



Aloha

From Our House to Yours

www.RonaldHouseHawaii.org

Newsletter of Ronald McDonald House Charities® Hawaii

Issue 2, June 2019

'Staying Strong' for their Loving Daughter

Resilient is the one word to describe Heather Naboa, a loving and compassionate mother of six children. Heather's children range in age from 11 months to 21 years old, and she is no stranger to the trials and joys of motherhood. When her youngest was admitted to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, also known as the NICU, all of her prior experiences could not have prepared her for what came next.

Heather and her husband Mervin are from Naalehu, a small town on the Big Island. "Family comes first," says Heather, and it shows when you see them all spending time together at the Ronald McDonald House.

One family member, though, remains in the NICU and has been in the hospital for more than a year, a situation Heather never expected even after being told she needed to deliver her baby on Oahu.

"I was nervous after having my C-section on Oahu," Heather said. "I said to myself, 'is everything okay?'" Shortly after, my daughter was whisked away to the NICU. I didn't know what would happen to her. Doctors said they didn't know how much longer she had to live."

At first, no one could figure out what exactly was wrong with Tehani. After weeks of genetic testing, doctors finally told the Naboas their daughter was missing a chromosome, a very rare condition called Rubenstein-Taybi Syndrome. This genetic disorder affects multiple organs, and Tehani required an oxygen breathing tube.

"Never give up hope," Heather said. "I continued to remain positive during a time when I wasn't sure what was



Isaiah, Tiani, Ioane, Lolana, Heather and Imilola Naboa



Heather and her daughter together in the NICU

going on with my daughter. My faith and family continue to support Tehani as she fights for her life. I remain positive and hopeful through it all."

Heather has called the Ronald McDonald House home for more than a year. Three of her boys even moved to Oahu with their mom to attend

school while her husband continued to work at home on the Big Island.

"Being here at the Ronald McDonald House, has allowed my family and I to be closer to our baby," Heather said. "We've built so many relationships with other families who were going through a similar situation. People in the house became our extended Ohana."

Her husband, Mervin, is also extremely grateful for the House. He works full-time on the Big Island and worried about his wife staying on Oahu alone, but he knows Heather is comfortable and safe at the Ronald McDonald House.

"They give me hope," Mervin said. Thank God for this House."



Despite fighting so hard, Tehani's long and difficult journey came to an end just after her first birthday, with mom, dad and family by her side. We share their sorrow and hope that the embrace of their many friends and loved ones, and cherished memories of the joy and light of Baby Tehani will bring them comfort. Shine long and bright, our littlest angel.

Message from our President



Jerri Chong

Aloha,
Each spring, as we celebrate our anniversary, we embrace cherished memories of names, faces, voices, and laughter of so many families that have

been part of our Ronald McDonald House Ohana over the years. For more than three decades, RMHC-HI has provided a home-away-from-home for Neighbor Island and Pacific Rim families who travel to Honolulu seeking lifesaving medical treatment for their seriously ill or injured child.

Nearly 13,000 families have spent more than 130,000 room nights with us, and almost 155,000 people have been supported by or received help from our RMHC family programs and services.

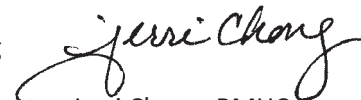
The joy we feel with each child's step towards recovery, or the sorrow shared when a child's difficult journey ends too soon, is a very real part of life at the Ronald McDonald House. Each family has their own unique story, and many will travel down an uncertain path. Most will never be the same following their experience.

We are so blessed and humbled to have the opportunity to take care of these families during their greatest

time of need. But it is the support and generosity of a very caring and giving community that helps keep our doors open, and lightens the burden for these children and their families.

Mahalo to all of our donors, supporters, and friends who are the key to keeping the "House That Love Built" open and welcoming to the most vulnerable in our community.

Sincerely,



Jerri Chong, RMHC Hawaii President

"Aloha From Our House to Yours", the newsletter of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Hawaii (RMHC-HI), is published three times a year.

A Mother's Love

Kelly Hintze never thought it could happen to her. No mother ever does. She and her husband Jordan were getting ready to celebrate their little girl's first major milestone - Bella was turning one year old! But their world suddenly changed overnight. The Big Island couple were dealt a devastating blow when Bella was diagnosed with a kidney tumor and needed immediate surgery.



Instead of planning Bella's birthday party, Kelly found herself researching treatment on Oahu, and even more daunting, a place to stay while baby Bella underwent medical care.

Kelly discovered the Ronald McDonald House, but she didn't yet realize it would become more than just a place to stay. "When we made our way up Judd Hillside passing those big red clown shoes on the driveway, for the first time there was an indescribable peace that swept over us. It made the overwhelming sadness the furthest thing from my mind," she recalled.

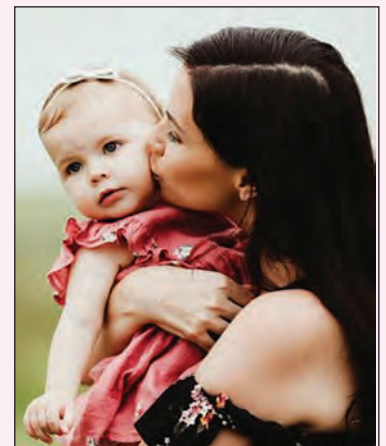
The House became a loving home for the Hintze family where they could bond with other families. "Because of the House, we've formed lifelong friendships, which were instantly deep and true," said Kelly. She found solace in other moms like her who confronted the challenges of

staying strong in the face of their precious children's illnesses.

Nowhere on earth is a mother's unconditional love and devotion to her child more apparent than at the House. The moms become friends because of a shared battle, linked by emotional toil that no parent should have to endure. Their love and concern for their child and one another gives them the strength to go on. "Love is the greeting here and community is the language. We really are all in this together," said Kelly.

"As for Bella, she is our inspiration and not afraid or worried about what's to come. She is going through a lot, but she remains simple. When she's hurting she cries and when she doesn't, she's happy. The Ronald McDonald House gave us time together. It touched our lives in an everlasting way and we are so thankful."

The Hintze family has since returned to the Big Island while their daughter continues to recover.



By Daniel Stearns

My daughter, Nikki, was born at Kapiolani Hospital on May 20, 1989. She was delivered 6 weeks prematurely after we were airlifted from Maui Memorial Hospital.

We had made all necessary arrangements for Nikki to be delivered on Maui. We thought everything would be fine and had no emergency contingency plan. Few new parents expect a premature birth, so we were not prepared for this.

At the hospital on Oahu, we were told how extremely important it was for my daughter to stay in the womb as long as she could so her lungs could develop and she'd "hopefully" breathe on her own when she was born.

I was nervous, unsure, and did not know what to think or feel. Would my daughter be ok? Would my wife be ok? It was not until things had settled down that evening that I realized I had no place to stay while on Oahu. The hospital staff suggested I reach out to the Ronald McDonald House. They welcomed me and I checked in late that night.

When I got to the RMH, I was a wreck with fear and insecurity. I wandered into the library and found countless books on premature births including what to expect, situations similar to mine, and many 'good news' stories. I was able to cast away doubt, worry, and start thinking more positively. I read about the advances in medical knowledge and techniques related to preemies.

Nikki was born shortly after, still premature but healthy and crying with a good set of lungs. We were so very lucky. While staying at the Ronald McDonald House, I met parents of truly courageous children. I admired the strength those families had. While at the hospital with some of the parents, I would visit their children. Not all of them had happy stories like mine. I think of them often.

Nikki will be 30 years old soon. She is happy, healthy, married to a fantastic man, and expecting her first baby in April. That night in the RMH library gave me the courage I needed to get through that first night. The staff, parents and their children I met at RMH during the days Nikki stayed in the hospital have remained an inspiration to me. The House was beautiful, and the people even more so. I cherish my memories of everyone and everything there. I really do not know what kind of a mess I would have been, or what I would have done, if not for all of them and that wonderful place to stay.



Daniel and Nikki



Nikki and baby

As we celebrate RMHC Hawaii's 32nd anniversary this year, we are reminded that some of our very first guests are now having children of their own. Nikki is now 30-years-old and had her first baby in April! It's a blessing to know that our House has brought life full circle to a new generation.

A Taste of Aloha!

Families who stay at the Ronald McDonald House must fly to Oahu and their journey is often unexpected, life-altering, and uncertain. The last thing that a parent should worry about is what to prepare or cook for their family, which is why we started a Sunday dinner tradition at our House many years ago.

It's one of the many special ways we bring our families together, to enjoy a delicious meal prepared just for them while finding comfort and friendship alongside volunteers, House staff, and other families. Any meal in a Hawaii household is a labor of Aloha. This Aloha is brought to our families every weekend by volunteers in our community who bring their hearts and hands, as well as ingredients and passion for cooking to the Ronald McDonald House table.

Since 2014, **Hula Grill Waikiki** has shared this Aloha spirit with our families. Every month, Office Manager Leilani Rivera coordinates someone from her team to bring a delicious meal of local style comfort food prepared by Chef

Matt Young and his culinary team. Our families are always looking forward to this meal!

Thank you, Hula Grill Ohana, for bringing our families together with your taste of Aloha! It is through longstanding community partnerships that we are able to make our House a "home-away-from-home" for our families. Mahalo from our RMHC Ohana!



Hula Grill Team Ohana

Capturing Heartwarming Stories through the Camera Lens

Brad Watanabe, an Oahu based videographer, has a passion and creative mind for storytelling that began at an early age. As a child, he would take his mother's video camera to sporting events, shooting footage and developing a special style for telling stories through video. Brad continued to evolve his videography skills and in 2013, he put his passion and creativity into starting his own, very successful, video production company called Berad Studio in Hawaii.



Recently, Brad and his creative team took RMHC Hawaii to the next level by using his talents to share two of our families' stories through his camera lens. It's not easy to capture emotions and share personal stories of families overcoming the challenge of caring for a sick child. Brad accomplishes this with compassion and care, and a great deal of tact and sensitivity.

His wife, Joanne Watanabe, has worked for Hospice and volunteered at the House, Christmas caroling over the holidays. From those experiences, the couple often recounts how blessed they are and in turn want to help others through their work and personal lives.

"I distinctly remember the RMHC donation box sitting on every McDonald's counter as a child," said Brad. "On occasion, I would drop loose change in the container as if it were an offering plate at church, thinking that others

needed it more than I did. As I grew up, I learned the change went directly to help children whose lives were much more fragile than my own, which made my desire to give even greater."

Brad and his team produced two videos for RMHC Hawaii. One video shares the story of a family who was dealt a difficult hand when their infant daughter was diagnosed with cancer. The other is about a family whose journey has gone on for a year, caring for their child in the NICU while staying at the Ronald McDonald House. The experiences of both families moved Brad deeply.



"Perspective is one of those things that costs nothing, but is worth everything," he says. "When you hear about the stories of families in their most delicate and dark hours, you are instantly schooled in lessons of perspective. It is extremely humbling to learn just how dire the needs are and how much help goes into supporting these families. But it's so refreshing to know that organizations like Ronald McDonald House Charities Hawaii are fighting the amazing fight to care for those in need."

To see our new videos, you can go the RMHC Hawaii social media pages @RonaldHouseHI on Facebook and Instagram. They will also be shown between screenings at select Consolidated Theatre locations on Oahu.

Do You Match?

Thousands of community-minded companies offer matching gift programs that can **double or even triple the power** of their employees' donations to RMHC Hawaii.

Ask your corporate Human Resources department or go online to see if your employer matches contributions of cash or volunteer hours for employees, retirees and/or spouses.

If your employer does have a **Matching Gift Program**, request a form and send it completed and signed with your donation.

Thank you for taking advantage of your company's generosity to further benefit Hawaii's families. It's an easy way to maximize your gift and make a **big** impact!



You hold the keys!

By donating just one vehicle, you can help families stay together when they need each other most.

1. Contact us at (855) 227-7435 or go toonecarhelpsrnhc.com
2. At no cost to you, your vehicle is picked up by our vendor (I.A.A.) and sent to the nearest auction location
3. I.A.A. sends you a receipt. Your donation may qualify for a tax deduction
4. The proceeds from your donation make a huge impact on a family in need



Your trucks, motorcycles, boats and RVs can also make a difference for so many families!

Red Shoe Mixer

Thank you to our event partners!

PURVÉ Donut Stop | 'IOLANI | Paradise Beverages | Chingu | Lucy's Lab Creamery | Sierra Nevada Brewing Co. | Tito's Handmade Vodka | Scratch Kitchen | Rainbow Drive-In | LIBRA Art | Lyft |

Ronald McDonald House Charities Hawaii held their first Red Shoe Mixer event on April 26th at 'Iolani Center outside of Purvé Donut Stop. Guests wore their red shoes in support of our mission and enjoyed live music by Shane Tsukayama and DJ James "Jimmy Taco" Mora as well as delicious food provided by our partners. All of the money raised from the event went to support seriously ill children and their families at the Ronald McDonald House.



RMHC Hawaii President Jerri Chong, Southwest Airlines Lori Skinner and Laura Nieto, McDonald's Owner/Operator Angela Ballard, Tiffany Ahuna, Southwest Airlines Kelly Knox



Check presentation from Purvé Donut Stop for the Dollars for Donuts Campaign Angela Ballard, Jerri Chong and Purvé Donut Stop Co-owners Brian Zablan and Nick Cornford



RMHC Hawaii Service Dog "Kaia" and friends



Mallorie, Matthew and Baby Micah Jones, Hawaii McDonald's Manager Michael Lim and Anna Gaxiola



Miss Hawaii 2018 Penelope Ng Pack and friend in "Ruby" the sparkly red Tesla



Red Shoe Mixer attendees enjoying cocktails and food.



Red Shoe Mixer event partners

Ways The Community Supports Us

RMHC Hawaii received a \$2,600 donation from **McDonald's of Saipan** as they celebrated their 26th anniversary. Over the past 32 years, RMHC Hawaii helped 490 families and provided 10,626 room nights for seriously ill children and their families from Saipan, Guam, and the Pacific. We are honored to have their support and continue to provide services for families in the Pacific.



Pictured: Saipan McDonald's Owner Joe Ayuyu, RMHC Hawaii Dir. of House Operations Kanoe Paauhau, RMHC Hawaii Dir. of Development Candace Asam-Lopez, RMHC Hawaii President Jerri Chong, and Saipan McDonald's Owner Marcia Ayuyu

Dollars for Donuts

Mahalo to everyone who visited **PURVÉ Donut Stop** during the month of February to support RMHC Hawaii. You helped us raise \$2,167 for seriously ill children and their families. During the month of February, we partnered with PURVÉ Donut Stop to raise money for the Ronald McDonald House in Hawaii. For every 2 dollar donation during the month of February, customers received a FREE specially created RMHC donut. Our social media contest winner received a \$100 MOKU gift card and 2 dozen PURVÉ donuts for following us on Instagram.



PURVÉ

RMHC child Jayln holds the Ronald McDonald House donut



Foodland Decorates!

A special mahalo to **Foodland!**

Foodland employees made St. Patrick's Day ornaments for the Christmas trees at the RMHC Hawaii House! The Foodland



employees started a competition on who could create the best ornaments. RMHC staff got a chance to vote on which ornaments they liked best. Foodland also brought a fabulous lunch prepared by their catering department, for families and staff.

"Our team was so excited to support Ronald McDonald House with this project because it gave us the opportunity to help an organization that was important to our founders — Sully and Joanna Sullivan — while also celebrating and honoring their legacy. Creating ornaments for St. Patrick's Day was especially meaningful because Sully was born in Ireland and he and Joanna loved to don their green on the holiday. I know they will be with everyone at the house in spirit, sending the luck of the Irish to all each St Patrick's Day."

- Foodland Chairman & CEO Jenai Wall

A Special Visit from Southwest Airlines

Southwest Airlines President Tom Nealon and his Executive Team were in town for the airlines' inaugural flight. The Southwest team brought breakfast for the families, were given a House tour, and learned details of our children's playroom renovation which they are helping to fund.



Midas Golf Tournament

The 9th A.P. III Memorial Golf Tournament was held by Dianne and Bob Pereira of Midas Hawaii at Midpac Country Club. A special mahalo to everyone who participated in the golf tournament to raise money for the Ronald McDonald House. All of the funds raised from the event go to RMHC Hawaii.



Do you want to have McFun?

Purchase RMHC Hawaii's McFun-Raiser Coupon Booklets. Raise money for your organization, school group, club or sports team while still raising money for the Hawaii Ronald McDonald House. For more information, please visit www.ronaldhousehawaii.org or email leah@rmhchawaii.org



What's inside the coupon booklet?

- 1 FREE Hamburger
- 1 FREE small order of French Fries
- 1 Free Ice-Cream Cone
- 1 Free Hash Brown
- 1 Buy any Large Sandwich & get 1 FREE
- 1 Buy any Breakfast Sandwich & get 1 FREE



Movie Passes
Gift Cards
Travel Size Toiletries & Toiletry Bags
Grocery Store Gift Cards
Valentine's Day Treats
White Hypoallergenic
Pillow Protectors



Ronald McDonald House Charities 28th Annual Golf Classic Hawaii Prince Golf Club

All proceeds go to the Ronald McDonald House Charities Hawaii to create a home-away-from-home for families with critically ill children throughout Hawaii and the Pacific Rim.

**Wed.
July
24
2019**

**18
HOLES
shotgun
start at
NOON**

TEAM
Platinum \$2,700
Gold \$1,900
Silver \$1,500

GOLFER
\$535
TEE SPONSOR
\$400

If you have any questions please contact Kylie Arrell
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Dear Ronald McDonald
I To thank you for helping
me when I was hurt
with my back insted of me
getting presents I'm giving you
some money to keep
helping kids. Love & grace
Seah ♡♡ Thank you!