



Deshae Lott Ministries Inc

Meet the Recipients of the 2015 CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries Outreach Program Quality of Life Grants

Conlan Higgins Recipient of a \$500 CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries Quality of Life Grant



Conlan is six years old and has been diagnosed with PVL (Periventricular leukomalacia), spastic quadriplegia, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, severe sleep apnea, GERD, asthma, and scoliosis. He is non-ambulatory and non-verbal. He cannot sit up, balance his body, crawl, or roll over. However, he does smile, vocalize frequently and joyfully, and interact with those around him. Conlan was progressing normally, speaking about 100 words and short phrases, and beginning to potty train when he started to lose functioning at about 2 ½ years of age. Conlan's mother, Chrysanthy Tsolakidis, is a single mother who is solely responsible for Conlan's physical, financial, and emotional wellbeing, along with that of his three-year-old sister Sophie, who has apraxia of speech and an IEP of her own in a special needs preschool. Chrysanthy also takes care of her father, who has Stage 4 lung cancer and lives with the family. She applied for the grant on Conlan's behalf to secure for him a special Tomato Seat

with movable base. The seat allows him to sit at the table with the family, to sit up on the couch or on the floor, to sit in a shopping cart, and so many other possibilities otherwise not available to Conlan on a daily basis. We awarded the full amount of the grant to this family, and were pleased to receive this picture of Conlan in his seat.

Amy Maples
Recipient of a \$500
CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries
Quality-of-Life Grant



Amy Maples of Lake Havasu City, Arizona, has been diagnosed with severe acute transverse myelitis, a “cousin” of Multiple Sclerosis. She has permanent nerve damage that affects her balance, ability to stand for any length of time, and her ability to deal independently with many aspects of daily life. She has extreme neuropathy in her right foot and impaired feeling and strength in her left leg, as well as constant pain in her right foot and spine. Although she initially applied for the grant in the hopes of remodeling her current bathtub into a low-step walk-in shower, she has since learned that the remodel



will be substantially more expensive than the grant money would allow. The good news, however, is that Amy has been able to fulfill another need: She has purchased a used scooter that allows her much greater mobility and independence, and a greater opportunity to participate in family and community events.



Jeffrey Lester
Recipient of a \$500
CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries
Quality-of-Life Grant

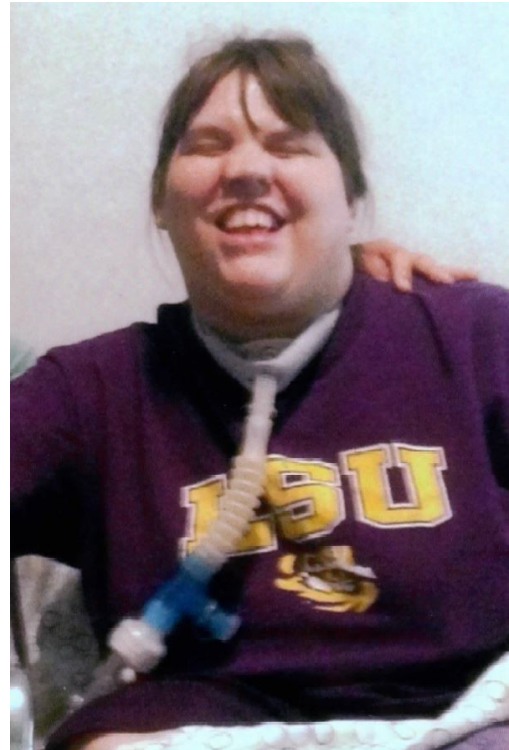
If Jeffrey’s name sounds familiar, there’s a very good reason for that. Jeffrey Lester of Lebanon, Missouri was a two-time recipient of the CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries Outreach Fund Scholarship as he pursued his Master of Finance Degree from the University of

Michigan-Dearborn.. Wanting to give back to our organization, he also served on our Outreach Selection Committee for a time, stepping down when he chose to apply for the scholarship a third time.

Now Jeff has applied for a grant to help with some dental work not covered by Medicare. Jeff has ALS and is on a ventilator. He can still eat, but recent problems with his teeth have made that a difficult and painful experience. We hope to help return this great smile to his face.

Lisa Miller
Recipient of a \$500
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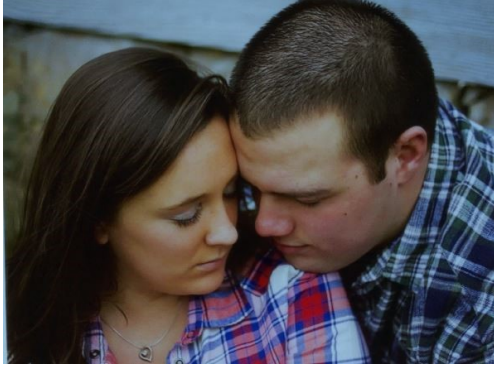
Lisa Miller of Egan, Louisiana is 38 years old and has a diagnosis of Muscular Dystrophy and Myasthenia Gravis. She is totally ventilator dependent, with a trach and PEG feeding tube. She also suffers with dysphasia, generalized weakness, severe anxiety, depression and arthritis. Completely confined either to bed or wheelchair, Lisa lives with her mother, who works night shifts at Wal-Mart. She receives 84 hours a week of licensed nursing care with night sitters included. She applied for the grant to help with hygiene products, linens, and the Ensure she needs to supplement her food because her swallow reflexes are weak and some days it is all that she can consume. Creative projects help to alleviate her depression, so she also hopes to spend a portion of the grant funds on craft items such as paints and acrylic sun catchers, as well as markers and felt paper coloring projects. .



Bashir Muhsin
Recipient of a \$500
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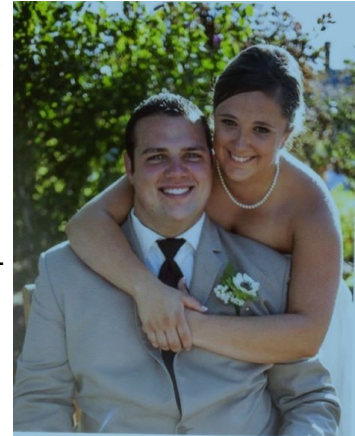
Bashir Muhsin of El Sobrante, California, is a 17-month old toddler who was born with an enlarged thymus and trachea-laryngomalacia, or softening of the multiple parts of the airway. Understandably, this condition gives him great difficulty with breathing. He has frequent cyanotic episodes and has stopped breathing 8 times, necessitating that his mother, Sahar Muhsin, perform CPR.

Bashir also has arthrogyriposis, a genetic tissue disorder similar to Marfan Syndrome, causing contractures all over his body that result in very limited range of motion. He has had an aortopexy, a surgical procedure to elevate the innominate artery up to the sternum and relieve pressure on the trachea. His mother, Sahar, is self-employed and receives food stamps. Bashir receives OT and PT that are covered by his state insurance, but his mother, Sahar, has found additional benefits for Bashir in osteopathy and cranial-sacral therapy as well as chiropractic care and massage. She has applied for the grant on his behalf in order to help pay for these additional therapies which have proven beneficial to Bashir but are not covered by insurance. The committee has approved the full \$500 award.



Grant Turner
Recipient of a \$500
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Before a diving accident on a family vacation in July of this year, Grant Turner of Cathlamet, Washington was a professional welder who also enjoyed an active life of hiking, boating, camping and other leisure activities with his wife, Ashley. Although the accident resulted in a spinal cord injury that has left him a quadriplegic, Grant is determined to regain as much independence as possible. He has applied for the grant to help with the adaptations that will be needed at home and in his vehicle. Grant writes, "In addition to many other positive characteristics I possess, my self-sufficiency is extremely important to me. My goals are in line with this independence for my future. Whether it be as a welder or in a profession I have not yet discovered, it would be extremely fulfilling for me to achieve this independence." To help him realize these goals of increased independence and an active life with his wife, Ashley, we are happy to award him the Quality of Life Grant.



Melissa Caffey
Recipient of a \$500
CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries
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Melissa Caffey of Springfield, Missouri, has been a multiple repeat recipient of the Quality of Life Grant. She has Limb Girdle Muscular Dystrophy, and needs help with nine of the twelve daily life tasks on the application. She is applying for the grant as a way of supplementing her income and allowing her to purchase in bulk the various items she needs, including personal hygiene items, that are not covered by insurance. Melissa feels blessed to have a strong support system of family and friends. They, along with the grants, allow her to stay in her own residence and to serve on the Board of her Independent Living Center, where she can be an advocate for others with disabilities, and help to spread the word about CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries Scholarships and Quality of Life Grants.

