

EQUIPMENT GIVEAWAY

Some Valley students take first rides on donated bikes



Robert Inglis/The Daily Item

Randy Prunty, left, of Blackburn's, watches Dayah Oyar, 16, get pushed in her new bicycle donated by Variety by her brother Martin, 14, as her mother Pamela watches outside the CSIU in Montandon on Tuesday.

Children's charity holds event at CSIU

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MONTANDON — Dayah Oyar enjoys watching her brothers ride their bikes around the cul-de-sac in their Bloomsburg neighborhood. Fortunately for her, just watching will be a thing of the past.

Dayah was one of 10 chil-



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dren to receive donations from children's charity Variety on Tuesday. The donations were in the form of adaptive mobility equipment — bikes and strollers — given to local children with disabilities. Mickey Sgro, a Variety

board member, made the drive from western Pennsylvania to be part of Tuesday's event at the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit (CSIU). Tuesday's giveaway pushed the charity past 375 bikes donated this year.

"It's worth it. I'd drive anywhere to make sure these kids and families get this equipment," he said. "You

see kids doing something no one ever thought they ever would do. Just happiness in their face."

Variety launched its My Bike Program in November 2012 to impact kid's lives and build a movement within the community. Tuesday's event was in partnership with the

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CSIU and Blackburn's Medical Equipment.

Dayah visited the CSIU with her mother, Pamela Henderson, of Bloomsburg, and her brothers, Martin and Darren. She was presented with one of six adaptable bikes, which will present new opportunities, her mother said.

"I felt so happy," Henderson said. "She loves to watch her brothers ride their bikes. She just laughs. Now she can go alongside them. It's going to mean everything to her. It's another opportunity for her to get as close to normal as possible."

Each bike costs about \$1,800, Sgro said. They are free to families who go through the application process. Funds are raised through a mix of private donors and foundation money.

"This is the best part of my job," said Jennifer Williams, CSIU's director of Special Education and Early Child Services. "Whenever I can be around the students and see the smiles on their faces, it's special. We can all remember the first time we rode a bike. For some of these kids, this might be the first time.

"It gives them a level of



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Variety board member Mickey Sgro, left, watches Henry Anspach, 6, test out his new bike with help from his mother, Robyn, at the CSIU in Montandon on Tuesday.

independence, to ride bikes with siblings and friends. It just makes me smile."

Robyn Anspach and her son Henry, 6, also picked up a vehicle on Tuesday at the CSIU.

While she was grateful for the program that will give her son more opportunities, she

did have one worry: "We probably won't get him off of it," she said with a laugh.

Since November 2012, nearly 3,500 adaptive bikes, adaptive strollers, and communication devices have been presented to eligible kids throughout Variety's 71-county service

area in Pennsylvania and West Virginia, accounting for more than \$5 million worth of adaptive equipment.

Interested families can visit www.varietypittsburgh.org/applynow to learn more or apply or call the Variety office directly at 724-933-0460.