Cohen is a 19-year-old young adult who was diagnosed with Hereditary Spastic Paraplegia, Inherited Peripheral Neuropathy (a form of Muscular Dystrophy), and Friedreich’s Ataxia in 2015. These rare diseases affect the spinal cord and cause muscle and leg weakness, along with cardiac complications and swallowing problems.

Cohen has the most positive attitude, however, never complaining about all that he has lost. He loves going to the movies, gaming on his XBOX, and anything Star Wars.

Cohen needs a wheelchair accessible van to continue to enjoy outings with his friends and family. His parents currently transfer him from his wheelchair into a car, then break his wheelchair down and lift it into the trunk. This process is very difficult for Cohen – and for those caring for him. Cohen’s family – his parents and two brothers – are very devoted to him, but the expenses are just too great for them to manage without help.

To donate (in any amount!), go to the FOCUS website OR send a check to FOCUS, 3825 Presidential Pkwy, #103, Atlanta, GA 30340 (we love checks, no fees!). Be sure to write “Fund A Need” in the Comments – and feel free to include an encouraging message to Cohen!

About Wheelchair Accessible Vans. Adding a lift or ramp to a van for a wheelchair is expensive! The van must be ‘converted’ to add the mechanics and weight support needed so the wheelchair can roll onto the lift / ramp and into the van; the floor of the van must be lowered – or the top of the van must be raised so that the person in the wheelchair has head-clearance. This usually means that the van must be ‘cut’ and modified extensively. Once the conversion is done, however, the person can stay in his/her wheelchair for the ride! No lifting person OR wheelchair! The average cost of a conversion is $15,000. This does NOT include the original cost of the van!

For questions about Fund A Need, please contact Lucy Cusick at lucy:focus-ga.org