

Emily Progin, Content Manager
eprogin@helphopelive.org / 800.642.8399
Release: Immediate

COMMUNITY RALLYING TO HELP GCU GRAD GET WHEELCHAIR VAN Living with Muscular Atrophy, David Smical Sets Sights on Independence

PHOENIX, Ariz.—23-year-old David Smical is a passionate gamer, joyful friend, GCU professional, and a driven student currently pursuing his master's degree. Living with spinal muscular atrophy, David needs a wheelchair van to move forward in life—but insurance won't cover the \$45,000 cost.

That's why his loved ones have turned to the trusted nonprofit Help Hope Live for medical fundraising. Donations are tax deductible in David's honor at:

<https://helphopelive.org/campaign/26380/>

David's experience with SMA started at age 3 when he first received the diagnosis. Rapidly, he began to lose his mobility and his upper body strength. By age 5, he began relying on a wheelchair.

Thanks to his passions, his drive, and caregiving support, David lives a full and varied life. He lives on campus and began working for GCU as an adjunct faculty member in the summer of 2025. The proud GCU grad is now pursuing his master's in information technology at the Maryvale Campus of CCV.

In his downtime, David loves gaming and brings joy, connection, and friendly competition into his downtime with his friends. "I love storytelling and strategy," he explained.

As SMA continues to steal away aspects of his mobility, David must rely on assistance for many of the tasks of basic living, including dressing, bathing, cooking, and chores. Using a power wheelchair to get around, he's limited in his options outside of home: no standard vehicle can accommodate his power chair, and public transportation is unreliable or downright unsafe.

David has already had a chance to drive an accessible vehicle, which means he's ready to enhance his life with greater mobility and independence. For needs ranging from staying employed to getting to church, a wheelchair van will be a game-changer for the gamer and student.

There's just one problem. Despite the lack of available accessible transportation available to David, insurance will not help with the \$45,000 cost of a van.

That's why David's community has rallied their support through the trusted national nonprofit Help Hope Live. Donations are tax deductible at:

<https://helphopelive.org/campaign/26380/>

Unlike a GoFundMe campaign, donations to Help Hope Live are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law, and all funds raised will be administered by the nonprofit to cover verified medical and related expenses. Help Hope Live verifies medical and financial need for every patient.

Help Hope Live is a national nonprofit that specializes in engaging communities in secure, tax-deductible fundraising campaigns for people who need a transplant or are affected by a catastrophic injury or illness. Since 1983, campaigns organized by Help Hope Live have raised over \$193 million to pay patient expenses, assisting more than 25,000 patient families.

###