

Spotlight on Katy Actor DALTON GRAY

A chance encounter and severe injury led to Dalton Gray discovering his love of acting

Written by Cherri Northcutt | Select Photography by DBH Photography



Dalton Gray and actress Kristen Devine take a break while filming *The Alchemy of Thieves*



Television Actress Taylor Hay and Gray often attend many of the same events

Although fans of the HBO drama series *Treme* will recognize him as Jack Colson, the son of a police detective in post-Katrina New Orleans, 15-year-old Dalton Gray never set out to become an actor.

At the age of 13, Dalton and his mother, Lynette Gray were out shopping when a woman approached them. “She asked if I wanted to do a back-to-school print ad,” remembers Dalton. He declined the offer but after a motocross injury left him with a broken collar bone, he reconsidered.

Extreme Racing

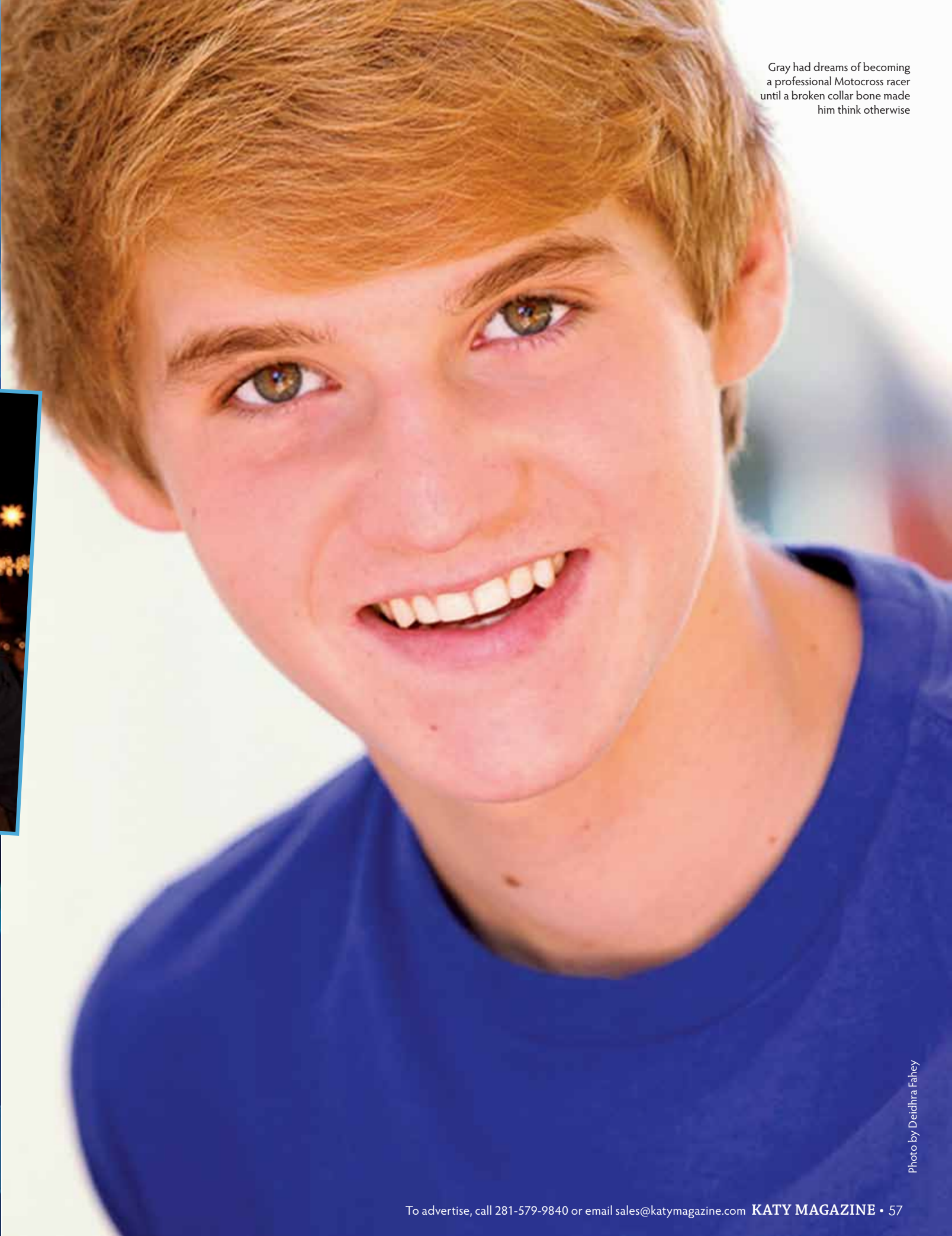
Before he began acting, Dalton had been at the top of his game as a National Level Motocross Racer with over 100 victories. The decision to quit racing was certainly not an easy one for the accomplished racer. “I haven’t raced in over six months, and I miss my motocross friends,” he adds.

Motocross racing is considered one of the most popular extreme sports but poses serious risks to its participants. Riders pilot into the air 70 feet or higher at high speeds as they careen around the track. “There have been some fatal crashes,” Lynette says. “Tragically, Dalton has lost a few friends.”

Dalton himself suffered a dozen broken bones and a dislocated hip in the years he spent racing. “I decided I had a better future in acting,” laughs Dalton, and he made the call.

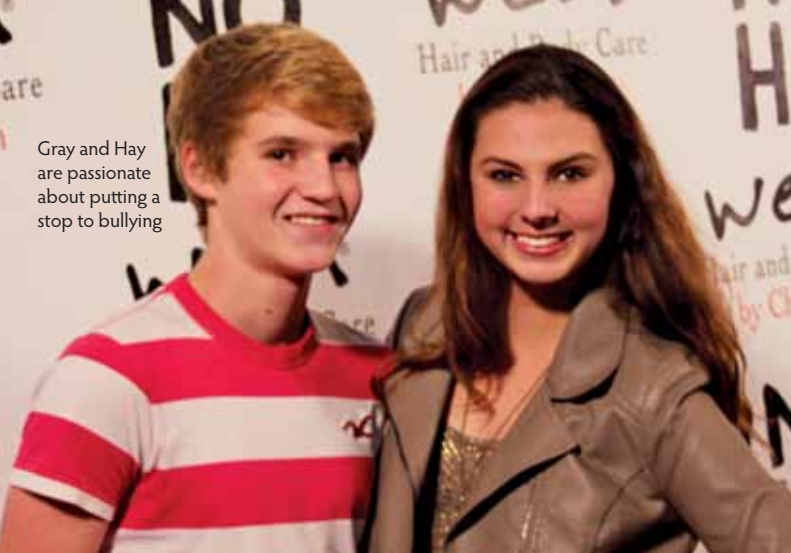
Professional Success

Dalton’s first audition opened up a whole new world that the Grays almost felt unprepared for. “We were totally new at this,” Dalton shares. “But I did get the part.” Landing a



Gray had dreams of becoming a professional Motocross racer until a broken collar bone made him think otherwise

Photo by Deidhra Fahey



Gray and Hay are passionate about putting a stop to bullying



Gray and Jason Newman star in the short film *The Alchemy of Thieves*

supporting role in the movie *I Lack*, an independent film scheduled for release in 2013, Dalton began the path to a lifelong love of acting.

"I had fun on set, meeting new people," Dalton remembers. "We got to ride our bikes through the set, and the catering was amazing." He was hooked.

After his first role, Dalton's career progressed quickly. He appeared in several commercials, TV shows, and movies. "Within his first year of acting he was in a feature film, had a trailer, and he's eligible to join the Screen Actors Guild," Lynette shares.

On the sets Dalton appreciates and enjoys the spoils of his profession. "They really cater to him," Lynette laughs. "They have a shopper for his clothes on *Treme*, and they're always bringing him food."

"It's amazing to be spoiled like that," he shares. "But I won't let it go to my head." Through it all, Dalton understands the importance of professionalism. "It's a job," he says. "If you're rude or immature, they're not going to hire you again."

Katy Support

With his shooting schedule in New Orleans and upcoming auditions in Los Angeles, Dalton spends a lot of time traveling. "It's hard sometimes because you don't get to see your friends every day, but you have to be an adult about it," he admits. Lynette enjoys the travel and the quality time with her son. "Sometimes it does interfere with his wanting to be a kid though," she shares.

Last year, Dalton was able to attend ninth-grade classes at Katy High School, although missing a large amount of time

due to his acting schedule. "We decided to enroll him in K12.com," Lynette explains. "It's a homeschool, and he's still required to participate in STAAR testing."

"Seeing myself on screen is weird," Dalton laughs. "I think, 'Do I really sound like that?'" Dalton enjoyed life and school in Katy and sometimes feels the pull for his hometown. However, Dalton has found his friends to be very accepting of his acting career. "My old friends haven't changed," he grins.

Gray Gives Back

One cause Dalton is passionate about is his work to stop bullying. He's been honored with official recognition from Governor Rick Perry for his efforts to raise awareness of the dangers of bullying. "I saw a lot of kids get bullied in school," Dalton remembers. "Kids these days are ruthless, but you can stand up against bullies."

Dalton has appeared in a number of anti-bullying PSAs and he's started his own anti-bullying Facebook page, *Kids joining together to end Bullying*.

Dalton also enjoyed participating in a toy drive benefiting Toys for Tots through Showbiz Kidz Foundation at which he signed autographs with other young actors. He also handed out toys and shoes to families from the Ronald McDonald House with young actors in the Shoe Crew. "I didn't care about the stars and the fame," Dalton explains. "Seeing those kids' faces when I passed out the toys, those were the best experiences of my life." KM



CHERRI NORTHCUTT is a freelance journalist and native of Houston. She and her family love living in Katy.



Gray's career has progressed quickly since his first role in *I Lack*

Dalton Details

- Plays Jack Colson on HBO's *Treme*
- Appears in the 2013 feature film, *No One Lives*
- Favorite actors are Kevin James, Adam Sandler, and Rob Schneider
- National level Motocross racer
- Has a pet bearded dragon
- Favorite TV show is AMC's *The Walking Dead*