



A Letter from our Board President

As I assume the role of President of the Board at the Ronald McDonald House of Scranton, I am both humbled and honored to lead an organization that has been dear to me for many years. I want to start by expressing my heartfelt gratitude to Justin Davis for his exceptional leadership and dedication during his years of service.

For those unfamiliar with my background, I am an attorney practicing in the heart of Scranton. However, my connection to this organization is more personal than professional. The Ronald McDonald House has been part of my life since childhood, thanks to my father, a founding member. Growing up, I witnessed his dedication and compassion as he worked to ensure that families in crisis could find peace and support. His example inspired me to continue this tradition of service, and it is my privilege to carry that torch forward.

The mission of "Keeping Families Close" is more than just a tagline—it embodies our unwavering commitment to providing a safe, comforting haven for families during some of life's most challenging moments. As we embark on this new chapter, I am confident in our community's ability to unite and make a tangible, lasting impact. I truly believe that when we come together for a common purpose, there is nothing we cannot achieve.

Today, I invite each of you to join us in this mission. Whether through a financial donation, helping us secure grants, adopting a room or project, or simply spreading awareness, every effort makes a difference. Your involvement can transform the lives of families in need. If you, your business, or someone you know would like to contribute, please contact our office at (570) 969-8998. Together, we can ensure that no family faces their journey alone.

As the holiday season approaches, I wish you and your loved ones health, happiness, and peace. Thank you for your unwavering support—I look forward to working with you all to continue making a difference in the lives of those who need it most.

With gratitude and warmest regards,

Fred Rinaldi

Fred Rinaldi, Esq.
President of the Board
Ronald McDonald House of Scranton, Inc.



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Family Story: The Cywinski Family



On July 29th, 2020, our first born son, Barrett Taylor Cywinski, was born nearly two months early at 32 weeks and 5 days gestation. Upon his arrival via emergency c-section, he was taken to the NICU where he stayed for 19 days. With this being our first child, we wanted to be with him every second that we possibly could. We were eventually told that we were going to have to leave our hospital room and have to make the commute home due to them needing more space for other patients. As heartbroken as we were, we knew that we would make it work to be there for Barrett as much as we possibly could while not staying in the same building as him. As the news broke that we would have to pack our things and leave, not much longer, a nurse came in and told us what never crossed our mind. She told us that the Ronald McDonald House had stepped in and booked us a hotel room that was maybe a mile, possibly less, from the hospital for the remainder of the time our son was in the NICU. As you can imagine our moods changed from feeling down, to feeling blessed and very grateful. The Ronald McDonald House will forever and always have a special place in our hearts. The work they do, you could say, is God's work. Blessings indeed. We thank them for all that they have done for us, and continue to do, for other families in a difficult position.

Board Member Spotlight: Elaine Shepard

What drew you to RMH's mission, and why do you feel passionate about supporting it?

When my oldest was under 6 years old, we lived in Scranton and he was playing at a friend's house, and one child picked up a rock and threw it and it hit my son in the eye. He had to go to the local hospital and was there for over a week. There was no place for me to go; I had to sit at the hospital. There was no Family Room or Ronald McDonald House. So, when the House came to be, I wanted to be involved. I was involved at the first Gourmet Gala in Taylor. I was then asked to be on the Board years later. I have been involved with the organization from the beginning.

How has your involvement with the board shaped your perspective on the nonprofit sector?

I think any nonprofit, whether the Ronald McDonald House or any other nonprofit share one thing: like mindedness. We all work together to make a difference.

What are some of the key responsibilities of being a board member, and how do you approach them?

A key responsibility is ensuring that the nonprofit is cared for financially and is represented well. Community awareness is key in making sure our area is aware of what we have to offer. Our board members have mutual respect and utilize each other's strengths which is also a great benefit.

Can you share a memorable experience or accomplishment during your time on the board?

We have had so many. The success of the Gourmet Gala was outstanding. Then when the Gourmet Gala was not able to take place due to COVID, the community rallying around the House to support our golf tournament was also amazing. Our board and staff work together to put forth great events and community awareness. It seems that whatever we touch, we have success with.

What do you see as the greatest strength of our organization?

I think we are fortunate to have a great staff that lead the organization forward.

What challenges or opportunities do you see ahead for the organization, and how can the board help address them?

Our greatest challenge is navigating the local healthcare situation and finding ways to continue serving our families in their greatest time of need. We will continue working together to develop ways of meeting their needs in this current climate.

What advice would you give to someone considering joining a nonprofit board?

It is such a worthwhile experience. For me, it has been such a rewarding experience being on a nonprofit board. You learn so much about the needs in your community, no matter its size. If you have the time to serve, it is well worth investing your time and resources to making a difference.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time? Any particular hobbies or interests?

I read a lot of books and try to alternate the genre of book from something serious and heavy to something fun and light.

In your view, what makes serving on the board of RMH special?

We work so well together. We support each other and we collaborate together. Many of us have served alongside each other from the beginning, and that makes us even stronger. We embrace new members and work together toward a common goal.



Upcoming Events

MERRY & BRIGHT Family Night



Join us on December 6, 2024 for our 3rd Annual Merry & Bright Family Night - An Evening on the Stourbridge Line! This year is going to be the best yet. Rumor has

it that Santa will be there, and so will GRIMACE! We will have two food trucks, a variety of activities for the kids, and some holiday shopping opportunities for the adults. It will be a Holiday Wonderland and we cannot wait to report back on its great success.



NEW EVENT

LOADING ...



Stay tuned for more information regarding a potential new event coming in 2025! Our board is developing a committee to spearhead this new fundraiser, and we look forward to announcing some details to you soon. To stay in the loop on all events and everything RMH, sign up here:

<https://form.jotform.com/241145366407050>



Fundraiser Updates



Charity Classic

Our 4th Annual Charity Classic was a great success. Since the start of this event, we have sold out. We are grateful for Highmark who underwrote the event and for the many other sponsors, participants, and volunteers who contributed to the success of this fundraiser. Through their help, we were able to raise approximately \$53,000 to help keep families close when it matters most. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your commitment to our mission! Keep your eye out for more information regarding our 2025 event!



Show Your Stripes 5K

Our 38th Annual Show Your Stripes 5k was a great day! Unfortunately due to unforeseen circumstances, we were forced to move the race from Nay Aug Park after hosting this event there for 37 years. Luckily, Blakely Borough was kind enough to accommodate our race at the Recreation Complex in Peckville! The morning was full of striped socks, a food truck, basket raffles, and people coming together to support our amazing mission. Through the support of our sponsors, participants, and volunteers, we were able to raise approximately \$10,000 to support our programs. We are looking forward to planning for our 2025 SYS 5k!

Staff Member Highlight: Benjamin Loomis



Can you tell us a bit about your background and what led you to join our nonprofit?

Before joining the organization, I worked in a few different jobs, such as sales, real estate, and graphic design, but RMH offered a career that carried a deeper purpose. I started working for RMH in 2008 and consider it to be one of the best choices I have ever made.

What is your role within the organization, and what does a typical day look like for you?

My role is House Program Director. Basically, my job is to make sure the House is in order and that the families are taken care of. I work with volunteers, families, contractors, and staff. There is no typical day for me, which keeps things interesting. For example, some days are focused more on working with volunteers and others I am interacting more with families.

What aspect of your job do you find the most rewarding?

We work with families that are going through some really difficult situations. Being a part of helping them during this time is an honor and easily the most rewarding part of my job.

Can you share a memorable experience you've had while working here?

The most recent memorable experience was a work trip to the RMHC International Conference in Chicago. The conference involved several days of learning sessions with members of the organization from all over the globe. It's amazing to see how far the reach of our mission is throughout the world! A bonus part of the trip was being able to watch an advance showing of "Audrey's Children", a biographical movie about the life of the RMH Founder, Dr. Audrey Evans.

How has working at RMH impacted your personal or professional growth?

The families that come through our doors are dealing with incredible hardships involving their children. Seeing families in these moments has had a tremendous personal impact on me. It really puts into perspective how precious this life we have is. For me, it is a constant reminder of how important it is to live a life that matters and to cherish moments with those we love.

What motivates you to keep doing the work you do each day?

Knowing that we are making a difference for the families that we help continues to motivate me every day. I love when we receive a thank you card or call from a family we helped. It is wonderful being a positive impact on so many people!

Is there a particular project or initiative you're especially excited about right now?

I just recently worked with a volunteer group on an exterior revitalization project at the House. With their help, we were able to take care of several issues and freshen up the exterior of the property. Projects like this are always great because they get our community involved and take care of important updates and needs.

How do you like to spend your time outside of work? Any hobbies or interests?

My greatest joy is being a father and a husband. Enjoying moments with my family is how I prefer to spend my time. We love doing outdoor activities such as hiking, camping, kayaking, and fishing. We also like to go out to shops, bookstores, and restaurants.

What's something most people don't know about you?

I have two college degrees. The first degree is in business and the second degree is in music recording. Music is a passion of mine, and I pursued the music degree to learn more about the recording aspect of the music field.

If you could have one superpower to help the organization, what would it be?

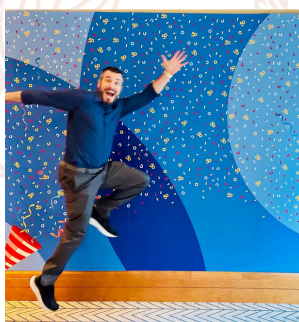
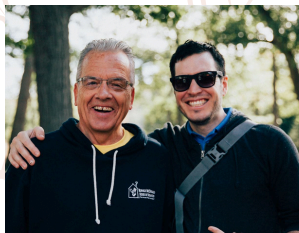
I'm not sure if this counts, but I would choose the ability to heal others. That would have such an effect on the people staying with us.

What advice would you give someone who is thinking of working in the nonprofit sector?

Non-profit work requires you to be a servant for others. The mission of the organization is always your main focus. The hours can be long, and at times you are being pulled in many different directions, but at the end of the day you know you are making a true difference.

What does RMH mean to you personally?

It is close to my heart. I have made so many lifelong friendships through this organization. If I could sum it up in one sentence: The Ronald McDonald House is like one big family.



Volunteer Spotlight: Rose Paulowskey

Tell us about yourself. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I've been retired since 2013. In my spare time, I like spending time with my grandkids, walking, yoga, and pickleball.

How did you get involved with RMH?

After I retired, I knew I wanted to volunteer. I like helping people.

What inspired you to volunteer with us?

RMH helps families and they provide comfort and a place to stay while going through hard times. I wanted to be a part of that.

What has been your most rewarding experience as a volunteer?

The most rewarding experience has been that I feel like I've been giving back and I've made many new friends. Seeing families take their little ones home is always a good feeling.

Can you describe a memorable moment or project you've worked on with RMH?

I remember one day, I was folding linens in the laundry room at the House and a woman came in and we started talking. She was at the House because her daughter just had a baby who was in the NICU. We chatted a while about her circumstances that brought her to the House, and after we were done talking, she thanked me for listening and then we hugged. It felt good being there for someone and offering support at such a difficult time!

How do you feel your volunteer work has impacted the community?

When you volunteer, you commit to your community that you will try to make it a better place. Helping others in need, makes a big difference in their lives!

What skills or knowledge have you gained volunteering with us?

I've learned more about our community's needs and what needs to be done to help others.

What would you say to someone considering volunteering for the first time?

Volunteering gives you a purpose in life and a great sense of connection with others. It's very fulfilling knowing you are helping others.

How do you balance volunteering with other responsibilities?

I'm fortunate as I am retired and dedicate my one day a week or other times that I may be needed.

What does being a part of RMH mean to you?

Being a part of the RMH family is very satisfying and fulfilling. Through the years that I've been volunteering, I've seen dedication and team work to provide a great home away from home for those who need it. The events they run are always well-planned and everyone seems to enjoy them and return year after year.

What is your favorite RMH event?

I really like all the events because each one is a little different. I love seeing the different people who attend the events. All the events are a great time!



Ways to Help

Amazon Wish List

*These items
support our
Hospitality
Bag
Program!*



IN
2023



344 HOSPITALITY BAGS
WERE GIVEN TO NICU FAMILIES!

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3B2G4WHA6SM8A?ref_=wl_share

Share a Night- Share a Drive

See Insert for More Details.

Overnight Program
We provide a place for families to stay while their child receives medical care at local medical facilities. Families can stay at the House or we provide a hotel stay depending on their situation.

Family Room Program
Our Family Rooms are spaces within two local hospitals that offer a place of respite for families to get a cup of coffee or snack and step away from the hospital environment while being only steps away from their child.

Hospitality Bag Program
We provide Hospitality Bags to every family with a child in the NICU in our two local hospitals. These bags include food and drink supplies, babies' first toy, crossword puzzles, etc. to help ease additional burdens during their hospital stay.

Transportation Program
We provide transportation assistance to families that may have other obligations at home that would make leaving home difficult. We provide Gift Cards to help offset the cost of their travel to and from the hospital.

Ease a Burden... Help keep families Close when it matters most.



<https://ronaldmcdonaldhouseofscranton-bloom.kindful.com/?campaign=1332325>

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Keeping families close™
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2023 - OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

A 30% INCREASE IN FAMILIES SERVED COMPARED TO 2022

