



# Celebrate!



Celebration of Champions.

Supporting Children with Cancer

April 26, 2025

Rady Children's  
Hospital  
Auxiliary  
La Playa Unit

Benefiting the Patients and Families  
at Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego  
Peckham Center for Cancer & Blood Disorders

## We Celebrate Our 2024 Sponsors

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*Additionally, we thank our  
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# Celebrate!

## Dear Supporters and Friends, We Invite You!

We are so excited to announce that the **30th Annual Celebration of Champions®** event is scheduled for **April 26, 2025**. Save the date! We are thankful for the great support received from our sponsors and donors that make this day possible. We look forward to celebrating Champions like Amelia and incredible care they received at the nationally recognized Peckham Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders at Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego. Please take a moment to read her inspiring story!

Your sponsorship funds important support programs that help patients and families cope with a cancer/blood disorder diagnosis—and subsequent treatment—with full array of psychosocial services which can include:

- **Art Therapy Program:** Art Therapy utilizes art making and creativity to increase emotional well-being.
- **Canine Therapy Program:** Therapy dogs, along with their handler or owner, visit with patients to provide a distraction from pain, anxiety, and daily hospital routines.
- **Child Life Services:** Child Life Specialists prepare patients and their families for procedures, tests, and surgeries along with providing programs to promote healing, peer interaction, and independence. Our compassionate team also partners with parents to maintain their child's emotional well-being during treatment for cancer or a blood disorder.
- **Hematology/Oncology Parent Liaison Program:** Parents of children who have been treated for cancer or parents who have lost a child to cancer are available to provide peer support to other families.
- **Supportive Care Program:** The focus of this integral program is to improve the quality of life for our high-risk and relapsed pediatric cancer patients by providing comprehensive, coordinated care across all treatment settings and during all phases of care.
- **Survivorship and Bereavement Programs:** We offer survivorship and bereavement services that provide hope, support, and comfort for families in the midst of profound pain.

In addition to the programs that are funded by the **Celebration** event, we also use any available funds for the "Champions' Wish" program. This year those funds will help countless families with the basics needed to be fully present for their child, such as parking passes, hospital meals and transportation.

This is a great time to reflect on the importance of health, the love of family, the sacrifice of our health care professionals, and the joy we have when reaching out to help others in need. Whether this is your first year, or you are a returning supporter, please join us in 2024 to celebrate our brave Champions. Together, let's help fund the important programs that support young patients and their families.

Warmly,

**The Members of La Playa Unit of Rady Children's Hospital Auxiliary**  
cocspendors@gmail.com



Visit: [www.celebrationofchampions.com](http://www.celebrationofchampions.com)

a story about a

# True Champion

When Knox was 6 months old, his parents noticed a discolored eyelid and drooping of his face. An MRI recommended by the ophthalmologist caring for him at Rady Children's showed that Knox had masses in his skull, and he was admitted to the hospital.

"After a few days, we found out Knox had Stage 4 neuroblastoma," recalls his mom, Kirstin. "It was metastatic, so it was everywhere. He was covered from head to toe in masses."

Knox spent two weeks at the Peckham Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders, undergoing chemotherapy to treat the cancer and surgery to install a port to facilitate blood transfusions and other treatments.

"They taught us as much as possible about taking care of Knox and his port line during that initial stay," Kristin says, "and they're really responsive if we have any questions or we're concerned."

The family still visits Rady Children's often for chemotherapy and lab tests. They've grown to know and love the entire Peckham Center team.

"Everyone is so positive and takes the initiative on everything—and anything that Knox needs he gets almost immediately," Chris says.

With Rady Children's experts and their community behind them, Knox's parents are optimistic about his final stretch of treatment. Now one year old, he is hitting milestones and full of joy.

"Knox is going to have happy memories of our time in the hospital," says Chris, "largely because of all the people there and treatment going well for us. We're blessed."



## Event Quick Facts

30th Annual Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego *Celebration of Champions*®  
April 26, 2025 | 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Presented by the La Playa Unit of Rady Children's Hospital Auxiliary

### Event Schedule

8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.	Event Check-in
9:40 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.	Sponsor Award and Opening Ceremonies
10:00 a.m. to Noon	<i>Celebration of Champions</i> ® Relay
Noon	Circle of Life Closing Ceremony
Noon to 2:00 p.m.	Picnic Lunch, Music & Entertainment, Champions Carnival
2:00 p.m.	Event Conclusion

### Attendance

2,500 Champions, Families, Friends, Sponsors, Celebrities, Hospital Staff and Volunteers

### Event Details

Magicians, animals, celebrities, and other entertainers provide pre-*Celebration* delight. Afterwards, each Champion, accompanied by their sponsor and celebrity, runs, walks, or is carried one-eighth of a mile while carrying the "Torch of Life" symbolizing courage and determination in fighting their illness. After the run is completed, a closing ceremony, picnic lunch, music, and carnival complete the day.

### About Rady Children's Peckham Center for Cancer & Blood Disorders

Part of a National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, the Peckham Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders is the largest pediatric hematology/oncology program serving San Diego, Riverside and Imperial counties. Children from around the world come to Rady Children's for comprehensive cancer care spanning evaluation, treatment, pain management, palliative care, oncologic emergencies and specialized cancer treatment, including chemotherapy, biotherapy and pioneering immunotherapy.

The Peckham Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders offers state-of-the-art facilities to meet San Diego's growing need for comprehensive pediatric cancer care. Its treatment, procedure, and outpatient exam rooms include the latest technology and equipment. An additional 38 private in-patient rooms provide advanced air filtering equipment for its fragile patients.

At the Peckham Center, cancer is the most frequent diagnosis, but patients are also treated for blood disorders such as hemophilia, sickle cell disease and von Willebrand's disease.

### Use of Celebration Funds

In addition to the healing *Celebration* day itself, net proceeds from this event help fund unique emotional and social support programs for patients and their families that would not be fully funded without the generosity of *Celebration* sponsors. These support programs include: hematology/oncology parent liaisons, child life services, and counseling services. For more information about the Center's complete psycho/social program, visit: <http://www.rchsd.org/programs-services/cancer-blood-disorders>.



# why do we Celebrate?

This special event provides a day of normalcy in these children's lives, where they can have fun being a kid, spend a few moments outside hospital walls, and take quality time with family.



joy

Doctors, nurses, and families work together to ensure these kids are healthy enough to attend this event. And they are there every step of the way, from bedside to *Celebration* day.

Coming together is the most powerful medicine—no matter what age, ailment, or walk of life. Whether survivors, in treatment or remembering those we have lost, the community heals together.



healing



courage

The funds raised help kids be strong during their fight against cancer. From physical resources to emotional guidance, we give them and their families the things they need to cope. Your donation helps them be brave against all odds.



support

The kids are the real champions at this event—cheered on all sides by military, sports stars, and celebrities. They are the ones signing autographs and taking their rightful place in the limelight.



dreams

## So Why Celebrate?

Our Champions are the true heroes: laughing, smiling and teaching the rest of us something important about life. Because they are our inspiration—and because they deserve it.



# Celebration of Champions® Use of Funds



William D. Roberts, MD

Director, Peckham Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders  
Division Chief, Pediatric Hematology/Oncology,  
Rady Children's and UC San Diego



It is a special moment for **Rady Children's** as we prepare to come together to mark the **30th Annual Celebration of Champions**. Each year, this inspirational event honors our young patients bravely fighting cancer, along with providing vital resources for psychosocial programs at the **Peckham Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders**.

The life-changing care our Peckham Center team delivers to children and their families facing a cancer or blood disease diagnoses is comprehensive of all their needs—physical, social, and emotional. During the difficult and uncertain journey managing pediatric cancer treatment, programs like integrative medicine, art and canine therapy, and spiritual care are critical to whole-child and family health. The generous contributions of **Celebration of Champions** sponsors and volunteers make these resources available for more than 1,500 courageous children and their loved ones each year.

**Celebration of Champions'** philanthropic investment in the complex and compassionate work of the Peckham Center also strengthens parent liaison, child life, social work, psychology and care navigation services. Combined with leading-edge treatments and lifesaving therapies, these supportive services are remarkably powerful in advancing patient outcomes and improving quality of life.

For the last three decades, **Celebration of Champions'** partners have been integral to the success of the Peckham Center's holistic approach and helped us bring healing to tens of thousands of families.

**Thank you** for standing alongside our heroes as they persevere, overcome challenges, and find hope at the Peckham Center.

With gratitude,

William D. Roberts, MD



## hearing from one of our Special Sponsors

For 25 years, **All Hallows Academy** has proudly participated in Rady Children's Hospital's **Celebration of Champions**, an essential part of our annual outreach program. This longstanding tradition allows our students to engage in philanthropy actively, teaching them the value of giving back to those in need. **Over the past 25 years, All Hallows Academy Students have donated over \$100,000 to this cause!**

Our students take great initiative and ownership of their fundraising projects each year. Their creativity knows no bounds, from lemonade stands and art shows to jewelry making and baseball hit sponsorships. These student-led efforts raise funds and build a deep sense of responsibility and pride in helping others.



Recently, we added an exciting new tradition to our fundraising activities—**Pie Day!** Our top donors can “pie” their favorite teacher as a fun incentive. This event has brought extra excitement to the school while encouraging even more participation in our outreach efforts.

All Hallows Academy is deeply committed to teaching our students the importance of compassion and community service, and their dedication to supporting Rady Children's Hospital is a testament to that. We are proud of our student's efforts and look forward to continuing this meaningful partnership for many years.

Learn more about our sponsorship opportunities by completing the enclosed sponsorship form, visiting [www.celebrationofchampions.com](http://www.celebrationofchampions.com), or emailing [cofcsponsors@gmail.com](mailto:cofcsponsors@gmail.com).





# Celebration of Champions®

Supporting Children with Cancer

## The La Playa Unit

Since 1953, the La Playa Unit of Rady Children's Hospital Auxiliary has been advocating for the health of San Diego children. In doing so, our lives have been enriched by the bravery of children and their families who face extraordinary challenges every day, and the dedication of the Rady Children's staff which works to heal them.

We invite you to partner with us as one of our very special Sponsors. Your participation will provide a deep satisfaction from caring for those who have received a life-altering diagnosis of pediatric cancer or other blood disorder.



## Our Mission

To work in partnership with Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego and to support its mission through advocating for the health and well-being of children, increasing community awareness of Rady Children's, and fundraising.

The production and printing of this brochure has been entirely underwritten by the kind generosity of Creative Fusion.

