Aloha, From Our House to Yours

Newsletter of Ronald McDonald House Charities® Hawaii www.RonaldHouseHawaii.org Issue 2, June 2026

More Than a Place to Stay

For Fabrício and Lene Fernandes, every parent's worst nightmare arrived with a phone call.

Their young son, Rafael, known lovingly as "Rafinha," had been suffering from a fever, vomiting, and unusual purple spots. The Maui family hoped for answers. Instead, they received devastating news: Rafinha had leukemia. Within hours, their lives were turned upside down.

The family rushed to the hospital before Rafinha was airlifted to Oahu for specialized treatment at Kapiolani Medical Center.

"My world collapsed," Fabrício recalls. "I was half an hour from home when I got the call. My legs gave out. I thought I was going to faint."



The first days were the hardest. As doctors worked to stabilize Rafinha, the couple leaned on their faith, each other, and the prayers of loved ones and their Maui community.

Then a hospital staff member introduced them to Ronald McDonald House. At first, they considered staying in a nearby hotel. What they found instead was far more than a room.

"We didn't know anything about the House," Fabrício said. "But when we arrived here, we couldn't imagine the experience we would have. It's not only a house, it's the way people care for other people."

For families from the Neighbor Islands, a child's medical crisis often means leaving behind jobs, routines, and support systems. For Fabrício and Lene, the House provided something they urgently needed: steadiness.

When Fabrício needed to return to Maui for work, he worried about leaving his wife and son behind.

"They told me, 'Don't worry. We are going to take care of them. They are our family,'" he said. "I felt relieved knowing they had support all the time. That is priceless."

During long days of care, the playroom became one of Rafinha's favorite places, where he could play video games, spend time with other children, and enjoy moments of normalcy.

"For me, the most beautiful thing is to see him in this playroom, playing with other kids," Fabrício said.

They also found strength in simple, everyday kindness: shared breakfasts, friendly conversations, helping hands, and people who genuinely cared about how they were doing.

"Every day, people ask, 'How are you feeling? What do you need? How can I help?'" Lene said. "It's beautiful."

"At this house, we didn't find only friends," Fabrício said. "We found brothers and sisters."

Today, they continue to take Rafinha's treatment one day at a time. There is still a long road ahead, but they are not walking it alone.

Before this experience, Fabrício admits he did not fully understand the organization's impact. Like many people, he had dropped spare change into McDonald's donation boxes without realizing how those small gifts help families facing medical crises. Now he does.

"What you do helps thousands of families like mine," he said. "What you do truly matters and transforms lives."

For Fabrício, Lene, and Rafinha, Ronald McDonald House became a refuge, a source of strength, and a community that helped carry them through days no family should have to face.

Today, when Fabrício leaves Maui for Oahu, he tells his friends: **"I'm going back home."**

President's Message



This summer, we are feeling especially grateful for the people and partnerships that make the mission of Ronald McDonald House Hawaii possible.

We are humbled and honored that **our team has been recognized by *Pacific Business News* as one of the Best Workplaces of 2026 in the under 25 employees category.** For a small team entrusted with such meaningful work, this recognition is a true blessing. It reflects the care, compassion, teamwork, and commitment that our staff brings to the families we serve every day.

We are also deeply grateful that our **Director of Administration, Kathy Matsukawa, was recognized as a PBN Workplace Champion** among all the companies and organizations honored. Kathy's heart, leadership, and commitment to our people have helped strengthen the culture of our organization. Her recognition is well deserved, and we are thankful for the many ways she supports our team and our mission.

As we celebrate these blessings, we also remain focused on serving families. We are excited that our hospitality carts are going mobile at Kapiolani Medical Center, allowing us to bring comfort, care, and support directly to families where they need it most. This is another way we can extend the heart of Ronald McDonald House Hawaii beyond our Houses and into the hospital setting.

We are also thankful for our growing partnership with Kaiser Permanente Hawaii, which served as the presenting sponsor of our Red Shoe 5k Walk. Their support helped make the event possible, and we look forward to continuing to explore meaningful ways to work together in service to Hawaii's children and families.

We are also excited to welcome Butch Galdeira, President of Diamond Bakery, to our Board of Directors. Butch is well known for his generous support of Kapiolani Medical Center and has long demonstrated a heart for helping children and families in our community. He was also recently recognized by Pacific Business News as the 2026 Small Business Person of the Year. We are grateful for the leadership, experience, and spirit of service he brings to Ronald McDonald House Hawaii.

Most importantly, none of this happens because of us alone. It happens because of our volunteers, donors, partners, board members, staff, and friends who believe in this mission and continue to show up for our families.

To each of you, thank you. We are truly grateful for your kindness, generosity, and trust. Your support allows us to provide comfort, care, and a home away from home for families during some of the most difficult moments of their lives.

With gratitude and best wishes,

Ed Nishioka
President & CEO

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

Welcome to Our Newest Board Member!



Ronald McDonald House Hawaii is pleased to welcome Butch Galdeira, President of Diamond Bakery, to our Board of Directors beginning June 2026.

Butch has been a longtime supporter of our mission, including bringing his executive team to the House to prepare meals for families several times a year. A respected business and community leader, Butch was named the 2026 Pacific Business News Small Business Person of the Year and serves as Chair of the City and County of Honolulu Fire Commission and on the Board of Directors for the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii.

We are grateful for Butch's heart for our families, his business leadership, and his commitment to serving our community and expertise he brings to our board.

Mahalo to Our Board of Directors

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

Volunteer and Partner Appreciation Luncheon

Our Annual Volunteer Luncheon was all about honoring the individuals and partners who show up for our families, day in and day out. Because of you, we're able to keep families close when it matters most.

We are proud to recognize this year's award recipients:

Corporate All-Stars: Southwest Airlines

Corporate Creative: Marriott Ko Olina Beach Club

Family Adventure Award: Mary Benson

Weekend Warrior: Brandi Del Mundo

Weekday Warriors: Pamela Chow & Jeanne Hempen

Hospitality Awards: Michaela Haywood & Irva Fuchigami

Longevity Award: Nobu Oshiro

President's Award: Nancy Bernal

We also want to send a heartfelt mahalo to our retiring volunteers for their years of dedication and impact.

Every hour you give, every meal you serve, every small act of kindness creates something bigger than all of us. You bring comfort, care, and a sense of home to families going through the unimaginable.

We are so grateful for each and every one of you.



A big mahalo to our luncheon emcees Jelayne Shelton and Richy Calderon for keeping things fun and upbeat!







Volunteer Spotlight

Nobu Oshiro, our 2026 recipient of the Volunteer Longevity Award, has been volunteering with Ronald McDonald House for nearly a quarter-century!

What made you decide to volunteer with Ronald McDonald House?

"When I retired, I told my friends and family that I wanted to do volunteer service. That's how I got started at Ronald McDonald House, and I love it!"

Nobu's dedication has grown over the years. "Sometimes I go three times a week," she shared. "I used to love helping out with the gala, making favors and table arrangements. For several years, whenever the gala came around, I would go practically every day!"

In addition to volunteering her time, Nobu has sewn and donated handmade pillowcases and "Quillows" to be sold at fundraisers benefiting the House. They are always a hit!

Want to join Nobu and the other amazing members of our volunteer 'ohana? Visit RonaldHouseHawaii.org/ways/volunteer or scan the QR code here.





Red Shoe 5K Fun Walk Brings Community Together for RMHC Hawai'i

Mahalo to everyone who joined Ronald McDonald House Charities Hawai'i for this year's Red Shoe 5K walk at Ala Moana Center! Together, we raised $79,321 in support of families with seriously ill or injured keiki receiving medical care on O'ahu.

The event brought together 1,548 walkers for a fun and meaningful day. From friendly competition to heartfelt moments of giving back, the Red Shoe 5K was a wonderful reminder of what our community can do when we come together for a shared purpose: helping keep families close when it matters most.

A very special mahalo goes to our Presenting Sponsor, Kaiser Permanente, and our Venue Sponsor, Ala Moana Center, for bringing the event to life. We are also deeply grateful to our team sponsors, station sponsors, and in-kind donors, whose generosity helped create a memorable experience from start to finish.

We were thrilled to recognize the creativity, enthusiasm, and spirit of our Photo Contest Winner, Kaiser IncuBuddies, and to our Dog Photo Contest Winner, Team McDoggos, whose entry was paws down adorable and unforgettable! A big shoutout also goes to our photo contest runners-up, whose entries made the judging incredibly tough. We would also like to recognize Haus of Brev as our #1 Team Fundraiser.

Whether you walked, donated, fundraised, sponsored, volunteered, cheered, or helped spread the word, your kindness helps RMHC Hawai'i continue providing comfort, care, and a home-away-from-home for families during some of their most challenging days. We look forward to seeing everyone again next year!



Mahalo to emcees Kamaka Pili and Jill Kuramoto. You rock our socks!























Photo Contest Winner:
Team Kaiser Incubuddies



Photo Contest Winner:
Team McDoggos

Mahalo to Our

Presenting Sponsor KAISER PERMANENTE® **&** **Venue Sponsor** ALA MOANA CENTER

Mahalo to Team Sponsor HDS

Special mahalo to Haus of Brev for being our #1 Team Fundraiser!

Additional special mahalos to our Top Individual Fundraisers: Lizzy Levine, Kat Nonaka and Pamela Chow!

Your support makes a difference!



Mahalo to Our Station Sponsors

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A New Way to Deliver Comfort at Kapi‘olani Medical Center

RMHC Hawai‘i is excited to launch a new mobile Hospitality Cart at Kapi‘olani Medical Center for Women and Children, extending the comfort of our stationary NICU Hospitality Cart into pediatric areas. The cart will travel to families’ rooms with snacks, small games/toys, and personal hygiene essentials—simple comforts that help caregivers take a breath and stay focused on their child’s health and recovery

This cart was generously donated by the Fuchigami ‘Ohana in honor of Tia and Eliana. The gift holds special meaning for Irva Fuchigami, Tia’s mother and Eliana’s grandmother, because Eliana was once a NICU patient at Kapi‘olani. Inspired by that experience, Irva has continued to give back by volunteering regularly with our NICU Hospitality Cart since last year.

The cart was designed and built by the Honolulu Kūpuna Shed, a nonprofit that brings kūpuna together for connection and purpose through hands-on projects that are donated to the community. We were proud to partner with the Kūpuna Shed after an RMHC staff member (and Shed member) shared their work with our team. Mahalo to Bill Chismar (President), Michael Esposito, and David Thai for donating their time and expertise to build a cart that will bring comfort to families when they need it most.

Join the Hospitality ‘Ohana!

RMHC Hawaii is now accepting volunteer applications to support our new mobile Hospitality Cart at Kapi‘olani Medical Center for Women and Children. Apply at RonaldHouseHawaii.org/ways/volunteer or contact volunteering@rmhchawaii.org to learn more.



Our stationary Hospitality Cart (left) in the NICU, alongside our new mobile cart (right).



(Left to Right) Joan Kanemori (VP and Chief Nurse Executive), Myra Barrientos (MSN, PNP, APRN), Chantel Kualapai (Hospitality Programs Coordinator RMHC Hawaii), Andrew Moats (COO of Kapiolani Medical Center), Jhelyn Pascual (Volunteer Services Manager RMHC Hawaii), Dazja Gianessi (Director of Operations RMHC Hawaii)

Caring Hearts ‘Ohana

Give monthly. Sustain families every night.



When a family is far from home, steady support can make all the difference. Through Caring Hearts ‘Ohana, monthly donors help RMHC Hawai‘i provide meals, transportation, and a place to stay, while also helping grow programs like our new mobile Hospitality Carts serving families on O‘ahu and the Neighbor Islands.

Your recurring gift helps us plan ahead, respond to family needs, and give parents the peace of mind to focus on their keiki. Monthly giving is convenient, flexible, tax eligible, and provides stability that changes lives.

To learn more about becoming a member and the benefits of joining this compassionate community, visit RonaldHouseHawaii.org or call (808) 892-1905.



In honor of May Day, we hosted a special lei making workshop at Kapi‘olani Medical Center for Women & Children. Families had the chance to get creative, share smiles, and enjoy a relaxing moment together while making their own unique lei-inspired keepsakes. Mahalo to everyone who helped make this special activity possible!

Around the House



Mahalo to Board Chair Dr. Barry Mizuo and volunteers from UH JABSOM for the family meal.



We mahalo our friends in the ALTRES Community, who cooked a meal for our families.



Mahalo to Chloe and the Girl Scouts Junior Troop 185 for their support (and the treats)!



The Super Hawaiian Circus put on an amazing performace in April, entertaining our guests and staff!

Valentine's Day





Easter









Mahalo to HawaiiUSA Federal Credit Union and Brevenchym for coming to Ronald McDonald House Hawai'i to cook and serve dinner for our families.





We celebrated the incredible moms at Ronald McDonald House Hawaii with a little self-care, connection, and time to just breathe.

Mother's Day









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All proceeds go to supporting Ronald McDonald House Hawai'i