

THE ACE HARDWARE FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES NINTH ACE CARES FOR KIDS All-STAR

Iowa's Nile Kron Named "All-Star" at Special University of Iowa Football Event

OAK BROOK, Ill. , Feb. 9, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- The Ace Hardware Foundation is pleased to name Nile Kron (age 4) of Iowa City, Iowa as the organization's ninth Ace Cares for Kids All-Star. Today, the Ace Hardware Foundation, University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital and Coach Ferentz of the University of Iowa surprised Nile and his family with an event to welcome them into the Ace community. The event was held at the Hansen Football Performance Center and included Ace retailers, UI football players and Herky the Hawkeye.

As Ace's ninth Ace Cares for Kids All-Star, Nile will serve as national ambassador for the Ace Foundation, raising awareness for the excellent work that is done at local Children's Miracle Network (CMN) Hospitals across the country. Through the support of Ace's vendor partner Duracell, the Ace Cares for Kids program enables Ace stores to raise funds for their local CMN Hospital using Nile's incredible story as inspiration.

From the moment Nile Kron was born, he has been a patient at University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital. Nile was born at 32 weeks 4 days on February 21, 2017. He spent 51 days in the NICU, but not only because Nile was pre-mature. Nile was born with a bilateral cleft lip and palate, scoliosis, absent right ear, Coloboma of his left eye, and a tethered cord -- diagnosis on their own that present difficulties, but diagnosis he received at once, setting up a difficult journey ahead for Nile and his parents.

On October 10, 2017, Nile had his first of many surgeries. This procedure was to fix his cleft lip and palate at UI Stead Family Children's Hospital. Nile's next surgery was to separate his spinal cord from his vertebrae. This complex and invasive procedure brought on a long road of recovery for Nile. He went on to have cleft lip and palate surgery plus another surgery to close off his left inner ear canal to prohibit infection, extensive oral surgeries, and a hernia removal surgery. In June of 2020, Nile had two rods placed in his back to fix his congenital scoliosis rods that must be adjusted every three months at UI Stead Family Children's Hospital until Nile is done growing. One of Nile's most exciting surgeries was the placement of his cochlear implants, tools that will help Nile hear and verbally communicate.

Nile loves being around people and thrives when he is around others thanks to the specialized treatment he received at the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital. "He lights up any room that he is in and is positive despite the challenges he experiences on a day-to-day basis. Even though Nile is only 4 years old, he is always determined to succeed. He has worn everything from a mouthpiece, to back braces, to foot braces," said Brittany, Nile's mom. "This will be nothing that stops him no matter his size."

"We are excited to welcome Nile into the Ace All-Star family," said Kane Calamari, President of the Ace Hardware Foundation. "Nile and his family will join Ace in raising awareness for CMN Hospitals and generating essential funding for other children facing illness. His story of bravery, perseverance and hope is one that we know will inspire our Ace community and beyond."

Nile was selected by the Ace Foundation following a nationwide campaign that gave every Children's Miracle Network Hospital an opportunity to nominate a deserving patient. As the ninth All-Star for the Ace Cares for Kids Program, a \$10,000 donation from Duracell will be made to University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital in Nile's honor. Throughout the year, Nile will make special appearances and will be treated to exciting surprises from Ace Hardware.

As a proud supporter of CMN Hospitals, Ace Hardware is dedicated to raising funds for children's hospitals across the country, including University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital. Over the past 30 years, the Ace Foundation has raised more than \$160 million for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals.

About the Ace Hardware Foundation

As the official charitable division of Ace Hardware Corporation, the Ace Hardware Foundation helps enhance the vision of being the "Helpful Place" in local communities across the country and around the globe through charitable giving. The Ace Foundation provides support and philanthropic opportunities to its consumers, retail store owners, vendors and team members to give back to local communities through fundraising efforts for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals and American Red Cross Disaster Relief. Ace Hardware has been a national partner for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals for the last 30 years, raising over \$160 million during that time.

About Ace Hardware

Ace Hardware is the largest retailer-owned hardware cooperative in the world with more than 5,500 locally owned and operated hardware stores in approximately 70 countries. Headquartered in Oak Brook, Ill., Ace and its subsidiaries operate an expansive network of distribution centers in the U.S. and have distribution capabilities in Ningbo, China; Colon, Panama; and Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Since 1924, Ace has become a part of local communities around the world and known as the place with the helpful hardware folks. For more information, visit acehardware.com or newsroom.acehardware.com.

About Children's Miracle Network Hospitals

Children's Miracle Network Hospitals® raises funds and awareness for 170 member hospitals that provide 32 million treatments each year to kids across the U.S. and Canada. Donations stay local to fund critical treatments and healthcare services, pediatric medical equipment and charitable care. Since 1983, Children's Miracle Network Hospitals has raised more than \$5 billion, most of it \$1 at a time through the charity's Miracle Balloon icon. Its various fundraising partners and programs support the nonprofit's mission to save and improve the lives of as many children as possible. Find out why children's hospitals need community support, identify your member hospital and learn how you can Put Your Money Where the Miracles Are, at <http://www.CMNHospitals.org> and <http://www.facebook.com/CMNHospitals>.

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