



Aloha

From Our House to Yours

www.RonaldHouseHawaii.org

Newsletter of Ronald McDonald House Charities® Hawaii

Issue 3, September 2019

'The Hardest Experience of My Life'

Most parents never expect they will need the support of a Ronald McDonald House—especially when a child makes it through a very rough start and rebounds healthy and strong. But for one Big Island family, the Ronald McDonald House provided them with solace, care, and support when tragedy struck and they needed it most.

Jamelia Paio excitedly anticipated the birth of her first son in August 2017. Although this was her second child, after having a daughter, it was a difficult pregnancy. She was diagnosed with preeclampsia midway through her term. Then, on July 28, a month before her baby was due, events took a dramatic turn for the worse. Liam was



Little Liam in the hospital

delivered by emergency C-section with underdeveloped lungs that would not fully inflate; he had to be rushed by medevac to Kapiolani Medical Center on Oahu.

"I was devastated," Jamelia shared. "I held my son for just 20 minutes after he was born and then he was taken away and flown in an air transport helicopter with his father to Oahu. I didn't know what to do. I couldn't imagine not having Liam with me. It was one of the hardest experiences of my life."

Jamelia spent two nights in the hospital on the Big Island before doctors would allow her to fly to Oahu to be with her son. Minutes felt like hours and time stood still for the loving mother of two.

When she was finally able to join her family, Liam's crisis was far from over. His lungs were still not functioning and he had jaundice. The family never left his side, sleeping in the NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit) at Kapiolani Medical Center. It was an exhausting and stressful three weeks before Liam was released and the family was able to return, together, to the Big Island.

For Jamelia and her family, the next year was busy. The children were healthy, happy, and growing. Then one morning, 18-month-old Liam developed a high fever and had trouble breathing. He was rushed to the emergency room where things escalated quickly. The toddler was medevaced, for the second time in his short life, to Oahu.

"We arrived at Kapiolani, and doctors were trying to figure out what was happening," Jamelia said.

Liam was admitted into the PICU (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit) and put on 100% oxygen. A short while later, doctors told Jamelia that her son's kidneys and liver weren't functioning and he needed to be put on continuous dialysis.

The diagnosis this time: pneumonia. But the worst was yet to come.

"The doctors told me Liam might not make it through surgery. I had to sign papers and prepare for the unthinkable. I was so scared. Saying goodbye is something you never want to do—or even think about."

Little Liam was kept in an induced coma for six weeks while doctors worked to get his kidneys to function. This was when Jamelia found out about

the Ronald McDonald House on Oahu, just up the street from the hospital. Her parents flew to Oahu to help care for her daughter and they all took shifts, spending time at the hospital with Liam.



Home, each night for everyone, was the Ronald McDonald House.

"The House helped us tremendously. It gave us peace of mind and helped relieve the incredible stress we were under. It was a home-away-from-home for me and my family. I would go to the House to find peace and rest while my parents stayed with the baby. I could get something to eat, a home cooked meal, and spend time with my daughter. And there was a shuttle that took me back and forth to the hospital, so I never had to worry about being away from Liam too long," Jamelia said.

The Paios are now back on the Big Island and Liam is continuing to recover. The little boy is working hard, relearning how to walk and talk. The family says they are so thankful for the care and

Continued on page 3

Hardest Experience

Message from our President



Jerri Chong

Aloha,
My heart is always warmed by the continuous community support that enables Ronald McDonald House to be a sanctuary for families. Through

your generous donations of time, talent, and treasure, we are keeping families close and enabling them to focus on and rally around their sick child, sibling, or grandchild.

Watching children gain strength from family members and others going through similar experiences is uplifting. Warmed by a cloak of caring, families share their stories along with words of hope, encouragement, comfort, and support. Who else knows better and understands what they are going through? Where else can illness be set aside – if only for brief periods – where kids can be kids, new friends are made, and parents and children help each other heal faster and cope better?

This support system of sharing and caring is what the Ronald McDonald House is all about and why its mission is so important.

You are part of our support system. You're also part of our family, so we

are thrilled to share exciting news of the “addition” we’re expecting early next year! To meet the growing needs of families that call the Ronald McDonald House “home”, we are creating a Family Recreation Center, combining existing playroom and outdoor lanai space at the Judd Hillside House to provide diverse areas for all family activities. It is our first capital renovation/expansion since 2006.

The Center will foster sharing and caring between families and relatives who are going through their toughest times. The multi-use space will include computer stations, a reading loft and library, an indoor tree house, as well as central family and guest meeting areas.

Young teens can hone their skills at gaming stations or catch up with school work on computers; caretakers and young moms can rest; children can climb into a reading loft or play pretend in the indoor tree house—all the while being close to family members and the embrace of loved ones.

Best of all, this project is a wonderful example of how caring individuals in a community can come together and make a powerful difference. Thanks in large part to the donated professional services of

project engineers, an architectural design firm, interior designers, talented artists and consultants, and very generous capital gifts from the corporate and grassroots community, our Family Recreation Center is already 80% funded. Although we are still working to raise final closing gifts totaling \$100,000, we are so excited about what this expansion will mean for our families and their experience at the Ronald McDonald House.

Please know that support from a caring community – people like you – is what makes projects like this possible. Every helping hand—whether volunteering time, donating money, or providing items on our wish list—counts, strengthening the safety net and providing support to Hawaii’s seriously ill children and their families.

From all of us to all of you, Mahalo, from the House that Love Built!

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.

Ronald McDonald House Charities Hawaii Board of Directors

Stacey Miyamoto
Chair

Duane Seabolt
1st Vice Chair

Dana Abe
Treasurer

Angela Ballard
Anthony Froix, M.D.
Wesley B. Hiyane
Dyanna Okazaki

Russell Woo, M.D.
2nd Vice Chair

Lisa Kikuta
Secretary

Clyde Shiigi
Tommy Silva
Markus Staib
Thanh Tran



Movie Passes
Gift Cards

Travel Size Toiletries and Toiletry Bags
Grocery Store Gift Cards
White Hypoallergenic Pillow Protectors

Keep Smiling

“Welcome to the family,” says Mary Tuiteleapaga when she greets guests and visitors arriving at the Ronald McDonald House at Judd Hillside. Her smile is like sunshine and light, a contrast to the heavy heart she carries. But Ronald McDonald House is family to her. Her smile and the camaraderie with other families in similar situations is how she copes.

Mary is just 18 years old but she shoulders responsibilities that anyone twice her age or experience would find daunting. She is the big sister, protector, best friend, nurse, and doting caregiver to Joseph, her 7-year old brother who has Hodgkin’s Lymphoma.

Mary, Joseph, and their father, Moli are from American Samoa. The Tuiteleapagas have been staying at the Ronald McDonald House since March, when Joseph was diagnosed with cancer.

Life was good for the Tuiteleapagas – mom, dad, Mary, Joseph, and youngest brother Damien – in American Samoa. Mary was in junior college and active with her church; her brothers were happy, playful and full of mischief. Then Joseph started having fevers, so high that they affected his vision and he wasn’t able to look at or focus on his mom.

He was rushed to the hospital and diagnosed with cancer, but after four days in the hospital, with no treatment



plan and no improvement, the family sought help outside of the Pacific Islands. On March 17, they all flew to Hawaii to begin Joseph’s treatment for a rare form of pediatric Hodgkin’s Lymphoma at Kapiolani Medical Center.

The treatment regimen would be long and difficult – at least six months of chemotherapy and a long separation from home, family, and friends. Mary, her father, and Joseph stayed at the Ronald McDonald House; their mother and younger brother returned home, and life for the Tuiteleapagas went through a dramatic shift.

“It’s a miracle that brought us here, all the way from American Samoa,” says Mary.

Her gratitude is almost tangible, her care and devotion for her brother and father unwavering. Every day she dresses Joseph, helps him with his bath, monitors and gives him his medications on schedule. Fluent in English, she meets with and talks to Joseph’s physicians and nurses at the hospital, asking careful questions so

she understands his treatment plan. She prepares meals, cleans up, and does all planning and household chores for her family—always with a smile.

“Every week, I talk to each person at the House and they tell me about their situation and life.” Her goal is to make people laugh. “When you share laughter, you share life.

It feels like someone is right there with you, a part of you.”

“And no matter how hard you cry, always think positive and know the Lord



will give you strength.” Mary’s mantra: “I will be there for Joseph.”

Joseph is doing well with his chemotherapy and radiation treatments, and the family looks forward to returning home to American Samoa in the next couple of months.

They are hopeful and grateful for the chance of recovery that he’s been given. As for Mary, she will re-apply for scholarships at U.S. colleges since she forfeited the one she received from Chaminade University in Hawaii so that she could take care of Joseph and her family. With hard work, she is determined to follow her life-long dream of becoming a doctor or nurse.

And Joseph...he will keep smiling and benefiting from the strong and caring support system and loving family he is blessed with.

continued from page 1

support they received at the Ronald McDonald House while going through so much chaos and turmoil.

“The experience was like no other,” Jamelia said. “It was the hardest time we’ve ever been through. But the people at the House understood what we were going through. They were there for us. They helped us stay positive and strong.”



Ways The Community Supports Us Mahalo!

The community supports us in so many ways, from donations, to providing meals, cooking, cleaning, gardening, and gift baskets.



Community volunteers keep our shelves stocked with supplies.



The Naval Health Clinic provides "Extra Hands" help every month.



HIHO – Hands In Helping Out – did hands on "oyster shucking" for an RMHC fundraising project!



Starbucks Uptown set up Wish Wednesday baskets filled with donations for RMHC.



University Lab students hard at work cleaning and sprucing up the House.



Yummm – tons of macarons prepared by Shoreline & Coconut Hotel volunteers.



31 Gifts, Oahu Chapter, brought an amazing meal and goody-filled totebags for RMHC families.



St. Louis High School students kept our families happy and full with a delicious Sunday dinner.

You Can Make a Difference

A \$25 donation or more helps make a family's stay at the Ronald McDonald House a little easier and contributes to their comfort and recovery in so many ways:



LODGING

A gift of \$150 can help sponsor a family's stay at Hawaii's Ronald McDonald House



TRANSPORTATION

\$50 would help pay for gas and auto costs to transport families to and from the hospital for treatment, appointments, and to be with their hospitalized children



INCIDENTALS

Gifts of \$25 or more could pay for gift cards to help cover incidentals (toiletries, groceries, pharmacy) for our families



HOUSEHOLD SUPPLIES

\$50 will help us purchase towels and linens, and stock up on laundry, cleaning and kitchen supplies



NOURISHMENT/NUTRITION

\$250 will buy a week of breakfast groceries to give families a healthy start in the morning. For \$200 you can sponsor Sunday dinner or a holiday meal for our families.



A HAPPY SMILE

\$25 would buy a little cake and toy for a child celebrating a birthday while recovering at the Ronald McDonald House

RMHC-HI Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon



Our volunteers are at the heart of everything we do. Volunteers at RMHC Hawaii spent more than 8,000 hours helping families at the House that Love Built. To honor them, Ronald McDonald House recently held its annual Volunteer Ohana celebration at the Pearl Country Club. We have received so many gifts of time, treasures, and donations. We greatly appreciate all that our volunteers do to help out our House and the families who stay here!



Volunteer Spotlight Millie Okada-Miura



The Ronald McDonald House is fortunate to have many amazing volunteers who share their time and aloha with our families and staff. Every volunteer who steps through our doors is an important part of the RMHC Ohana, but one of them holds a special place in our hearts. Millie Okada-Miura has shared her heart with our families since 2006.

Millie is one of four siblings and had two special needs sisters. "My sisters made us look at the world differently," she said. "We knew how

blessed we were being raised by our parents. They were extremely giving people. Complete strangers were in our house all of the time. My dad even delivered fresh bread, for free."

Millie continued the "giving aloha" spirit and first began volunteering at the RMHC's Family Room; she now volunteers around our entire House. She is a core component in prepping and running our silent auction at our annual Share a Night Gala fundraiser every year. But one of the most important things she helps with is ensuring our families have tasty, filling meals to stay strong and healthy while caring for their children.

Millie is our grocery shopper. Every week she does all the food shopping to fill our fridge, freezers, and pantry for

the families. She does this between her own weekly food shopping, volunteering with other organizations, and running her own business. She manages to squeeze in time to make home cooked dishes for our families using the ingredients and groceries that she has stocked on our shelves. During her rare down time, she travels with her husband, Eric.

Millie said it was her dream to volunteer and to help others. It is with the help of amazing hearts and hands like Millie's that our staff is able to provide a home-away-from-home for seriously ill children and their families. We are forever grateful for Millie and our many volunteers who have touched the lives of so many families.

Ronald McDonald House Charities Hawaii 28th Annual Golf Classic

The 2019 Golf Classic was held on July 24th at the Hawaii Prince Golf Club. We had a wonderful turnout of 66 teams that joined us for a day filled with golf, camaraderie, fun and competitive activities, food, prizes and more.

It was another successful tournament setting a new record raising over \$150,000 through team sponsorships, donations and a day of activities. Additionally, we had the support of nearly 200 volunteers to ensure the day went smoothly and all enjoyed themselves.

A big mahalo to all of the businesses, organizations and individuals that made this event a resounding success.

PLATINUM SPONSORS

Crazy Shirts	McDonald's of Hawaii GAMA*
Golden State Foods	Midas Hawaii
Hamasaki Construction, LLC	Par Hawaii
J. Kadowaki, Inc.	Pasha Hawaii
Kalaeloa Partners*	R.M. Towill
Leu, Okuda & Doi, A Law Partnership	Southwest Airlines
McDonald's Hawaii	Tyler & Stacey Miyamoto

GOLD SPONSORS

Aryzta	First Insurance Company of Hawaii, Ltd.	Island Insurance Companies
Dustin S. Ridgeway and Annie Stamps	Friends of RMHC Hawaii	Lamb Weston
Egami & Ichikawa CPA's Inc.	Hawaii Five Stars, Inc.	Newtown Veterinary Clinic*
		Sky River Management*

SILVER SPONSORS

Brown and Brown Pacific Insurance*	Hawaii USA Federal Credit Union	Okazaki Friends/Koga Engineering*
Bruce Yanagihara	Helen's Garden	PAMCAH UA-Local 675
C C Engineering and Construction	HMSA	Plumbing & Mechanical Contractors Association of Hawaii (PAMCA)
Central Pacific Bank	HPC Foods, Ltd.	Popcorn Express
Coca-Cola Company	INPAC Wealth Solutions	Premier Insurance
Commercial Sheetmetal Co. Inc.	Kopke Enterprises, LLC	R.K. Oshiro Door Service
Crum & Forster	Locations Foundation	Sato & Associates
Dennis M. H. Pang Associates	Matheson Tri-Gas, Inc.	Stanley Lum
Golden State Foods	Meadow Gold Dairies*	Sunrun
GoodFellow Bros.	Merit Properties	Todd and Seabolt
Ham Produce and Seafood	Mitsunaga Construction	
	N&K CPAs, Inc.	
	NETT Distribution	

* Two teams

2019 GOLF CLASSIC SPECIAL FRIENDS

Boss Frog's Dive & Surf | California Hotel & Casino - Las Vegas | The Coca-Cola Company
 Dr Pepper Snapple Group | Egami and Ichikawa CPAs, Inc. | Farmers' Rice Cooperative
 Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea | Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort & Spa
 Grand Naniiloa Resort - A DoubleTree by Hilton | Hawaii Prince Golf Club | Hawaiian Expressions
 Hyatt Regency Maui Resort and Spa | Ka'anapali Beach Hotel | Kaha Lani - Castle Resorts & Hotels
 KTM Services, Inc. | Kuoha Culinary | McDonald's Hawaii | Mid-Pacific Country Club | Nalo Snow
 Paradise Beverages | Prince Waikiki | Ruth's Chris Steak House | Mr. and Mrs. Mel and Jane Shigeta
 Southwest Airlines | Tony Group Autoplex | Turtle Bay Golf | Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort & Spa
 Wailea Beach Resort, Marriott Maui | Wet'N'Wild Hawaii | Mr. Bruce Yanagihara

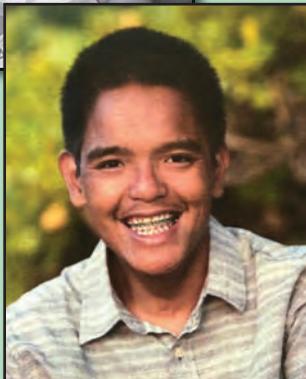


Going Home



Little Chloe and her family spent 93 days at the Ronald McDonald House while undergoing multiple surgeries after arriving from Guam. The lovable toddler, her mom, and grandma became part of our extended Ohana. Everyone celebrated when Chloe was able to go home to Guam, but we miss them all very much.

Congrats Kevin



Congratulations to Kevin Saligumba, who recently did his commencement walk at Waimea High School on Kauai. Kevin was born four months early, spending two years in the hospital while his parents stayed at the Ronald McDonald House. His parents – Cora and Frankie – became caring “houseparents” for so many other RMHC families. Kevin and his parents continue to be cherished members of the Ronald McDonald House Ohana.

RMHC Walks for Keiki



Ronald McDonald House staff and volunteers were ready for fun in the sun at the Visitor Industry Charity Walk to support our keiki.

Save the date!

Join us to celebrate the children and families of Ronald McDonald House Charities® Hawaii.



RMHC HAWAII'S ANNUAL Share a Night Gala

Saturday, November 23
Sheraton Waikiki Resort Hawaii Ballroom

Honorees: Nancy Bernal & Al Waterson

Country Store | Silent & Live Auctions | Hosted Cocktail Hour
Dinner Program | Live Entertainment
Cocktail Attire

Sponsorship Levels:

Koa \$15,000 | Maile \$10,000 | Ilima \$5,000
Pikake \$3,000 | Seats \$250

To reserve your table contact Kylie Arrell
at 892-1906 or kylie@rmhchawaii.org



Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Hawaii
1970 Judd Hillside Road
P.O. Box 61777
Honolulu, Hawaii 96839-1777
Phone: (808) 973-5683
info@rmhchawaii.org
www.RonaldHouseHawaii.org

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Honolulu HI
Permit No. 635

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Workplace Giving Changes Lives

Workplace giving programs provide essential support for RMHC Hawaii families, and many donors find it an easy and convenient way to make their annual tax-deductible donations and give to the causes they truly care about.

If you are a federal government employee (civilian or military), please consider designating a portion of your **Combined Federal Campaign** gift to Hawaii's Ronald McDonald House.

If **Aloha United Way** is your option for workplace giving, choose **My Community Investment** and direct your gift of \$48 or more per year to help keep families together during a medical crisis.

Many companies encourage employee giving programs such as **matching gifts, payroll deductions, annual giving campaigns, holiday drives and volunteerism**. Become a House Partner by selecting an activity, whether individual or company-wide, to provide hope and hospitality for families in need.

