

## Grantee Spotlight: Nick Nelson

NBC introduced the world to ten year-old Nick Nelson from Rosemont, Minnesota in November of 2007. Born with Popliteal pterygium syndrome, similar to CAF athletes Rudy Garcia-Tolson and Jake Frank, he couldn't fully extend his legs. The Today Show highlighted his bravery to amputate one of his legs in the hopes of reducing his limitations. Now, a bilateral through the knee amputee, his story has progressed significantly over the past year, thanks in large part to CAF.



After hearing Nick's story on the Today Show, CAF put his family in touch with the Franks (*see the Jake Frank Athlete Profile below for the touching meeting*). Jake Frank and his family had faced very similar challenges as the Nelson's, but with mentorship and support from Rudy Garcia-Tolson and CAF, Jake easily overcame them and is now a thriving young man and athlete. CAF's goal was to provide Nick and his family with a similar support system.

In June, CAF invited Nick and his family out to New York City to attend the Heroes, Heart and Hope Gala where funds were raised to help provide running feet to Nick and other challenged athletes through CAF's partnership with Ossur. Nick has been through a lot since the Gala including having

his other leg amputated and overcoming multiple complications from the surgery which forced him to remain in the hospital for 37 days.

Less than a two weeks after being released from the hospital, Nick attended his first Aspen Medical Products SAN DIEGO TRIATHLON CHALLENGE (SDTC). After Nick participated in the Challenged Athletes Kid's Run in his wheelchair with more than ten other challenged athlete kids at SDTC, he wandered off from the finish line area. His Mom Greta Nelson later found him near the water staring out into the Pacific Ocean.



*"I get it Mom" Nick said to his Mom as she walked up to him. "I can do anything I want. There's nothing I can't do!"*

Thanks to your support, Nick's dreams have come true! He recently received his very first pair of running feet making him more mobile and active than ever before, he's playing on his local sled hockey team and he's ready to take on the world.