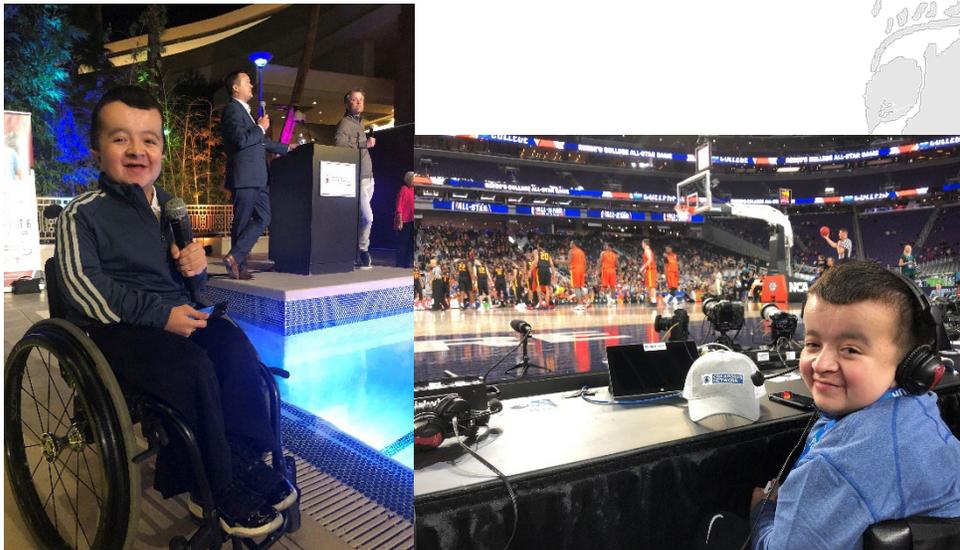


About Alec, 2022 Chicago Disability Pride Parade Grand Marshal

Shriners Children's has several exceptional teenage patients who are available to media for interviews about their experiences with one of the nation's leading providers of pediatric specialty care. Alec, 20, from suburban Chicago, is a national spokespatient by virtue of his starring role in our commercials, as well as his talents in media. Shriners Children's is pleased to have Alec selected as this year's Chicago Disability Pride Parade grand marshal.



You may recognize Alec from TV commercials for Shriners Hospitals, or you may have seen him in many other venues including the Rose Bowl Parade. Over the years, Alec has been a tremendous voice for Shriners Children's, and has appeared in numerous national commercials, representing the many patients whose lives have been changed forever by the health care system. He has also been a featured guest on many television shows, sharing his appreciation everywhere he goes.

- [Alec's Story](#)
- Alec is a college student is studying sports broadcasting at Northwestern University. When he is not in school, you can find Alec on the basketball court with his friends or working out at home.
- Alec's approach to his favorite activities is a little different, however, since he has osteogenesis (AW-stee-oh-genesis) imperfecta (IM-per-fect-uh), also known as brittle bone disease or OI.
- OI is a genetic bone disorder characterized by fragile bones that can frequently and easily break, which can make it hard for Alec to participate in sports. The

- underlying cause is a lack of collagen – or abnormal collagen – in the bones that prevents them from absorbing appropriate minerals and developing correctly.
- Alec just happened to live near the Chicago Shriners Hospital, which is a nationally known treatment center for brittle bone disorders in children. Doctors there developed the first surgically successful treatment, a bone rodding surgical technique that has improved the lives of many patients with OI.
 - Alec has been receiving care at the Shriners Chicago hospital for treatment since 2002. He's broken more than 60 bones. Over the years, he's made great progress with the help of customized treatment from his orthopedic surgeon, Peter Smith, and rehabilitation specialists.
 - Alec, who has had several surgeries, receives intravenous medication infusions and physical therapy.
 - Alec is building more strength and increasing muscle development through Aquatic Therapy. Physical therapists work with Alec in the hospital's temperature-controlled hydrotherapy pool using aquatic treadmills and other equipment. Tapping into Alec's love for sports, his physical therapist has even incorporated water basketball into rehabilitation sessions. "I do aquatic therapy when time allows," the busy teen said. "I love the warm water therapy pool during the cold winter months."
 - His muscles are strengthening and his bones are breaking less often. This provides Alec with more opportunities to indulge in his passion for sports.
 - Knowing that Alec hopes to be a sports broadcaster someday, the hospital staff has done what it can to encourage faith in that dream. During the NFL Draft weeks of 2015-2017, patients experienced the excitement of the draft first-hand when players visited during a Prospect Community Visit. During these events, Alec was given the opportunity to conduct interviews with NFL Draft prospects, which were featured on the NFL website...and later surprised with tickets to Super Bowl SBLIV.
 - Alec created a web-based sports show, *Smart Alec on Sports*, to follow his dream of being a sports anchor/broadcaster. He currently hosts *Alec Presents*, an online show of fun with celebrities, and asks them questions about lessons learned and their favorite moments. Season Two: <https://myshc.tv/>
 - In 2018 the Shriners Chicago hospital renamed the hospital's popular indoor wheelchair basketball court as "Alec's Court"

"Without Shriners Children's, I wouldn't be able to dream as big as I do," said Alec. "I know anything is possible because the staff remind me all the time that I can do whatever I set my mind to." Alec is just one of more than 400,000 children who benefited from the hope and healing found at Shriners Children's location in 2021 in the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

About Shriners Children's

For nearly 100 years, Shriners Children's Chicago has provided care in orthopedic surgery, spine, cleft lip and palate, spinal cord injury/rehabilitation services to children who need it, regardless of the families' ability to pay or insurance status. Our children's hospital, on the outskirts of Chicago, is also part of the largest specialty pediatric healthcare system in North America. Shriners Children's is a network of nearly 20 close-knit communities, united in our commitment to caring for children. As healthcare in

America evolves to greater outpatient care and services, some of our locations are evolving too, reflective of an overall nationwide move toward ambulatory and outpatient-oriented care. That's why in 2022, our name evolved too, our healthcare system is now known as Shriners Children's, as we look forward to our next 100 years of providing the most amazing care. Learn more at shrinerschildrens.org. Follow us at [@shrinerschicago](https://twitter.com/shrinerschicago) and [@shrinerschildrens](https://twitter.com/shrinerschildrens)