PATIENT STORY

Seamus: Kennedy Krieger's Thumb War Champion

Seamus' three-and-a-half month stay at Kennedy Krieger Institute was marked with hard work, measurable progress and thumb war domination.

Every person Seamus encountered during his hospitalization, from the maintenance staff to his therapists, was invited to battle Seamus, who was usually the victor.

Seamus' passion for thumb wars came by necessity—his left thumb was the first part of his body he was able to move when he arrived at Kennedy Krieger. While his father, Travis, was stationed in Korea, where the family had lived for just six weeks, Seamus experienced a brain hemorrhage caused by Arteriovenous Malformation (AVM), an abnormal tangle of blood vessels in the brain.

Following emergency surgery in Seoul, Seamus was airlifted to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center for further treatment. He was then moved to Kennedy Krieger, where he worked with an extensive interdisciplinary team to address his therapeutic needs, including behavioral, neuropsychological, nutritional, physical, occupational, recreational, speech and music therapy.

In anticipation of the long road of therapy ahead for Seamus, the family—his parents, Jenny and Travis, and five siblings—put down roots in Maryland, renting a home in Ellicott City. Every day, one parent would accompany him for five hours of therapy and stay with him overnight, with the other remaining at home with Seamus' siblings, who range in age from five to 16. Originally from the Pacific Northwest, Seamus' family has no relatives in the area.

Maintaining meaningful traditions while so far from family and tending to Seamus' medical needs proved challenging for Jenny and Travis. They leaned on their Kennedy Krieger team to create special moments together. The family attended a holiday light festival, made gingerbread houses, went on outings with the Child Life and Recreation Therapies department, and partook in many dinners in the lobby of the hospital, where they had space to gather. "We were able to do so much together as a family during Seamus' time at Kennedy Krieger," said Jenny.

"Kennedy Krieger made it possible for Seamus to be at home with his family and has given us HOPE."

– Jenny, Seamus' mom

After his inpatient stay at Kennedy Krieger, Seamus was able to move to his family's new home and begin Kennedy Krieger's Specialized Transition Program (STP), a neurorehabilitative day hospital. Jenny says the continuity of care Seamus received at Kennedy Krieger enabled him to maintain the momentum of his progress as he moved from inpatient to outpatient care. "There was no gap in his care," she said. "We have seen Seamus make strides in his therapy and he is excited about his progress."

To learn more about Seamus, scan the QR code or visit: **KennedyKrieger.org/HopeHappens/Seamus**

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THIS is Kennedy Krieger.

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