

HELPING OTHERS

# Children's Health Guild Event Raises \$55K for Kids' Health Care

By ELANA O'LOSKEY  
Staff Writer

Children's Health Guild (CHG) held its annual holiday boutique and luncheon fundraiser at the Ritz Carlton San Francisco on Dec. 2. The 325 attendees at the "Hope Lives Here" event raised over \$50K via a paddle raffle and over \$20K in vendor product sales, of which 25 percent goes to CHG. Close to 30 vendors in six categories opened their booths at 9:30 a.m. – men's and women's apparel, home décor, jewelry, children's products, women's accessories and edibles. CHG, a nonprofit group, has raised \$1.1 million since 2012 to assist children and families in need at UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital in Oakland (CHO) and George Mark Children's House (GMCH) in San Leandro.

After guests spent time sipping and shopping at the boutique, Annie Holmes of Lafayette, holiday co-chair, opened the event with a warm welcome. Luncheon followed, and then Laura Pavlovich of Orinda, CHG president, introduced celebrated author Christine Carter, Ph.D., who is the happiness expert at U.C. Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center. Says Carter, "I spoke at the event because I grew up in Orinda, and so have been aware of the work that CHG does and really wanted to support them. As a mother of four teens, we made a few trips to Children's Hospital. I am so grateful to have it as a resource in our community. Supporting CHG is a way for me to pay forward my gratitude."

Liz Heflin shared her family's experience with respite care for her teenage daughter Kaitlyn at George Mark. Kaitlyn experiences seizures, so every day is filled with complex medical protocols. When Kaitlyn stays at GMCH, Heflin gets a rest and can spend time with her son, Kai, knowing Kaitlyn is in good hands.

Hillary Weiner of Orinda, CHG public relations chair, pointed out that physicians and medical staff at CHO see more than 200,000 patients each year, many of whom have nowhere else to turn. Katia Merriam, senior director of external relations for CHO, says that funds from the event are used in a variety of ways including,

"supplies for our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit such as hypo-hyperthermia pads used for warming and cooling, blood pressure cuffs, diapers, hats and onsies, all for premature babies as small as one pound." This is in addition to CHO's Child Life Services program, which bridges the gap between home, hospital and school with age-appropriate activities designed to help young patients understand and adapt to the hospital experience.

When GMCH opened in 2004, it was the first freestanding facility in the nation to offer palliative and hospice care to terminally ill children. While this is common in Europe, the United States is catching up in opening such facilities. According to Children's Hospice International, most of the 3,000 hospices in the U.S. will now consider admitting children but only about 450 have child-centered programs. As far as independent children's hospice homes, there are about 10 in the U.S., six in Canada and three in Australia. Ken Sommers of GMCH says that two examples of what funds from CHG are used for include their Adopt-a-Family program, which funds \$50 to \$99 per day of meals and incidentals for families at the facility or \$250 to \$999 for one day of end-of-life, respite or transitional care for one patient and memory making supplies for one month.

For more information about CHG, visit [www.childrenshealthguild.org](http://www.childrenshealthguild.org).



ALICIA CERVENKA PHOTOGRAPHY

At the Children's Health Guild "Hope Lives Here" holiday fundraiser members (L-R) Annie Holmes of Lafayette, Laura Pavlovich of Orinda and Shannon Nelson of Pleasant Hill teamed up to organize the event.

## Help Those Without Shelter

White Pony Express, a nonprofit based in Pleasant Hill, has launched its 2017 Cold Weather Clothing Program. The program, launched two years ago when two homeless men died from exposure, needs new or like-new articles of warm clothing.

Volunteers and monetary donations for the purchase of clothing are also needed and most appreciated. Interested volunteers should contact Many Nakaya at 925-818-6361, email her at [mandy@whiteponyexpress.org](mailto:mandy@whiteponyexpress.org) or go to the website, [www.whiteponyexpress.org](http://www.whiteponyexpress.org), for volunteer and donor information.

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The research design calls for a three month commitment. The first and third month you would be sending in rating forms. The second month you would be coming into our offices three times a week for treatment.

Childhood Trauma has been shown to result in the largest medical expense in the United States. A history of childhood trauma impacts health at many levels. Volunteers for this project will help to develop an important advancement in the treatment of Childhood Trauma.

For more information and to volunteer, please call Dr. Candia Smith at the Advanced Therapy Center, Orinda, CA. (925) 254 7823.

Candia Smith, DMH | Founding Director

344 Village Square  
Orinda, California 94563  
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[AdvancedTherapyCenter.org](http://AdvancedTherapyCenter.org)



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