

## Honoring Connor

His smile—big, his hair—wacky and blonde, his demeanor despite a very rare genetic disorder—joyful. While only 5 years old when he passed away, Connor Jenson's life was measured by how he lived and those he touched around him.

When Connor was 9 months old, he was sent to American Family Children's Hospital (AFCH) in Madison after receiving care at other medical facilities since his birth. At the time, Abby, Zac and Connor's grandparents, Barb and Sam Story, stayed at the Ronald McDonald House for six weeks, taking turns being by Connor's side at the hospital. The family returned for subsequent visits to Madison for appointments and procedures.

In March of 2023, Abby & Zac took Connor to AFCH because they thought he was fighting a cold that he needed some help getting over. Unfortunately, they learned that Connor's rare genetic disorder was taking over his body. During this difficult time, the House brought Abby and Zac peace. Abby shared, "When you're dealing with heavy things, we needed the space at the House where we could go back and have a room to ourselves with no interruptions and to regain our strength."

The Jenson Family recently returned to the House to honor Connor with a tile on the Heart Wall in Hope Park. It reads: "The little boy who inspired many and loved by all." Also displayed on the tile, Bucky Badger. The family made this selection because the UW Badgers often frequented AFCH when Connor was there. Abby shared, "Days get long at the hospital and their visits provided levity. I was always in awe that they did that for families."

Learning of Connor's passing, UW Athletics wanted to do more. On September 16, the family received that levity from the Badgers again. After installing Connor's Heart Wall tile in Hope Park, they enjoyed a Badgers win on a picture-perfect fall day complete with apparel and concession vouchers to make this difficult trip back to Madison a memorable one.

Read Connor's full story: [rmhcmadison.org/connor](https://rmhcmadison.org/connor)



"When you're dealing with heavy things, we needed the space at the House..."



**Heart Wall:**  
**A symbol of hope & love.** ❤️  
Learn more on back.



## Our Mission

Believing every family deserves access to healthcare, RMHC-Madison creates, finds, and supports programs that directly improve the health and well-being of children and their families.

## 2023 Board of Directors

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## Reflection on 2023



Dear Friends of RMHC-Madison:

As 2023 begins to wind down, it provides an opportunity to reflect on our 30th Anniversary and all that has been accomplished since its founding. My journey with RMHC-Madison began nearly one year ago, and it has been an honor to witness the unwavering commitment and dedication of staff, board, volunteers, and those who have supported the organization over the years.

This spring we celebrated our milestone with friends and heroes who not only keep the doors open but are the heart and soul of our mission. We refer to them as pillars. They represent the volunteers, guest families, and generations of donors who remain passionately committed to the cause. These individuals are the bedrock upon which our organization stands. Without them, we would not be where we are today.

The past several years have been challenging with the pandemic, robust demand for services and inflationary increases. Despite this, we have grown stronger. Your support has enabled us to provide a warm and welcoming home away from home for families facing difficult times of their own. You made it possible for families to stay close to their children during their medical journeys, and for that, we are truly thankful.

For three decades, RMHC-Madison has been making a real difference in the lives of guest families, many of our readers among them. They are the reason we do what we do, and their stories of courage and resilience inspire us all to continue our efforts. For families who used our services and continue to pay it forward is a full circle moment.

We remain deeply committed to keeping our doors widely open, and with your continued support, we will continue to make a positive impact on the lives of even more families in the years to come. Your dedication and compassion are a driving force, and together, we will continue to provide comfort and care to those in need.

Together, we not only celebrate 30 years of impact, but we also herald a future filled with boundless hope, love, and opportunity for those who need it most. In 2024, we celebrate another milestone with our global organization's 50th Anniversary. This is truly a time to reflect on how one small idea becomes a dream, which becomes a global game-changer when community and partnerships flourish. Help us continue to dream big.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie L. Hayden".

Stephanie L. Hayden  
Executive Director

## Wish List

Help stock our  
House &  
Family Room  
with items guests  
need most.







## Our Forever Mission Partner

McDonald's support extends far beyond monetary contributions and volunteerism to opportunities for customers to give back through donation boxes, proceeds from Happy Meals and RoundUp for RMHC.

Locally-owned McDonald's from Southwest Wisconsin to the Rockford area annually support 18% of our chapter's budget.

RMHC celebrates its global 50th Anniversary of this founding partnership next year. Learn more at [rmhcmadison.org/mcdonalds](http://rmhcmadison.org/mcdonalds)



# Fundraising Success

From penny wars to the Red Shoe Soiree, our supporters showed-up in big, creative ways in 2023.

Hundreds of folks chose to spread hope in their communities this year and raise funds and awareness for RMHC-Madison through third party fundraisers. Recent highlights include: UW Ophthalmology – Pi Day Pie Fundraiser, Roy's Market Receipt Round-up, Stark Realty Golf Classic and the Olson Family Penny Wars.

RMHC-Madison hosted three record-breaking fundraisers in 2023, the Rock Valley Golf Classic, Red Shoe Soiree and RMHC-Madison Golf Outing. Highlights include inspirational stories from two guest families, a celebration of the Care Mobile's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, and a surprise visit from UW Men's Basketball players which secured \$15,000 for a team shootaround experience.

Many thanks to all for helping to ensure our doors at the House stay widely open to the families we serve.

## 3 major fundraisers



More than  
**\$450,000**  
raised

(Includes 3<sup>rd</sup> party fundraisers)







## Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Madison

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Visit [rmhcmadison.org](http://rmhcmadison.org)  
to support our mission by  
donating, volunteering, or  
joining our online community.



## Heart Wall Tiles

Honor your family, loved one  
or friend and help create a

*wall of love*

featured in  
Hope Park.



LEARN  
MORE



### Fill Hope Park with Love

Just steps from the Ronald McDonald House, Hope Park is a beautiful space for guest families to recharge. The Heart Wall features messages of love and inspiration, and honors guests - like Connor Jenson - who are the cornerstone of our mission.

Purchase your tile by Oct. 27 and help us fill the wall with goodness.  
[rmhcmadison.org/heartwall](http://rmhcmadison.org/heartwall)