

# Celebrate!



  
Celebration  
of Champions  
2023



  
Celebration  
of Champions®

Supporting Children with Cancer

April 2024

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





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

# Celebrate!

Dear Supporters and Friends,  
We Invite You!

We are so excited to announce that the **29th Annual Celebration of Champions®** event is scheduled for **April 27, 2024**. 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**

cocsponsors@gmail.com

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





a story about a

# True Champion

When 14-year-old Amelia was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma in her home country of Colombia, her parents immediately began researching the best options for treatment.

Rady Children's Peckham Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders rose to the top.

A friend recommended they connect with Paula Aristizabal, MD, MAS, a pediatric hematologist-oncologist at Rady Children's who is also from Colombia. Confident in the hospital's expertise, the family temporarily moved to San Diego to partner with them in Amelia's care.

"Our family had never been in a hospital much before," Juliana says. "But from our first visit to Rady Children's, we loved the way everything went."

Amelia's five months of chemotherapy treatment encompassed more than they expected—from detailed attention to their case and coordination between specialists to wraparound services supporting the family's well-being made possible by **Celebration of Champions**®.

Healing touch therapy made a particular difference for Amelia. As longtime patients of alternative medicine, her parents were thrilled that Amelia could receive a healing touch session integrating massage, reflexology, and energy work nearly every day she was at Rady Children's.

"I believe in the power of all that, so it was great to have, and very comforting for Amelia as well," Juliana says.

After two months of treatment at the Peckham Center, Amelia's scans were clear of cancer, and she remained strong completing chemotherapy before returning home to family, friends, and competitive horseback riding. Her family is grateful to Rady Children's for compassionately seeing them through to a new, cancer-free beginning.



## Event Quick Facts

29th Annual Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego **Celebration of Champions**®  
April 2024 | 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	<b>Celebration of Champions</b> ® 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 truly my honor to participate in the **29th Annual Celebration of Champions®**. For over 30 years, I have been a member of the **Rady Children's Hospital Peckham Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders**. Every day, I see the impact this amazing event has on our Psychosocial Program.

A cancer diagnosis brings fear, uncertainty, and doubts. Fighting cancer is difficult and exhausting for children and their loved ones. At the Peckham Center, patients receive leading-edge treatments and lifesaving therapies along with supportive services for the whole family to guide them during their cancer journey. Through the generous contributions of **Celebration** sponsors and the many dedicated volunteers, the Program is available to offer hope and encouragement to all our oncology and hematology patients. Last year alone, more than 1,500 children and their families benefitted from the services supported by these contributions.

Services offered include integrative medicine, art therapy, canine therapy, spiritual care, and the thriving after cancer program. Personnel such as parent liaisons, child life specialists, social workers, and psychologists are supported by these contributions and enhance the quality of life for patients and family members. We also offer navigation services, including helping to overcome insurance barriers, explaining treatment options, accompanying patients to their hospital visits, communicating with health care teams, assisting caregivers, and even managing medical paperwork.

For over ten years, *U.S. News & World Report* has ranked the Rady Children's Hospital Cancer Program among the top in the nation. Thanks to the **Celebration of Champions**, our outstanding Psychosocial Program contributes to this high rating.

On behalf of our patients and families, **thank you**. We truly appreciate your partnership that advances care for these amazing children who bravely face the challenges presented by a cancer diagnosis.

With gratitude,

William D. Roberts, MD



## hearing from one of our Special Sponsors

We are delighted to serve as the 2023 **Celebration of Champions®** Featured Sponsor. Our family is a long-time supporter of Rady Children's Hospital, and particularly its Peckham Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders. We believe it's crucial to have a state-of-the-art pediatric hospital in San Diego.

I was introduced to the **Celebrations of Champions** when I was six years old and attended my first event. This program is an experience for everyone on many different levels. It connects all of us, from the survivors to the families, the celebrities, and the organizers. This event creates an incredible experience that brings hope, joy, and love to everyone involved. Seeing children my age struggling with a cancer diagnosis made a lasting impression on me, and what was most impressive was their optimism and bravery. Now as a young adult, I see the **Celebration** from a different perspective: the responsibility to contribute to worthy causes that help our community.

Your 2023 **Celebration** contributions will support a variety of cancer support programs that are **funded entirely** by this event. These services start from the first moment a catastrophic cancer diagnosis is delivered with support by a Parent Liaison who will stay and assist the family throughout treatment. Celebration funds also provide Child Life Specialists who explain complex treatment protocols to young children in preparation for undergoing time-consuming, scary, and often painful procedures. These are just two of the important cancer support programs your contributions will make possible, and which have given the Peckham Center U.S. News' top ranking for 13 consecutive years.

We welcome back all **Celebration of Champion** sponsors and welcome aboard those of you sponsoring for the first time. **To those of you considering becoming a sponsor, we wholeheartedly reach out and invite you to join the team**, by completing the enclosed sponsorship form. You can be assured that your monetary contributions will be used thoughtfully and wisely to care for our San Diego children as they battle cancer.

My Dad and I look forward to seeing you at the May 2024 **Celebration of Champions!**

Thank you for your support of our brave Champions,

Jacqueline Crivello & Jack Crivello II

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

