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able, he began working hard every day in physical and occupational therapies, making his way through the inpatient unit at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta before transitioning to the hospital's day rehab program.

At first, his speech failed him, and he could only follow simple one-step directions, but over the course of his time at Children's, he began to experience substantial returns in his memory, motor and other functions with each passing day.

And when he finally learned what had happened to him, he had just one question: "Anybody else hurt?" Upon discovering that he was the only one seriously injured in the accident, he replied, "Thank God."

Through constant hard work and dedication, and with the support and prayers of everyone in his life, Lassiter's condition improved at a remarkable pace, as it does to this day.

Dr. Robyn Howarth, Lassiter's neuropsychologist at Children's, said that she, too, has been impressed with the vibrant young man's drive to get better.

"It's been really wonderful to see his ongoing improvements from the time I met him until the time he graduated day rehab (on Dec. 14), and I expect ongoing improvements and recovery over time," said Dr. Howarth. "When he graduated from our day rehab program, he was less than three months out from his accident.

"And so, the fastest rate of healing is going to continue for the first one to two years. He's still very early in his recovery, and I anticipate ongoing recovery moving forward. I'll see him again toward the end of this year to get an updated snapshot of where he's at in his recovery and what his needs are, especially pertaining to school."

Speaking for the family, Green said that the journey so far has been a rollercoaster from the start, since none of his doctors have been able to say exactly how things will turn out for Lassiter.

All the same, like Dr. Howarth, his other health care

providers have been pleased with his progress, and Lassiter has shown a desire to heal that's certainly making a difference in his recovery.

"The doctors told us every single day, they don't see kids progress like he did," said Green. "When he first came out of it, they asked him to draw the numbers on a clock, and he put all the numbers, 1 through 12, up top, because he couldn't remember what a clock even looked like. Now, he tells time. It's just amazing."

Since returning to school last month, Lassiter has earned several perfect scores on math tests and is doing well with vocabulary, too, making great strides with his Individualized Education Program as he works toward a full recovery.

"He had gotten good grades before the accident and good grades post-accident," said Steven Hyde, Lassiter's homeroom teacher, who drove down to Children's on many a weekend to visit with his student. "He's a remarkable young man.

"Lassiter is one of a very few that says, 'Yes, sir,' 'No, sir,' 'Yes, ma'am,' 'No, ma'am.' And he still self-advocates, which is to say, 'I don't get this, will you help me with this?' He recognizes that, 'I need to get this,' and he makes it happen."

All three of his teachers – Hyde, Sonja Krout, who teaches Reading and Social Studies, and Paraprofessional Adriana Strand – are extremely proud of Lassiter and happy to have him back.

Indeed, the entire school is happy to have Lassiter back, all of the students and his many friends, as well as the teachers and school administrators, and they awaited his return by rallying behind him all the way.

"Crises tend to bring people together and spur them to action, so right away, it was, 'They're going to need funding, they're going to need resources,'" said Elementary School Principal Jerry Bavero.

As Lassiter fought to recover from the worst of his injuries, his friends and teachers sold specially made wristbands and T-shirts to a supportive community in order



Lassiter Windsor graduating from day rehab at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta on Dec. 14.

to raise money to offset costs associated with his stay in Atlanta.

Quickly, the phrase "#LassiterStrong" and images of #00 – his youth sports jersey number – became synonymous with Lassiter's will to survive and get stronger, despite the odds having at first been stacked against him.

And while Lassiter's mom worked all last fall to keep people updated on his progress via Facebook, his 10U Panther teammates, inspired by his strength and determination, made it all the way to the playoffs of the Mountain Football League.

The Panthers were sorry to miss their teammate this past season, and Coach Levi Kendrick sure wishes he'd had his most coachable youth football player on the field.

"When you coach him, you better tell him exactly what to do, because he's going to do it right," said Kendrick.

Now, it's youth basketball season, and Lassiter is having fun dressing out for games. He still hasn't been medically cleared to play, but he gets massive cheers when making baskets during the halftime of each game.

Lassiter's dream is to become a professional basketball player when he grows up, and if he works as hard at basketball as he has on

his recovery, he could one day be dribbling in the footsteps of his favorite NBA player, Kevin Durant.

In addition to his extracurricular activities and schoolwork, Lassiter has been keeping busy with regular physical, occupational and speech therapy sessions with specialists from Union General Hospital.

By Lassiter's side throughout have been his siblings Liam Green, Lordus Green and Luka Windsor, his mom and her fiance Kevin Fox, as well as his Grandma, Papa, Grandpa, aunts, uncles, cousins and innumerable friends in the school and community.

And though the number of people he and his family want to thank is too great to enumerate – local emergency first responders, members of House of Prayer and other area churches, Chick-fil-A for hosting a Spirit Night, the Mountain Football League, everyone who prayed for Lassiter across the world and those who continue to pray, just to name a few – they are truly thankful to everyone who has made a difference in their lives.

"It's not over," said Fox. "He has come a long way, but there's still a long road to go, and those continued prayers are good."

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public to vote on and decide who would be the contest winner.

"We had about 25 submissions this year," said Postmaster Rachel Martin. "I displayed them in the lobby and had a little voting box out there with numbers on each stamp, and the public came in to vote with the little pieces of paper we had out there."

The voting boxes stayed in the lobby for two weeks before the winner was selected to ensure that many community members could have the opportunity to vote during their visit.

The stamp that Davenport designed displayed the Historic Union County Courthouse on the Blairsville Square, complete with the bell and a rustic look to make it more realistic.

"I wanted to draw the Old Courthouse because I think it's pretty," said Davenport.

Davenport also enjoys the bell tower and the way it sounds when it rings, along with the bricks on the building itself that stand out because of its age and location, according to Davenport and her family.

"She has always liked the courthouse," said Ashley Davenport, Lexi's mother. "I'm excited for her because she won the contest. She makes us pretty proud."

As Davenport moved through the tour, she excitedly asked questions about how the mail gets sorted in the right

places and where the mail of her family members gets stored before going to their mailboxes.

Gina Young, Lexi's teacher, thought that the stamp contest was a successful activity for children with a passion for art to participate in and enjoy.

"I definitely think that this is a great thing for the kids," said Young. "Everybody is not a ball player or anything like that, and it gives those that are more artistic the chance to express themselves.

"Lexi would ask me every day when we would find out about who the winner of the contest was, because she was that excited, and I could definitely see the school participating again for the kids that love it."

And though Davenport's design won't be used to mail letters, the main goal of the contest was successful in promoting involvement between the Post Office, the school and the community.

"I chose third grade because, at 8 years old, they are just starting to really get their artistic abilities, and that's why I picked them as the group to do the contest," said Martin. "This year was a very great success.

"The customers seemed to be thrilled, and not only did each of the students get individual votes, but a lot of the customers put something in there saying how all of the designs were so great. Everyone seemed to enjoy it, so we currently plan on bringing it back next year."

Food for Fines February at the Library

Overdue fines may be paid with food during the month of February at Union County Public Library.

Each canned or non-perishable food item with an unexpired "used-by" date donated will pay up to \$1 in overdue fines. Overdue fines must have accrued at Union County Public Library.

The library cannot accept donations in payment for lost or damaged materials or for services such as copies or faxes. All donations will be given to Union County Food Pantry. N(Feb6,214)CA