



2017 Annual Impact Report



Fiona McGahey

Executive Director's Message

Aloha!

In 2017, HUGS celebrated 35 years of improving the lives of Hawaii's seriously ill children and their families. It was a milestone in many ways. Because of you... our HUGS families feel supported and know they are not alone. Because of you... a range of comprehensive programs are available to lessen their emotional and financial hardships. And because of you... children with life-threatening illnesses, their parents and siblings are wrapped with hugs of support.

A few highlights:

- Children can cope with their fears and anxieties during hospitalization through bedside play during weekly visits by HUGS staff
- Our HUGS families connected with each other at 50 events and activities, half of which were held on the west side of Oahu
- A grant from The Gift Foundation of Hawaii will foster peer support networks among Neighbor Island families in their own communities
- Families are receiving more assistance with community resources and referrals through our new Ho'okele Case Management Program, thanks to a City & County of Honolulu grant-in-aid
- Sunset Ranch and Waimea Valley Park dedicated a grove of koa trees as a living legacy for our HUGS children who have passed away
- HEI, Hawaiian Electric and American Savings Bank brightened the holiday season for HUGS children and their families at the HUGS Christmas Party

These highlights and more are the result of all of you. We are so grateful to our Board members, volunteers and community groups for championing our mission, as well as to our individual donors, corporate partners and foundations for your heartfelt giving of monetary and in-kind donations. Your phenomenal support made 2017 the best year ever.

We've come a long way, and together with you, we look forward to another fulfilling year of supporting families on their challenging journey through childhood illness.

Mahalo,



Joan Naguwa
HUGS Executive Director

“The emotional support from HUGS is the most invaluable treasure.”



The Colunga Family

The Colunga's Story

Bonny and Kyle Colunga's youngest son, Judah, was a happy, healthy baby until he got his 4-month immunization shots. He was diagnosed with epilepsy. At 3 years, Judah has delays in his development, and medications, which lessened the frequency of his seizures at first, are no longer as effective. His parents are seeking alternative treatment. The Colungas became a HUGS family in 2017 and are grateful to HUGS for supporting the entire family on their changing journey of living with Judah's illness.

“HUGS has helped our family in significant ways. The emotional support is the most invaluable treasure,” said

Bonny. “Just knowing someone is there, should I need a listening ear, helps me feel more stable on this journey.

“The HUGS Mom's Nights provide an avenue for self-care. And the discussions with other moms have normalized my struggles. I feel a burden is lifted when I meet other women who have encountered similar experiences, fears, anxieties, hopes, and frustrations,” she continued.

“At HUGS, Ezekiel and Grace are recognized as individuals and not just as Judah's brother and sister... and now have a better understanding of Judah's condition.”

HUGS Impact Overview

325

Families statewide received HUGS' services

1,509

Family members served

73

New HUGS families

14,195

Total touchpoints or interactions with families

590

HUGS children and their siblings received support

415

Hospital visits made by HUGS staff and volunteers

89

Boxes of food provided to 30 families

59

Family members received emergency airfare assistance

\$0

Amount families pay for services

66

Neighbor Island families received a stipend for daily living expenses with a hospitalized child on Oahu

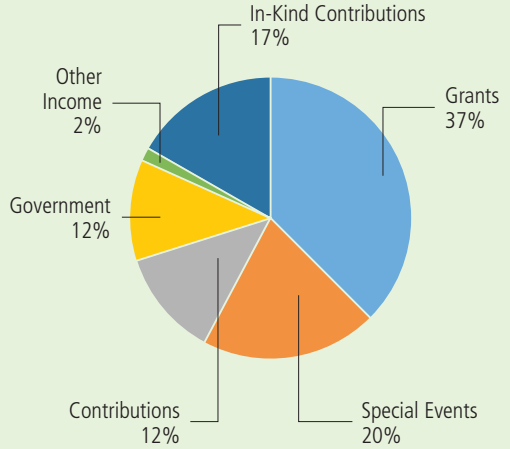
6,343

Total Volunteer Hours

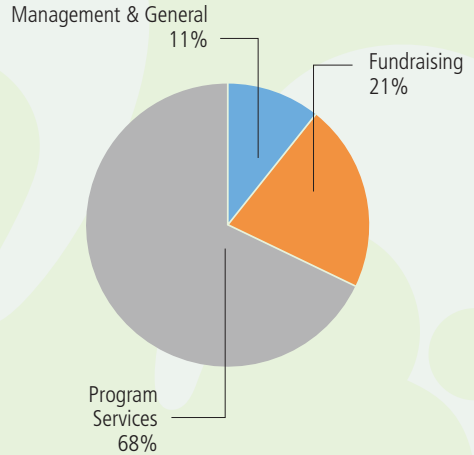
\$875,872

Raised

Revenue & Other Support



Expenses



2017 Gifts to HUGS

With gratitude, we recognize the following individuals and organizations who supported HUGS with gifts of \$1,000 or more in 2017. Your generous gifts are helping Hawaii's families on their challenging journey of caring for a child with a life-threatening illness.

\$10,000 and Above

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We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this listing and apologize for any gifts we may have missed. Please call our Development Office at 808-380-6924 to report any inaccuracies or omissions.



“HUGS is our extended family.”



*The McGahey Family
with friend*

The McGahey's Story

Fiona McGahey loves playing outside, the simple joy of a typical 5-year-old. At a recent HUGS Family Dinner, she was learning how to jump rope. “I did one!” she said with a big smile on her beautiful face. She tried jump-roping again. “I did one!” she said again. This positive, can-do spirit got her through 131 weeks of chemotherapy treatments, completed in January 2017 to combat Philadelphia Chromosome-Positive (Ph+) Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL), an aggressive subtype of leukemia that required more intense chemotherapy, extra shots and medications.

Although Fiona is in remission, she’s not out of the woods yet as this condition has a 50% recurrence rate.

“I lived in fear every day with the thought of losing her, I still do,” said Yuko, Fiona’s mom. “I’m not one to cry, but I just broke down [when I got the news about Fiona’s diagnosis],” Stephen, Fiona’s dad, admitted. “We’ve learned to take one day at a time,” he continued. “Even through her chemo treatments and when she lost

her hair, she was so brave every day. She’s our hero,” he added. “Fiona is also proud of her surgical scars, from the port and G- (gastrostomy) tube so she could take her medications.”

Stephen, who is in the military, had previously transferred from Kanagawa, Japan to Fort Drum in New York, and Yuko, then pregnant with their third child, and their two toddlers were supposed to join him as soon as she received her U.S. visa.

It was in June 2014 when Yuko first noticed a rash on 2-year-old Fiona’s thigh that spread. When bruises appeared at the slightest touch along with purplish spots around her eyes when she cried, Yuko looked up the symptoms online and took Fiona to the doctor for blood work. The family’s plans all fell apart when Fiona was diagnosed with Ph+ALL. She was immediately hospitalized to begin chemotherapy treatment.

“Moving to Hawaii for treatment at Tripler Army Medical Center became the best option,” said Stephen. After all the paperwork was finally approved, there was only a small window when travel was possible – between Fiona’s treatments and before it became too risky for Yuko to fly. Yuko had only a two-hour notice before getting on a medical jet to Honolulu with Fiona. For several months, they stayed at Fisher House for military families with patients receiving treatment at Tripler before moving into Army housing. It was a difficult time without family nearby to support them.

Since 2015, HUGS has become their extended family. The McGaheys learned about HUGS during a hospital visit by our HUGS staff. They are grateful for the community’s generous support of HUGS that allows them to connect with other families who understand what they’re going through and by participating in Respite Care and Family Dinners.

“Fiona, Raicheal and Cathleen love going to the HUGS house for Respite. Without any family here, it’s hard to leave three little girls with just anyone. We know HUGS is a safe place for them, and we can enjoy ourselves without having to worry,” said Stephen. “The Family Dinners are also great. We can relax, get together with other HUGS families and don’t have to cook,” added Yuko. Mahalo to our caring community for rallying around families like the McGaheys.



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To strengthen Hawaii's families and improve their quality of life as they face the emotional and financial hardships of caring for a seriously ill child.

