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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Jamie's Smiles Gives Out \$2,000 in Grants to Improve the Lives of Children with Special Needs Amid Covid

In 2004, an amazingly gentle spirited and loving little boy named Jameson Bates, aka "Jamie", was born with Down syndrome. Devastated that he passed away from a rare seizure disorder in 2006, his parents, Mark and Gretchen Bates, created the "Jamie's Smiles" memorial and endowment funds to help other special needs children like their son and to raise awareness about the value of "special kids" in our community.

Jamie's Smiles is a fund created through the Shelby Community Foundation (SCF), a 501(c)(3), in memory of Jameson Bates. Their mission is to supply supplemental funding to outstanding programs that benefit special needs children, through grants and other financial means. Gretchen Bates recently announced that, "In this unusual year, we are pleased to announce that Jamie's Smiles has again been able to release \$2,000 in grants to help programs assisting children with special needs in our local community."

On October 19, 2020 the Macomb Infant Preschool Program (MIPP) and Glen H. Peters School, serving a combined total of over 1,000 students with special needs ages 3-26 in Macomb County, each received a \$1,000 grant from Jamie's Smiles. The money from these grants is for the purchase of aids to enhance seating options for babies & toddlers including high chairs, boosters, therapeutic balls, as well as cause & effect, speech therapy and communication assistive technology, and physical therapy items to work on core strength, balance, and vestibular sensory needs. Some items will be used on site at their locations and other will be utilized as short-term loan equipment for families to use for child development and in-home teaching.

When asked about their projects Bates said, "The Macomb Infant Preschool Program (MIPP) and Glen Peters School programs are hard at work in this atypical environment. They are adapting their teaching and therapy methods to continue to improve the lives of children with special needs like our son. We want to support their important efforts during this difficult time. We are thankful to have such high-quality programs in our own backyard to continue to help so many children progress and prosper."

Bates went on to say, "We are also excited to announce our Holiday Adoption program for families of children with special needs through MIPP. We are adopting families from the MIPP program who are raising children that have special needs. We rely on the support and generosity of people in the community who have a desire to change the lives of others for the better by offering them a hand-up. We invite everyone with a giving heart to join in our mission to change lives and help others."

Contributions via PayPal can be made by going to <https://jamiessmiles.org/make-a-donation> then click "Donate Now", input the amount you would like to donate, and finally select "Donate with PayPal". From here, follow the directions to complete your contribution. Of course you can still send your check made out to "SCF – Jamie's Smiles (Holiday Adoptions)" to us at: PO Box 183181, Shelby Township MI 48318 as well. For more information about Jamie's Smiles, please call 586/909-5305 or visit them on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/JamiesSmiles/> or on their website at www.JamiesSmiles.org. Jamie's Smiles is a fund held and administered by the Shelby Community Foundation.

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