

Heartstrings

Spring/Summer 2019



Moms

As givers of life,
we see you.

Happy Mother's Day!

Every day, ***you choose to love well*** - even on those days when you're spent and you think you have nothing left to give - you still find room for one more walk.. one more snack.. one more story.. one more bath.. one more hug and a goodnight kiss. Then, miraculously, you manage to gather your energy, wiping the smudges left behind by pudgy hands, picking up the remnants of toys, snacks and books before exhaustingly dropping off into bed - all in preparation for the adventure that awaits at the crack of dawn when little voices call out. *We applaud your efforts and are so thankful for you.*

Being a heartbeat away from their critically ill, hospitalized child, Moms who have stayed at our Ronald McDonald House have said this --



"There is nothing as powerful as a mother's love and nothing as healing as a child's soul."

"You gave us HOPE."

"Staying at your Ronald McDonald House has been a huge hug to my family. Everyone has treated us as if we're their own family. ***When everything was falling apart around us, your House was a safe spot.***"

"Our family was overwhelmed by the kindness of those who were initially complete strangers. Staying at the Ronald McDonald House let us be with our son, ***loving and supporting him as he fought for his life.***"



Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
of Southern Colorado

New House Update



Help Us Finish the Job

Since breaking ground on June 27, 2018, the site of the new Ronald McDonald House in northeast Colorado Springs has undergone a dramatic transformation. Rising from the open field adjacent to UCHealth Memorial Hospital North and Children's Hospital Colorado, Colorado Springs is the new 25,000 square-foot Ronald McDonald House. The new House quadruples our guest room capacity, provides improved amenities to make our families as comfortable as possible and adds space for future programs and expansion.



The new House is scheduled to open this summer. The Capital Campaign is near completion. We are so close to finishing the project! Will you help us "Fill the House with Love"? Needed donations include kitchen supplies, linens, lawn and garden equipment and more -- essentially the same items you would need to stock your own home. Helping us finish strong, your donation will help make our House 'home' for the families we serve, keeping them near their children and the resources they need to thrive. Contact Sam Rush-Walton at sam@rmhcsoutherncolorado.org for the many ways you can help.



Our Ronald McDonald House gives families with sick children the best medicine – each other!

"You gave us HOPE."

"I truly believe part of my daughters healing came from having her family with her, and you made that possible. Staying at the House taught us so much - we remain



forever grateful! Even if I could donate all of my time and money, I still wouldn't feel like I'd given enough for what we received – our daughter, **coming out of her coma**, looking up through her bright blue eyes and squeezing my hand."

"For the forty days and nights while our son fought for his life after the car crash, you were with us every step of the way. When he worked valiantly to simply put one foot in front of the other – and struggled for cognizant thought, *you kept us close.*"



"We received REST."

"I'm not quite sure how to put this, but staying at the Ronald McDonald House was like being at your grandparent's house for the holidays. Everything was so nice and clean and taken care of. *You know it's not really your house, but yet it feels so much like home.*"

"**The House was a place we could rest.** We received such a warm welcome from staff and volunteers. They always asked, 'How is your daughter doing?' Everyone was so kind to our young son, too."



"Staying at your House was such a help. Once I knew my daughter was going to be OK, I was finally able to exhale and fall

apart. *My process shifted from the worst case scenario to 'OK. What does this look like now, moving forward?'*"

“We felt LOVED.”

“It was the little things... to be able to sleep for a couple of hours, to take a shower, to open the refrigerator, knowing the food in it was for us – and, provided by complete strangers... *it was a such a blessing.*”

“So much of our sons healing, of our family’s healing, happened here, just steps away from his bedside. The House was so peaceful and everyone was so kind-it was amazing and life-giving. You all took such good care of us, while the hospital took care of our son. *BOTH were needed and now, we have new friends! Thank You!*”

“We were KNOWN.”

“Staff, families and volunteers knew us as a family, not just a family with a critically ill child. We were individuals, not just a ‘cancer family’, because, truly – we are so much more than that.”



“We were TAKEN CARE OF.”



“Having your Ronald McDonald House to stay in meant ... everything. We really appreciated all that you did for us. Your House was safe, warm and cozy. It meant we could rest. The fact

that we didn’t need to leave our twin babies was amazing. *When almost every decision was hard and we were so exhausted, your House took care of everything else.* I didn’t have to think or worry about what I would make for dinner, or how I could get a bath for our other son. Without financial concerns, your place provided all the comforts of home, as near as we could be to our twin boys. **That meant the world.**”

“Staying here was the closest thing to being home without being home. Everything runs so smoothly! **There was a lot of stress at the hospital, and, here, it was stress free.**”



“Being cared for at the Ronald McDonald House created a safe place for our family, and that meant the world to us. *When*

the possibilities of death loomed all around us, you were LIFE, filling our hearts with hope.”

The Ronald McDonald House provided us so much! Staff and volunteers took such good care of us, and everyone LOVED our daughter (who stayed with us at the House). So much, in fact, that *when I told her that her brother was getting out of the hospital, she asked, ‘Do we have to go home?!’*”



“We were safe and taken care of at your House. You allowed us to spend as much time as we needed with our preemie twin boys while we engaged in ‘marathon holds’ and Kangaroo Care.”

“Our FAITH was RESTORED.”

“*Honestly, staying with you was a godsend.* It gave me a safe place where I could lay my head down without worrying about the minor details of life.”

“My grandpa used to say ‘*God shows himself to you in whatever ways you need it.*’ We definitely needed it now. Thank you for your kindnesses.”

“Our PRIORITIES shifted.”



“Little things weren’t nearly as pressing... *staying with you let us focus on the big things – the most important things, like helping our daughter heal.*”

On behalf of ALL the Moms we take care of, Thank You for Your Support. It makes a world of difference to know there are others who are willing to lend of their time, their talents and their resources – standing in the gap to help lessen a difficult season.

The View from Captain Dan



Looking back on my first year with Ronald McDonald House Charities of Southern Colorado, I am overwhelmed by the sheer number of people, from all ages and walks of life, who have come together to make our mission possible. It's truly a case of... "Many hands make light work!"

It reminds me of an Amish 'barn raising'. A community takes pleasure from participating in joint cooperative work projects—both from the social aspect as well as from the deeper sense of satisfaction in seeing tangible results of one's labor. One Amish man said, "There are so many helping, no one has to work too hard. *And, we get in a good visit.*"

Such is the case with our charity and the new Ronald McDonald House, now under construction in the northeast corner of Colorado Springs. Our community and surrounding areas have come together in profound ways to make this project possible.

Numerous donors have given of their personal or corporate treasures to support the construction of the new House, knowing the stories behind the children and families it will serve. Our caring community has offered help in every possible way – from the youngest who have made blankets or collected pop tabs, to the grandest, who have helped with landscaping, furnishings, painting and a roof. Each contribution is significant, as every bit of care is impactful, helping families in need.

I was touched by the depth of feeling and care demonstrated by those who came to the new House, braving freezing temperatures on a cold Sunday afternoon, to leave messages of hope and

good will on the walls, floor and studs. It is powerful to know their positive words and thoughts will be forever embedded into the framework of the House, as they left their personal blessings to impact all who walk through the doors.

What I have witnessed transcends the construction of a new House. It's people of good cheer who donate their time and talent daily, weekly or monthly to make our House a comforting home for those with children in need, those who have left their real home behind in search of healing.

From the very beginning, *I've had the sense that this charity and our House have been watched over and blessed.* I have witnessed the needs of the House being filled by selfless individuals, who in some cases (and without their knowing), have come forth with just the right help at the exact moment it was needed. Serendipity, indeed.

I am excited for the future and the possibilities the new House will afford our community and all the children and families we will serve. *Those unforeseen moments of crisis call to the rest of us to bring out our best.*

Are you, like me, feeling called to help? If so, there are many ways you can get involved! From the simple collection of pop tabs, a large or small donation of goods, services or cash, to the most personal gift of all, a donation of your time as a volunteer – or, perhaps a combination of all. To learn more about your place in our giving community, go to our website at www.rmhcsontherncolorado.org.

And, when you come, *"we'll have a good visit."*

Ronald McDonald House Charities Staff
Thank you for all your support!



27th Annual Cameron Memorial Golf Tournament

For 27 years, Ronald McDonald House Charities of Southern Colorado has hosted the Cameron Memorial Golf Tournament and Pre-Tourney celebration. As our largest annual fundraiser, our tournament has been ranked as one of the top three tournaments in our community.



Join us Monday, June 24th, at the prestigious Eisenhower Blue Course, host of the 2020 USGA Girls Jr. Championship, on the grounds of the USAFA. The tournament will provide an exciting day of golf with both morning and afternoon flights, a continental breakfast, a player's luncheon between flights and an evening reception.

The Pre-Tourney will be held on Sunday, June 23rd at the ProRodeo Hall of Fame. The evening features live entertainment, food, drinks, live and silent auctions and a Ronald McDonald House family sharing their story. We hope you can join us for the fun! For more information, contact Beth Alessio at 719.375.3871 or beth@rmhcsoutherncolorado.org.

We'd like to thank Children's Hospital Colorado, Colorado Springs, the Larry H Miller dealerships and McWilliams Roofing for their generous support of the 27th annual Cameron Memorial Golf Tournament.



Ways to Support



Room Adoptions and Sponsorships

The new Ronald McDonald House has a few rooms and spaces that are still available for adoption. When you choose to adopt, you're ensuring that room is built, while leaving a forever legacy, with your name prominently placed.

An annual sponsorship of a room ensures families have safe places to lay their heads at night, just steps away from their hospitalized child. Sponsoring spaces also provides support for the kitchens and dining areas where families will enjoy daily healthy, nutritious meals, and play areas where kids of all ages can do what they do best - *simply be kids*. Annual sponsorships keep families close, in the places and spaces where they most need to be - together.

Naming Tiles

Naming tiles are still available. The tiles are a great place to honor a loved one or to pay tribute to someone special. Tile prices range from \$250 - \$1,000.

Other Ways to Give

RMHCSC gratefully accepts cash, pledges, appreciated stock and trusts.

No matter how you choose to give, you will leave a positive and permanent impact on the families who will stay at the new House. Thank you for your consideration!

Need More Information?

Contact Sam Rush-Walton at sam@rmhcsoutherncolorado.org

Cornerstone Programs



Ronald McDonald House®

We believe that when families are together, they are stronger. We believe in keeping families near the care and resources they need to thrive. We believe that seriously ill children should have their parents and families close by.

Our Ronald McDonald House offers a warm, safe, nurturing environment for families of seriously ill and injured children. Many families travel far from home to get specialized care. Our House serves as a home base for families whose children are receiving critical treatment at nearby medical facilities.

By staying at our Ronald McDonald House, parents remain close to their children, providing the support and care their child needs, in addition to better communicating with their child's medical team and keeping up with complicated treatment plans. Parents can focus on the health of their child, while having a place to stay that is within eyesight and walking distance, at little or no cost.

All guests enjoy private bedrooms, home-cooked meals, play areas for children, gardens, laundry facilities, and friendly, caring staff and volunteers.

Our Ronald McDonald House is more than just a House. It provides comfort, support and resources to families facing the stress, fear and hardship of having a seriously ill child.

Ronald McDonald Family Room®

When a family enters a Ronald McDonald Family Room, they forget they're in a medical setting. Moments away from their child's bedside, the rooms are designed as a refuge for families to rest and recharge, keeping them strong for their children. These comfortable spaces provide a variety of homelike amenities, and can be found in UCHHealth Memorial Hospital - Central, St. Francis Medical Center and Children's Colorado Urgent and Specialty Clinic.



House Wish List



Food

- ✓ Apple Sauce - Singles
- ✓ Bagels
- ✓ Cereal - Single Serve
- ✓ Chips - Single Serve
- ✓ Cookies - Single Serve
- ✓ Crackers - Single Serve
- ✓ Fruit Cups
- ✓ Fruit Snacks
- ✓ Granola Bars
- ✓ Mac & Cheese - Singles
- ✓ Pudding Cups
- ✓ Trail Mix - Single Serve



Household Items

- ✓ All Purpose Cleaner
- ✓ Clorox Wipes
- ✓ Dish Drying Cloths
- ✓ Dish Soap
- ✓ Dishwasher Tablets
- ✓ Dryer Sheets
- ✓ Food Handling Gloves
- ✓ Furniture Polish
- ✓ Hand Sanitizer
- ✓ Indiv. Wrapped Toothbrushes
- ✓ Laundry Pods
- ✓ Paper Towels
- ✓ Pot Holders
- ✓ Small Trash Bags
- ✓ Swiffer Products
- ✓ Tall Kitchen Trash Bags



Gift cards

- ✓ Costco
- ✓ Home Depot
- ✓ King Soopers
- ✓ Kohl's
- ✓ Lowe's
- ✓ Restaurants
- ✓ Safeway
- ✓ Sam's Club
- ✓ Target
- ✓ Walmart



Linens

- ✓ ALLEREASE Zippered Mattress Covers - Q
- ✓ ALLEREASE Zippered Pillow Covers
- ✓ NEW Queen Flat & Fitted White Sheets
- ✓ NEW Queen Mattress Pads
- ✓ NEW Standard Pillows
- ✓ NEW White Hand/Face Towels



Office

- ✓ Postage Stamps: First Class
- ✓ Postage Stamps: Postcard
- ✓ 20# Copy Paper 8.5x11



Family Lodging

- ✓ One Night Lodging (our cost) For a Family - \$50
- ✓ One Week Lodging (our cost) For a Family - \$350



**Ronald McDonald
House Charities®**
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Volunteer Information

A strong foundation of volunteers support Ronald McDonald House Charities of Southern Colorado. *Our volunteers' gifts of love and compassion make our House more than just a place to stay, they make it a home.* The House provides volunteer opportunities for individuals, pairs and groups, while the Family Rooms are supported by individual and paired volunteers. Our volunteers help with office work, preparing and setting out snacks and drinks, greeting guests, housekeeping and a host of other activities.

All volunteer positions require a RMHC volunteer application, and most also require a background check. Some, like Children's Hospital Colorado, Colorado Springs, may require additional applications and background checks.

Meals That Mend

You can also help by contributing meals for families staying at our House through our *Meals That Mend* program. There are a variety of ways to participate.

- Provide a meal on a one-time or recurring basis
- "Freezer Edition"- Cook a freezer meal that we can use later
- "Adopt a Meal" - With your monetary donation, we will plan the meal, shop for the ingredients and make the meal
- Donate gift cards from local grocery stores
- Pick up a pre-made meal from a grocery store or order a meal from a local restaurant



To volunteer or find out more, please visit our website at rmhcsoutherncolorado.org/volunteer