



# Home Front

FALL 2021

A PUBLICATION OF RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES DETROIT

## A NOTE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Happy Fall everyone. We were thrilled to see so many of you at our summer events this year. I was really missing seeing people face to face in person instead of on a computer screen! Our staff is missing our volunteers terribly and we know we will see you all back in the House soon. Unfortunately, due to our dedication to keeping our families healthy and safe, we are cancelling in person volunteering and events through the end of 2021. Let's all stay safe and hopefully we'll be able to gather again in 2022.

Check out our annual report, showing how we did financially in 2020. We can't say thanks enough to everyone who supported us through the shutdowns last year. Those of you who loved us before, loved us through, and keep showing us love are the reasons we can continue to serve our families so well.

If you have questions, concerns, or comments you'd like to share with me, I am always available at [jlitomisky@rmhc-detroit.org](mailto:jlitomisky@rmhc-detroit.org) or 313-745-5909.

Wishing you health and happiness,

*Jennifer J. Litomisky*

Jennifer J. Litomisky  
Executive Director



## MEET MICHAELA DERMYER

Michaela was born with a congenital heart defect called hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. During a routine appointment when she was 3 years old, her doctors in Lansing started, and then stopped, a stress test. They did an ultrasound and told her mom and dad "grab what you can and get to Detroit." Michaela had a major blockage in her heart and needed immediate surgery. Her parents raced her to Children's Hospital of Michigan and spent the next three nights sleeping at her bedside as she underwent open heart surgery.

When they learned about the Ronald McDonald House, her dad, Willard, felt a huge sense of relief.



*"...it was a breath of fresh air for a minute to sit and relax and be as a family."*

Their son, just 4 years old and staying with grandparents back at home in Jackson, could now come visit his parents and little sister. His wife could eat a real meal, instead of hospital grilled cheese sandwiches. In

Willard's own words, "To sit down, try and relax a little bit in between going up and being with your child, it was a breath of fresh air for a minute to sit and relax and be as a family".



Michaela is now 20 years old and doing well! She has had several surgeries but none as urgent or severe as her first and her parents are still so thankful for their time in the Ronald McDonald House.



## DONOR/VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

# HUG-LI DOLLS

Hug-Li dolls are made from fabric scraps, sewing bits and pieces, curtains, or anything! No two Hug-Li dolls look alike and every one is handmade with love. Christine Ann and her sister, Carole Ann, began making Hug-Li dolls to give hugs away to anyone, of any age, who might need a hug during a difficult time. Since they began, they've given away more than 5,000 handmade dolls!

Hug-Li has been donating dolls to Ronald McDonald House Charities Detroit for more than five years and they're a huge hit with our families and kids. Having a stuffed animal "friend" to hold during a difficult time has meant so much to our kids during their long hospital stays.

We're so grateful for the support of Hug-Li dolls and all of their volunteers. They've provided so much comfort to our families!



## WOODWARD DREAM CRUISE

It was a hot weekend for the 2021 Woodward Dream Cruise and no one would know better than the team at David Younger's Royal Oak McDonald's restaurant. Directed by Rich Davedowski, John Perras, Tim Grobelski, Jaye Sutton, and crew, hundreds of Dream Cruise visitors found prime parking and supported the families of the Ronald McDonald House at the same time! A big shout out to Dr. Pepper and Carla Schwesinger for their support.



## VINNI'S CHILDREN'S CHARITY GOLF OUTING

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the 20th anniversary of the Vinni's Children's Charity Golf Outing. We had an absolutely gorgeous day for golf at Fieldstone Golf Course and we were so glad to see everyone in person! Special thanks to Cary Adragna and the whole Adragna family, the Kostecki's, and the whole team of volunteers that made the event go so smoothly. Golfers, save the date for June 3, 2022.





## ESCAPE TO BELLE ISLE

It was a rainy start to the day and there were some unexpected challenges at this year's Escape to Belle Isle race but we are so thankful for all of you who joined us, both in person and virtually, for a great event! We can't wait to see you all again next year.







In 1984 the national Ronald McDonald House Charities chapter (RMHC) was established in memory of McDonald's founder, Ray Kroc. McDonald's franchise owners and suppliers contribute time and funding for all the Ronald McDonald Houses, including Detroit.

Though the McDonald's system is our largest corporate sponsor, no one company funds our programs entirely. We continue to rely on the generous support of our entire community and greatly value all donations, whether they are through time, talent, or treasure.



## KEEPING FAMILIES CLOSE<sup>®</sup>

*"We stayed at RMHC Detroit while our daughter was at Children's Hospital. Your staff is so friendly, helpful and gracious. We really felt like it was our second home."*

– An RMHC Detroit Family



## PLANNED GIVING

When you choose to leave a legacy gift to Ronald McDonald House Charities Detroit, you're ensuring that the families of critically ill and injured children have a supportive and comfortable place, just minutes from their child, for years to come. In the face of uncertainty such as the COVID-19 pandemic, planned gifts helped us stay open and serve families who needed us. Your planned gift can help us in the future!

There are many ways to leave a legacy gift to Ronald McDonald House Charities Detroit, including:

- Making a bequest in your will
- Creating a charitable gift annuity
- Making a gift of life insurance
- Donating your retirement assets
- IRA Planned Giving
- Giving a gift of stocks or bonds

Your support will help us bolster our endowment, creating a lasting impact on the families of critically ill and injured children for decades to come. For more information or assistance in setting up a planned gift, contact Marketing and Development Director Chrissy Cooper at **313-745-9487** or [ccooper@rmhc-detroit.org](mailto:ccooper@rmhc-detroit.org).

Have you already chosen to leave a legacy gift to Ronald McDonald House Charities Detroit? Please contact Chrissy and let us know!

## HELLO TO OUR FRIENDS AND FAMILIES!

2020 was quite the year. Our House and Family Room programs were closed for much longer than any of us anticipated, our volunteers had to stay home, and our staff were working double and triple duty just to get the basic needs of the families who sheltered with us met.

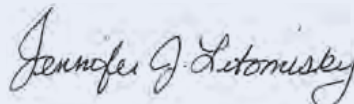
We hope this annual report gives you a sense of the impact your gifts made for our families in 2020. Below, you will see two charts, one outlining expenses and the other, revenue. The expense chart is primarily programming costs, things that we buy and pay for to keep our House and Family Room running smoothly. Last year, it was a lot of dinners, snacks, and meal vouchers due to the suspension of our volunteer meal program. The revenue and support chart shows where we get the money to pay for those programming costs. Most of it comes from unsolicited, general gifts. That means it comes from all of you! The amazing businesses, families, and individuals who support our work to help families every day. The rest comes from fundraising events, grants and foundations, our newsletters (like this one), and the donations families contribute to their stay.

So on behalf of the entire Board of Directors, thank you to all our donors, volunteers, supporters, partners, and friends. We couldn't make it without you and we thank you for all you continue to do for Ronald McDonald House Charities Detroit.

Best,



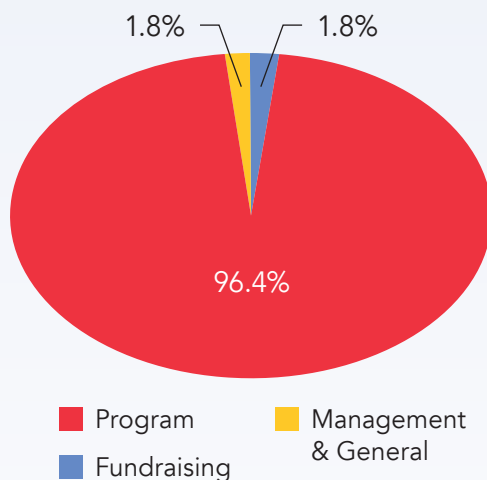
Jenna Greenman  
Board President



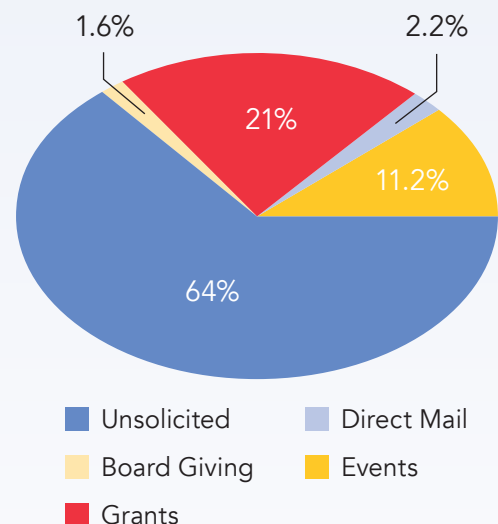
Jennifer Litomisky  
Executive Director

## INCOME & EXPENSES\*

2020 FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES



2020 REVENUES AND SUPPORT



\*Please note that these Expense and Revenue numbers are from 2020 as our fiscal year runs January to December. Our 2021 numbers will be shared in 2022.

# RED SHOE SOCIETY

Do you want to contribute to **Ronald McDonald House Charities Detroit**, but don't think your gift can make a difference? It can! Join our Red Shoe Society to make a nominal monthly gift to make a difference in the lives of families who are going through a tough time. Over time, your gift adds up to support families while their child receives care at a local hospital. Visit our website at [www.rmhc-detroit.org](http://www.rmhc-detroit.org) or contact Marketing and Development Director **Chrissy Cooper** at **313-745-9487** or [ccooper@rmhc-detroit.org](mailto:ccooper@rmhc-detroit.org).



**Ronald McDonald  
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