



Keeping OUR FOCUS

Ithough the pandemic still challenges us, our look at 2021 proves that the resiliency and creativity among our families, volunteers, and staff kept us on track toward realizing our belief that all children deserve access

Not only do our programs enable equitable access to care, they allow families to spend more time with their children, interact with their doctors, and make important decisions about their care.

Our Houses and partner hotels served 1,365 families, giving them 11,096 nights of rest in a safe, clean environment near the hospital. When children are hospitalized far from home, families face a daunting financial burden with mounting expenses. By staying with us, these families, 94% of whom cannot afford to contribute toward their stay, saved \$3.3 million in out-of-pocket food, lodging, transportation, and other expenses. Just imagine their relief.

> Our Ronald McDonald Family Room, located at Scottish Rite — just steps from their child's bedside, provided **1,314 families** with meals provided by volunteers and a place to recharge so they can return to giving their child the best medicine of all — hugs, kisses and I love yous.

Our Ronald McDonald Care Mobile treated 1,306 children in under-served communities at 23 Atlanta Public and Fulton County schools, providing vaccinations to 520 children, in addition to 247 asthma visits.

In 2021, compassionate volunteers donated nearly 1,000 meals, saving us more than \$225,000. Our donors take our mission to heart and make hope possible.

The future of Atlanta RMHC and the families we serve looks positive and bright because of all of you — donors, staff and volunteers. As we move forward boldly to meet the growing need, we thank you.

Buth Havell

Atlanta RMHC President & CEO

ONE DAY at a Time

eter Dam returned home after work and, seeing his daughter crying in her bed, asked the obvious, "What's going on?"

His wife **Pam** replied that **Paige**, 8, was complaining about back pain. So the parents gave her a warm bath and pain medication before putting her to bed.

Peter awoke at about 4 a.m. to prepare for work as an E7/Sergeant First Class, U.S. Army, at Fort Benning in Columbus, Georgia. But, first, he checked on Paige.

She said she couldn't feel her legs and her left leg was "dangling like a noodle."

Frightened parents rushed her to the Fort Benning hospital, where the staff ran the gamut of tests. "They could see her right leg was severely degraded in physical function and strength, but tests revealed nothing."

The medical staff ordered a urine sample, but Paige insisted she did not need to go to the bathroom. "Although a CAT/CT scan revealed her bladder was full, Paige had no feeling or control of her bladder function."

Immediately, they were in an ambulance rushing to Atlanta, where a care team at Scottish Rite jumped into action.

Paige was diagnosed with transverse myelitis. "They told us to expect a full recovery. We just don't know how long it will take." She spent two months at Scottish Rite in robotics and aquatics therapy.

Not wanting to leave Paige's side, Peter slept on furniture in her hospital room for two months. The confinement weighed on Paige and she missed her 6-year-old brother **Phillip**.

Prospects of yet another month of therapy following her hospital release increased the burden on her already stressed parents.

"But thankfully Scottish Rite contacted the Ronald McDonald House. Immediately the night manager called with a few questions and said they would love to have our family. It was a seamless process, and from day one it's been a great experience."

At the House, Paige loved her newfound freedom, walking inside and out with her walker and wheelchair, eating in the dining room, and she especially enjoyed the treehouse.

A recent activity encouraged children to draw their favorite superhero, with a trip to Zoo Atlanta as the reward. Father and daughter enjoyed the zoo. But, best of all, the lift in COVID restrictions allowed her brother to visit, and Paige got to hang out with Phillip for the first time in two months.

Peter and Paige return for therapy at regular monthly intervals. And they are assured volunteers and staff will make their family feel welcome.



Peter says Ronald McDonald House volunteers and staff make it a place to call home. "Everyone cares. They get to know you. They understand why parents are upset. They take all the burden and stress off you and let you focus on your child's well-being and happiness."



Count Us LUCKY

na Stone recognized the signs. Her brother, grandfather, aunt, and cousin are on the autism spectrum.

Her daughter Ada, now 2, began showing classic signs around 9 months.

Late to walk, Ada had low muscle tone, repeated things endlessly, rocked back and forth, flapped her hands, disliked playing with children, and became so overwhelmed that she screamed for hours. Sometimes, she relieved frustration by intentionally hurting herself.

In addition, Ada was 100 percent dependent on a feeding tube for nourishment.

"Physically, nothing is wrong with her ability," Ana says. "Mentally, she does not want to eat. Sensory sensitivity, another autism characteristic, is likely the reason."

The Marcus Autism Center offered hope that Ada could learn to eat at least a little independently. After four weeks, Ada ate about 30 percent of her daily nutritional needs.

"The program has a high success rate," Ana says. "Although I would love for her to be at least 50 percent off the feeding tube, the only thing I wanted from the program was for her not to be 100 percent dependent. She's making so much progress. I have high hopes."

During a museum tour, a chance encounter introduced Ana to the

Little Ada Stone, 2, loves the pink piano at our Ronald McDonald House near Egleston.

tube holder on Ada's stroller and expressed how she wished she'd had one when her daughter was feeding tube dependent. "We became friends, and she told me about her daughter's success with the Marcus Center program."

Ada's ability to participate depended upon her family's acceptance at the Ronald McDonald House. Unfortunately, two months of hotel and restaurant bills would create an unsurmountable burden for them.

Ana is amazed by the Atlanta RMHC donors whose generosity has lifted her worry and made Ada's treatment possible.

At the Marcus Center, Ada is weighed and has four carefully planned feeding sessions that take up their day.

Ada burns off energy in the Ronald McDonald House playroom, where she heads for the pink piano. "She's obsessed with it," says Ana, who suspects Ada also inherited the family's musical talent.

Although experienced with autism, Ana admits becoming the mother of a child on the spectrum has been an adjustment and stressful, but she says she manages.

"You never expect your child to be sick when you give birth. As a mom that got me, but the Ronald McDonald House offers hope."



Marcus Autism Center. A woman noticed the Flying Squirrel feeding



PERSONAL Meet

s program manger for Invesco's Global Thought Leadership, Stephanie Valentine coordinates "the smart thinking in the company" so content is globally coordinated while allowing for regional nuances.

Senior Managing Director, Andrew Schlossberg, decided North America should adopt a charity annually. He observed first hand how successful this model was while leading the European division. He put the idea in motion when he returned to the Atlanta headquarters.

Employees also have the opportunity to support local charities based on their interests through Invesco Cares in multiple U.S. cities.

By popular vote, Ronald McDonald House Charities won. "I'm honored that my story may have played a role in colleagues selecting RMHC as the charity of the year," says **James Nelson**, head of U.S. Institutional Product Strategy & Development and Atlanta RMHC Advisory Council member.

James was one of those families. As an Advisory Council member for Atlanta RMHC, he has done the usual things such as volunteering at the House and inviting the President & CEO to speak to Invesco Cares. "While I was motivated to help a good cause through encouraging my colleagues to join me in volunteering, cooking meals, and donating resources, my connection was not personal yet."

His perspective changed when his college-age son Jayden was diagnosed with lupus. Jayden's first stint in the hospital lasted 100 days, with him battling for his life as lupus attacked his entire body, shutting down his organs. "We almost lost him three times. My son was fighting for his life, and I wanted to be next to him



James and Kizmet Nelson spent 72 nights at our Ronald McDonald House near Scottish Rite.

whenever possible."

James' daily routine became driving from McDonough, to work in Atlanta, spending as much time with Jayden as possible, before driving back home. When he fell asleep while driving, he knew something had to change. The Advisory Council member became a beneficiary of not just a room but a haven at the Ronald McDonald House.

"The House gave me rest. I could walk to see Jayden, and the drive to work was only 15 minutes. That was a game changer."

James also enjoyed a "bunch of other good things" the House provided. "I didn't have to worry about food and could talk with people who could relate. That's all

great. But the peace of mind knowing I could see my son every day —that was huge."

Jayden now lives on his own and manages his lupus symptoms while adjusting to adulthood and his new normal.

James willingly tells his story of the Ronald McDonald House with his hard-earned new perspective. "I am honored to do it because of what the organization did for me. Mine will be a lifelong commitment to this organization."

Invesco recently extended its one-year commitment to two. While the company donated funds, and its volunteers helped in whatever ways they could, the pandemic prevented activities in the Houses. Invesco looks forward to more opportunities to serve now that COVID restrictions are being lifted.

"We are excited to spend more time at the Houses," Stephanie says. "But we understand the sensitivities of the families and children receiving care. That's our number one priority."



FUN with a Purpose

ngel Glover's involvement with Atlanta Ronald McDonald House Charities has earned her a singular distinction. She attends most fundraising events and activities. Serving on the Executive Committee in 2021 and now president of the RED SHOE SOCIETY — ATLANTA, she engages other young professionals to put on their red shoes and keep moving for the well-being of children and families.

When moving to Atlanta in 2018, she immediately searched for ways to meet people, and just anything would not do. Already aware of the Ronald McDonald House, she researched the local Houses online for ways to become involved. Then, she attended a Halloween craft event and got hooked.

The Red Shoe Society supports the Houses with volunteering and social events and provides young professionals with networking opportunities.

"It's a good way to meet people who share common interests and the same values," Angel says. "I enjoy meeting people like that and building relationships that way in a big city."

The pandemic disrupted the society's activities, primarily because members could not volunteer in person. But it also reenergized the group's creativity and focused its goals.

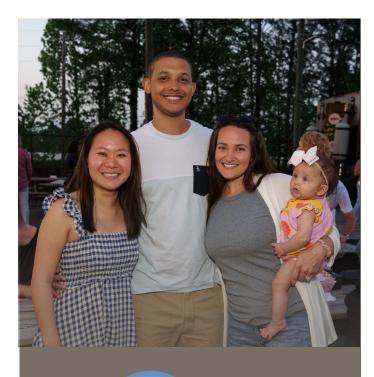
For example, members continued providing craft activities for the children by gathering supplies and making individual kits. They included instructions along with a short how-to video and delivered them.

More remote and virtual engagement provided our community a unique opportunity to engage volunteers on a deeper level, Angel says. "Digging deeper and getting more engrained with people who care about making a difference is exciting."

She's also glad that dinners prepared by in-person volunteers at the Houses are returning in 2022. These dinners are a favorite activity for Angel, who enjoys hearing the families' stories.

And all those activities she attends? She says she has a great time. But, again, she likes talking to people about the Ronald McDonald House because so many don't know its unique purpose.

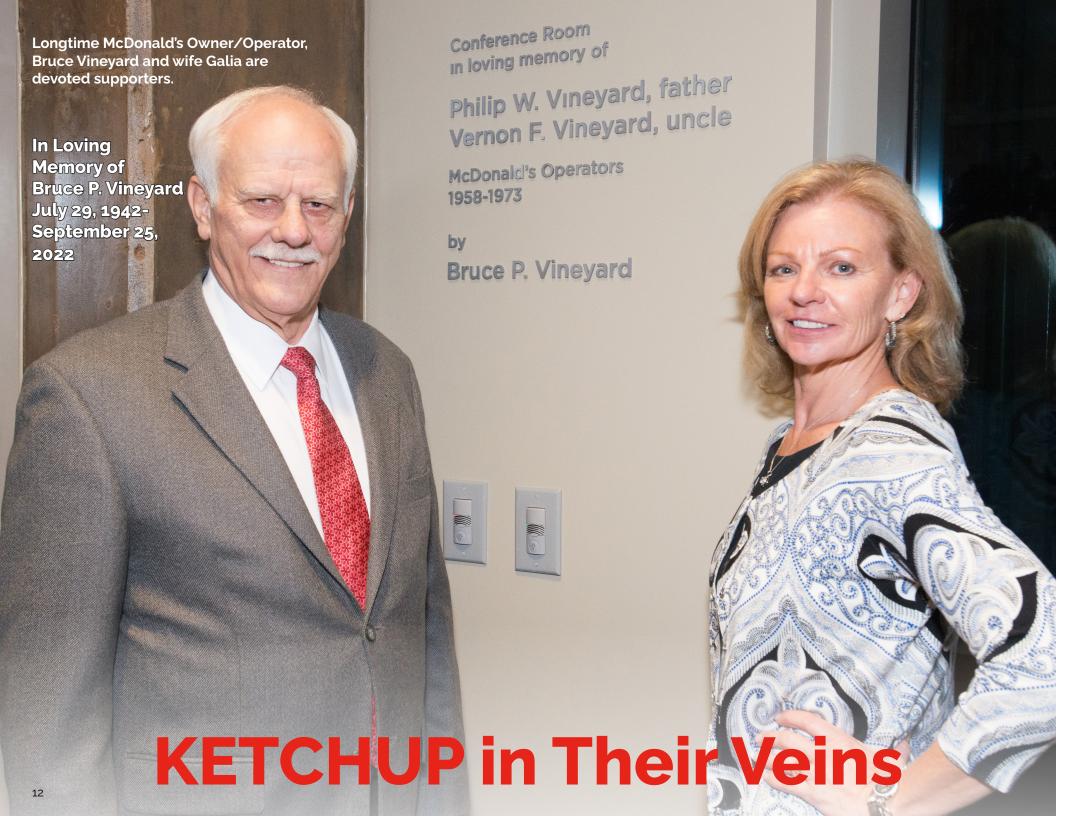
"I love being involved with the Ronald McDonald House because it is a meaningful organization whose sole mission is to keep families close during the hardest of times."





2021 Executive Committee

President: Kendell Miller (center)
Volunteer Chair: Angel Glover (left)
Social Chair: Alex Miller (right)
Membership Chair: Amanda Guthrie



"Everybody is welcome. So much care is shown to the children and the families. The upbeat atmosphere makes everybody feel positive, so they don't stress over everything they have to deal with. This House gives people hope."

- LYNN VINEYARD



and RMHC in Their Hearts

Ithough its unproven, **Philip Vineyard II** has a "little theory" that he may be the reason for his father's commitment to the health and well-being of children and families.

"I was a problem child, always had medical issues. My father was just starting out, working two jobs, and had three children. Mom had just returned to school."

His father, Bruce, was just beginning what turned out to be a stellar, 64-year career "selling hamburgers" for McDonald's, the go-to restaurant for families with children.

Noting his father isn't usually emotional, Philip has seen him break into tears when he encounters a sick child. "He then wants to spend the rest of the day playing games with them."

Philip and his siblings — **Lynn** and **Bruce Jr.** — know that they inherited their father's commitment to responsibility, discipline, and giving to others, along with his penchant for business.

Lynn began cleaning dining room tables when she was 10. Bruce says he did the same chore at about age 4. Both stood on plastic milk crates to take drive-thru orders. Bruce's voice was so young that customers called him "ma'am."

Today, Lynn and Bruce Jr. own 28 restaurants in southeast Metro Atlanta. Philip, an attorney, assists the family with legal matters, administers The Vineyard Foundation and chairs the Jacksonville, Florida Ronald McDonald House board.

These Houses resulted from Ray Kroc's requirement that all Operators give back to their local communities. "Dad was among the early Owner/Operators who brought the first Ronald McDonald House to Atlanta," says Lynn. "He was always big on giving to the House for it to



Bruce Vineyard talks with the legendary Fred Turner at a McDonald's meeting.

be successful, not just for the brand, but for the children."

And his children agree. "Since we love McDonald's, we love the Ronald McDonald House," says Lynn. "It's nice to know you are helping families be close to their kids, and helping people who have supported your business."

— Cont'd on page 14

"The Ronald McDonald House has the purest form of a mission as a charity, which is helping families during their worst crisis ever."

- PHILIP VINEYARD II



"It's important for them to understand McDonald's role in funding the House and what that funding means. It's also important for the Charity to be taken care of after we are gone."

- BRUCE VINEYARD JR.



KETCHUP in Their Veins

– from page 13

Bruce Jr. believes one of the most important things he does is train his employees to gain skills for a lifetime. And wanting more people to know about the Ronald McDonald Houses. he uses training time to introduce them to the family charity.

Lynn schedules employee meetings at the Ronald McDonald House to let their managers see what McDonald's is about besides selling burgers and fries.

The current generation of Vineyards contribute financially through their restaurants and personally. Their father donates through his foundation and estate planning, and their stepmother, Galia, has devoted many hours as a volunteer. They stress that anyone can donate their time, money and items the families need.

Philip points out that estate planning is an excellent way for people to support the Charity. Philip and his siblings are following their father's example by including Atlanta RMHC in their wills and challenge others to join them in leaving a lasting legacy. In the words of their

father, "it's all for the children."



The Vineyard Family

HOW WILL YOU BE REMEMBERED?

With a little planning and a big heart you can strengthen sick children and their families today and for years to come.

- Include Atlanta RMHC in your will or estate planning.
- Name Atlanta RMHC the beneficiary of all or part of your retirement plan assets.
- Name the Charity as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy.
- Give appreciated stocks, bonds or other marketable securities and receive a tax benefit.
- Create a charitable reminder trust to receive reliable payments while making a significant gift to support our mission.

Learn more at armhc.org/legacy

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Our Impact in 2021



3,617

Families served through our Ronald McDonald Houses, Ronald McDonald Family Room and Ronald McDonald Care Mobile

\$3.3 million

Saved by families staying with us on food, lodging, transportation and other expenses

94%

Families who cannot afford to make a contribution toward their stay





706



11,096

Nights of rest provided to families

1,365



Total number of families housed at our Ronald McDonald Houses and partner hotels 21 nights

Average length of stay at our Ronald McDonald Houses



262 nights

Longest stay by 1 family

Our Impact in 2021



1,306

Children treated on our Ronald McDonald Care Mobile

520

Vaccine visits

8

Telemedicine visits

247

Asthma visits

23

Atlanta Public and Fulton County schools served



41,628

Total family visits to our Ronald McDonald Family Room

1,314

Families served







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Christina Bailey finds a quiet spot at our Ronald McDonald House near Scottish Rite. The Baileys stayed with us for more than 300 nights.

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Anton Plauche and his dad, Tanner, stayed with us 7 nights during his cancer treatment.





The Hearts & Hands Society recognizes annual donors who contribute \$1,000 and more. These generous individuals strengthen thousands of families each year and are integral to our mission.

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The Campaign for the Next Generation Ronald McDonald House

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The Coca-Cola Company
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Lindsey and Jay Pierce
Elizabeth and John Strom
Wanda and Bob Swoszowski
Galia and Bruce Vineyard
Ann and Bob Ward
Dawn and Wyatt Whaley



For more than four decades, Atlanta RMHC has kept more than 68,000 families together and close to care during their most difficult times. For many, equitable access to life-saving care would not be possible without Atlanta RMHC. With 94% of families unable to afford any contribution toward their stay, the need in our community has never been greater.

Through A New World of Care, we will develop a Ronald McDonald House for the next generation — one that is built on connection, comfort, hope, and healing and continues our legacy of world-class care.

World-class care deserves world-class support. To learn more, contact Marissa Greider, Senior Director of Major and Planned Gifts, at marissa.greider@armhc.org or 678.704.8088.





The mission of Atlanta Ronald McDonald House Charities is to nurture the health and well-being of children and families.

armhc.org



