



# CELEBRATION OF CHAMPIONS

31ST ANNUAL | MAY 2, 2026



**Rady  
Children's  
Health**

Benefitting the Patients and Families at  
Rady Children's Health San Diego Peckham  
Center for Cancer & Blood Disorders



# WE CELEBRATE OUR 2025 SPONSORS

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Additionally, we thank our Ribbon, Pennant Sponsors, and Donors!

# CELEBRATE!

## Dear Supporters and Friends, We Invite You!

We are excited to announce our **31st Annual Celebration of Champions®** event is scheduled for **May 2, 2026**. Please SAVE THE DATE. Each year we are grateful for the overwhelming support received from our sponsors, donors and volunteers who make this day incredibly special for all our Champions!

Your sponsorship funds a full array of psychosocial services proven vital to the emotional well-being of the patient and their family as they navigate through this uncertain time in their lives.

### Please consider giving to support these essential programs:

- **Hematology/Oncology Parent Liaison Program**– Parents of children treated at Rady Children's Hospital Peckham Center provide peer support to newly diagnosed patients and their families.
- **Child Life Services**– Specialists psychologically prepare patients and families for procedures, tests and surgeries using tools such as education, coping techniques and school visits.
- **Counseling Services** – Staff provides crisis intervention, supportive therapy and referrals.
- **And many other programs that help children and their families battling cancer.**

With your help, we will create the magic that takes place in this annual, momentous event. Your support will help more than 200 San Diego children who will hear their cancer diagnosis for the first time this year and make more than 13,000 cancer treatment visits to the Peckham Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders at Rady Children's Hospital–San Diego.

**We look forward to having you back** on our Celebration of Champions® team. An account manager will be contacting you shortly to discuss your 2026 participation.

Warmly,

**The Members of the La Playa Unit of Rady Children's Hospital Auxiliary**

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





# A STORY ABOUT A **TRUE CHAMPION**

The day after Christmas 2024, Nicole French received devastating news. Her two year old son, Kannon, had cancer.

What began as recurring fevers and illnesses escalated quickly. Kannon had daily fevers reaching over 105 degrees, vomiting, breathing troubles and a growing belly that initially seemed harmless. Everything changed on Christmas night when Nicole felt a lump during bath time. “I felt something protruding that shouldn’t have been there,” she recalls.

The next morning, Kannon was transferred to Rady Children’s Hospital San Diego, where he was diagnosed with Stage IV Wilms tumor, a rare kidney cancer that had spread to his abdomen and lungs.

“We were terrified,” Nicole says. “My medical background meant I understood how serious this was.”

Kannon was admitted on December 26 and began aggressive treatment almost immediately. When biopsy results were inconclusive, his care team started chemotherapy without delay.

“Our goal is to give children the strongest possible start to treatment,” says Megan Paul, MD, Kannon’s hematologist oncologist.

Over 33 weeks, Kannon endured chemotherapy, radiation and multiple hospital stays, surrounded by a

team who treated him like family.

“They knew his nickname. They made him laugh. They made the hospital feel safe,” his mom says.



In February, Kannon underwent a complex surgery to remove the tumor. The procedure was a success.

“It felt like everything that needed to go right, did,” Nicole says. “It was a miracle.”

After treatment ended, lingering spots in Kannon’s lungs led his parents to trust their instincts and pursue surgery. The nodules removed were still active cancer.

“Listening to our gut saved his life,” his mom says.

Today, Kannon is three years old, in remission, and thriving. His story reflects the extraordinary care at Rady Children’s and the hope made possible by the doctors, nurses and supporters who believe every child deserves a fighting chance.

# QUICK EVENT FACTS

## 31st Annual Rady Children's Hospital–San Diego Celebration of Champions®

May 2, 2026 | 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.  
9:40 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

10:00 a.m. to Noon  
Noon  
Noon to 2:00 p.m.

2:00 p.m.

**Event Check-in**  
**Sponsor Award and**  
**Opening Ceremonies**  
**Celebration of Champions® Relay**  
**Circle of Life Closing Ceremony**  
**Picnic Lunch, Music &**  
**Entertainment, Champions**  
**Carnival**  
**Event Conclusion**



## Attendance

- 2,500+ Champions, families, sponsors, celebrities, hospital staff, and volunteers

## Event Experience

- Live entertainment including magicians, animals, and celebrity guests
- Champions complete a symbolic one-eighth-mile walk/run carrying the Torch of Life
- Closing ceremony, picnic lunch, music, and carnival celebration

## About the Peckham Center

- Part of an NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center
- Largest pediatric cancer and blood disorders program in San Diego, Riverside, and Imperial counties
- World-class care including chemotherapy, biotherapy, and leading-edge immunotherapy
- State-of-the-art facilities with advanced technology and private inpatient rooms
- Treats pediatric cancer and complex blood disorders including hemophilia and sickle cell disease
- Use of Celebration Funds
- Supports emotional and social care programs not fully funded otherwise
- Parent Liaison peer support
- Child Life Services
- Counseling and psychosocial support for patients and families

# WHY DO WE CELEBRATE

## JOY

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.



## SUPPORT

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.

## DREAMS

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.



# WHY DO WE CELEBRATE



## HEALING

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.

## 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.



## 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



For 31 years, Celebration of Champions has been a source of inspiration for every patient, family, and clinician connected to the Peckham Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders. This year, like every year, honors our young patients bravely fighting cancer. At Rady Children's, we believe that caring for children extends beyond medical excellence. The environment surrounding each child and family plays a vital role in their physical and emotional well-being.

A cancer diagnosis brings understandable fear and uncertainty. Programs such as integrative medicine, art therapy, canine therapy, spiritual care, and the Thriving After Cancer Clinic, combined with the supportive services provided by our parent liaisons and child life specialists, offer strength, comfort, and encouragement when it is needed most.

Our programs are designed to support the whole family throughout their cancer journey. Every child who comes to the Peckham Center benefits from these remarkable resources.

On behalf of our patients and families, thank you. The generous contributions of the 31st Annual Celebration of Champions sponsors and volunteers make these essential psychosocial programs possible.

With gratitude,

**William D. Roberts, MD**



# HEARING FROM ONE OF OUR **SPECIAL SPONSORS**



Dear Future Sponsor,

It is a great honor to write this letter to share my journey as an attendee of Celebration of Champions to now a sponsor. In 1996 my brother was diagnosed with Leukemia and the wonderful staff at Rady's Children's Hospital San Diego embraced us in nurturing care, not just medically but emotionally and mentally as well. Their excellent care was not only for my brother but also for my parents and myself. At such young age, I witnessed their tireless commitment to providing the best to patients and their families impacted by such life-changing events.

As a family of such a brave champion, my brother, Celebration of Champions became the annual event we looked forward to. Every year we celebrated his journey through the ups and downs of his treatment, and we built a community of support with other patients and their families. We cherish the memories of celebrating my brother and other champions so dearly in our hearts.

Fast forward 28 years, my experience with Celebration of Champions has recently been from afar but with continued support for its mission. The company that I am part of, Motive Studio, became a sponsor of Celebration of Champions in 2025. It is truly a gift to see our journey come full circle; from being a sibling of a champion to playing a small part in helping carry the mission.

Thank you, in advance, for considering being part of Celebration of Champions. I have witnessed firsthand the impact that it has in every patient and family member.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Eliana Montoya.

Eliana Montoya



## SPONSOR IMPACT & EVENT BENEFITS

Underwrites the cost for Champions and their families to attend the Celebration of Champions®, providing a joyful day away from the hospital filled with fun, laughter, and hope. Your generosity also supports vital, philanthropy-funded cancer programs at the Peckham Center, including:

- **Parent Liaison Program:** Peer support for newly diagnosed families
- **Child Life Services:** Preparation and coping support for procedures and hospital stays
- **Counseling Services:** Crisis intervention and supportive therapy
- **Champions' Wish:** Financial assistance for transportation, meals, and parking
- **Greatest Needs:** Integrative care, psychological services, healing arts, and emerging priorities

### Presenting Sponsorship \$100,000 Celebration of Champions® Benefits

- Send 50 Champions and their families to event
- Placement of the individual or company name on three signs at event
- Carnival Booth Opportunity
- Fixed, prominent and permanent placement of corporate logo on home page of Celebration website
- Press release and social media opportunities, and listing on the Champions Board prominently displayed at the event
- Your name and event logo on T-shirts sold at the event
- An opportunity for up to thirty-five individuals to “run” beside and be supportive of a child who has cancer
- Event T-shirt with your name and the event logo on the back for all runners attending the event
- A recognition plaque presented at the awards ceremony
- Exclusive Educational Opportunities
- A Customized Partnership Benefit of your choice

### Relay Race Sponsorship \$50,000 Celebration of Champions® Benefits

- Send 25 Champions and their families to event
- Placement of the individual or company name on two signs at event
- Carnival Booth Opportunity
- Fixed and prominent placement of corporate logo on homepage of Celebration website for one year
- Press release and social media opportunities, and listing on the Champions Board prominently displayed at the event
- Your name and event logo on T-shirts sold at the event
- An opportunity for up to thirty individuals to “run” beside and be supportive of a child who has cancer
- Event T-shirt with your name and the event logo on the back for each runner attending the event
- A recognition plaque presented at the awards ceremony
- Exclusive Educational Opportunities
- A Customized Partnership Benefit of your choice

## **Champion Sponsorship \$25,000**

### **Celebration of Champions® Benefits**

- Send 15 Champions and their families to event
- Placement of the individual or company name on two signs at event
- Carnival Booth Opportunity
- One-year fixed placement of corporate logo on home page of Celebration website
- Press release and social media opportunities, and listing on the Champions Board prominently displayed at the event
- Your name and event logo on T-shirts sold at the event
- An opportunity for up to twenty-five individuals to “run” beside and be supportive of a child who has cancer
- Event T-shirt with your name and the event logo on the back for each runner attending the event
- A recognition plaque presented at the awards ceremony
- Exclusive Educational Opportunities
- A Customized Partnership Benefit of your choice

## **Finish Line Sponsorship \$15,000**

### **Celebration of Champions® Benefits**

- Send 10 Champions and their families to event
- Placement of the individual or company name on two banners at event
- Carnival Booth Opportunity
- One-year revolving placement of corporate logo on home page of Celebration website
- Press release opportunities, and listing on the Champions Board prominently displayed at the event
- An opportunity for up to fifteen individuals to “run” beside and be supportive of a child who has cancer
- Event T shirt for each runner attending the event
- A recognition plaque presented at the awards ceremony

## **Starting Block Sponsorship \$10,000**

### **Celebration of Champions® Benefits**

- Send 5 Champions and their families to event
- Placement of the individual or company name on two signs at event
- Carnival Booth Opportunity
- One-year revolving placement of corporate logo on home page of Celebration website
- Press release opportunities, and listing on the Champions Board prominently displayed at the event
- An opportunity for up to ten individuals to “run” beside and be supportive of a child who has cancer
- Event T shirt for each runner attending the event
- A recognition plaque presented at the awards ceremony

## **Torch Sponsorship \$5,000**

### **Celebration of Champions® Benefits**

- Send 3 Champions and their families to event
- Placement of the individual or company name on a sign at event
- One-year revolving placement of corporate logo on home page of Celebration website
- An opportunity for up to five individuals to “run” beside and be supportive of a child who has cancer
- Event T shirt for each runner attending the event

A recognition plaque presented at the awards ceremony

## **Ribbon Sponsorship \$3,000**

### **Celebration of Champions® Benefits**

- Send two Champions and their families to the event
- Placement of the individual or company name on two pennants along the relay course
- An opportunity for up to four individuals to “run” beside and be supportive of a child who has cancer

Event T shirt for each runner attending the event

## **Pennant Sponsorship \$1,500**

### **Celebration of Champions® Benefits**

- Send one Champion and their family to event
- Placement of the individual or company name on a pennant along the relay course
- An opportunity for up to two individuals to “run” beside and be supportive of a child who has cancer
- Event T shirt for each runner attending the event



# 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.



Rady  
Children's  
Health

## 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.

Celebration of Champions®  
Rady Children's Hospital Foundation  
3020 Children's Way MC 5005 San Diego, CA 92123