



# HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

## STATE OF MICHIGAN

### Appropriations Requests for Legislatively Directed Spending Items

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1. The sponsoring representative's first name:  
Kathy
2. The sponsoring representative's last name:  
Schmaltz
3. The cosponsoring representatives' names. All cosponsors must be listed. If none, please type 'n/a.' A signed letter from the sponsor approving the co-sponsorship and a signed letter from the member wishing to co-sponsor are required. Attach letters at question #9 below.  
n/a
4. Name of the entity that the spending item is intended for:  
THE DAVIES PROJECT
5. Physical address of the entity that the spending item is intended for:  
230 Bingham St., Suite 100, Lansing, MI 48912
6. If there is not a specific recipient, the intended location of the project or activity:  
Lansing, MI (Primary Service Area) and Jackson (Pilot)
7. Name of the representative and the district number where the legislatively directed spending item is located:  
House 23 Jason Morgan House 46 Kathy Schmaltz House 48 Jennifer Conlin House 49 Ann Bollin House 51 Matt Maddock House 71 Brian BeGole House 73 Julie Brixie House 74 Kara Hope House 75 Penelope Tsernoglou House 76 Angela Witwer House 77 Emily Dievendorf House 81 Stephen Wooden House 84 Carol Glanville
8. Purpose of the legislatively directed spending item. Please include how it provides a public benefit and why it is an appropriate use of taxpayer funding. Please also demonstrate that the item does not violate Article IV, S 30 of the Michigan Constitution. This project provides free family-focused rides to: 1) all kinds of medical care for seriously ill children whose families struggle with transportation, including physical therapy, occupational therapy, mental health care etc., 2) prenatal care and postnatal care for expecting women and their infants, and 3) the neonatal intensive

care unit for new parents whose infants are hospitalized. Bonding time between parents and infants is critical in the early weeks and months, as is the time in the hospital to learn how to best care for a medically fragile child when taken home. In each of the three cases, transportation to care is a barrier. In Lansing, where 70% of the children who rely on the specialty clinics are on Medicaid and miss 60% of their outpatient appointments, this service is critical. Our service has reduced this missed appointment rate to 20%. Close to 900 Lansing area families have been served by this agency since 2014, many receiving multiple rides per week. More than 4,200 rides were provided in 2024 to medical appointments that likely would have been missed without TDP. (This is 260% more rides than in 2019 when we provided 1,600.) The public will benefit by having access to this service when transportation is a barrier. Given that we have a waiting list, additional resources will allow us to serve more families in Lansing while also allowing us to test this model as a pilot project in Jackson, Michigan--where there is also a significant need. Eventually, this model could be adapted to every community since the transportation issues are the same throughout the state.

Children who meet their medical needs are healthier, attend more school, have more productive adult lives and cost the public less. Parents whose children receive the medical care they need miss less work and are able to provide a more stable home environment for their families. The hospitals and insurance companies benefit thanks to close monitoring of pediatric disease that results in fewer emergency department visits and fewer missed appointments that are costly for any medical system. Last, our volunteer drivers provide a connection to the community that enhances trust in the medical system and inspires hope among those who are already struggling on so many fronts. An added bonus is that people from different walks of life are having the opportunity to interact in a way that is healthy and beneficial for all concerned.

9. Attach documents here if needed:

Attachments added to the end of this file.

10. The amount of state funding requested for the legislatively directed spending item.

1000000

11. Has the legislatively directed spending item previously received any of the following types of funding? Check all that apply.

["Private", "Local"]

12. Please select one of the following groups that describes the entity requesting the legislatively directed spending item:

Non-profit organization

13. For a non-profit organization, has the organization been operating within Michigan for the preceding 36 months?

Yes

14. For a non-profit organization, has the entity had a physical office within Michigan for the preceding 12 months?

Yes

15. For a non-profit organization, does the organization have a board of directors?

Yes

16. For a non-profit organization, list all the active members on the organization's board of directors and any other officers. If this question is not applicable, please type 'n/a.'

Arianna E. Ridderbusch, President, LaSean Thompson, Vice President, David Baker, Treasurer, Cheri Salazar, RN, CPNP-PC/AC, CHPPN, Secretary, Lalitha Gundamiraj, MD, Mikhail Murshak, Jann Nestell, Paul Schmidt, Dr. Aditi Sharangpani, MD, Pamela Riley Miklavcic, PhD (Non-Voting), Dr. H. Dele Davies, MD, MPH, MHCH, Honorary Board Member (Non-Voting), Nick Nauta, CFP, CLU, (Non-Voting), Janet Chegwidden, Honorary Board Member (Non-Voting), Tammy Averill, Honorary Board Member (Non-Voting)

17. "I certify that neither the sponsoring representative nor the sponsoring representative's staff or immediate family has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the legislatively directed spending item."

Yes, this is correct

18. Anticipated start and end dates for the legislatively directed spending item:

January 1, 2026-December 31, 2026

19. "I hereby certify that all information provided in this request is true and accurate."

Yes

# THE DAVIES PROJECT WANTS YOU!

Are you looking to make a difference, but are short on time and need some flexibility?

Many families struggle to afford reliable transportation, making it difficult for them to access essential healthcare.

The Davies Project needs compassionate volunteers to drive medically fragile children, expectant and postnatal moms to essential medical appointments or parents to visit their infants in the NICU.

By providing transportation, you'll ensure these individuals receive the care they need and make a significant impact on their lives.

Together, let's create a brighter future for all of us!



[www.TheDaviesProject.org](http://www.TheDaviesProject.org)



## INFORMATION



### Address

230 Bingham Street, Ste 100  
Lansing, MI 48912



### Drekia Cook,

Volunteer Recruiter

[Mardrekia@TheDaviesProject.org](mailto:Mardrekia@TheDaviesProject.org)



(517) 582-3145

### Our Mission:

To connect families to resources and community by providing reliable transportation for seriously ill children and pregnant women to essential healthcare.



### Why Volunteer ?

Did you know that 70% of the children that rely on Lansing's subspecialty clinics are on Medicaid and regularly **miss 60%** of their outpatient appointments, usually **due to transportation barriers?**

Our dedicated drivers provide rides that are vital for the health and well-being of hundreds of children in Greater Lansing.

# VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



**Become a  
VOLUNTEER  
DRIVER**



# Join Our Traditional Volunteer Driver Program!

Join us in making a difference by signing up for rides that fit your schedule.

You choose the day, the time and distance of your drive. You'll use your own vehicle to transport patients to critical medical appointments and therapies.

**Think of it as a neighbor helping a neighbor!**

## Drive for a Cause:

Transport tri-county children with serious medical conditions, expectant and postnatal moms to essential medical appointments or parents to visit their infants in the NICU.

Offer support and understanding to families facing transportation challenges and complex health issues.



- optional mileage reimbursement

Scan here to inquire about becoming a volunteer driver!



## WE NOW HAVE TWO OPTIONS TO DRIVE WITH THE DAVIES PROJECT!

### Join Our Team of Compassionate Drivers!

#### To qualify, you must:

- Be 21+ with a valid driver's license
- Have Michigan auto insurance and a clean driving record
- Own a working cell phone
- Pass a background check
- Complete driver orientation
- Be compassionate, reliable, and culturally sensitive
- Understand weather-related driving limitations
- Respect client privacy and confidentiality



## Join Our On-Call Volunteer Driver Program!

Help us fill last-minute transportation needs for medically fragile children, expectant and postnatal moms to essential medical appointments.

Be ready to step in when unexpected appointments arise or other drivers face unforeseen circumstances.

### Why Volunteer as an On-Call Driver?

- **Make a Difference:** Help families in need by providing crucial transportation.
- **Stay Flexible:** Choose your own hours. We may or may not call you, but having you ready means a lot when unforeseen circumstances arise. Regardless, you get credit for the hours you set aside!
- **Connect with Others:** Join a supportive community of volunteers dedicated to helping others.

[www.TheDaviesProject.org](http://www.TheDaviesProject.org)

## More than just a ride

Did you know that 70% of the children who rely on Lansing's medical subspecialty clinics are on Medicaid, and regularly miss 60% of their appointments? Too often, this is because of poor access to transportation. Dependable access to medical care helps doctors provide timely treatment and improves health outcomes. The rides our drivers provide are critical for the health of children in our community.

Our job is to pair families with highly-screened, highly-trained volunteer drivers to ensure every child has access to the support services he or she needs. Best of all is the camaraderie that develops between drivers and families, breaking through the significant isolation families often experience when caring for a sick child. This explains our tag line: *more than just a ride.*

## Do you have a child with a serious or long-term illness?

If you have trouble taking your child to appointments due to transportation challenges, The Davies Project can help. Our highly-trained volunteer drivers will provide you with timely, round-trip rides for free. We only ask that you let us know as far in advance as you can about upcoming appointments. Once we hear from you, we will do our best to have a driver available.

We will take your child and you to the following kinds of appointments in Greater Lansing: subspecialty care, primary care, dental care, eye care, mental health visits, occupational therapy, and physical therapy.

We also provide rides to prenatal care for expectant moms and to the NICU at Sparrow Hospital for parents with hospitalized infants.

Give us a call at (517) 899-2425 to learn more about becoming a Davies Project family.

For information, please contact:

Laura Young, Family Services Coordinator  
(517) 899-2425 or [laura@thedaviesproject.org](mailto:laura@thedaviesproject.org)

Pam Miklavcic, Founder and CEO  
(517) 775-7457 or [pam@thedaviesproject.org](mailto:pam@thedaviesproject.org)

[WWW.THEDAVIESPROJECT.ORG](http://WWW.THEDAVIESPROJECT.ORG)  
230 Bingham Street, Suite 100  
Lansing, MI 48912

  
MSU FEDERAL CREDIT UNION  
Corporate Sponsor

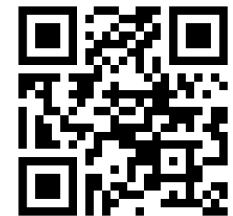
## THE DAVIES PROJECT



## What is The Davies Project

We are a 501 (c)3 nonprofit organization that provides support to Lansing area families with a long-term, seriously ill child. Sometimes a car is not available and public transportation is not the best choice with a child who is sick. When that is the case, we provide free rides to and from all local medical appointments. We will provide a volunteer driver in a clean and safe vehicle. Some appointments are last minute and sometimes other family members are in tow—not to worry, our services are designed to adapt to these circumstances!

**There is no charge for rides provided by The Davies Project; we are here to support your family.**



*Keeping all your appointments means fewer visits to the emergency department, fewer hospitalizations, and better long-term health outcomes for your child.*

Rides to prenatal appointments



Rides to outpatient subspecialty care





Rides to dental  
and eye  
appointments

The Davies Project doesn't just provide transportation. I got to know the drivers and build friendships, and that's what has helped my family the most. Thank you!

- Mother of a TDP child

## Join our team of volunteer drivers

Interested in making a difference in your community? Do you have a special place in your heart for children? The Davies Project is looking to grow its team of passionate, committed individuals to drive a child (and family members) to local medical appointments. It also seeks drivers willing to transport expectant moms to prenatal care and parents with hospitalized infants to the Sparrow NICU.

The demand for our services is growing and we need your help. As a volunteer driver, you will help improve the health and well-being of kids and families in Greater Lansing while driving only as much as it is convenient for you to drive.

The online application can be found at [www.thedaviesproject.org](http://www.thedaviesproject.org)

## Make a donation


Your generosity can help improve the quality of life for local children with serious health challenges. Donations are 100% tax deductible and go toward recruiting and training drivers as well as informing new families about our services.

You can donate online at:  
[thedaviesproject.org/donate](http://thedaviesproject.org/donate),

or send a check to:  
The Davies Project  
230 Bingham Street #100  
Lansing, MI 48912



Rides to primary care  
appointments



To everyone at TDP, you're the best thing that has happened to our family. Words can't express how you all have truly, deeply, touched our hearts. We thank you.

- A TDP Family

Rides to the Sparrow NICU



## **The Davies Project for Mid-Michigan Children**

### **Why This Agency Has Potential for the Great State of Michigan**

**July 24, 2023**

#### **Mission Statement:**

*To connect families to resources and community by providing reliable transportation for seriously ill children and pregnant women to essential healthcare.*

#### **Brief History**

Pamela Riley Miklavcic, PhD founded The Davies Project (TDP) after her experiences with the health care system in Lansing, Michigan during her oldest son's battle with cancer. (He is now 27 and healthy.) Reflecting on that time, she says, "One may have the best health care in the world but without supportive resources and a manageable way to access that care, success at regaining health is greatly limited."

Starting in late 2014, TDP began offering free rides to medical care for seriously ill children and accompanying family members. Rides are provided by well-vetted and well-trained volunteer drivers who use their own vehicles. Most are retirees from teaching, social work, and medical backgrounds. TDP has dozens of active drivers who are encouraged to drive as much or as little as suits their schedules.

A parent or guardian is always present, and siblings are allowed to accompany the child as well. If a child is seen by a specialty clinic for any reason, they qualify for rides to every kind of

medical care. TDP also drives expecting women to prenatal care and new parents of hospitalized infants to the neonatal intensive care unit at Sparrow Hospital.

Everything TDP does is geared towards helping Lansing area children be as healthy as possible. It is much more than a taxi service. In fact, TDP's tagline is ***More Than Just A Ride***. When a driver takes a family to an appointment, they wait to take them home again and are together for about three hours. TDP drivers are excellent listeners and there is plenty of time to get to know one another. Volunteers carry gently used children's books for families to keep as well as snack bags and other donations that the community makes available to the families served by TDP.

The Davies Project has pioneered a way to compassionately and effectively address a serious barrier to accessing medical care. Thanks to nine years developing this model, children are better able to reach their best health possible. With proper state funding and support, this model could be successfully implemented throughout the state of Michigan.

## Statistics

1. Seventy percent of the children who rely on the Lansing area specialty clinics are on Medicaid, and miss 60% of their medical appointments. (These percentages are similar in other communities statewide.) (Sparrow Hospital outpatient clinics, consistent from year to year according to staff)
2. Eighty percent of pediatric care takes place in the outpatient setting. This means families spend most of their time managing a child's illness at home, in an isolated environment. (MSU College of Human Medicine Report, 2010)
3. One in five households in Michigan has a child with a serious medical condition. (MSU College of Human Medicine Report, 2010)
4. Lack of transportation significantly affects access to health care and disproportionately affects those on the low end of the socioeconomic spectrum.
5. Seventy-five percent of Lansing's population lives in South Lansing. By car, it takes 10-15 minutes to travel to Sparrow's main campus or the MSU Clinical Center. It takes 1-2 hours by bus and involves at least one transfer and significant walking. Doing this with a sick child, another toddler or two, diaper bags, medical equipment, and/or in bad weather puts unnecessary pressure on families who must do this multiple times a day or week, particularly when trying to hold down a job(s) to avoid an interruption in income or health care benefits. It is overwhelming and exhausting. (University of Michigan Data Analysis Class, 2022)
6. In Ingham County, where Lansing is located, nearly 22% of the families live below the poverty line and the unemployment rate is higher than in other similar parts of the state. Too often, those with the least resources are faced with the greatest health challenges. In addition, care is not always coordinated across doctors and/or ancillary services, and more and more often, patients must travel to a range of subspecialty services located

both near to and far from home. Caring for a sick child is difficult in the best of circumstances. For the poorest among us, it can be a recipe for disaster—both financially and in terms of the emotional toll it can have on a family. (U.S. Census, 2022)

7. Volunteer drivers from The Davies Project enable families to access health care while providing companionship, access to other community services, snack bags and books for children to keep. To date, we estimate that we are helping 10% of the children in our community who need us. We need state assistance to do better. (extrapolation of data from Sparrow Hospital and MSU, 2019)
8. We have now served more than 800 families with thousands of rides annually. (2022 TDP Gratitude and Impact Report)

### **Consequences of Children Missing Their Medical Appointments**

- When sick children miss their medical appointments, they do not get better. Generally, their health deteriorates.
- Children who are sick tend to miss lots of school. Since lower levels of education are connected to future earnings, sick children with little education and training are more likely to become adults who cannot find a job. This affects the community as a whole.
- When families miss work to care for sick children, their financial situation is negatively impacted, including their ability to save, spend and invest. Additionally, parents of special needs children have higher rates of anxiety and depression, negatively affecting their ability to stay employed.
- Children who miss appointments, especially those with chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes and sickle cell anemia, are more likely to be admitted to the emergency department and then hospitalized because their medical conditions deteriorate. This causes an extra strain on the child and family, as well as the medical system, that is completely preventable.

### **Who Qualifies?**

Rides are available for:

- Children who rely on a specialist for any kind of serious health condition. Through TDP, they may receive rides to all medical appointments, including physical therapy, occupational therapy, well-child checks, immunizations, dental and eye care, and mental health services.



- Pregnant women to prenatal appointments and for a year postpartum. Their infants also receive rides to medical care for the first year of life.
- Parents of hospitalized infants to the neonatal intensive care unit so that they can bond with their baby and learn best at-home practices for when they take their infant home.

Rides are open to those who do not have safe and reliable transportation, including:

- Temporary situations such as when a family's car is out of order, or
- Families with one car who need that car during the day to maintain employment, income and health insurance.

### **Why Rides from The Davies Project are Critical**

At The Davies Project, we recognize that taxis and buses do not work well as a means of transport for sick kids. The process of using them is cumbersome in the least. They are also cost-prohibitive and dangerous for children with immune-compromised systems or those with social-emotional types of trauma. Likewise, expected co-pays add up quickly (becoming impossible for many families) and the number of family members that can accompany a child is not flexible. In addition, the amount of notice needed to arrange available transportation is too long to be of help in last minute or emergency scenarios. Last, when parents are not allowed to take siblings to appointments, additional babysitting expenses are incurred—leaving parents with unsatisfactory choices about how to use their already-tight money.

Oftentimes, given the options, the most rational choice is for parents to skip a child's appointment, especially if the child seems well that week. For children with asthma, diabetes, and sickle cell anemia, skipping an appointment is especially detrimental. Too frequently, they are seen in an emergency room setting following a missed appointment and admitted to the hospital for conditions that, under tighter outpatient monitoring, could have been avoided.

### **Ride Provision to Overcome Distrust of Medical System**

One challenge we believe we are helping to overcome is a great distrust of the medical system, particularly among people of color whose families long remember tragic medical events such as the Syphilis Study at Tuskegee (1932-72). Such wariness and cynicism discourages people, to this day, from wanting to access health care<sup>1</sup>.

Much of this distrust is, sadly, rooted in racism. According to multiple public health studies done over more than thirty years, racism is a public health crisis in America. In

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<sup>1</sup> This point was discussed freely two years ago, during focus groups we conducted with families who had and had not received free rides to medical care from The Davies Project. Those who had received rides from us described more positive interactions with the health care system than those who did not.

fact, research has shown that racial health disparities don't just affect poor African Americans, but they also cross class lines.

According to The American Academy of Family Physicians, decades of systemic segregation and racism have resulted in many inequities in accessing quality health care. While direct discrimination is illegal, some organizations do so indirectly, for example based on insurance status, which disproportionately affects non-white populations. We see this everyday at The Davies Project.

In an attempt to counter this situation, our volunteers are frequently helpful when it comes to navigating the healthcare system. Our director of engagement steps in as needed, too. They hold space with families, providing a supportive presence that can help prevent an anxious parent from negatively spiraling to a darker frame of mind. Volunteers use the simple art of conversation to develop confidence and trust with the families. This relationship building has the power to positively address the detrimental effects of institutional racism that continue to plague our country.

### **How *The Davies Project* Could Benefit the State of Michigan:**

By more tightly managing diseases through close outpatient management, there are fewer visits to the emergency department, fewer hospitalizations, less co-morbidity, and better long-term health outcomes for children. This results in cost savings for the hospitals as well as cost savings at the state level through Medicaid.

We are already seeing the impact of this program in Lansing. Imagine the statewide pediatric health improvement and cost savings by investing in this program throughout Michigan.

Ann Arbor, Detroit, Flint, Traverse City and Marquette have already expressed a sincere interest.

### **Next Steps for the State of Michigan to Consider**

- *The Davies Project seeks support from the state of Michigan to annually sustain the great strides we are making in pediatric medical transportation in Lansing. We also seek support to expand our work to other communities in Michigan with our long-term goal being a statewide TDP network to ensure the best health possible for every Michigan child.*

What we have developed works better than any other solution in the state and we are proud of what we have accomplished.

While Medicaid funds may be tricky to direct towards The Davies Project at this time, we urge you to examine CalAIM in California, referred to me by the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, Xavier Becerra, in a joint meeting two weeks ago with U.S. Representative Elissa Slotkin. To learn more about this program, please visit:

<https://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/california-efforts-to-address-behavioral-health-and-sdoh-a-look-at-whole-person-care-pilots/>

The waiver received by the state of California allows Medicaid funding to be applied to social determinants of health support as well as to direct medical expenses. It is all part of leveling the playing field, ensuring adequate medical access and care for all residents, regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic standing or any other differentiating trait that may lead to inequitable care.

- The components of the model we have developed in Lansing are easily transferable to other communities and deserve attention by the state of Michigan. They include the following:
  - A staffing plan for an effective agency
  - Policies and Procedures that are stringently followed by our staff and volunteers
  - Handbooks for staff, volunteer drivers, and board members
  - Assisted Rides software for tracking all driving activities, schedules and data
  - Bloomerang software for tracking all donors and donations
  - A background check and screening process for all volunteers and staff
  - A bookkeeping system to track all financial transactions and grant spend downs
  - Successful grant application templates with which to seek community-level funds
  - Website that can be shared, including volunteer applications
  - Volunteer recruitment plan
  - Benevon Fundraising Tools
  - Printed materials that can be tweaked for use in any community
  - PowerPoint access for presentations
  - Strategic plans on which to model future efforts
  - Insurance options
  - Advice at the ready from those who created this program

Please feel free to reach out with questions at any time.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pam Miklavcic, Founder and CEO

[pam@thedaviesproject.org](mailto:pam@thedaviesproject.org), 517-775-7457, [www.thedaviesproject.org](http://www.thedaviesproject.org)



230 Bingham Street, Suite 100  
Lansing, MI 48912

[www.thedaviesproject.org](http://www.thedaviesproject.org)

517-515-5122 (general information)

517-582-3145 (to volunteer)

517-899-2425 (for rides)

The Davies Project connects families to resources and community by providing reliable transportation for seriously ill children and pregnant women to essential healthcare. In particular, when transportation is a challenge, well-screened and trained volunteer drivers to provide rides to:

- All medical appointments for children with a serious health condition
- Prenatal and Postnatal appointments for pregnant women
- The NICU for parents with hospitalized infants

Rides are important in our community where 70% of the children in subspecialty clinics are on Medicaid and miss 60% of their appointments.



*I drive for The Davies Project because I like being part of something that has a positive impact in our community. I always enjoy the rides with children that chatter to me about whatever topic is on their mind.*

-- TDP volunteer driver

Visit [www.thedaviesproject.org](http://www.thedaviesproject.org) to learn more about how to help our community's children and families be healthy.

Or, contact [mardrekia@thedaviesproject.org](mailto:mardrekia@thedaviesproject.org)