



## **SAN MANUEL BAND OF MISSION INDIANS ANNOUNCES \$5.6 MILLION GIFT TO SUPPORT LOMA LINDA RONALD McDONALD HOUSE EXPANSION**

*Program Expanding to Provide Vital Resources to Meet the Critical Needs of Ill Children and Their Families across Southern California*

**San Manuel Indian Nation** – May 18, 2015 – For nearly 20 years, the Loma Linda Ronald McDonald House has been a “home away from home” for families with seriously ill children throughout Southern California; keeping families close by and together during one of the most challenging times. In an effort to provide more families with stability and the resources to meet their basic needs, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians has committed over \$5 million to help more than double the size of the House. This gift will enable the House to break ground later this year.

The expansion will allow the House to add 33 rooms on-site for families, increasing the total number from 21 to 54. The House will also expand its kitchen and dining areas, as well as the common spaces, which include the playroom and business office. The House is located steps from Loma Linda University Children’s Hospital, supporting improved access to quality medical care and helping enhance the hospital experience for the family. It serves more than 1,000 families each year from areas including Riverside, San Bernardino, Coachella Valley and beyond. The program is often at capacity and works to place families at local hotels, covering those costs, until a room becomes available. In 2013, more than 800 families were referred to hotels.

“When a parent hears their child is critically-ill and in need of medical attention, nothing matters more than being close by when they need you most,” said Mike Kovack, executive director, Loma Linda Ronald McDonald House. “San Manuel Mission Band of Indians’ incredible gift will help ensure we can strengthen even more families during an unimaginable time.”

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## San Manuel Donates \$5.6 Million to Ronald McDonald House

Plans for the expansion have been approved and a groundbreaking will be scheduled around September 2015, thanks in part to the generosity of the San Manuel Mission Band of Indians.

“Over many years of partnership with Loma Linda Ronald McDonald House, San Manuel has sought to foster a supportive, communal environment that contributes to the well-being of young patients and their families,” said San Manuel Band of Mission Indians Chairwoman Lynn Valbuena. “This gift will allow more families to remain together and find support through the close community the house provides.”

Other generous supporters of the campaign have included the McDonald’s Owner-Operators Association of Southern California, local owner/operators Randy Baremor and the Sanchez Family Corporation. Community members and businesses interested in pledging funds over a three-to-five year period are encouraged to contact Mike Kovack at [mkovack@rmhcsc.org](mailto:mkovack@rmhcsc.org), or by phone at (909) 558-8338.

The Loma Linda Ronald McDonald House is a program of Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Southern California and plays a vital role in the continuum of care by allowing families, especially siblings, to balance the need for both privacy and social support while helping them stay involved with clinical care providers. Since opening on September 11, 1996, the LLRMH has served more than 19,000 families. For more information, readers can visit <http://rmhcsc.org/lomalinda> .

### **About Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Southern California**

For more than 35 years, Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Southern California (RMHCSC) has been dedicated to improving the health and well-being of children and families across Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. RMHCSC helps families with critically-ill children stay together, connecting them with others facing similar challenges through its six Ronald McDonald Houses® in Bakersfield, Loma Linda, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Orange and Pasadena and two Ronald McDonald Family Rooms®. One of the few chapters to operate a cost-free, medically supervised Camp Ronald McDonald For Good Times®, RMHCSC helps children with cancer and their siblings rediscover childhood and develop the self-esteem and self-efficacy often lost as a result of the disease. The organization also provides funding through its Community Grants Board to deserving non-profits that improve the lives of children and funds four college scholarship programs that help exemplary high school students pursue the education of their dreams. More information about RMHCSC and its programs can be found at [www.rmhcsc.org](http://www.rmhcsc.org) or on [www.Facebook.com/RMHCSocal](https://www.facebook.com/RMHCSocal) and [www.Twitter.com/RMHC\\_SoCal](https://www.twitter.com/RMHC_SoCal).

### **About San Manuel Band of Mission Indians**

The San Manuel Band of Serrano Mission Indians is a federally recognized American Indian tribe located near the city of Highland, Calif. The Serrano Indians are the indigenous people of the San Bernardino highlands, passes, valleys and mountains who share a common language and culture. The San Manuel reservation was established in 1891 and recognized as a sovereign nation with the right of self-government. As an indigenous community the origins and history of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians stem from our relationship with the land and to all who share it. Since ancient times we have expressed ourselves through a culture of giving. Today, San Manuel is able to answer the call of Yawa' (Serrano word meaning "to act on one's beliefs") through partnerships with charitable organizations. We have drawn upon our history, knowledge, expertise and cultural values to direct our philanthropic giving in our local region, as well as to Native American causes nationwide. For more information, visit <http://www.sanmanuel-nsn.gov>.

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