

Client Stories

## The Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Coastal Empire

At the Ronald McDonald House Charities© (RMHC©) of the Coastal Empire families of seriously ill and injured children find a temporary home where they can cope with the stress and expense of daily living, while trying to be close and emotionally strong for their child. It can be a quiet place to reflect and spend one-on-one time together, or a place for companionship, sharing, and emotional support.

The RMHC© has been caring for these families since 1987. Located on the campus of Memorial Health Hospital, RMHC serves the Dwaine & Cynthia Willett Children's Hospital of Savannah, St. Joseph Candler Hospital, and surrounding medical facilities that are treating a critically ill or injured child.



### Highlights

- Held at the Hyatt Regency Savannah, Wine, Women & Shoes is an indoor and outdoor event that looks out over the river walk and Savannah's skyline. Guests enjoy watching the ships sailing up and down the river throughout the evening.
- Twenty-one "Shoe guys" were recruited by committee members. These men included dentists, physicians, personal trainers and other professionals. They even had a mayor from a neighboring town join in on the fun! Each Shoe Guy competed to raise a minimum of \$300 and the one who raised the most was crowned "King of Sole."
- A much anticipated fashion show was sponsored by Dillard's and the Gap.

### Challenge

RMHC© needed an easier way to manage the popular fundraising events they hold throughout the year. Based on the stories of success they heard about from two other RMHC© groups, they decided that Greater Giving's event software was the best option for their "Wine, Women & Shoes" event and others that host a broad range of fundraising activities. Their goal in getting a comprehensive event software program in place was to bring all the people, projects, and activities into one workable system, where instant updates and sharing capabilities would allow everyone to be on the same page, regardless of where or when they are working.

The "Wine, Women & Shoes" event includes a marketplace with multiple vendors, such as jewelry, handbags, and shoes. Focusing more on quality than quantity, ten high-quality fashion vendors opened their doors to 525 people.

The marketplace included three jewelry stores, two shoe stores, and two clothing and handbag lines. A portion of those sales comes back to the organization, making accurate tracking a crucial component to their record keeping.

There are also several wine pouring stations paired with desserts and small bites prepared by Savannah area chefs. A fashion show is the highlight of the festivities. Attendees can participate in two raffles called the "Key to the Closet" and "Key to the Cellar" where the winner takes home over \$10,000 in gift cards, clothing, jewelry and furniture. The Fund-A-Need event ties an RMHC© story to the request for funding to underscore the overall need for donations, like funding a family's stay or purchasing supplies for the house.

## Solution

RMHC© volunteers found Great Giving's software easy to learn, with a straightforward operating system that people could learn on their own. Setting up pages for the returning "Shoe Guys" participants was quick and easy and will be ready for organizers to use next year, with the same login and password. Organizers liked that all the information was available in one spot and was quickly and easily accessible. The ability to be mobile on iPads and iPhones was convenient and used for ticket sales, "Key to the Closet" and "Key to the Cellar" raffle sales, the live auction and the Fund-A-Need portion of the event.

Bringing all the activities of this multi-level approach to fundraising together in one software program helped streamline the process, eliminate mistakes, and relieve stressful situations when information was needed at a moment's notice.

## Results

Wine, Women & Shoes for Ronald McDonald House Charities just completed its sixth year. This event continues to grow each year, with this year's proceeds grossing \$200,000. Through the Join Me component, donations processed the night of the event and ticket sales, RMHC was able to process over \$100,000 through the Greater Giving platform. In 2018 and 2019 the WWS event was voted "Best Charity Event in Savannah." The Savannah community looks forward to this annual "sold out" event and how they can continue to support RMHC and its mission.

### Tips from The Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Coastal Empire

- Don't be afraid to use the support team when you have questions, including the chat feature which helped quite a bit.
- While anyone can build a page in Greater Giving's Join Me feature, RMHC streamlined the process by building pages for each one of the "Shoe Guys" who were tasked with raising money through the software's peer-to-peer tool. This was key to keeping their pages up to date.
- Use the Client Services' feature to get answers to your questions, no matter how frequently.
- Request all the Auctionpay card readers you need, with return labels, so everyone is connected.