



# Aloha from OUR HOUSE to YOURS

Newsletter of Ronald McDonald House Charities® Hawaii

[www.RonaldHouseHawaii.org](http://www.RonaldHouseHawaii.org)

Issue 1, Spring 2025

## “Straight from my Heart”

As told by Jodi Yu

*At our recent Hope & Heroes Gala, former guest Jodi Yu courageously shared her family’s journey, reflecting on how their stay at “The House That Love Built” continues to shape their lives.*

“No one anticipates needing a Ronald McDonald House, yet my family has spent countless days, weeks, and months there. Our children were born prematurely—our daughter Sadie at 29 weeks and son Ka’ohe at 27 weeks.

This reality meant long days by their bedside in the NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit) and sleepless nights filled with worry. The constant beeping of machines and the rollercoaster of good news and setbacks created a whirlwind of emotions that left us feeling drained.

The Judd Hillside House offered respite from the stresses of hospital life; it became our sanctuary, providing a peaceful and nurturing place to rest and recharge. It was our refuge, allowing us to process the anxiety of caring for a sick child, and focus solely on what our kids needed.

When Ka’ohe was eight months old, he began having seizures, and we sought answers at Lucille Packard Children’s Hospital at Stanford. There, he was diagnosed with a genetic mutation causing a severe form of epilepsy. His prematurity also led to a weakened immune system and respiratory challenges.

With these diagnoses, we spent more time at our home-away-from-home, returning to Ronald House where the amazing aunties and uncles welcomed us back with open arms, easing our worries during tough times and helping us keep our family together. While we concentrated on Ka’ohe’s recovery, we could also ensure Sadie felt our support as well.

The beautiful Family Room, designed by our honorees Auntie Cathy and Nicki Lee, became a cherished part of our stay. It was a magical space for Sadie to play with other children, providing a sense of normalcy and fun. Many days, we returned from the hospital, sank to the floor and simply watched our kids be kids.



A sleepy Ka’ohe yawns while in the NICU



(L-R) Gary, Sadie, Ka’ohe & Jodi Yu today



Big sister Sadie (right) with buddy April (left) who was also a guest of the House at the time

As Sadie grew, she began to grasp the weight of Ka’ohe’s condition and the strain on us as a family. Exhausting our vacation and sick leave left us often without a paycheck, leading to mounting and unexpected expenses. This fueled Sadie’s ambition to create her small business, Sweetheart Farm. She began by selling her farm-fresh eggs to help with her little brother’s medical costs and has since expanded to delicious Lilikoi butter.

As a labor and delivery nurse at Hilo Medical Center, I always share my story with other families, expressing my deep gratitude for such a vital resource. It is a true gift to struggling families, made possible by the incredible generosity of our community.

The Ronald McDonald House will forever hold a special place in our hearts—a community where we found hope, joy, and lifelong connections with other families facing hardships. Gary, Sadie, Ka’ohe, and I feel truly blessed by all of you and much more today.”

# President's Message

**Aloha Friends and Supporters,**

I'm so excited to share that we are coming off a very successful year at Ronald McDonald House Charities of Hawaii. Thanks to your support, 2024 proved to be a very productive year, allowing us to serve more families, create more activities, solidify our team and exceed our fundraising event goals. Now, as we welcome spring 2025, we look forward to building on that momentum and expanding our capacity to keep families together during some of life's toughest moments and increase our outreach.

One of the key highlights of the new year is our upcoming Red Shoe 5K Walk! This healthy event is not only a fun way for friends and families to come together, but it also plays an essential role in helping us fund the new and existing programs that directly benefit the families we serve. We can't wait to see you lacing up your sneakers, showing off your red style, and walking in support of our mission.

This year, we're especially eager to grow our offerings and introduce enhancements to our existing



family programs. We are looking to expand our meal program with more ready-made and grab and go meals and enhance our fresh offerings.. We believe that by nourishing both body and spirit, we can help families feel more at home and focused on what matters most: their child's well-being. We are also looking at ways to increase our support systems for our families. We are excited about all of these new possibilities.

Mahalo nui loa for your continued support and dedication. None of our progress—past, present, or future—would be possible without your generosity, volunteer hours, and partnership. Here's to a wonderful spring, another successful Red Shoe 5K Walk, and a year filled with hope, healing, and aloha for all the families we serve.

Best wishes,

Ed Nishioka  
President and CEO

"Aloha From Our House to Yours," the newsletter of Ronald McDonald House Charities Hawaii (RMHC Hawaii), is published three times a year. Printing: Edward's Enterprises.

**Save the Date!** Our **RMHC Hawaii Golf Classic** will be **Thursday, July 17 2025** at the **Pearl at Kalauao**

## Mahalo to our Board of Directors

Dr. Lois Chiu Board Chair	Jaymes Bell Director	Vincent Lim Director
Dr. Barry Mizuo 1st Vice Chair	Dr. Dylan Bothamley Director	Justin Nowak Director
Melissa Yara 2nd Vice Chair	Ryan Engle JD Director	Quin Ogawa Director
Denny Nakayama Treasurer	Natalie Fogle Director	Caroline Sluyter Director
Kukui Claydon JD Secretary	David Lim Director	Jan Sugihara Director

## Wishlist



**Toilet Paper**  
**Paper Towels**

**Laundry Soap/Pods**

**Nursing Pads**

**Coffee Pods (Regular & Decaf)**

**Individually Packaged Snacks**

**Frozen items: Pizza, Ice Cream**

**Fresh Fruit**

Items can be dropped off at our Judd Hillside House  
between 9AM-6PM  
1970 Judd Hillside Rd., Honolulu, HI 96822

# 50 years of RMHC

## RMHC Teams Up with John Legend to Celebrate 50 Years of Caring for Families

On October 15, 2024, EGOT-winning, critically acclaimed, multi-platinum singer-songwriter and father of four, John Legend, hosted “50 Years of Ohana” at our Judd Hillside House to celebrate the founding of the first Ronald McDonald House program.

Both current and former guests of RMHC Hawaii attended the day’s festivities which included activities showcasing Hawaii’s rich culture, with music, hula, shaved ice, lei-making, musubi crafting and customizing RMHC 50 years t-shirts. We were also honored to have a team from RMHC Global with us – they even got a hula lesson from one of our families. ☺

RMHC’s history in Hawaii began in 1982 when a dedicated group of concerned citizens worked tirelessly to garner support for a Ronald McDonald House. A capital campaign, chaired by Maurice “Sully” Sullivan, was launched, leading to the establishment of the Judd Hillside House in 1987—a true “labor of love.” Often referred to as “The House That Love Built,” it has provided programs and partnerships aimed at improving the lives of nearly 15,000 children from across Hawaii and the Pacific region.



### DID YOU KNOW?

The first Ronald McDonald House opened in October 1974 in Philadelphia, PA.

Since then, RMHC has expanded to more than 386 House programs around the world.

This year, RMHC chapters celebrate the global community of care built over the past 50 years—from the staff and volunteers who provide unrivaled compassion each day, to the countless families with children who are ill or injured that have been cared for.

You, along with our invaluable community of donors and partners, make it all possible. The RMHC network has become an essential service to strengthen families and remove barriers to healthcare worldwide.



...with a Shamrock Shake & Support RMHC Hawaii

We’re feeling lucky! Now thru March 23rd, twenty-five cents from each cool, refreshing minty Shamrock Shake sold at McDonald’s will support RMHC. An Irish blessing for our families from our forever mission partner, McDonald’s!

For 50 years the Shamrock Shake has been more than just a treat. It was the first McDonald’s fundraiser for RMHC, playing a crucial role in the founding of the first Ronald McDonald House.

Join us in celebrating this legacy and support RMHC with every Shamrock Shake you enjoy! Cheers to making a difference!



# HOPE & HEROES

CELEBRATING A LEGACY OF GIVING



The Lee Ohana: Dr. Darrell, Cathy & Nicki

## Ronald McDonald House Charities® Hawaii HOPE & HEROES BENEFIT GALA

Honored The Lee Family  
Dr. Darrell, Cathy and Nicki Lee

On November 23, 2024 at the 'Alohilani Resort Waikiki Beach, RMHC Hawaii held our annual Benefit Gala Dinner, "An Evening of Hope and Heroes." This year, we were very honored to recognize the remarkable contributions of a family of true heroes, the Lee Family – Dr. Darrell, Cathy, and Nicki.

Through their hard work and non-profit organization, Kidz for a Cause, the Lee Family has profoundly impacted the lives of the families we serve. Their dedication and commitment to raising funds transformed our family room and playroom area into a beautiful, functional, and enjoyable environment where our families can gather, complete schoolwork, use computer stations, and play. It has become the heart of the House.



McDonald's Hawaii representatives, Tamara Corpuz (3rd from left) and Owner/Operator Vincent Lim (right) present proceeds from their Round-Up promotion to RMHC Hawaii President & CEO Ed Nishioka (left) and RMHC Hawaii Board Chair Dr. Lois Chiu (2nd from left)



Our alumni family for the evening, the Yu ohana (see speech on cover)



The Hope and Heroes Galleria shopping experience offered incredible deals on travel, experiences, jewelry, wine, spirits, and much more, delighting guests and raising nearly \$95,000.



The evening finale was a concert by Multi-Grammy Award winner Larry Carlton and his all-star Hawaii Jazz Band that had guests dancing at their tables.

# MAHALO TO OUR SPONSORS

## HOPE

Dr. Thomas and Mi Kosasa & Mr. Bubbles Kosasa  
 McDonald's Hawaii  
 Arrillaga Foundation in honor of Ray Vara's  
 Contributions to Hawaii

## HERO

Cathy Lee Style  
 Ginny Tiu  
 Hawaii Gastroenterology  
 Specialists  
 Mālama Ola Cares  
 Stacey Sakahihara and Roger & Linh Dang  
 Honolulu Star-Advertiser  
 United Surgical Partners International  
 & Tenet Health  
 Y. Hata & Co., Limited & ChefZone

## GOLD

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 & Honolulu Time  
 Company

## SILVER

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## Special Mahalo

1 Hotel Hanalei Bay  
 Dr. Yousif A-Rahim\*  
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 Alaska Reel Adventures  
 'Alohilani Resort Waikiki Beach & Staff  
 Malia Amaral\*  
 Andaz Maui at Wailea Resort  
 Jaymes Bell\*  
 Nancy Bernal\*  
 Larry Carlton  
 Cathy Lee Style Team  
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 The Kahala Hotel & Resort  
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 Dr. Scott Morita\*  
 Moumen El Hajji  
 Mr. Bubbles & Yuzu  
 Reid Mukawa\*  
 Multimedia Solutions  
 Stacy Nakano\*  
 Rick Nakashima\*  
 Nanea Golf Club  
 Ed Nishioka\*  
 Nursery Associates  
 Quin Ogawa\*  
 Aya Okimoto & Wish Makers Quartet

Bruce Okimoto\*  
 Jon Olson and Mary Lavoie-Olson\*  
 Pasha Hawaii  
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 T. Oki Trading, Ltd.  
 Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort & Spa  
 Wailea Beach Resort, Maui  
 Rollins and Kristin Wood\*

\*Also a Gala Committee Member

# Exclusive McFun Special

With spring and summer activities approaching, we are offering a newsletter exclusive deal! For every 100 booklets purchased, you can receive 10 booklets for **FREE**. Each book is purchased for \$6, you sell them for \$10.

**This special of 10 FREE booklets gives you an EXTRA \$100 towards your fundraiser!**



Be sure to mention this newsletter exclusive in your inquiry.

Offer expires May 31, 2025

For more information about our McFun-raiser Coupon Booklets, please visit our website: [RonaldHouseHawaii.org](http://RonaldHouseHawaii.org)

Email: [mcfun@rmhchawaii.org](mailto:mcfun@rmhchawaii.org)

Phone: (808) 892-1907

# Join Us As A Volunteer!

You can volunteer your talents in many ways to help our mission. Our volunteers are the foundation of our House. As a volunteer, you assist us in many remarkable ways. By contributing your time to volunteer, you will enable us to continue our mission to help families with seriously ill children.



To learn more about our individual or group opportunities and guidelines contact:

Email: [volunteering@rmhchawaii.org](mailto:volunteering@rmhchawaii.org)

Phone: (808) 973-5683 ext. 241



## Family Reunion

Former House Guests, the Feldman Ohana, visited us with a gift of Liliha Bakery goodies for our current families.

It was great to see Liam doing so well!

This house brought us comfort when my son was in the NICU for 130 days.

To RMCH of Hawaii -  
Alana RMCH, -  
I was born here in Hawaii. This house, just Hills side, helped my family with a place to stay. Even though I didn't stay here ~~born~~ when I was born, I still am living my life today.  
I was born at 23 weeks. + Hope you Mahalo nui, ~~gals~~ net better.  
Liam Feldman.

## Breakfast with a Friend

Guess who stopped by the House with breakfast for our families? It was the official mascot, ambassador, and "Chief Happiness Officer" for McDonald's restaurants: Ronald McDonald himself!





Joe & Marcia Ayuyu, Owners/Operators of McDonald's Guam and Saipan, visited recently to present a check for \$10,000 from their 2024 Biennial Golf Classic held last December. They also brought an additional check for \$2,000 from a family that utilized RMHC's services who wanted to show their gratitude. We are so grateful to both.

(L to R) Vincent Lim (McDonald's Hawaii Owner/Operator), Joe & Marcia Ayuyu, Ed Nishioka (RMHC Hawaii President & CEO), Candace Asam-Lopez (RMHC Hawaii Director of Development).



# Holiday Helping Hands



Meals on Wheels provided four complete Thanksgiving Dinners



Kaiser Permanente Hospital Volunteers baked scrumptious goodies



Dr. Lau & Ohana donated a tree for our House



Hawaii Amazon Distribution Center Gift Donations



Macy's Hawaii Volunteers helped decorate the interior of our House



Girl Scouts Hawaii Gift Donations



Southwest Airlines Volunteers helped decorate the exterior of our House



Hawaiian Airlines Volunteers assisted with our holiday cards

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



# Red Shoe 5K

at ALA MOANA CENTER  
Presented by  
 KAISER PERMANENTE®



## Come Rock Your Socks!

Sunday, March 30, 2025 • 8:00 AM

Register now, then meet us at Ala Moana Center's Centerstage for our family and pet-friendly fun walk.

There's a virtual option, too!

For information and to register, visit our website:  
[apps.ronaldhousehawaii.org/redshoe5k](https://apps.ronaldhousehawaii.org/redshoe5k)

All participants receive our signature RMHC Hawaii Socks and a Walker's Bib!



First 350 to register receive an exclusive Red Shoe 5K tote bag, courtesy of UNIQLO



Or scan the QR Code below:



Questions? Email us at  
RockYourSocks5k@rmhchawaii.org

Spring into action for a good cause!  
#RockYourSocks  
#ShowYourStripes

### Event Volunteers Needed

Sign-up to volunteer by scanning this QR Code:

