

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



*Dear Friends,*

Every day at Capper Foundation is a testament to the incredible support of our donors, who enable us to enhance

the quality of life for hundreds of individuals. I am filled with gratitude as I witness the remarkable progress and tiny miracles in the lives of infants, children, and teens through our Pediatric Therapy Program. I have also seen individuals build their abilities through our employment readiness program, partnering with local employers and at one of our four Dialogue Coffee House locations. Through our continuum of services, participants in our Adult Day Program enjoy meaningful experiences tailored to their personal goals and dreams. Those in our residential program are successfully living in their own homes or apartments with caring assistance from our Direct Support Professionals.

In this Summer edition of our Capper Update, I am delighted to share the inspiring progress made by two of our young heroes, Kylah and Kyson. Their remarkable journeys at Capper are just two powerful examples of the lives touched by our mission and of the inspiring children that make every day a great day at Capper Foundation.

I am optimistic about the incredible journey of those whose lives we touch. Your unwavering support and dedication have been instrumental in our mission to empower individuals with disabilities, enabling them to achieve their fullest potential and live meaningful, inclusive lives.

Thank you for helping us make dreams come true.

*With gratitude,*



Zach Ahrens  
President & CEO



## Back to School

Back to School brings the excitement of making new friends, adventures, and ongoing learning. For families of children with disabilities, it also places strain on a family budget already stretched to cover the cost of essential therapeutic services.

**Your gift of as little as \$25 can cover a monthly insurance co-pay for a child who is currently receiving therapeutic services at Capper.**

### DONATE BY PHONE

☎ 785.272.4060

### DONATE BY MAIL

✉ Use enclosed envelope

### DONATE ONLINE

🌐 [www.capper.org](http://www.capper.org)



DONATE FROM  
YOUR MOBILE DEVICE



*Capper Foundation Occupational Therapist Crista Porter helps Kylah develop strength and coordination between her two arms as part of a recent play-based therapy session.*

## KYLAH: LEARNING NEW SKILLS, BUILDING STRENGTH, AND...

# Sharing Smiles!

Every parent has dreams about their child's future even before birth – activities they might participate in, the career they may choose, and more. These moments were no different for first-time parents, Skyler and Chelsea, as they joyfully anticipated the arrival of their daughter, Kylah, in 2021. While the journey to fulfilling those dreams looks different than planned, they believe their happy girl will be as independent as she can be when she grows up.

After complications at birth, Kylah was diagnosed with spastic cerebral palsy, sensorineural hearing loss with a history of neonatal seizures, and Hypoxic-Ischemic encephalopathy (HIE). Beginning late last year and early this year, she started receiving play-based occupational, physical, and speech therapy with an interdisciplinary team of pediatric therapists at Capper Foundation. Together, they developed and are progressively implementing an individualized plan of care that focuses on increasing her communication skills, mobility, motor skills, and strength.

Over the past seven months, Kylah has made tremendous improvement toward the goals that her therapists have set for her notably using her left arm more independently as well as in conjunction with her right arm to complete tasks and utilizing multimodal forms of communication. She is also walking with a gait trainer and can now bear more weight through her legs requiring less support from a harness to hold her up. With the continuation of therapy and reinforcement at home, Kylah is on the path to achieving greater independence.

"Kylah is such a blessing. She has made huge strides that in these earliest years of her life we never thought we would see. Her endurance to keep going and push to do things on her own is so encouraging. While it can be extremely difficult to have a child with special needs, it just makes meeting those milestones so much more gratifying," shared Chelsea.

With your support of Capper Foundation, more children like Kylah will experience life-changing milestones that will lead them to advancing their hopes and dreams.



“While it can be extremely difficult to have a child with special needs, it just makes meeting those milestones so much more gratifying.”

—Chelsea, Kylah's Mom

WITH CONFIDENCE AND DETERMINATION **KYSON IS...**

# Swinging for the Fences

**A**round this time nine years ago, we shared the remarkable story of two-and-a-half-year-old Kyson. In 2012, his parents, Jaryl and Stephanie received the unexpected news at their 18-week ultrasound that their fourth son had Myelomeningocele Spina Bifida, an open lesion on the back that affects the brain and spine. Faced with difficult decisions, they opted to move forward with a new and very risky in-utero fetal surgery with no guarantees of what the outcome would be.

As you can see, Kyson is growing up and is now 11 years old and will start middle school this year. His parents share that their brave boy still has a heart of gold who examines life through the lens of compassion, grace, and perseverance. “We often hear from others that Kyson is one of the most compassionate, loving, and happiest

“ *Capper Foundation is a place to learn, grow, and explore. We believe with our whole hearts that Kyson’s determination and confidence started with programs just like this one.* ”

—Jaryl & Stephanie, Kyson’s parents

children they have ever met. He always has a smile on his face and regardless of the circumstances, he gives 110% to everything he does.” His “can do” attitude extends to the recreational activities he participates in, especially baseball. Earlier this summer, Kyson was hit directly in the spine by a ball but refused to be carried off the field only accepting a helping hand as he walked to the dugout. Thankfully, he was okay, and after some initial fear, he told his parents he was getting back on that field regardless of what they had to say about it. And he did, just a few weeks later.

The family credits Capper Foundation and now retired physical therapist, Kim Coker, whom they call an “angel on earth” for providing them the knowledge and resources during the most critical time of Kyson’s development as well as the confidence to know what to advocate for. “She helped us to tune out the extra noise of distraction and focus on developing his skills at HIS level and need, not anyone else’s. From the beginning of his time at Capper, Kim modeled to Kyson that through hard work, he could



Photo: Chelsi Simpson Photography

accomplish any goal he set his mind to.” At ages three and four, those goals included throwing a ball, crawling up a slide, and eventually walking independently. More recently, Kyson has used that same determination to successfully learn to ride a bicycle without assistance.

“Know that when you support Capper Foundation, you are supporting kids just like Kyson. Capper Foundation is a place to learn, grow, and explore. We believe with our whole hearts that Kyson’s determination and confidence started with programs just like this one. Consider supporting or continuing to support these programs so that these children will have what they need to show the world that they are important too.” – Jaryl & Stephanie, Kyson’s parents

## Join the Conversation.



Dialogue Coffee House provides meaningful employment to over 50 adults and teens with intellectual and developmental disabilities giving them a place to join the conversation, without the definition of their abilities.

**dialogue**  
coffee house

Now serving in 4 Topeka area locations.

Learn more at: [www.dialoguecoffeehouse.com](http://www.dialoguecoffeehouse.com)

DIALOGUE COFFEE HOUSE IS A COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM OF CAPPER FOUNDATION.

## Dialogue employees shine in Special Olympics

**A**s the world watches the 2024 Summer Olympics, our eyes are on several Dialogue Coffee House employees who participate in Special Olympics year-round. Like any athlete, their “work” does not end with their shifts at Dialogue, it continues with numerous hours at the gym and practices to prepare them for regional and state competitions with the potential to compete nationally and internationally.

Each of them is enthusiastic about competing in more than one of the twenty sports currently available in the state of Kansas. From skiing to power lifting to softball, every sport has a unique skill set that requires the athletes not only to have




physical strength, grit, and determination but also a spirit of inclusion and acceptance for their fellow athletes. And they all do!

To support and encourage these amazing competitors, visit our Dialogue locations for coffee and conversation and follow Capper Foundation, Dialogue Coffee House, and Special Olympics Kansas on social media.

### DONATE BY PHONE

 785.272.4060

### DONATE BY MAIL

 Use enclosed envelope

### DONATE ONLINE

 [www.capper.org](http://www.capper.org)



3500 SW Tenth Ave.  
Topeka, Kansas 66604  
785.272.4060

1500 E Eighth Ave., Ste. 201  
Winfield, Kansas 67156  
620.221.9431

622 N Haverhill Road  
El Dorado, Kansas 67042  
316.320.7531

[www.capper.org](http://www.capper.org)



Pediatric services available only at our Topeka location. Capper Foundation is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.