



**Ronald
McDonald
House**
INLAND EMPIRE

WINTER 2022

Keeping Families Close

Getting Back to Giving Back



The **Inland Empire Ronald McDonald House (IERMH)** is excited to welcome the return of our favorite activities that strengthen our community and relationships. Working together with the community, IERMH is able to provide comfort, care, and support to families that are experiencing the challenge of having a child in the hospital or receiving outpatient care. IERMH provides a "home away home" offering families a place to stay with all the amenities they need to be safe and comfortable. Currently, your **Inland Empire Ronald McDonald House** has an occupancy rate of 70%. You are invited to come to the house and learn how you can make a difference.

The programs at IERMH are opening up after a hiatus caused by the pandemic. This means that the doors are open at the house to vaccinated volunteers that wish to give of their time onsite. The Meals of Love Program is back and we are accepting reservations for groups to come in and cook for the families. If baking is your talent, then you can come bake sweet treats for the families by taking part in the Bakers of Love Program. All the details about these programs can be found on page 4.

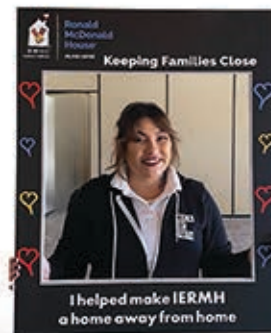
House Tours are now being offered Monday through Friday from 9am to 4pm. We take your health seriously and provide a safe environment for you to see all the wonderful things we do for the families at



the **Inland Empire Ronald McDonald House**. We do require that masks covering the nose and mouth be worn during the indoor portion of the tour.

You can drop off donations in person and say hello to our staff and volunteers while you are here. Welcome back to **Inland Empire Ronald McDonald House**.

Give us a call at **909-747-1200** and we will be ready to welcome you back.



Letter from the Director



This year has been a year of celebrations here at Inland Empire Ronald McDonald House. We have celebrated the return of onsite volunteers, the Meals of Love Program, Pet Therapy, and bringing back tour groups. We are grateful that we are able to offer families all the comforts of home, allowing them to focus on their children. Now, we are looking forward to a wonderful holiday season filled with love and generosity for the families staying at IERMH.

2022 also marked my 16th year with IERMH. I feel blessed that my life journey brought me to this organization. It's the people, families, donors, volunteers, and everyone I get to meet and interact with that makes it so special. I couldn't do it without all of each of you, our community partners, the staff, the volunteers, board members, and my family who stand with me to continue the good works day in and day out.

I want to take a moment to personally thank you for helping the families and staff during the past two and a half years. Your donations of time, talent, and treasures truly kept IERMH resilient through the challenges of the pandemic. We are ready to move forward and share the house with the community once again.

Everyone here at IERMH feels your support. It's felt through the kindness of your donations, your offers to help, and your compassion for the people at IERMH. With an abundance of appreciation, we thank you!

With much gratitude,



OUR MISSION

To provide comfort, care and support to children and families in Southern California



OUR VISION

A community where children and their families embrace life and healing with a sense of hope, enthusiasm, courage and joy.



OUR VALUES

Compassion, Integrity, Respect, Innovation and Transparency.

The House That Love Built

Here's What Is Going On Under the Roof

Calculated through October 2022



Your Support Makes a Difference

So far, in 2022, your donations have made it possible for 589 families to stay at the Inland Empire Ronald McDonald House. This number is anticipated to reach 700 families by the end of the year. The actual cost per night for a family to stay at IERMH is \$150.00. The Inland Empire house has 54 rooms and throughout 2022 the average occupancy rate has been a steady 65%. A recommended donation of \$12.00 donation per night is suggested per family. It is understood that most families are unable to make a contribution of any amount and that is where you come in. The Inland Empire Ronald McDonald House operates successfully because of your donations. Your support keeps the lights on and makes the house a home for the families that stay.

We are grateful for all donations and our hope is that you use the envelope attached to this newsletter to help provide comfort to the families that stay at IERMH. A one-time donation will help fund a family into the New Year. A commitment to become a monthly donor will help fund several families throughout 2023. Yes, every donation, no matter the amount, makes a difference.

Homecoming!



Leslie Vargas and her family have dealt with challenging medical issues for most of Leslie's 11 years of life. It took a few years of traveling from their home in Thermal, California, to see different doctors before a repeat visit to Loma Linda Children's Hospital finally identified a diagnosis. Leslie was diagnosed with a brain tumor which was causing her to have headaches and seizures. Leslie's parents agreed that the 8 hour surgery recommended by doctors would be the best option for their daughter.

Their family was filled with worry and the 80 mile drive between Thermal and Loma Linda was causing more stress for the family. Lydia Vargas, Leslie's mom, didn't have reliable transportation to make the trip to Loma Linda. She didn't know how she was going to manage the time and cost for her family. She expressed her concerns to a social worker at the hospital and that is when she learned about the Inland Empire Ronald McDonald House.



"Staying at the Ronald McDonald House was a big relief for all of us financially and emotionally. I am grateful for the house," Lydia Vargas said when she shared her experience at a recent IERMH Board Meeting. Leslie and her mom moved into IERMH on August 15, 2022. Her father and the rest of the family made visits to the house during Leslie's 49 day stay.

Leslie made friends with some of the other young residents staying at IERMH, which made the time pass a little easier. She also made friends with many of the staff members at the house. She received a collection of beanies to help keep her head warm from other residents and staff.

Everyone at IERMH was so excited to see Leslie return home. We will miss her beautiful smile and the smell of homemade tortillas that Lydia made for Leslie during their stay. It's because of your support that Leslie's family was able to stay close to the hospital as she received treatment. Every donation makes a difference and we thank you.



Adopt A Room

You can Adopt A Room



Your generosity offers hope to families with critically ill children. An individual, family, organization, small business or corporation can adopt a room. This is an annual sponsorship and sponsors have the first right to renew when the year is up. Whether you live near or far away from the Ronald McDonald House, families that we serve come from your community; they are your neighbors. Families who come here from all over the Inland Empire, have one focus – the health and healing of their child. Thank you for caring and for giving. You too can stand with families at the most trying time of their lives, bring them comfort, support and most of all – HOPE.

For complete details, please contact:

gabalez@rmhsc.org

909-747-1268

Wish List

IERMH is currently in need of the following items:

Paper Plates • Paper Bowls
Toilet Paper • Dawn Dish Soap
Individual Snack Items
(chips, trail mix, crackers, etc.)

You can find the Amazon Wish List by visiting:

<https://www.rmhsc.org/inlandempire>

Living The Life of Service

We are taking this opportunity to shine a light on a few of the people who dedicate themselves to serving the families at IERMH. We call it the "House that Love Built" because every volunteer and staff member makes it a home with their loving acts of kindness.



Twice per month members from the Loma Linda Seventh Day Adventist Church come in to provide a vegetarian Meal of Love for the families at IERMH. This group of 8 members is led by Tia Kim. Their service began when the group came in for a house tour. It was during the tour that they collectively decided to be part of the Meal of Love Program. They donate all the food, cook and package the meals for families. In August of 2022 they were awarded the Golden Spatula in honor of their dedication.

Our Meals of Love program allows volunteers to give families a night off by preparing a hot meal or making one possible from a local restaurant. Families appreciate the chance to relax and enjoy a hot meal with no dishes to wash.



Amazon Meal of Love



Alta Vista Meal of Love



Southwest Airlines Meal of Love

Volunteer Spotlight: Lois Cowan

When it comes to knowing the history of IERMH, chances are Lois Cowan knows the details. Lois started volunteering in 1996 when the house was built. Yes, she has been volunteering for 26 years. Unbelievable, right? Lois has many talents including being the house master seamstress. She makes quilts and she made plastic arm covers for all the furniture in the house. This made it possible for families to enjoy the furniture and keep things sanitary. Lois also assembles breakfast sandwiches from the food donations received from local McDonald's franchises.

It doesn't matter what needs we have around the house, Lois is always willing to lend a hand. Lois is passionate about helping the families in the house and she is also passionate about her four legged friends.



IERMH is GRATEFUL for all volunteers! Our volunteer program is now open. If you are interested in volunteering please visit: <https://rmhsc.org/inlandempire> or call Albrena Ceroni at 909-747-1275.

Making the House a Home

Raquel Castillo made this house her home by serving IERMH for the past 26 years. She applied to be a housekeeper back in 1996 when the house opened because she enjoys interacting with people, especially children. Raquel has become a big part of the loving spirit that keeps IERMH going. She says that feeling useful has kept her going and continues to keep her going. Being able to help people, whether it was showing them where to get a cup of coffee or taking a moment to listen to them, while doing her job makes her feel good.



She enjoys the moments when families receive positive news and their children are improving. She likes seeing the families celebrate together during the holidays. One of her most beautiful memories was the year the Briseno Family stayed at the house. Salvador was battling leukemia, and the Make a Wish Foundation granted his wish of visiting Disney World.

"Salvador picked me to be his special guest and I visited Disney World with his family. It was truly one of the most memorable times of my life," said Raquel. That same year, Raquel represented IERMH on a float in the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade. Raquel shared, "So many memories live in my heart, inside of me. My family is proud of my work. They know that it is my passion and they share my love for the children, the families and my co-workers."



Raquel receiving a 25 year award from Board Member, Ann Pillar

The Housekeeping Team does more than clean at IERMH. They interact with every person that is in the house on a daily basis. IERMH is proud to have Raquel on our team.

Thank You for Making IERMH a Better Place



Planter Box Project

Community projects and donations really do make a difference at IERMH. Recently, Troop 19 spent several hours at IERMH to complete an Eagle Scout Project. They built a patio over the house BBQ and two planter boxes.

Staff from ATI visited the house and used the time to power wash the grounds. Cleanliness is a priority here at IERMH, and our friends at ATI came out to help us maintain the grounds. The ATI Team power washed the grounds and made sure the outside of the house was as clean as the inside.



Walmart Volunteers

Walmart is a generous supporter of IERMH. Three local Walmart stores collaborated to be the difference for the families staying at IERMH. The Colton, San Bernardino, and Redlands stores donated toys, emergency flashlights, toilet paper, paper plates, paper bowls, snacks, lightbulbs, and many more items. In November, the Moreno Valley store sent over a crew of hard working volunteers to assist during the Golf Tournament.



Troop 19



ATI Services



Walmart Donations

2022 Signature Events



Inland Empire Ronald McDonald House is sending out a giant "Thank You" to everyone that attended the 6th Annual A Few Good Men and Women Gala. It was an incredible evening to support the programs at the house. We are incredibly grateful for this year's Honorees: Damian Jenkins, Brian Wanzek (Bella da Ball), Stephanie Wilson, Julio Figueroa, Rod Vandenbos, Melissa Neiderman, Karen Devine, and Pete Chrissy. These 8 individuals gave their time and their heart's to support IERMH.



IERMH BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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- Neftali Galarza
- Kurt Helm (Secretary)
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- Fatima Djelmane Rodriguez
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- Doug Kanner
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- Karen Hooper
Executive Director
- Penelope Sachs
Operations Director
- Annette Florez
Development Director

Walk for Kids, an annual family-friendly 5k fundraising event supporting the families with critically ill children served by Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Southern California (RMHCSC). Walk For Kids creates a community where children and their families embrace life and healing with a sense of hope, enthusiasm, courage, and joy. This event is open to everyone and is also pet friendly.



2023 UPCOMING EVENTS

- February 4, 2023**
Mountain High Resort Ski and Ride Day
- February 11, 2023**
Tour de Palm - Walk for Kids Coachella
- April 1, 2023**
Wine, Beer, Spirits Tasting
- April 30, 2023**
Walk for Kids Fontana
- IERMH Golf Tournament - TBD
- A Few Good men and Women Gala - TBD
- Pairing with a Purpose - TBD

Donor Spotlight: Suzie Murrish



Why do you donate to IERMH?

I donate because I believe in giving back to my community. I see how much love is going into the Inland Empire Ronald McDonald House, so I know my donations are going to good use and are appreciated.

What motivated you to hold a fundraiser in honor of your birthday?

A week before my birthday, I started planning what I wanted to do. There are so many people in need of help in this world and I just couldn't see having another party. That's when I came up with the idea to do the birthday fundraiser for the house. Knowing how many families I was helping was priceless. It's the best birthday I have ever had and I'm committed now to do it every year for the rest of my life!

My message to others would be to find it in your heart to donate to IERMH. A donation in any amount helps the house keep families together during the difficult times. Just think of all the smiles you will put on people's faces. Be someone's hero!



Family Support Services: Making a Difficult Time Easier

Family Support Services (FSS) provides emotional support, education and resources to the families and staff of the Ronald McDonald House. Individuals and entire families are served in the privacy of the FSS offices, around the House or wherever a person feels most comfortable. FSS plans and manages House therapeutic activities such as Fun Clubs, holiday activities, and special events that provide a caring environment for all.

"At RMH, I get to build relationships on a personal level because I interact with clients, not only in session, but as they cook dinner for their families, as they are running back and forth from the hospital, in the playroom, etc. One of the best parts of my day is doing Fun Clubs and getting to interact with multiple families all at once.

IERMH is community-based and it creates a welcoming environment for not only families who stay here, but staff as well. It is a privilege to be able to be a part of these families' lives and I'm very grateful I am able to be a small part of their journey."

– Natalie Betschart, FSS Psychology Trainee



Thank You for Your Contributions:





**Ronald
McDonald
House**
INLANDEMPIRE

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 2228
San Bernardino, CA

11365 Anderson Street
Loma Linda CA 92354

Become a "Friend of the Family"

Join the Circle Of Healing in 1..2..3

- 1.** Highlight "Monthly" option and choose the amount you would like to donate (you can change the amount any time)
- 2.** Enter your personal information
- 3.** In the "Leave A Comment" section type in "Circle Of Healing"

Thank you!



To join, visit our website by hovering your cell phones camera over the QR code and follow the instructions



Support they can depend on

CIRCLE OF HEALING

Join today to make a lasting impact on families when it's most important!

