



Ronald McDonald
House Charities
of Connecticut &
Western Massachusetts

From the Heart

Summer 2025

Stories of how you keep families together when it matters most



**Krystle and Rowan
in our Family Room**

The Heart of our Mission

I am overwhelmed with a sense of gratitude—for the families who share their deeply personal journeys with us, for the volunteers who show up with open hearts, and for the donors and community partners who make it all possible.

In this issue, you'll read about Krystle and Jared, who found comfort, care, and community during a 58-night stay while their daughter, Rowan, was in the NICU. You'll meet the Andersen Family, who were able to be near their newborn daughter, Scottie, during a challenging and emotional time. Their stories remind us why RMHC CTMA exists—to keep families together when they need it most.

You will read how the spirit of generosity continues to flourish. From Shiloh and her Nana collecting soda cans to give back, to the enduring support of the Community Foundation for Middlesex County, and an incredibly moving legacy gift from Linda Roman—these acts of kindness form the foundation of everything we do.

And then there are our volunteers—like Evelyn F., the Give Back Girls, and the team from Shields Health— who remind us that giving time is one of the most powerful gifts of all. They cook meals, offer smiles, and create moments of connection that transform our Houses into homes.

This year, as we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Ronald McDonald House of Connecticut, I am filled with pride in all we've accomplished together. Forty years of keeping families connected. Forty years of compassion, resilience, and love.

Thank you for being part of this mission. Whether you've attended an event, made a donation, shared your story, or volunteered your time—you are the heart of our work. Because of you, families facing some of life's most difficult moments never have to face them alone.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Michelle D'Amore, Chief Executive Officer



Michelle and Cynthia Sparer at the 40th anniversary celebration and construction kick-off.

DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT
JOIN THE
**2025 UNITEX
MATCHING CHALLENGE**

Your donation from this newsletter will support twice as many families thanks to Unitex!
Unitex is matching every gift made to RMHC CTMA before August 31 dollar for dollar.

 Ronald McDonald House Charities of Connecticut & Western Massachusetts  Unitex HEALTHCARE LAUNDRY SERVICES

With Grateful Hearts

"My husband, Jared, and I came to the Ronald McDonald House two days after our daughter was born. Our daughter, Rowan, was a bit too eager to meet us and was born ten weeks early. Needless to say, we were not quite prepared or ready for her arrival on so many levels and neither was she. The doctors let us know that she was in for a lengthy stay at the NICU and my heart wept at the thought of leaving her and not being able to stay close by.

The next day a very kind social worker came to us and spoke about the Ronald McDonald House. I was a bit familiar with RMHC but did not realize they had a home so close to the hospital. She explained that if we wanted to stay, she would set everything up and when I was discharged, we could make our way over to check in.

We arrived at Ronald McDonald House after a hard discharge from the hospital without our new baby girl in hand. To our surprise, the House was within walking distance from the hospital or only a two minute drive.



Krystle and Rowan

A staff member welcomed us with a warm and gentle smile and took us on a tour. There were so many emotions running through us that evening and as the staff member left us in our room, I broke down thinking of all the unknowns...That was the beginning to our 58-night stay at RMH.

I have to say we were truly blessed by the opportunity to stay at this beautiful House. There were so many things the House provided to help us while we were there. They had prepared meals from volunteers which were a saving grace after long trying days, as well as having a communal kitchen area to make meals that felt home cooked when we had the energy. They also had a laundry room to use and a quiet library area to collect our thoughts on hard days back and forth from the hospital. In our time there, we met so many amazing families from all over the world, other NICU families, many volunteers, and staff members. The staff members were always there to help and make our stay as comfortable as possible. There were days where a simple good morning from a staff member would turn into an uplifting conversation that would help me get through the day and give me hope. When it was time to leave, we felt like we were leaving a second family we had been so graciously welcomed into.

Now as Rowan grows up, we are looking forward to coming, volunteering, and giving back to this wonderful organization. Without having a place like the Ronald McDonald House, so many would not have the opportunity to be close to their loved ones in the hospital or get the care they need. We could not have made it through without being there. Thank you so much for everything, we will be forever grateful."

- Krystle and Jared

The Love of Giving Back



The Give Back Girls

"We researched volunteer opportunities in our area and were happy to see that Ronald McDonald House had a variety of ways to participate and give back. Volunteering for RMH is a common source of joy across our members. The Give Back Girls have participated for the past two years with the House in several ways including preparing a meal in the amazing kitchen for the families with the Meals from the Heart program and volunteering at special events ushering and making guests feel important. It brings a great sense of peace knowing that somehow our small efforts culminate in something much bigger. Family means something to us and bringing comfort and a moment of happiness to those that are staying at the House is why we help."

Evelyn F.

"The opportunity to provide comfort, companionship, and a sense of normalcy during such a challenging time felt like a cause I could connect with on a personal level. Seeing the relief on parents' faces when they realize they have a warm meal, a safe place to stay, and a community that cares is truly rewarding. The connections I have built with both families and fellow volunteers and staff have been incredibly meaningful, reminding me of how small acts of kindness can make a significant difference. I support families by providing them with a welcoming and comforting environment during their difficult journeys. Whether it is preparing homecooked meals, organizing activities for children, or simply offering a listening ear, my goal is to make their stay as stress-free as possible. By giving my time and compassion, I hope to provide a sense of normalcy, warmth, and support to families facing unimaginable challenges."

Shields Health

"It's truly powerful to know that our support makes a real impact. Whether we're preparing meals for families, helping with a household project, collecting donations around the holidays, or showing up for one of RMH's signature fundraising events, we can see firsthand how these efforts contribute to a larger mission of care, compassion, and community. It's humbling and incredibly rewarding."

"This organization has a profound impact on the lives of families during some of their most challenging times, and volunteering is a chance to make a real difference for the families. Volunteering is an opportunity to step outside of our own day-to-day routine and put things into perspective. From the families staying at the House to the dedicated staff and volunteers, there's such a strong sense of camaraderie. There are so many stories of resilience, hope, and strength. "

Giving from the Heart

Shiloh and Nana B.

"My name is Shiloh and I am in 8th grade at Monson High School. My aunt, my best friend's dad, and a friend who races Go Karts with me have all battled cancer—and I felt I needed to help somehow. I asked my Nana for ideas, and we decided to collect soda cans and use our own money as well. We headed out on our shopping spree and really enjoyed buying items for others. We brought our donated items to the Ronald McDonald House. The House was like a real life doll house—a gorgeous place with impeccable furnishings, so clean and peaceful. We talked about it all the way home and felt proud to be a part of it."



Shiloh and Nana B.

A Lasting Legacy: Linda Roman

In late 2023, RMHC CTMA received notification of an estate gift from Linda N. Roman. Earlier this year, that gift was realized with the Ronald McDonald House of Connecticut being one of the recipients of her generosity. Linda was born in New London and spent her entire life in the area. She and her late husband, Richard, resided in Quaker Hill for nearly fifty years before his passing in early 2023. Linda, humbly seeking no recognition before her passing, chose to gift their entire estate to four charities.

Linda's gift to RMH of Connecticut is the largest estate gift received by RMHC CTMA. Her life and generosity will be celebrated through recognition as a donor to the Mission Expansion Campaign. We are incredibly grateful for this wonderful legacy gift and the impact it will have for generations to come.



Linda Roman

Supporting Families One Room at a Time

Since their first gift in 2019, the Community Foundation for Middlesex County (CFMC) has supported countless families staying at the Ronald McDonald House of Connecticut. Through their philanthropy, CFMC has sponsored a family guest room each year. Annually, nearly 10% of the families that stay at RMH come from Middlesex County and the communities served by the Foundation. Sponsor A Room donors help to offset the programmatic costs to host guest families. Donors like CFMC provide funding that enable RMHC CTMA to provide weekly activities, a stocked community pantry, coffee and tea, laundry and cleaning supplies, and parking in addition to overnight accommodations. In 2025, the grant from CFMC was made possible by the generosity of the *Barbara Weeks Hart and George H. Hart Memorial Fund*.



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
of Middlesex County

Philanthropy • Leadership • Legacy

Get to Know the Andersens

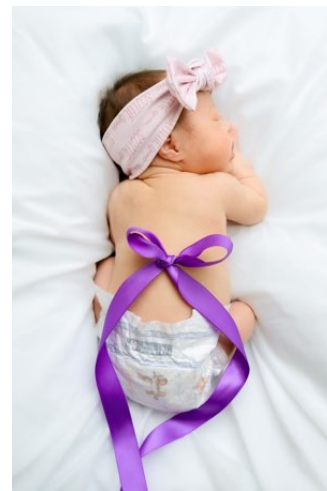


The Andersen family going home after a 21 night stay.

“Our daughter, Scottie, was born prematurely at 34 weeks and spent 26 days in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

Thanks to Ronald McDonald House, we were able to stay close to the hospital to spend as much time in the NICU as we could as we live about 45–60 minutes away. RMH provided a clean, safe, and caring environment to sleep and decompress after long days.

The House was an amazing resource that provided a secure place to stay with great activities, warm meals, and friendly staff in an otherwise challenging time.



Scottie Lynne

Without Ronald McDonald House, driving back and forth one hour each way daily would have taken away time we were able to spend with our daughter and would have added increased stress to our experience.

One of our favorite things about staying at the Ronald McDonald House were the staff that made us feel welcome and comfortable and the accessibility to the hospital. We also enjoyed the snacks in the kitchen!" - Andrea and Connor

The Generosity of McDonald's Customers

McDonald's customers gave \$430,981 to RMHC CTMA families when visiting McDonald's in 2024!

By buying a Happy Meal, saying "YES" to Round-Up, and donating their spare change, McDonald's customers donated all year long!



Did you know there are 3 ways you can Round-Up for RMHC CTMA families?

You can Round-Up at the kiosk at the end of entering your order.

You can Round-Up through the drive-thru when placing your order.

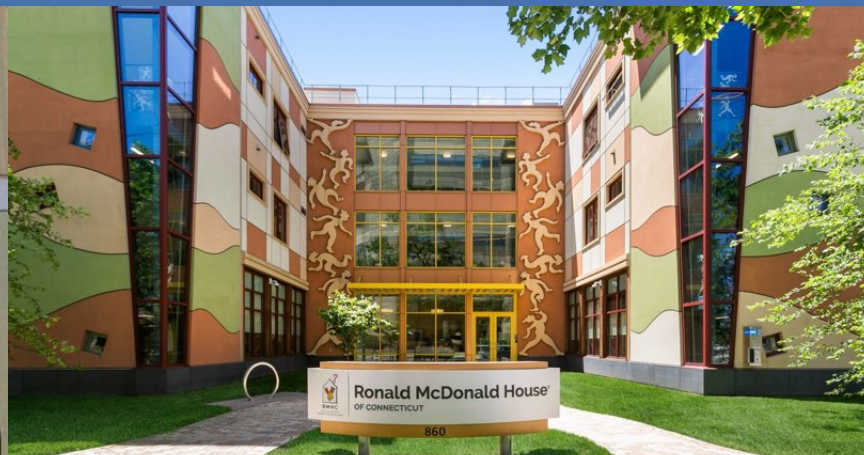
You can Round-Up when you give your order at the front counter.



Check out our Round-Up video to learn more!



Celebrating 40 Years: Ronald McDonald House of CT



Thank you to the thousands of individuals, businesses, civic groups, and families that have tirelessly given their time, treasure, and talents over the last 40 years.



The Ronald McDonald House of Connecticut is proud to celebrate four decades of providing families home, compassion, and support as they face their children's medical journeys head on, and most importantly, together.





Ronald McDonald
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Western Massachusetts

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Did you know ?

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right from your smartphone!



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For RMHC CTMA Families!



Did you know you can host a fundraiser, event,
or even a challenge for your friends and family to
raise money—all to support RMHC CTMA families?

**Raise
Love!**

Visit our website to
learn more and
make a difference
for families today!

