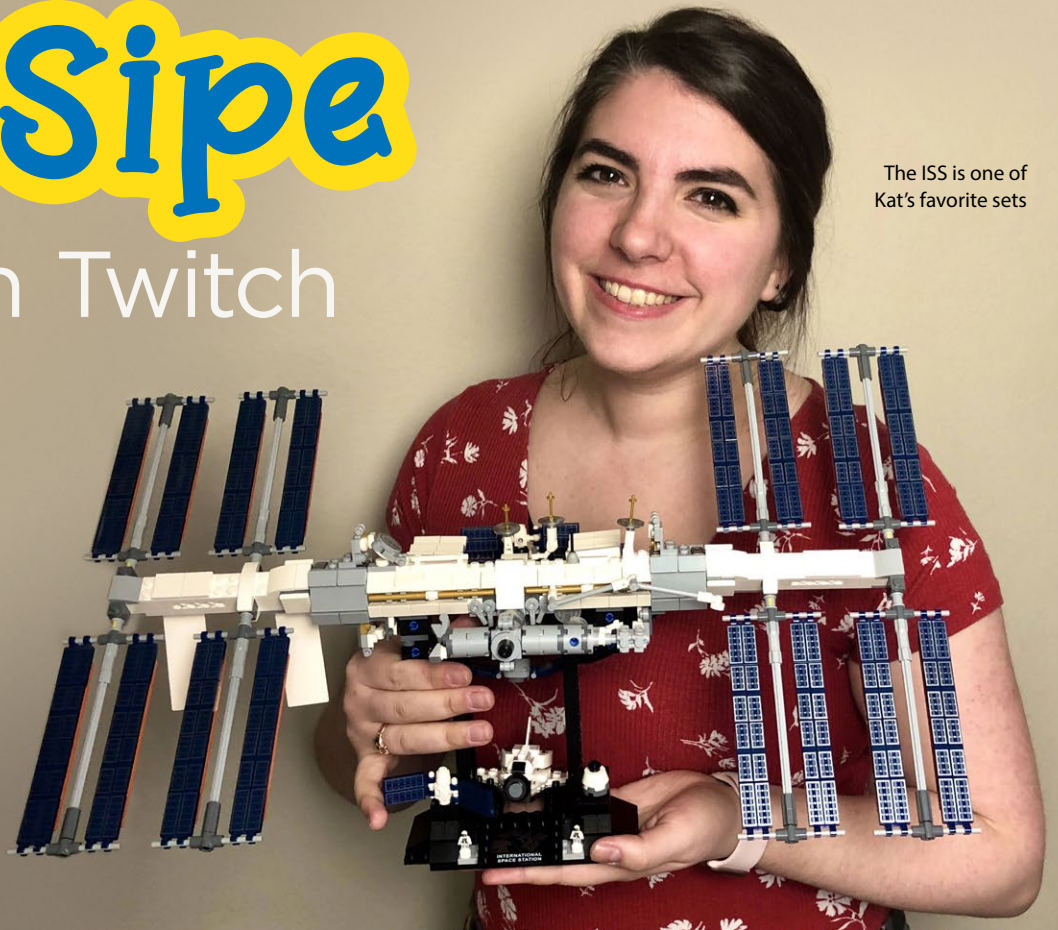


Kat Sipe

RLFM on Twitch

The ISS is one of Kat's favorite sets



My experience on the Twitch platform actually started because of my husband. He used to be in the food industry and wanted to do cooking content creation. We initially started on YouTube, but we jumped over to Twitch as the interaction in real-time was much more appealing. After he had been on Twitch for about six months I decided to start my own channel. Initially I was more of a gaming channel, but I started with the LEGO video games. During that time I bought the Hogwarts castle and thought it would be fun to build it on-stream. I had so much fun building it that I basically shifted my channel from a gaming channel with a bit of LEGO to a LEGO channel with a bit of gaming.

After I made that switch I started looking for more LEGO people to follow on Instagram and I came across BrickinNick (another RLFM here on the LAN). He had been doing LEGO building for several years and was able to plug me into the Brickbuilding community on Twitch. I also got to meet him at TwitchCon 2019 (which is Twitch's in-person convention with around 75-100K attendees). After that I became much more solidified in the Brickbuilding community and in the Discord that both streamers and members use to share MOCs, talk about upcoming sets, and discuss techniques. The community is great and very supportive of each other. Twitch has

features where you can "raid" into one another, so when you're finished with your stream you can bring your community to a new channel. This is a feature YouTube doesn't have. We're also starting to see a wonderful blending of the Food & Drink communities and the Brickbuilding communities because of mine and my husband's channels, as we have viewers who frequent both channels (and who then branch out to follow other streamers in these categories).

As far as my journey to become an RLFM, that started when I attended Bricks Cascade 2020. It was my first convention (which I touch on in the

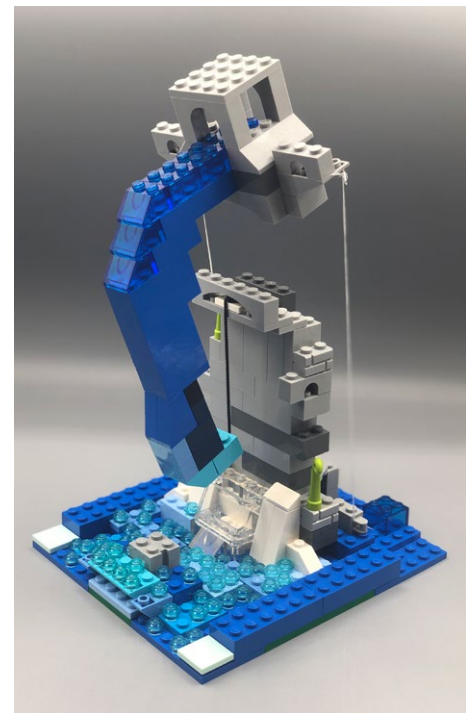
article, and I have an additional blog post I wrote specifically about the convention). I was really inspired by the WBI workshop and realized that we needed more women builders represented on that LAN. From February until I applied in May 2020 I really worked at pushing my channel and networking with other groups, like TrickyBricks (who has created "TrickyLug", an unofficial LEGO group), and the GayFOL communities. I was able to apply for RLFM status in May 2020. I was also contacted by Alyssa for other opportunities to work with LEGO, as she said she really liked what I was doing on Twitch. I had to wait until



Kat's re-creation of the therapy gym at her hospital where she works as a Doctor of Physical Therapy



Kat with Hogwarts, her first build on Twitch



Kat's waterfall tensegrity build, made when the tensegrity challenge occurred last year



A collaboration from Kat and her husband to bake and build a cake (from Milk Bar which is a popular chain in the US)



Kat at Bricks Cascade 2020, her first AFOL Networking event and LEGO convention

October for them to review my application, and in mid-November I got the email that I had been accepted into the LAN. Twitch was a big part of that, but in my onboarding interview Jordan said that every reviewer kept saying how “authentic” I was, and that this didn’t happen very often. As a newer builder it can be intimidating talking about LEGO, but I also feel I have a unique perspective and am coming into the community at a wonderful time as there are so many great sets that have been released recently. While I bring that authenticity when talking about LEGO, I also genuinely love the community that watches me build on Twitch. They are friends and family and we’re there to support each other, which has been

especially critical this past year with COVID. While we all enjoy building LEGO, we’re also able to talk about more serious topics as well. If viewers are having a hard time, my channel is a place that they can lean on each other for support.

My goals as an RLFM are to continue to bringing my authenticity to the LAN, which means I’m not afraid to speak up when I feel the need. Being both a woman and a queer builder (I am bisexual), I also want to help improve equity and inclusivity within the LEGO community as best I can.

My primary channel is <https://twitch.tv/misstapkat>, although I also have a Link tree that condenses a lot of my platforms in one link (<https://linktr.ee/misstapkat>)



A mosaic of Momo, a character from Avatar The Last Airbender