



Gratitude Report 2023

Keeping families close™



Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
Southern Arizona



WITH GRATITUDE

For all our volunteers who know that love and compassion help families heal.

For all our donors and friends who support the work of RMHC® in countless ways.

And for all the families who place their trust in us while their children are receiving medical care.

Thank you so very much. We share these highlights of our past year with heartfelt gratitude.

Photo by Navy Jaymes Photography

Some people talk about degrees of separation between people. I like to think about degrees of connection – because that’s what I see happening at the Ronald McDonald House®.

Families staying here make connections with other families and form lasting friendships. Our staff members connect with our guest families in ways that make their stressful journeys much less so.

And it’s no longer surprising to me how many people I meet who have a connection to the Ronald McDonald House.

Three of our board members relied on a Ronald McDonald House – in different cities and in different ways.

A few of the McDonald’s managers in Southern Arizona stayed at this House.

Some of our donors support this organization because it supported them – even if it was decades ago.

All these connections build an incredible network of kindness and create new opportunities to “nurture the health and well-being of children and their families.”

We’ll further that mission this year by launching a Ronald McDonald Care Mobile®, in partnership with MHC Healthcare, to bring dental care to children in under-served areas of Pima County. And we are establishing a Ronald McDonald Sibling Center at Banner Children’s at Diamond Children’s Medical Center, so parents with children in the hospital will have a safe place for their other children.

In the end, what connects us all to each other and to Ronald McDonald House Charities® (RMHC) is a wholehearted focus on making lives a little better for children and their families.

Thank you for making good things possible.

With gratitude,

Kate Maguire Jensen,
President & CEO

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Southern Arizona



All photos by Sobecki Photography, except where noted.

A Heart for Austin

Lynette Two Moons was first introduced to the Ronald McDonald House when she was around 10 years old. Her auntie had welcomed a son and he had to stay in the hospital a little longer than usual. During that time, she, her auntie and her grandma stayed at a Ronald McDonald House in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

“This was the very first time we ever heard about the Ronald McDonald House,” said Lynette. “This had to be in the 1980s sometime. It was awesome because me and my grandma got to stay there. Everything that they do now they also did there. Anything we needed they were able to help assist us with it.”

But she never imagined that she would return to a Ronald McDonald House many years later with her own son, Austin.

In 2013 while living in Elfrida, Arizona, she and her husband, Brian, were expecting baby number five. The doctor noticed signs of slow development three months in, but they largely resolved. Then Lynette’s water broke early when she was just shy of seven months.

“I went in expecting to have a baby,” she recalls. “Turns out there were complications with his heart so they flew us to the children’s hospital in Aurora, Colorado, to see a pediatric heart specialist. From there I was on bed rest for as long as they could keep me on bed rest.”

When a social worker suggested Brian stay at a Ronald McDonald House down the street, Lynette immediately remembered how helpful everyone was at the House when she was a little girl. She knew it would be a calm and soothing place for her family – just like home.

Austin was born nearly two months later and before he was even a day old, he underwent open-heart surgery. A pacemaker was inserted. He had a long road ahead of him.

“It was scary for all of us knowing he had this odd piece of metal helping his heart beat,” said Lynette. “But bittersweet because he was alive and able to be with us. It built a stronger bond between our family.”

It would be another two months before Austin went home to Elfrida. Then when he was two years old, his heart started to swell. His primary care physician said to take him to Diamond Children’s Medical Center right away. Lynette packed up their things and made the two-hour drive to Tucson.

After many tests, Austin’s doctors discovered that the procedure he had as a baby had reversed. “Another hole had formed and surgery wasn’t going to fix it,” remembered mom. “So, they started preparing us for hospice care.”

Like Austin, his family was heartbroken.

“We were preparing for the worst. But the doctors decided to see if he would be eligible for a transplant. After a day, we were blessed, and they told us the good news that he was eligible. So, they transferred us to Phoenix Children’s Hospital where Austin would wait for his heart.”

For the next five and a half months, Lynette once again found a “home-away-from-home” at a Ronald McDonald House close to her son. Then his heart transplant came through.

“We grew so much closer during Austin’s hospitalization,” Lynette said. “Just being able to grow in faith and be there for each other. And to know that life is precious and we need each other to keep moving forward and growing.”

Now 9 years old, Austin’s heart doesn’t slow him down – he plays volleyball and basketball for his school teams. But because his heart transplant makes him more susceptible to infections, he needs to travel to Tucson for specialized dental care, and needs cardiology check-ups in Phoenix.

In both cities, Austin and his family know that they always have a place to call home at the Ronald McDonald House.



About Our Families

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE, IN 2022, SERVED:

CHILDREN WHO NEEDED MEDICAL CARE

253

ALL TOGETHER, THEY STAYED

4,127 Nights

AVERAGE FAMILY STAYED

17 Nights

BENEFIT TO FAMILIES
\$1,054,055

Families savings in 2022 in combined hotel, meal and transportation costs.



WHERE THEY'RE FROM

| | |
|----------------|-----|
| ARIZONA | 80% |
| COCHISE | 36% |
| PIMA | 8% |
| GRAHAM | 8% |
| SANTA CRUZ | 8% |
| YUMA | 5% |
| MARICOPA | 5% |
| PINAL | 4% |
| GREENLEE | 1% |
| NAVAJO | 1% |
| APACHE | 1% |
| MOHAVE | 1% |
| OUT OF STATE | 12% |
| OUT OF COUNTRY | 8% |

WHY THEY STAY

38% NICU
3% Cerebral Palsy

14% Cancer
3% Accident/Trauma

6% High Risk Pregnancy
2.5% PANS/PANDA

5% Cardiac
31% All other diagnoses

“Staying at the House – I tell this to everyone – it’s a blessing. Nothing compares to the importance of being near to the baby.”

PAULO DOS SANTOS
74 NIGHTS, RIO RICO



Photo by Solaris Photography

The Ronald McDonald Family Room – A Place for Moms, Dads, Two-Year-Olds and more

The first visitors to the new Ronald McDonald Family Room at Tucson Medical Center (TMC) made us all so happy that this project came to fruition last fall. The Family Room is a place for any parent with a baby or child in the hospital, to rest and regroup.

Kathryn Peña and Jake Hilander had twin boys, Wes and Leo, in TMC's Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and one day while they were walking to the NICU, they noticed the door to the new Family Room was open and wandered in.

Turns out it was the best place for Kathryn, Jake and their two-year-old daughter, Maley, who was too young to visit her brothers in the NICU.



“The Ronald McDonald Family Room changed everything,” said Jake. “They had a giant table where you can sit and do games or eat as a family. There was an entire wall of just snacks and drinks. And they always had fresh coffee.”

Best of all, the Family Room gave them a place to be together as a family. During the day, Maley would hang out with mom or dad in the Family Room, building with LEGO blocks, putting together puzzles and playing games. Whichever parent wasn't with Maley in the Family Room would be just steps away caring for Leo and Wes in the NICU.

Tucson Medical Center donated the space for the Family Room. Our friends with Interiors in Design designed the space and TMC construction teams built everything out. We were grateful for funding from RMHC Global, the TMC Foundation and Children's Miracle Network. Friendly volunteers from TMC and our RMHC crew ensure every visitor feels at home.

And when a nurse learned that Maley was struggling to understand where her brothers were, she devised a plan. Maley was able to view her brothers through the glass windows of the Family Room. The nurse explained that Wes and Leo were getting a little extra help growing and would be home soon. It all started to make a little more sense to her.

Soon after, the babies were discharged and their first trip was to the Family Room so Maley could officially meet them. She couldn't wait to hug her baby brothers.

“You don't understand until you're a NICU parent how hard it really is,” said Kathryn. “How much the small things – like the coffee or the snacks or somewhere to go sit and relax for a minute – really mean.”



Photo by Tayler D Hernandez Photography

Visits to Ronald McDonald Family Room
programs at TMC and Diamond Children's
Medical Center in 2022

20,365

What's Ahead?

This year we're expanding our programs to serve even more children and families throughout Tucson. We have plans to build a Ronald McDonald Sibling Center at Diamond Children's Medical Center to provide short-term care for siblings of babies and children in the hospital.

"We have long wanted to be able to help families in this situation," said Kate. "Often we have moms with a baby in the NICU and a four-year-old to care for – it makes a difficult situation even more so."

The Ronald McDonald Sibling Center will be right next to the new Play Zone that Banner is creating for kids and teens. Parents will be able to drop children off in a safe and supervised environment so they can focus on their sick child. The Sibling Center will be staffed by Child Life Assistants and be available to any family with a child in the hospital – not just those staying at the Ronald McDonald House.

"In addition to the benefit for parents, this new program will be great for siblings – to have a safe, dedicated place to play," said Hadley Trull, Associate Director of Child Life. "And our Child Life Assistants will be able to help normalize the sibling's experience and connect with them through the language of play, by which they learn and connect with the world."



And we're launching a new Ronald McDonald Care Mobile, in partnership with MHC Healthcare, Inc., to bring dental care to kids who need it. MHC has 17 clinics throughout Pima County -- three of which have dental services. Their own research identified that only 14 percent of their pediatric patients were receiving appropriate dental care. That will change when parents can take their children to the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile, which will make the rounds at MHC clinics.

Vijay Patel, D.D.S., Director of Dental Services, predicts that nearly 1,000 children each year will visit a dentist in the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile. "Having dental care where families are already bringing their children for medical care will be a game changer," Dr. Patel said. "We're grateful to RMHC for its partnership on this project."

Stayed tuned for opening ceremonies!



"The Ronald McDonald Care Mobile is amazing. It is so much easier. They can set up the appointments and I can get all three kids done in the morning so they don't miss a whole day of school."

MELISSA DEE VANDONGEN

Gabe's Passion

Gabe Gutierrez is one of the most endearingly positive people you'll ever meet. Infectious is the only way to describe Gabe's smile.

Imagining Gabe's smile suddenly turning to a look of worry might help you understand just how serious a situation it was when he and his wife, Belen, found out that their seven year old daughter, Beatriz, was facing a potentially serious kidney condition. Her tests came back 12 times higher than normal, and she needed to see a pediatric nephrologist urgently. Surgery might be necessary.

The family had to travel to Phoenix to be seen at Phoenix Children's Hospital. While there, they were able to stay at the Ronald McDonald House on Cambridge Avenue.

"We didn't know what to expect, and we certainly weren't expecting more than a bed and a shower," Gabe recalled. "We were blown away by the hospitality. The impact was immediate and profound. Here were people working with purpose, all to support our family."

Beatriz received excellent care, was able to avoid surgery and six years later, she has fully recovered. Gabe now gives of his own to our local Ronald McDonald House Charities and encourages others to do so as well.

His company, Gabe's Spotless Window Cleaning, donates its services to keep the Ronald McDonald House looking its best and to make sure our families have beautiful and unobstructed views of the Santa Catalina mountains.

Last November, Gabe (who is an avid runner) decided to give cycling a try and rode in El Tour de Tucson as part of Team RMHC. He engaged his friends, families and clients and raised more than \$4,000 in just a few weeks, especially thanks to many of his team supporters taking advantage of the Arizona Charitable Tax Credit.

Gabe's looking forward to this year's race. And while he is anticipating backing off his pace on the bike, there's no slowing him down in supporting the children at the Ronald McDonald House.



To join Gabe and more than 60 other members of Team RMHC for the 2023 El Tour de Tucson, visit rmhctucson.org/eltour.



Photo by Torev Photo



HOUSE PARTY

OCTOBER 13, 2023

An upscale block party at the Ronald McDonald House.



NOVEMBER 18, 2023

Join Team RMHC in the 10-mile, 50km, 100km or 100-mile rides.



DECEMBER 3, 2023

Family fun and fitness at the University of Arizona Mall.



Red Shoe Society Back Together Again

Originally started as a volunteer and networking group for young professionals, the Red Shoe Society has since expanded to anyone looking to make a difference for the families we serve.

“Our main focus is to support the House and the families,” said Ashley Kimberlin, this year’s President. “We’re constantly thinking of new, fun ways to do that and to get more people involved at the House.”

Their projects run the gamut of cooking a meal together, to creating crafts for families, to lending a hand at major events like the House Party and the Walk for Kids. And they always plan something exciting for the holidays.

In February, members assembled Valentine’s Day kits that were delivered to both of our Ronald McDonald Family Room programs. Outside of volunteering, the Red Shoe Society is also a place to network with other professionals that have a similar soft spot for RMHC.

“I like that we get to meet other people in an organic way while helping the House,” said Tabatha Schneider of Realty Executives Arizona Territory.

Tabatha has been a member of the Red Shoe Society since 2018 after she and Ashley spent an evening at the House cooking for families. As a mom of two, the mission of RMHC really tugged at her heart.

“My heart just wants to help the kids and their families. Make sure they know how thought of and loved they are. That’s what Red Shoe Society is.”



Someplace Like Home for the Holidays

What defines a holiday? Many think of time away from work, favorite meals, festive decorations, and traditional music. Our first thought is time with our loved ones.

There’s no place like home for the holidays, but when home is miles away, recreating your special traditions with fellow families staying at the Ronald McDonald House® can feel almost as good.

For Ilce and Luis, that means celebrating their loved ones on Día de los Muertos. So they helped us put together an ofrenda (a customary altar of remembrance) and made a traditional meal of chicken mole with rice, pan de muerto and conchas (a pastry shaped like a shell) so we could all celebrate together.

For the Wright family, it means creating cherished memories with James Jr. around the Thanksgiving dinner table. A dinner filled with love and laughter.

“Someone at the House had made a ham dinner,” said James Jr.’s mom. “He wasn’t really eating a lot during his treatment, but I remember he took one bite of this ham and said it was the best ham he had ever tasted in his life. I’ll never forget that.”

For Maraena and Henry, it means being together as a family to celebrate Christmas and New Year’s, even while on bedrest awaiting their daughter’s arrival.

“At the hospital, I would have to take turns bringing Maraena one family member at a time,” said Henry. “But at the House, everyone could come at once and you have that community. That played a huge role in her mental health.”

For the Sotelos, it means honoring Alizee’s birthday by sharing a meal with the House, a place that became their “home-away-from-home” after she underwent heart surgery as a newborn 12 years ago.

Holidays are meant for being together and we’re grateful to help families do just that at the Ronald McDonald House. No matter how you celebrate, we’re here to celebrate with you – just like family.



Join the Red Shoe Society on the second Wednesday of every month to help plan the next project.

Visit www.rmhcucson.org/RedShoe for more information.



That Extra Little Bit

Lizzeth Alvarez knows how important that “extra little bit” can be. What is excess or left over for one person might be vital to the next. Five years ago, she was preparing to give birth to twin boys. Her pregnancy was a difficult one. Exhausted and worried for her babies’ health, she had to take significant time off from her long-time job as general manager of a local Tucson McDonald’s restaurant.

After weeks of bed rest, and still two months before her due date, she gave birth to little Luciano and Eli. Like many moms, Lizzeth had difficulty breast feeding, and she became scared when neither Luciano nor Eli were able to take formula. They weren’t thriving and they needed help. At the same time, she met Francisca, another mom with a baby in the NICU at Tucson Medical Center. They quickly became friends, as can happen in a crisis.

Francisca was from out of town but was staying at the Ronald McDonald House. Her baby, Elvia, was making steady progress, and Francisca was actually producing more milk than Elvia needed. For the next two months, Francisca helped feed Elvia, Eli and Luciano until they were all strong enough to leave the hospital.

“The connections that we make and the comfort families provide for each other are a game changer,” Lizzeth remembered.

“Francisca was so grateful for the Ronald McDonald House, especially as we’d both be willing to sleep under a bridge for our children. What the House offered to her was almost too much good to bear. I tried to offer everything I could to thank her and kind of repay her for giving my boys life, but she wouldn’t hear of it. It was her way of paying it forward. The type of trust we built with each other and the trust she built with the people at the Ronald McDonald House was uncommon and special.”

When Lizzeth was ready to go back to work, she brought that feeling of gratitude and joy with her. In the years since, her McDonald’s restaurants (including the one with the dinosaur out front!) are some of the most generous in the city on a guest-by-guest basis. Lizzeth builds community with her crew and her customers, and together they support the children and families of Ronald McDonald House Charities through the Round-Up for RMHC® program.

Those extra few cents from guests’ orders really add up. While nine cents or 40 cents or 73 cents may not seem like much when they are purchasing their breakfast, lunch or dinner, all together it totaled more than \$350,000 for RMHC in 2022 from Southern Arizona restaurants alone.

What Lizzeth has learned from all of this is how important that last little bit can be. The difference between 32 weeks and 40 weeks. The surplus of milk. The leftover change. That’s where you find the magic.



Audrey Evans

A Life Well Lived



“When a child is sick, the family is sick.”

RMHC co-founder, Dr. Audrey Evans, died last year at the age of 97. Her passing warranted news stories in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and other major news outlets.

Dr. Evans was the inspiration for the first Ronald McDonald House, built in Philadelphia in 1974. She was the Chief of Pediatric Oncology at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia when most women couldn’t yet apply for a credit card. Her research improved outcomes for children with cancer, specifically neuroblastoma.

Dr. Evans is the one who taught us that “when a child is sick, the family is sick” and she set in motion the concept of family-centered care, which is routinely practiced in hospitals around the world.

We admire her compassion, her dedication, her pluck. The program she created to solve a problem in Philadelphia now serves millions of children and families around the world.

A feature film about Dr. Evans’ life starring Natalie Dormer (*Game of Thrones*) as Audrey Evans is in production to be released later this year. Stay tuned for an invitation to the screening.

“When a child is sick, all your focus should be on the healing of your child and that’s what the Ronald McDonald House was. We weren’t stressed about anything else. It’s something we will always remember and be appreciative of.”

MELVA PATTEN
GREYSON’S MOM, 26 NIGHTS



Digging in for the Ronald McDonald House

There are many reasons to volunteer at the Ronald McDonald House. For Micci and Jan, the reason was simple: they wanted to do something for others in their retirement.

Micci worked for Pima County for 27 years, serving under all three branches of government. Jan was an ergonomics engineer who designed cockpits for military planes. They met at the gym and quickly became friends.

Between Zumba, Pilates and kickboxing, they talked about their hobbies. Both loved working on projects and had volunteered for other local organizations. But they were looking for something more consistent where they could really make a difference.

When Micci saw a request for volunteers to care for the Louise Thomas Healing Garden at the Ronald McDonald House, she quickly signed on to help. Then she remembered Jan's beautiful native yard and asked if she wanted to join, too. It was an easy yes!

"For me it was perfect," said Jan. "And it's just enough to keep us busy without being overwhelming."

They spend about two hours every week in the healing garden. They weed and water plants, repair furniture and ensure that the garden looks great for families. Outside of the garden, they spend time refurbishing pots, finding new plants to introduce and creating identification markers out of painted stones.

"I really love the design of this garden," said Micci. "The little alcoves offer a bit of privacy. You could be sitting next to someone else and still feel like you're alone if you want to be alone."

Like all RMHC volunteers, Micci and Jan work hard to make sure the House is always inviting for the families that stay here.

"It makes you feel good that you're doing something for the Ronald McDonald House," said Micci.

And if "getting down in the dirt" doesn't sound like something you can get into, there are many other ways to volunteer at the House: cooking meals for families, helping out at the front desk or helping out with special projects. No matter what you're into, there's something for you to do.

"Volunteering here is fun."

I want to get involved. HOW CAN I HELP?



ONE-TIME

EVENT VOLUNTEER

Day of Event Operations • Greet Guests

WEEKLY

HOUSE VOLUNTEER

Answer phones • Cleaning • Greet Visitors

FAMILY ROOM VOLUNTEER

Greet Visitors • Cleaning • Restocking Snacks

MONTHLY

EVENT COMMITTEE

Organize Events • Fundraising • Networking

RED SHOE SOCIETY

Projects for Families • Networking • Fundraising



ONE-TIME

CHEF FOR A DAY

Cook for the Families at the House

HOUSE TO HOME

Make Casseroles for the Families to Take Home

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Seasonal • On or off-site

EVENT VOLUNTEER

Day of Event Operations • Greet Guests



For more information, or to sign up,
visit rmhctucson.org/volunteer

Leaving a Legacy of Love

Jean is a member of the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Southern Arizona (RMHC-SA) Legacy of Love Society, and she would love for you to join her. We asked her why she decided to add RMHC-SA as a beneficiary in her trust.

“It makes me feel so good to know that when I’m gone, families will be taken care of. That when families go through what my daughter Lizz and I did, they will have a huge element of stress taken off them so they can focus on getting better.”

When Lizz had just turned 21, she needed urgent surgery. What the doctors thought was a cyst turned out to be a six-pound tumor. The surgery to remove the tumor was dangerous and the surgeon told Jean that “we came close to disaster.”

“From that point on, I knew I couldn’t leave her,” Jean said. “I was living in Vail at the time so I was at least 45 minutes away from the hospital.”

Fortunately for Jean, a friend of hers had a place near the hospital where Jean could shower and get a few hours of sleep. But Jean knew there were other families who didn’t have that option. “This whole experience made me passionate about helping other parents.”

Soon after Lizz had recovered, Jean started volunteering at the Ronald McDonald House and made the change to her estate plans.

“I feel so good about adding Ronald McDonald House Charities of Southern Arizona to my trust. One person can make a big difference in a lot of families’ lives.”



Legacy of Love Society

Our Legacy of Love Society recognizes individuals who have included RMHC-SA in their estate plans by naming RMHC-SA as a beneficiary in a will, trust, insurance policy or retirement plan.

Thank you to the following donors who have included RMHC-SA in their estate plans to help provide for families in the future:

Ron and Christy Caldwell Endowment Fund
Sharon Crowder
Michael Cyrino
Paul and Nelie Dias
Cindy and Jim Evers
Don and Catherine Hatcher
Thomas P. Kresler and Anne C. Kresler Trust
Linda McNeel
Tara Radke
Anonymous

Adopt-a-Room Partners

Adopt-a-Room Partners make an annual gift of \$5,000 or more to be the exclusive sponsor of one of the guest rooms at the Ronald McDonald House. We are so thankful to these donors for the wonderful way in which they support our families. Our Adopt-a-Room Partners are...

Awesome Amphi Alums
Michael and Tina Baker
Marsha Thrall and Jack Bona
Frank and Laurel Brown
John and Phyllis Capp
Cardinals Charities
Herb and JoAnn Cowgill
Paul and Nelie Dias
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The Harden, Clements, Simpson & Paschall Families
Becky Johnson
The Kasser Family – Beth, Mike, Mikey & Violet
Phil and Cheryl Klein
The Lundtvedt Family
in memory of Anna
Kate and Craig MacKay
Norkaitis Family Charities
Del and Jodi Norton
Retirement Evolutions Wealth Management
Staff & Clients
Roche Tissue Diagnostics
Schmidt and Barton Family Fund
Southwest Section of the PGA
The Stonewall Fund, held at the
Community Foundation for Southern Arizona
Lynn and Mark Thomas
In Memory of Harold and Nancy Willingham
In Memory of Rachel Faye Yow

Community Champions

Community Champions help Ronald McDonald House Charities in a big way. We are grateful to these wonderful donors who are incredibly committed to the children and families we serve. The following Champions make an annual contribution of \$10,000 or more...

ACE Hardware, Joe Findysz & Family
Alpha Delta Pi
Angel Charity for Children
Arcos de Oro dba McDonald’s
Arizona Complete Health
Banner-University Medicine
Bashas’
Block Foundation
Connie Hillman Family Foundation
Susan Causbie Cowgill & John Cowgill
Del E. Webb Foundation
Desert Diamond Casinos
Dias Management
Gray Management
HSL Properties
John and Linda Hughes
Image FIRST
La-Z-Boy
McDonald’s Local Owner Operators
Nextrio
Norman and Joan Kinsey Foundation
Pioneer Title Agency
Anthony Escalante Plumbing
Realty Executives Arizona Territory
Roche Tissue Diagnostics
Southwest Section of the PGA
Tempur Sealy International, Inc.
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TMC Health
TMC Foundation
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Frank Trembulak – *Community Volunteer*

Vivian Van Peenen – *Community Volunteer*

Bridget Werchan – *Casa de los Niños*

Support Your Favorite Charity AND Reduce Your Tax Liability

Yes, it's true! When you give to your favorite charity in Arizona, you may be eligible for a dollar-for-dollar credit on your State of Arizona taxes. You can choose to direct your tax dollars to the causes you care about, such as Ronald McDonald House Charities of Southern Arizona. This is not a deduction but a full one-to-one return. Every dollar you donate, up to the maximum allowed (see below), could come right back to you in the form of a reduced tax bill or an increased refund.

So how does this work?

You can find our comprehensive Charitable Tax Credits Guide by visiting rmhctucson.org/tax-credit-info or by scanning the QR code below. There you'll find detailed answers to common questions, such as:

- How do I know if my gift is eligible?
- I don't usually have to pay the State each April. Could I still benefit? (YES!)
- I already donate to my child's school. Can I claim this credit too? (YES!)

We always recommend that you consult with your tax professional before making any financial decisions.



Learn more and make your gift at rmhctucson.org/donate.

For tax year 2023,
the maximums have
increased!

Single Taxpayer or Head of Household
\$421 Maximum

Married Filing Jointly
\$841 Maximum

Donate all at once or spread your donations out monthly. Gifts through tax day in April can count toward the previous year's return.

Eric Rhodes
Board President Paying it Forward



“When people ask me why I’m involved with Ronald McDonald House Charities, the answer is easy. Ryan.”

In June 2017, my kids and their mom were enjoying a family vacation in Mission Viejo. It was a random Tuesday when I received an urgent call that my nine-year-old son, Ryan, had had a massive seizure and was being rushed to the ER. The cause of the seizure was not clear, but an excellent ER physician took the situation seriously and ordered a CT Scan. And that’s when I got the news that no parent ever wants – there was a golf-ball-sized tumor in my son’s brain. My heart dropped and I jumped in the car. And I honestly don’t remember much about that drive from Tucson to the Children’s Hospital of California in Anaheim.

Of course, my mind went to the worst possible outcome, and I was having a conversation with myself about the possibility that my son could die. But when I stepped out of the car, I knew I needed to be strong for my son, his mom and my two other kids.

We spent the next week meeting with every kind of specialist you can imagine – his MRIs and CT scans were sent all over the world. The tumor didn’t look normal. With very smooth edges, it didn’t appear to be cancerous, but still no one knew what it was, and it was right up against his skull.

As the weeks went by, his mom and I needed to go back to work and my other kids back to school so we moved Ryan to Diamond Children’s Medical Center. The hospital staff was fantastic, but we still didn’t know what the tumor was. We were wrestling with so many difficult questions and that’s when I found the Ronald McDonald Family Room. That space provided a place to have difficult conversations, not in front of Ryan. That space and the people who staff it changed our hospital experience.

“When I wasn’t at Ryan’s bedside, I was in the Family Room. I could make phone calls to family members there and I can’t tell you how much I appreciated the nice volunteers and the snacks that weren’t hospital food. A sleeve of Oreos never looked so good.”

Eventually the doctors decided that no matter what had caused the tumor, it needed to come out. And fortunately, this story has a very happy ending. Surgeons took out a large chunk of Ryan’s brain and placed three titanium plates in his skull. They called it a complete cure. The best words ever. Ryan is 15 now. He’s 6-foot-4, playing basketball, living life.

And that’s why I devote my time to Ronald McDonald House Charities and am so proud to serve as Board President. The people my fellow board members and I serve are the people who don’t know they need us yet. We want them to know that our board is here working for Ronald McDonald House Charities so they can be there with their families.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eric Rhodes".

President
Board of Directors



Ronald McDonald
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Southern Arizona

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