform our minds, and inspire us to live, love, and serve.

Amen.

Save the Date

**POSSABILITIES VIRTUAL
1K, 5K AND 10K RUN**

Sunday, May 30, 2021

Register online at [raceroster.com](https://www.raceroster.com),
search PossAbilities.

PossAbilities provides resources and opportunities
for people with diverse disabilities.



LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY
HEALTH

PossAbilities

Many Strengths.
One Mission.

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call 909-558-6384 or email cwilliams@llu.edu.