



Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
of Central Pennsylvania

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2026



A Home Away From Home ❤️



88 Days OF HOPE

How RMHC-CP Helped The Couce Family Stay Close When It Mattered Most

Jennifer and Joshua, from Washington, DC, never expected their babymoon in Hershey to turn into a life-altering journey. On October 10, 2025, at just 28 weeks pregnant, Jennifer's water broke, and she was admitted to Hershey Medical Center. Six days later, on October 16, their son Liam was born at 29 weeks gestation.

On his fifth day of life, Liam was diagnosed with Stage 3 Necrotizing Enterocolitis (NEC), a severe and life-threatening gastrointestinal disease. He required immediate bedside surgery because he was too unstable to reach the operating room, followed by a second surgery two days later. After months of recovery and a third surgery on January 6, 2026, Liam's intestines were successfully reconnected. Today, Liam is thriving and is expected to live a normal life.



From October 18, 2025, when Jennifer was discharged, until Liam's discharge on January 14, 2026, the Couce family stayed at the Ronald McDonald House—a total of 88 days and nights. Being 125 miles from home for nearly three months with a critically ill newborn, they relied on the House for meals, laundry, family spaces, computer access, and the comfort of the Ronald McDonald House Family Room and Hospitality Cart. They estimate that the support from RMHC saved them at least \$15,000 in out-of-pocket costs for food, housing, and laundry.

“It is because of Ronald McDonald House Charities' incredible work that we didn't have to worry about anything, and that we could focus on our son, Liam's health and well-being. Words cannot describe how thankful we are to Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central PA and every single donor who helps make it possible.”

To help RMHC of Central PA provide services to families like the Couce's, visit rmhc-centralpa.org. To share your RMHC-CP story with us, please email marketing@rmhc-centralpa.org.



A LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends,

As the days grow longer and the first signs of spring begin to bloom, we're reminded that this season is all about renewal, hope, and fresh beginnings. At Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central PA, that spirit lives in every family we serve. Just as spring brings warmth and light after a long winter, our mission is to provide comfort, care, and a home-away-from-home for families with children receiving medical treatment.

Each day, we remain devoted in our commitment to serve families whose children are receiving care at Penn State Health Golisano Children's Hospital through our House and Family Room, at Penn Medicine Lancaster General Hospital through our Ronald McDonald Hospitality Kiosk, and at UPMC Harrisburg through our Ronald McDonald Cart with a Heart. These valued partnerships ensure families can remain close to their child's bedside while we provide comfort, stability, and compassionate support.

Whether it's through our newly enhanced Guest Chef Program, bringing nourishing, diverse meals into the House through the generosity of community partners, or our newly completed patio space – a peaceful outdoor retreat offering fresh air and a quiet moment of rest between hospital visits, we are always focusing on how we can serve more families better.

As our programs expand, so does our team. We are thoughtfully growing our staff to ensure we continue delivering exceptional care, operational excellence, and meaningful engagement for the families and partners we serve.

Because of your generosity, we continue to remove barriers, strengthen resilience, and walk alongside families when they need it most. I hope you enjoy learning more in the pages that follow.

With gratitude,

Karla Mitchell, Executive Director



Karla Mitchell
RMHC-CP Executive Director

Brighter Days Ahead at Ronald McDonald House Charities

With winter behind us, we're welcoming the fresh start that spring brings to Ronald McDonald House Charities. Longer days, warmer air, and blooming flowers will soon surround our House, creating a peaceful place for families to step outside, breathe deeply, and enjoy a moment of renewal. Spring reminds us that brighter days are ahead—for the families we serve and for our entire community.



PATIO UPDATE

Our new patio area is taking shape at the House, providing a peaceful space for families to relax, connect, and enjoy fresh air. With landscaping complete, we're waiting for the flowers and greenery to reach full bloom and for the finishing touches to be added. This space will be a bright, welcoming spot for families to take a moment, share a meal, or enjoy some quiet time together.



PLAYGROUND UPDATE

Our new playground is moving forward and is set to open this year! This space will give kids opportunities to play, explore, and enjoy time outdoors, adding to the comfort and joy of their stay. With plans finalized and construction soon underway, stay tuned for updates as we get closer to the **big reveal!**



VOICES OF IMPACT



We're showcasing the voices of the leaders and professionals who make our mission possible. Their insights offer a glimpse into why supporting Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central PA matters and how their work brings reassurance, care, and stability to the families we serve.



“As a McDonald's Owner-Operator, I proudly support RMHC-CP because caring for families is at the heart of what we do — both inside and beyond our restaurants. The mission to provide a home away from home for families with hospitalized children reflects the values our brand was built on: **community, compassion, and support.** I've seen how families being close to their child during medical treatment can make an immeasurable difference in their strength and healing. Supporting RMHC-CP is one of the most meaningful ways we can give back to the community.”



Matthew Di Rienzo
McDonald's Owner Operator
RMHC-CP Board Director

“Serving on the Board of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central PA has shown me how powerful it is when a community comes together around families in crisis. **RMHC doesn't just provide a place to stay — it gives families comfort and reassurance during the most challenging times.** I'm proud to support an organization that keeps families close and turns care into action every single day.”



Tammy S. Derk, MHA
Vice President Children's Service Line
Penn State Health
RMHC-CP Board Director



**Alyssa Livengood Waite, MHA, MSN
RN, NEA-BC, FACHE**
Associate Chief Nursing Officer
Penn Medicine, Lancaster General Health

“Serving on the Board of Ronald McDonald House of Central PA allowed me to experience how essential the partnership with Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health is to help with the way we care for children and their families.

Through our collaboration, particularly with our inpatient pediatric unit and the RMHC Kiosk, we help remove everyday barriers so families can remain close, supported, and present at their child's bedside. **RMHC-CP does more than provide resources; it offers comfort during some of the most stressful moments a family can face.** I'm proud of this partnership and the positive difference it makes in supporting families' care.”

“As both a healthcare provider and Board Director for Ronald McDonald House Charities, I see firsthand how critical it is for families to remain close to their children during times of serious illness. Supporting RMHC-CP means supporting not just medical care, but the emotional stability and strength that families need to navigate incredibly difficult journeys. I have witnessed the difference it makes when parents can focus on their child's healing without the added burden of housing or distance.

The mission of RMHC-CP aligns deeply with my commitment to compassionate, patient-and family-centered care. **It is an honor to support an organization that brings comfort, dignity, and hope to families when they need it most.”**



Dorothy V. Rocourt, MD, MBA, FACS
Adjunct Clinical Professor of Surgery,
Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh
Associate Regional Medical Director, Pediatric Surgery
Pediatric Quality Medical Director
UPMC Children's in Central PA
RMHC-CP Board Director



WAYS TO GIVE

MILTON
HERSHEY
SCHOOL®



Ronald McDonald House Family Room®

This spring, Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central PA extends heartfelt thanks to our Family Room Sponsors from this past year, Milton Hershey School and Catherine Hershey Schools for Early Learning.

Their shared commitment to supporting and empowering children and families beautifully reflects our mission, helping us provide comfort, care, and connection at Penn State Health Golisano Children's Hospital.

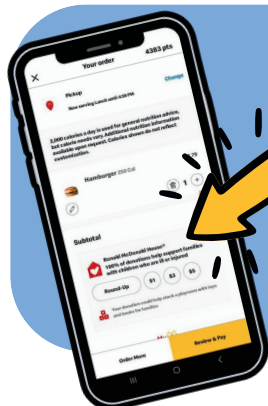
Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central PA offers several strategic giving options designed to maximize both philanthropic impact and tax efficiency. Donors may include RMHC in:

- Estate plans through bequests, beneficiary designations, charitable remainder trusts, or other planned giving vehicles to create a legacy of support
- Donor Advised Funds (DAFs), providing flexibility in grant timing while achieving immediate tax benefits
- Workplace giving programs, including United Way, the State Employees Combined Appeal (SECA), offering convenient payroll deduction options, and corporate matching gift programs.



Gifts of appreciated securities, such as publicly traded stocks or mutual funds held long-term, may provide significant capital gains tax advantages while allowing donors to support families facing pediatric medical crises in a meaningful way

We encourage donors to consult with their financial or tax advisors to determine the most effective giving strategy aligned with their philanthropic goals. If you have chosen to include RMHC-CP in any of your estate plans or have questions, please contact development@rmhc-centralpa.org. You can also complete our Letter of Intent to notify us of your legacy plans for our organization, which can be found at: rmhc-centralpa.org/leave-a-legacy-2/.



Round Up in the McDonald's App

Round-Up is now available in the McDonald's mobile app, making it easier than ever to **support families staying at Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central PA**. With just one tap, you can round up your purchase to help provide families with a place to stay, warm meals, and the comfort of being close to their child receiving medical care. **Every penny rounded up helps keep families close when it matters most.**



Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
of Central Pennsylvania

2026 Event Save the Dates

April 30

*Diamonds
& DENIM*
Ladies Night Out | 10th Anniversary

May 19

16th Annual
Lancaster County
Community 
Auction

July 27

31st Annual
**Golf
Classic**

September 18

Sporting Clays
TOURNAMENT



Throughout 2026, Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central PA will host a series of signature fundraising events that help keep our programs and services free of charge for families.

Thanks to the generosity of community members like you, these events make it possible for us to provide comfort, care, and essential resources when families need them most.

To learn more about participating in any of our 2026 signature events, please contact:

events@rmhc-centralpa.org

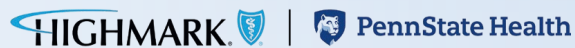


JOIN US IN KEEPING THE MAGIC ALIVE!

Thank you

TO OUR 2025 SPECIAL EVENT SPONSORS

Thanks to all the incredible sponsors who partnered with us on our three special events in 2025: Diamonds & Denim Ladies Night Out, Annual Golf Classic and Sporting Clays Tournament. These events were a true testament to community collaboration, and each generous contribution was instrumental in bringing them to life. The belief in our mission strengthens our ability to support families throughout the year. **We are truly honored by their partnership.**



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Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
of Central Pennsylvania

745 West Governor Road
Hershey, PA 17033-2304

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2025 IMPACT



RMHC®
of Central Pennsylvania

1,487

Families stayed at
the RMH in Hershey



Overnight family stays provided

9,752

10,945

Total program
volunteer hours



6 Nights

Average length of stay



708

Families served in our RMHC
Family Room



5,823

Guest visited our
Hospitality Carts

19,400

Individual meals provided

