

Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Northeast Ohio

# 2020 IMPACT REPORT



Ronald McDonald  
House Charities®  
Northeast Ohio

Keeping families close®



# Ronald McDonald House Charities of Northeast Ohio

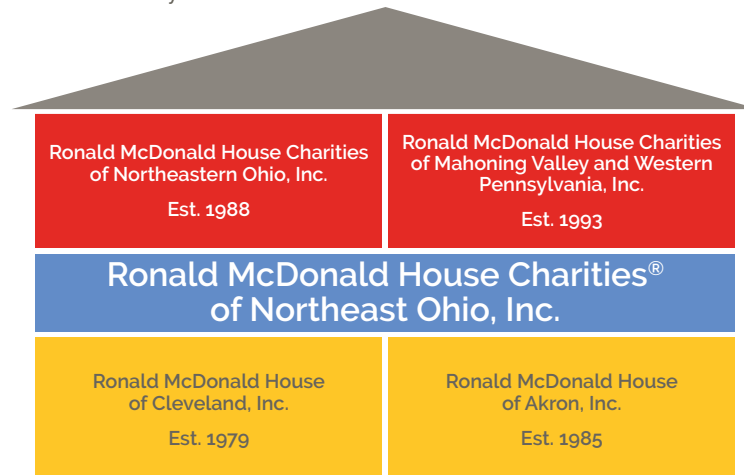
## 2020 IMPACT REPORT

After 18 months of planning, the four RMHC-affiliated organizations serving areas of Northeast Ohio united as Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Northeast Ohio, Inc. (RMHC® NEO) in July 2020.

### Governance and Staffing Structure

RMHC NEO adopted a new governance structure that ensures representation from its geographic areas, boards of the former entities, hospital partners and founding mission partner, McDonald's.

The staffing structure also evolved, and the leadership team welcomed Judy Hubbard as Chief Operating Officer. Judy has served on committees and boards of directors for both Ronald McDonald House Charities of Northeastern Ohio and Ronald McDonald House of Cleveland dating back to 1996.



### RMHC NEO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Kim McFarlane**

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**Craig Richmond**

The MetroHealth System

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Alpha Phi Alpha Homes

### COMMUNITY TRUSTEES

#### Greater Akron/Canton

**Chair: Jeananne Chadsey**

Office of the Ohio Secretary of State

**Vice-Chair: Amie O'Neill**

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Akron Children's Hospital

**Lin Gentile**

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**Rhonda Larimore**

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**Harun Rashid**

Akron Children's Hospital

**Anita Ferris Sears**

Tipping, Sears & Assoc.-

Dream Vacations

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Ernst & Young LLP

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**Mary Ann Dragon**

UH Rainbow Babies & Children's and MacDonald Women's Hospital

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**Pat Gable**

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**Don Grassi**

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**Harsha Kapur**

KeyBank

**Mickey Kozlovich**

Kozlovich Enterprises, Inc.

**Daniel Lorber**

Signet Jewelers

**Eric Metzung**

SITE Centers Corp.

**James Neville**

RDL Architects

**Jennifer Noble**

Westfield

**Leah Sardiga**

Oswald Companies

**Mike Scanlan**

John Carroll University

**Kathy Seitz Watson**

Frankel, Schickler & Seitz, LLP

**Brian Shenk**

The Sherwin-Williams Company

**Denise Speer**

Cleveland Clinic Fairview Hospital

**April Thompson**

Wild Thyme Personal Chef Service

**Michael Vehovec**

University Hospitals

**John Wargo**

Quicken Loans



### Dear Friends,

*2020 was a year of change—expected and unexpected.*

We entered 2020 putting finishing touches on an 18-month plan to unify RMHC® programs and services in our region. In July 2020, Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Northeast Ohio, Inc. was officially formed, successfully combining the talent, resources and community support of four chapters to fulfill one mission.

*RMHC NEO enhances the healthcare experience for families and children through comfort, care and supportive services.*

The new organizational structure creates many efficiencies and streamlines relationships, including with our founding mission partner McDonald's Owner/Operators of Northeast Ohio. Our shared experience and expertise better position us to manage and expand programs in response to needs of families and children in the region. It also made us stronger in addressing the unexpected challenges of 2020.

The pandemic arrived in 2020, changing all our lives and halting many experiences we previously took for granted. But childhood illness and injury did not stop. The need for families to be together and supported during the most stressful times of their lives did not stop. And we did not stop, thanks in no small part to your generous support.

Faced with the challenges of serving families safely, we pivoted. We revised, re-purposed, re-invented and re-imagined our services. You were there every step of the way. You donated money to our meal program to help us provide what volunteer groups could not. You supported our fundraising event transitions from in-person to virtual, or modified and masked. Staff learned new roles to provide essential services that individual volunteers could not. When our hospital-based programs had to shut their doors, we delivered snacks, activities and encouragement to the units...for patients, families and health care staff.

The stories, photos and memories shared in these pages reflect our united resilience and resolve. Our gratitude for the part you played, and continue to play, cannot be overstated. As we move into 2021 and phases of re-opening, we are optimistic, inspired and stronger together.

With Gratitude,



Craig Wilson  
Chief Executive Officer



Fritz Berckmueller  
President, Board of Directors



# At the House

## BY THE NUMBERS

**Family Nights: 12,242**  
**Family Visits: 545**  
**Families Served: 457**  
**Hotel Nights: 99**  
(provided during shutdown)  
**Average Stay: 22 nights**  
**Where families were from:**

- Countries: 10
- States: 33  
Top States: OH, WV, PA, MI, NY, VA, IL, FL
- Ohio Counties: 56  
Top Counties: Stark, Mahoning, Trumbull, Cuyahoga, Lorain, Summit, Columbiana
- Ohio Residents: 66.7 %
- International: 2.4%

**We never turn away guests for an inability to pay**

- Room Cost: \$100
- Requested Nightly Donation: \$20
- Average Nightly Donation: \$6.76
- Unpaid Room Nights: 66%

*Ronald McDonald House® programs in Akron and Cleveland give families a welcoming place to stay so they can focus on caring for their children. Comfortable rooms, meals, inviting common areas and landscaped grounds are a safe and welcome retreat from the hospital setting. Families also benefit from the comradery and community they find at our Houses.*

**At full capacity, we can accommodate 97 families per night.**

**40 long-term families returned home after a total of 9822 nights**, an average of eight months per family!



2-year-old Cameron Peete's family stayed together at our Cleveland House for 261 nights during his cancer treatment. This allowed his mom, Adelaida Brown, and his grandparents to be there for him, while still caring for his four siblings.

*"I don't think I could have gone through what I went through without the Ronald McDonald House... it's an amazing place for families."*

—Adelaida Brown

## MCDONALD'S: OUR FOUNDING MISSION PARTNER



Contributions from McDonald's Owner/Operators of Northeast Ohio and their customers totaled more than **\$506,000, making up 10% of RMHC NEO's 2020 operating budget.**



## A MENU OF SUPPORT

McDonald's operators made financial contributions and donated a portion of sales from Happy Meals, fries and promotions like Shamrock Shakes. Their customers donated through the mobile ordering app, Round-Up for RMHC and restaurant donation boxes.

McDonald's restaurants and suppliers, such as **New Horizons Baking** and **Anderson-Dubose**, contributed

food items and meals to help stretch the meal program budget.



To help RMHC NEO promote the Drive-Thru **Round-Up for RMHC** competition between McDonald's regions, **Lamar Advertising** donated digital billboard space in 26 prime locations for 18 weeks—a value of \$195,000.

Round-Up for RMHC public service announcements featuring **Clark Kellogg** promoted drive-thru purchases on social media and broadcast airtime donated by WKYC Studios.

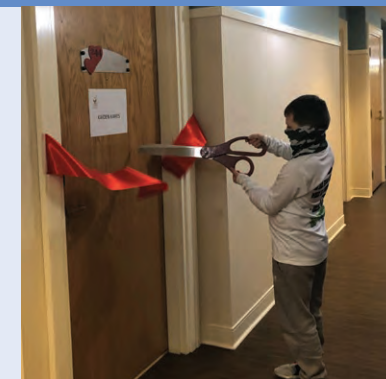
**59 Room Sponsorships provided \$331,048** to help keep families together and near the care their children need!

## New Annual Room Sponsors

The Steve and Maureen Harris Family Charitable Fund  
INSIGHT 2 PROFIT (sponsoring two rooms)  
Kaiden Kares, Inc.  
Bentwood Solutions  
Tomtreycy, Inc.  
The Colin Scheetz Family Foundation added a second room to their sponsorship  
Steve and Debbie Gratto



**Tom and Ana Locke** (Tomtreycy) sponsored room 220 at our Akron House. Tom is an RMHC NEO board member and McDonald's owner/operator who regularly donates needed items to the House.



Kaiden, who survived open-heart surgery at just three months of age, cuts the ribbon to the room sponsored by Kaiden Kares, the nonprofit that shares his name.

*"We knew we wanted to sponsor a room because we know having a place to rest your head is the last thing you should have to deal with when you are taking care of your sick child."*

—Christine Gardner, Kaiden's mom



- A room was permanently sponsored in memory of **Carl Doershuk**, past RMH Cleveland board president
- The **Doug and Charlotte McGregor Sunroom** sponsorship was renewed at \$50,000
- **Kent Elastomer and employees** renewed their sponsorship of four rooms for the 6<sup>th</sup> year

## COMPASSIONATE CUISINE

Meals are an essential part of our services, nourishing the bodies and souls of the families staying with us. Due to restrictions prohibiting group volunteers from preparing meals and limiting dining area capacity, our teams successfully pivoted and created a *Quarantine Edition* of our Family Meal Program. In both the Akron and Cleveland House, this still meant providing three meals a day: continental breakfast, individually packaged lunches and hot dinners (with room service!), plus snacks, beverages and dessert carts. By the numbers:

- **50,000+ individual meals** provided for House families
- More than 200 meals donated by groups who could not cook in person
- Snacks, beverages and 40 meals delivered to hospitals for families and healthcare staff



While **SITE Centers** employees worked from home and the company cafeteria was closed, Executive Chef Mickey Venditti prepared and delivered gourmet lunches to the House for 6 weeks, totaling 3,420 individual meals. The company also donated 2 new ovens and a warming cart.



**Everstream** contributed 1,650 catered dinners from 18 local restaurants from May-June 2020, \$1,500 worth of Wish List items and monetary donations. When volunteers were able to return, employees resumed their service. Pictured: Office Manager Jara Anton.

**Wish List drives brought over \$24,500** of things we needed, right when we needed them!



**Troop 70950** brought a sweet sign and Girl Scout cookies for our families to enjoy.

**The Wince Family**, who stayed at our Akron House when their daughter was in the PICU, hosted a Wish List Drive and donated over \$1,000 of much-needed items.





## BY THE NUMBERS

### FAMILY ROOM PROGRAMS

UH Rainbow Babies & Children's  
Cleveland Clinic Children's  
MetroHealth Medical Center  
Cleveland Clinic Fairview

**Individual Visits: 12,045**

**Happy Wheels Servings: 1,703**

**Gifts Distributed: 1,003**

**Overnight Guest Visits: 432**

### STAR CENTER

Cleveland Clinic Children's  
Outpatient Center

**Children Served: 242**

**Gifts & Snacks: 670**

**Lesson Takeaways: 94**

Ronald McDonald Family Room® programs in four Cleveland-area hospitals offer a space for families to rest and recharge just steps from their child's treatment room. Ronald McDonald STAR Center at Cleveland Clinic Children's Outpatient Center is a fun learning environment for children during siblings' outpatient visits.

*Our four hospital Family Room programs and STAR Center were fully operational from January 1 - March 11, 2020. By March 13, all five programs were temporarily closed.*

*Deliveries to frontline workers at hospitals began on April 2, 2020.*



Erin Goldsmith, Family Room Coordinator at Cleveland Clinic Children's, working the front desk at the Cleveland House and helping portion condiments for dinner delivery to families.

A delivery for healthcare workers and families.

## HOLIDAYS AT THE HOSPITAL

We were grateful to provide Thanksgiving dinner for parents of hospitalized children and healthcare staff at all four of our Family Room locations.

- **A Taste of Excellence** has donated the Thanksgiving meal at UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital since 2011 and Cleveland Clinic Fairview Hospital since 2015.
- **The Intercontinental** has donated the Thanksgiving meal at Cleveland Clinic Children's Family Room since 2015.
- **The Ritz-Carlton** has donated the Thanksgiving meal at MetroHealth Medical Center since our Family Room opened in 2010.



Family Room Coordinator Katie Muckle & UH Rainbow's Mary Ratcliffe accept Taste of Excellence delivery.



Amy Kossiver, STAR Center Lead Teacher, serves Thanksgiving dinner at UH Rainbow.



A generous donation from **Majestic Steel** provided all four Family Room locations with Christmas dinner from **Stancato's Italian Restaurant**.

Lauren Gittinger, STAR Center Lead Teacher, helping with Christmas meal distribution

During the shutdown, Hospital-Based Programs staff filled essential roles in our House Programs and found new ways to continue serving at the hospitals:

- Over 1000 gifts and necessary supply items were delivered to frontline healthcare workers, beginning on April 2, 2020.
- Snacks, beverages and 40 safely hosted meals were provided for families and healthcare workers.
- Family Room and STAR Center Staff took front desk shifts, helped with meal preparation, disinfected and assisted families at the Cleveland House
- All Family Room and STAR Center staff continue to serve families in the absence of volunteers through our phased reopening of Family Room programs, which began on August 24, 2020.

When our Family Room at Cleveland Clinic Children's reopened, this mom was able to do laundry just steps from her child's hospital room. Here she is receiving a bag donated by **31 Gifts**.



**Ronald McDonald Care Mobile®**, in partnership with UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital, provides dental service to children ages 3-12 in underserved areas of Northeast Ohio. Pediatric dental disease, also known as childhood tooth decay, is the **#1** chronic childhood disease in America. If left untreated, the effects on a child's health and wellness can be devastating.

The Ronald McDonald Care Mobile is a state-of-the-art dentist office on wheels that provides diagnostic, preventative and restorative treatment and education to at-risk children right in their own communities. The 42-foot-long vehicle travels to twenty counties served by RMHC Northeast Ohio.

*Due to the pandemic, Care Mobile operations were temporarily suspended from March to August, 2020.*

**RedTreehouse.org**, the online Ronald McDonald Family Resource Link, has thousands of resources for families and children with challenges, disabilities and health care needs. This curated directory covers Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia, plus has national resources and original Helpful Guides on a variety of topics.

In 2020, Red Treehouse was uniquely positioned to support families as COVID-19 caused people to seek online resources.

### New Initiatives:

- 200+ resources related to COVID-19 added to database
- 12 original Helpful Guides published
- Became a site partner for Case Western Reserve University's Healthcare Interprofessional Collaborative Practice
- Relationships built or fostered with Act Early Ohio, Project NICU and Ohio Department of Health

*"So many wonderful resources in one place."*

### Continuing Initiatives:

- Integration on Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services site [HeyImHere.org](https://www.ohiohealth.com/HeyImHere.org)
- Ohio Attorney General Office's Linking Systems of Care project
- Collaboration with Ronald McDonald House Charities of Pittsburgh and Morgantown

*"I really like the Helpful Guides. There is so much useful information provided."*

## BY THE NUMBERS

**Dental Visits: 949 children**

**Dental Hygiene & Health Education Visits: 824 children**

**Number of Different Locations: 47**

**Days of Operation: 79**



The Red Treehouse team is working with **Act Early Ohio** to distribute children's books and resources to families of children ages 0-5. The resource materials are from the **CDC's Act Early** program and are designed to help caregivers track their child's developmental milestones and take action by bringing any potential concerns to their pediatrician. You can find all of the Act Early resources on [RedTreehouse.org](https://www.RedTreehouse.org)

Lukas Lehde reads *Amazing Me: It's Busy Being 3*



## VIRTUAL MISSION MOMENT

On Children's Grief Awareness Day (11/19/2020), Red Treehouse social media channels shared resources designed to support children as they cope with loss. In just hours, **over 3500 individuals engaged with the tools that were shared**. Dozens of comments emerged from parents, grandparents, and others who were grateful to be pointed towards this resource. The father of a 9-year-old who lost his mother took the step of sharing the resource with his son's teachers who had been looking for ways to better communicate with the grieving child.



# Events

**Signature events** are a vital part of our fundraising efforts and help build community awareness of RMHC Northeast Ohio services.

In 2020, our indoor events switched to a virtual format and outdoor events were greatly altered for safety. In spite of this, our supporters showed up, had a great time, and contributed **\$334,254** net revenue.



## 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual A Red Tie Affair

The quick transition from a scheduled May 30 in-person event to a virtual gathering running August 4-8 did not stop the fun. Nearly 100 guests participated in the online auction and viewed the program broadcast. The versatile event generated net proceeds of **\$81,362**.



## 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Pro-Am Golf Tournament

*presented by Truline Industries*

CEOs and Pros alike remained steadfast to Northeast Ohio's most prestigious charity golf event. Their support culminated on June 29, 2020 at Mayfield Sand Ridge Club in a day of celebration and comradery on the course, resulting in net proceeds of **\$139,380**.



## 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Pulling Together for Kids

Northeast Ohio's only sporting clays Pro-Am event, in partnership with Kids and Clays Foundation, took place on October 3, 2020 at the world class Hill 'n Dale Club in Medina. The event paired foursomes with professional shooters and raised net proceeds of **\$35,211**.



## 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Wine Women & Shoes

*presented by Majestic Steel USA*

Joe Cronauer and Sara Shookman of WKYC 3News kicked things off in spectacular fashion on October 22. Attendees heard from CEO Craig Wilson, were inspired by guest families, and took part in fabulous raffles and auctions. The event raised net proceeds of **\$78,301**.

## Pull Tabs: 6 million Acts of Kindness

We adjusted the way we received in-kind contributions, which allowed the community to continue donating pull tabs throughout 2020. **More than 200 individuals, businesses, and groups donated 5,889 lbs. of pull tabs** resulting in more than \$2075 for our Family Fund! With 1 lb. = 1,000 pull tabs, almost 6 million acts of kindness were made in support of RMHC NEO!



**Julie & Brylee Parks** delivered three large buckets of tabs. The Parks family stayed at the Akron House multiple times for Brylee's surgeries, and frequently return to the House to drop off pull tabs.



**Jake's Family & Friends Foundation** donated 280 lbs of pull tabs. With this contribution they reached one million tabs donated, earning their place on the Morgan Stock Collect-a-Million-Club plaque.

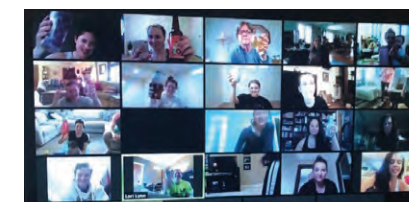
## Emerging Leaders

The Emerging Leaders group consists of young professionals with diverse backgrounds whose mission is to raise awareness, promote volunteerism and generate financial support to advance the mission of RMHC NEO.

In 2020 the Emerging Leaders pivoted from in-person to virtual fundraising events and continued serving with enthusiasm and creativity.



Annual Golf Outing



Virtual Yoga Fundraiser

## EMERGING LEADERS FUNDRAISERS

CycleBar Charity Ride

Super Bowl Squares

Virtual Yoga Class

3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Golf Outing at Big Met

Member Dues & Adopt-a-Family Program

Net Proceeds: **\$18,929**

Chair: Leah Sardiga

Vice-Chair: Bill Ambrogio

Secretary: Hunter Aims

Red Events Committee Chairs:  
Christina Lograsso, Kelsey Zebrowski

Gold Events Committee Chairs:  
Katie Bible, Matt Gabele

Marketing Committee Chairs:  
Allison Forhan, Tanya Reynolds

Volunteerism Committee Chair:  
Justin Hamlin

## THIRD-PARTY EVENTS

Third-party events raised **\$174,084** for RMHC Northeast Ohio!



**Lake Erie Silver Dolphins** donated \$1200 raised from their annual swim meet.



Ryan & Cyndi Foster stayed at our Akron House with kids Carson, Karrington, and Crew, who has a congenital heart defect. They created **Crew's Crusaders** to raise awareness and give back. In 2020, they hosted their 5<sup>th</sup> annual golf outing and donated close to \$5,000.



**The Portage Lakes Polar Bear Jump** raised \$95,000. The jump, which benefits us every other year, is hosted at Portage Lakes in February. Teams gather to jump in the lake to raise money for their cause. The water was FREEZING, but we had a record number of jumpers in 2020.



## VOLUNTEERS MAKE AN IMPACT

Individual Volunteers: 464

Individual Volunteer Hours: 7,757

Value of Volunteer Hours:  
\$221,384.78

Volunteer Groups  
(meals, chores, activities): 232

It is because of the commitment of hundreds of individual and group volunteers that we can carry out our mission. From greeting families at our Ronald McDonald House and Family Room programs, assisting with donations, to preparing meals, routine maintenance and landscaping, volunteers keep operations flowing.

Due to COVID-19 and the need to ensure the safety of families and onsite staff as well as our volunteers, 2020 saw a pause in in-person volunteer services. While the pandemic prevented volunteers from being onsite, it did not prevent them from using their ingenuity to find ways to remain involved.

Many things changed for us all during the pandemic. For RMHC Northeast Ohio, finding ways to maintain our meal program was critical to caring for the families staying with us. Serving those meals meant staff needed to innovate and re-imagine our kitchen facilities.

Dining in the kitchen was not an option due to social distancing measures. We pivoted to a room service model, delivering dinners directly to families' rooms. Individually packaged lunches and healthy snacks to-go gave families safety and convenience—eating at the hospital, in their rooms, or outdoors.

By mid-2020, it was evident that **the safety of our guests and sustainability of the meal program demands more permanent changes.**

We must redesign kitchens and dining areas in both Akron and Cleveland to accommodate:

- New food-handling safety protocols
- Adequate space for volunteer groups, vital to our program, to prepare meals
- Improved spacing and flow for guest families

Guest surveys underscore the significant impact our meals make for families caring for their sick child. Those using hospital Family Room programs could greatly benefit from meals provided more regularly.

*"Your boxed lunch program was a great treat for us today - we didn't have to order and wait for anything! So nice. Thanks for doing this."*

– Family Room guest at Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital



*We need your help to meet these essential family needs.*

- GOALS** Boxed lunches seven days a week for House guests in Akron and Cleveland  
Boxed lunches each weekday in four hospital Family Room programs  
Kitchen renovations for meal program safety and sustainability
- COST** Expanded meal program: \$100,000 annually  
Kitchen renovations at both Cleveland and Akron locations: > \$1 million

## VOLUNTEERS HELP IN UNIQUE WAYS



**Laughs, love, and virtual licks!** Glen Stout, Nosy Rosey, and Stanley Guido host a virtual pet therapy visit with the Mercurio family in April 2020.



**So fresh and so clean!** Akron Ronald McDonald House volunteer, Jessie, pauses her kitchen cleaning duties for a quick photo op.



**Mask making memories.** Cleveland Clinic Fairview Family Room volunteer, Emese Blankenship creating masks with her granddaughter.



**Loads of laundry** are no match for Cleveland Ronald McDonald House volunteer, Barb Fisher. Barb has been a volunteer for more than 40 years!

From virtual pet therapy visits and crafty mask donation creation sessions with family, to donating funds and catered meals, our volunteers rose to the occasion and helped the House continue to feel like home from afar. In the fall we began

to welcome back volunteers who felt safe to return, marking a turning point for us during the pandemic. To all our volunteers, we express our deepest gratitude for your steadfast support. We look forward to welcoming everyone back soon.

Volunteer groups provided more than **150 catered meals** so that our guests could remain fed during the shutdown.



**Talk about tacos** courtesy of Frank and Helen Vari! At the Akron Ronald McDonald House, 13 individual volunteers donated 22 meals during the shutdown.



**Let there be light!** Maintenance volunteer Dave Bejbl, along with wife, and fellow volunteer Marge, tag-team installing efficient LED lightbulbs at the Ronald McDonald House in Cleveland. Throughout 2020, Dave and the crew of maintenance volunteers changed more than 200 of the 1000 lightbulbs. The upgrade will lead to an anticipated annual cost savings of \$14,000!



**A sun-filled return.** Longtime garden volunteer, Bobbe Katzman, relishes the rays while riding on her trusty John Deere tractor. This was her first day back at the Ronald McDonald House in Cleveland following a brief pause due to COVID-19.

*"...my thoughts drifted to when I started volunteering at the House. I'm sure I was like everyone else. I just wanted to help the families who were taking care of a sick child and had the misfortune of being far from home.*

*But somewhere along the way, my fellow volunteers and I, WE have become a FAMILY and you can't imagine how much I miss you ALL!"*

– Mary Jane Soltysiak, RMHC NEO Volunteer

*"Excellent service and we appreciate the health protection."*

– Cleveland House Guest



*To discuss an investment in the family meal program or facilities, contact:*

**Tim O'Callahan**  
Chief Development Officer, North  
216-229-5757 x1129  
tocallahan@rmhcneo.org

**Aristea Tzouloufis**  
Chief Development Officer, South  
330-253-5400 x1109  
atzouloufis@rmhcneo.org



## GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

- \$5,000** Boxed lunches for all locations, one month
- \$10,000** Catered meals during kitchen construction, one month
- \$50,000** 24/7 Self-Service Family Nutrition Center
- \$100,000** Day Respite Room
- \$250,000** Family Kitchen renovations
- \$500,000** Commercial Kitchen Conversion
- \$1,000,000** Full renovation of Cleveland and Akron House kitchens, dining and serving areas



Make a difference with us today.



10415 Euclid Avenue | Cleveland, OH 44106 | 216-229-5757

141 West State Street | Akron, OH 44302 | 330-253-5400

[www.RMHCneo.org](http://www.RMHCneo.org)

