



**Ronald
McDonald
House®**

Connecticut & Western
Massachusetts

From the Heart

June 2026



A Time of Growth and Gratitude

This is an especially exciting time for our Chapter as we celebrate the launch of our refreshed brand—a new look that reflects who we are today and where we are headed. While our brand has evolved, our mission remains unchanged: providing essential services that remove barriers, strengthen families, and promote healing when children need healthcare.

In this issue, you'll read inspiring stories like Anyse's, which remind us just how meaningful a place that feels like home can be during an incredibly difficult time. You'll also see the impact of our dedicated volunteers, generous donors, and committed sponsors, and learn more about programs like Family Stays and Nourishing Families that help us support families every single day.

As we head into summer, we're also excited about opportunities like the 26th Annual Golf Tournament, which brings our community together in a fun and meaningful way to make a difference for the families we serve.

Thank you for helping Ronald McDonald House Connecticut & Western Massachusetts continue to bring comfort, care, and support to families when they need it most.

With heartfelt gratitude,



Michelle D'Amore, Chief Executive Officer



Michelle with Sara Amato and Emily Brady at the Mid-State Chamber of Commerce event.



A Journey of Support and Kindness

“I relocated from Texas to Connecticut and the week I moved was the week my fiancé’s and my life changed drastically. We found out we were expecting!

Finding out we were expecting brought both joy and worry. Our pregnancy was complicated from the beginning. We experienced a miscarriage, but did not know we were pregnant with multiples at the time. We found out we were having twins after the third ultrasound, and later find out through genetic testing that we had been pregnant with triplets.



Anyse and Jamelle visiting their newborn twins, Jamira and Jamari.

During our pregnancy we found out our son was growth restricted and had a heart defect. This meant lots of weekly appointments and scans for us. I was placed on bed rest at three months, due to the high-risk and complications. Our twins were due in September, 2025 and were born on July 15th. Our son, Jamari, weighed one pound, one ounce and our daughter, Jamira, weighed three pounds, three ounces. Jamira spent 38 days in the NICU and her brother spent over eight months in the NICU/PICU.

Jamari was diagnosed with VSD which means he has a hole in his heart. Every time his heart would beat, it would pump blood to his heart and lungs. Jamari needed open-heart surgery to repair the hole so his lungs could heal and grow. While waiting to have the procedure, Jamari had several complications including cardiac arrest lasting five minutes. We were told he was very critical and was literally fighting for his life and wasn’t stable enough for surgery.

While all of this was happening, my mom decided she would put her life on hold and come help us take care of Jamira while I recovered. She ended up staying from the time I gave birth until the babies were seven months old. During this time, the hospital referred us to the Ronald McDonald House. We had no idea what it was or what to expect, but we accepted to be closer to Jamari.”



Jamira and Jamari while in the hospital.

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Volunteering with Heart

Dail L.

Dail was looking for a place to donate her time. While looking for volunteer opportunities, a friend recommended she try Ronald McDonald House, and we are certainly glad she did!

Not only does she greet our families and visitors with a warm and welcoming smile, she helps with tasks that truly support them. She helps wherever needed, prepares food, and keeps our community spaces neat and tidy.



Dail preparing food for families.



Caitlin helping with front desk duties.

Caitlin W.

“I felt that involving myself in the community and getting to know the families at Ronald McDonald House would allow me to make a small difference while volunteering within a healthcare related setting. I enjoy helping out as much as I can to make sure families are welcome.”

I hope that through my volunteerism, families feel that the Ronald McDonald House welcomes them and supports them throughout their stay.”

Springfield International Charter School National Honor Society (NHS)

“As part of our commitment to NHS, we provide 40 hours of service yearly to organizations. Brandon P., who is a National Honor Society member, is also part of the Ronald McDonald House: Springfield’s Teen Board and recommended it for our service day.”

“We held a food drive and delivered 25 shopping bags of non- perishable groceries to the House. We cleaned, sanitized and organized multiple areas of the House.”

“I want to make a positive difference.”

“I want to inspire others to do that same.”



Members of the Springfield International Charter School National Honor Society during their recent service day.

A Journey of Support and Kindness (continued)

Upon first arriving, the staff was very welcoming as they provided us a tour and all the information we needed while staying there. They provided meals and snacks, conversations, family activities, and a sense of home away from home. They made it easier to focus on our son rather than stressing over cooking, commuting and more.

My mom stayed the majority of the time with Jamira so her dad and I could work and visit Jamari. My mother was a large support for us during this time and between her and the Ronald McDonald House, this journey was a little less difficult and stressful.



Jamari with her Nana, Rosalind.

Not only was the Ronald McDonald House and the staff very helpful and accommodating, they became family.

As Jamari continued to fight and became stable enough, he underwent surgery and handled it like a rockstar and recovered very well. We were able to bring our son home.

We would like to thank everyone involved in the Ronald McDonalds House and can't express how much we appreciate each and everyone of you. You guys are very special and will forever be a part of our lives." - Anyse K.



Ralph with Jamira.

“My name is Ralph, and I am the husband of Rosalind, and we are the grandparents of Jamari and Jamira.

What a great experience it was being able to stay at the Ronald McDonald House. Everything was so nice and so clean. The staff were always there for Nana and Jamira. It was great to learn what the House does for the people that have to stay there. The services you provide to people in need are exceptional. People never know how important such a service is until they need it.

The word is gratitude for all that you do. Love and thanks from the Holt & Hewitt families.”

Giving in Meaningful Ways

Monthly Giving: Mark P.

A recurring gift provides more than financial support – it delivers stability, comfort, and hope to families facing some of the most difficult moments of their lives. Monthly recurring donations are especially important because they create reliable funding the organization can count on year-round.

Even a modest recurring gift can have a meaningful impact over time. Consistent giving ensures families always have access to essentials like meals, laundry facilities, private rooms, and emotional support services.

“Setting up a monthly donation was quick and easy, and it allows me to make a lasting impact all year long. Families facing medical crises need comfort, care, and a place to stay every single day and monthly giving helps ensure that support is always there when they need it most.” – Mark P.



Mark and his wife, Nichole, at our Expansion Ribbon Cutting ceremony.

The McKnight Family’s annual “Family Stays” Sponsorship:

The McKnight Family’s annual Family Stays sponsorship is a meaningful tribute to their loved one, John McKnight, whose compassion and dedication left a lasting impact on the Ronald McDonald House: New Haven. By sponsoring a guest room each year in his memory, the family continues John’s legacy of supporting Ronald McDonald House families with a safe, comfortable place to stay while their child receives medical treatment nearby. They support not only lodging, but also meals, emotional support, and essential services that allow parents to focus entirely on their child’s care.

For the McKnight Family, this annual gift is more than a donation – it is a way to honor John’s longtime commitment to the mission of keeping families together. Their support ensures that families traveling for pediatric medical care can find comfort, stability, and a sense of community when they need it most.

Through the McKnight Family’s continued generosity, John’s memory lives on in every family welcomed through our doors, helping provide hope, healing, and togetherness for years to come.



The McKnight Family.

Introducing Our New Brand and Programs

We're excited to share our fresh new look!

On May 18, we officially launched our new branding—designed to better reflect who we are today and where we're headed next. While our look has evolved, our mission and commitment to those we serve remain the same. This refreshed identity marks an important moment for us, including the introduction of our Family Stays tagline, which reinforces our deepened focus on supporting families through the full continuum of care. We're proud to continue walking alongside families when they need it most.



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Nourishing Families

The Nourishing Families Program provides warm, nutritious, and comforting meals to families who are spending long days—and often weeks—by their child's side during medical treatment. By becoming a Nourishing Families sponsor, you provide a month of meals in our House Kitchens or Family Room as well as grab-and-go snacks and fresh ingredients for cooking. Sponsors directly ensure families have access to food that not only sustains their bodies, but also their strength, hope, and sense of care during an otherwise overwhelming time.

The Family Stays program offers a year-long sponsorship of one of our family guest rooms. Sponsors' generous contributions help to underwrite the cost of each family's stay, enabling our Chapter to serve all families, regardless of their financial situation or background. Family Stays gifts provide parents the ability to focus on the most important thing—the wellbeing of their child.



Family Stays

To learn more about becoming a Family Stays or Nourishing Families Sponsor, contact Emily Brady at EBrady@ronaldmcdonaldhousectma.org today!



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**860 Howard Avenue
New Haven, CT 06519
www.rmhc-ctma.org**

