With the sunrise on August 1st each year, thoughts of school start to enter the minds of parents and kids around our city. The ever-growing list of essential supplies needed for academic excellence should not leave families struggling. We believe that all children should walk into school, on day one, ready to learn. Houston Children’s Charity’s Back2School program is paving the road for that success.

Everything changed in 2010. Rod Ryan of The Rod Ryan Morning Show on 94.5 The Buzz, reached out to Houston Children’s Charity to be involved with the Back2School program. “I wanted to do something for kids because I was one of those children growing up without a lot of money. I liked the partnership HCC had with The Houston Furniture Bank, (who we work with) and used that as my way in to get involved” Rod recalls. The Rod Ryan Show Cares Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to helping and assisting those in the Houston area through the generosity of their listeners. His mission revolves around ‘Humans helping Humans.’ He raises awareness and funds...
Dear Friends,

As we prepare for another successful year serving Houston’s special children, we remain mindful that nothing happens without YOU!

Houston Children’s Charity is more than just a nonprofit organization. We are a FAMILY!

Our sponsors, supporters and volunteers remind us each day of what is possible when one defines a purpose and goes for it.

Houston Children’s Charity believes wholeheartedly in the work that we do every day and we value your support of it. With our objectives in sight, your support makes our resulting success possible.

It is true that each man’s life touches so many other lives and that number is dictated each year by your continued generosity. On this day, and every day, we thank you and look forward to positively affecting children’s lives for years to come.

Warm Regards,

Laura S. Ward
WHATABURGER Partnership Spotlight

• Tell us a bit about how this partnership came about.
Whataburger has been in the Houston community for nearly 50 years. This particular partnership started five years ago (2014) when Whataburger first became involved with the Back2School program through The Rod Ryan Morning show.

• Is there a moment during the years that stands out to you?
What stands out the most are the big smiles on the faces of the children when they receive their backpack full of supplies. Receiving the new backpack, supplies for reading and other good things really does bring them confidence and joy. You can see it in their faces.

• What programs have Whataburger been a part of?
With HCC, Whataburger supports the Annual Easter Party, A Better Night’s Sleep program, Christmas Toy Distribution at the George R. Brown. In addition to our HCC partnerships, Whataburger has been supporting the communities it serves through charitable giving and volunteerism since the first restaurant was opened in 1950. Whataburger supports a number of nonprofit organizations that focus on children’s charities, cancer research, hunger assistance, disaster relief and military support.

• Where do you see the partnership going in the future?
Whataburger is proud to partner with Houston Children’s Charity and we certainly plan to continue this great relationship and look for ways in which we can be of greater assistance to HCC. We have recently had conversations with the Young Houstonians for Houston Children’s Charity and we are looking for ways to support the work they are doing for HCC. As long as there are children in need in Houston, Whataburger will be around to support those efforts.

Academics, Backpacks, Classmates

With each approaching school year there comes mixed feeling for everyone in the family. A fresh start, lay down your old routines, catch up with old friends. Demands of extracurricular activities. Moving up to the next grade. Report Cards. Fear of not knowing anyone in your class. But the anxiety of not being prepared with supplies should never cross one’s mind.

Houston Children’s Charity began the Back2School program, in 2005, to alleviate that tension of not being equipped on Day 1 of a new school year. It began with a single school district. Now our Back2School program includes many districts and covers over five counties. We believe ALL children should enter the doors on the first day wearing a new backpack loaded with supplies.

Each summer this program helps thousands of underserved children in the Houston area. Since teaming up with Rod Ryan of The Rod Ryan Show on 94.5 The Buzz in 2010, the support given has proven to be inspiring. Year after year, Rod and his crew set a new standard with contributions from local businesses to get our special children backpacks full of age appropriate supplies…and this year was no different.

Funds were raised through a variety of sources. The Meat Raffle, at Lucky’s Pub West, brought in $16,644 to start off the campaign. Special thanks to Bellville Meat Market and Ben E Keith Foods for donating all meat products for this event. Weekly partnerships sought great participation from “The Best Listeners” in Houston. Squeezedonline.com, Jim Adler the “Texas Hammer” Shell Federal Credit Union and Primeway Federal Credit Union, all contributed $5,000 to the cause. This year Whataburger donated $7,500 while The Rod Ryan Show Cares website raised an astonishing $35,700 towards the program. Thanks to Brand Management Professionals for the amazing items which everyone purchased through the RRSC online store.

Volunteers from Greystar, Whataburger, Methodist Hospital I-Care, Asurion, Landry’s Inc., SP Waltrip Lodge, Briggs Equipment, Amegy Bank, Memorial Hermann - Hometown, Hydrochem PSC, Young Houstonians for Houston Children’s Charity, US Coast Guard and CarMax Auto Superstores Inc. Cypress helped distribute more than 4,000 backpacks on August 3, 2019. Huge shout out to ACME Party & Tent for donating the large tent for our distribution. This helped everyone survive the Texas heat.

Additional partners for the 2019 Back2School program include: Maddy’s Book Drive, Charles E. Dyer IV, D.D.S., MS, Raising Cane’s, Taco Cabana, Aggrecko, Eric Berger, Wyndham Houston Medical Center, Veolia and Solvay, Captain America, Spider-Man, Cosplay characters, Rainforest Café’s ChaCha and the 501st Legion made appearances and helped us keep spirits up on this hot Texas day. Building New Foundations made a surprise donation of $15,000 towards school uniforms.

The distribution day will always be remembered through the various photos taken. Thanks to LM Photography, Stevie Merrill and Angel Rangel for donating their services for this event. THANK YOU to all of our partners for making a difference.

A Decade of Steadfast Support & Partnering for the Next Generation

that stays right here in Houston, the city that adopted him over 15 years ago. Rod states “I have never seen such generosity from a community!”

We are thrilled that over 40,000 children have received academic assistance through Rod’s continued tried and true platform. We look forward to growing this partnership with Rod Ryan as we watch this program flourish in the years to come! Thank you for another successful year!
For 23 years, Houston Children’s Charity has bestowed “Chariots” to deserving families and agencies who are in need of safe and effective transportation. On April 17, 2019, Houston Children’s Charity awarded 15 wheelchair-accessible vehicles through its renowned Chariots for Children program. Our generous sponsors Jana & Richard Fanta with The Fant Foundation, The Guill Family, the Gary Becker Family/ Brian Becker Family and Leticia & Steve Trauber each donated state-of-the-art vans.

The event which took place at HCC Chairman of the Board Tilman J. Fertitta’s Willie G’s Post Oak and featured a sweet treat of cookies and milk as well as festive Easter decorations. Each child was thrilled to see Easter Baskets that were placed in their waiting chariots.

Chariots for Children partner, Adaptive Driving Access, supplied the 15 brand-new vans. Chosen recipients of this program gain a reliable and efficient way to travel as a family to everything from medical treatments and doctor’s appointments to after-school activities and adventures that were once unattainable.

Since its inception in 1996, Houston Children’s Charity has raised over $6 Million for the program, and has awarded over 205 vehicles to 95 agencies and 111 individual families.

Spotted in the crowd were HCC supporter Carol Sawyer, Board Members Grant Guthrie, Bob Ogle, Dan D’Armond, Rob Pierce and Don Henderson.

Last but certainly not least, we would like to extend our thanks to the volunteers who made the event possible: Chris Merrill, Stevie Merrill, Allen Hord, Maricella Reed, Rhonda Burrage and David Torres along with HCC’s two interns Kenia Fermer and Danielle Richardson.
Rachael Adeyeye – Age: 18
At birth, Rachael was diagnosed with Trisomy 18. Today, she suffers from Seizures, Scoliosis, and developmental delay. Rachael was recently named Student of the Month at her school for helping to spread awareness about Trisomy 18. Her parents, Sarah and Tayo, are very proud. She loves music, PE, and art but she does NOT enjoy getting her hair done and will throw a fit when someone tries. Rachael has two older brothers, David and Moses, who are in college but love helping to care for her when they are home.

Neave Ittman – Age: 19
Neave suffers from a rare genetic defect of the KCNQ1 gene and she suffers from Seizures, Spastic Quadriplegic, and Scoliosis. She is described by her parents, Kelly & Keith, as “almost always happy and content.” She is thrilled by flashing lights, music and movies at the theatre. She loves to ride in a wheelchair swing, or better yet, in a car, bus, or van, and the outings that come with them. When she is out in the world, she enjoys looking around at people and lights, and appreciates attention from loved ones.

Tomy E. Jackson III – Age: 10
Tommy suffers from Cerebral Palsy, Neuromuscular Scoliosis, and Chronic Static Encephalopathy. On the weekends, Tommy and his older sister, Tomia, enjoy watching Peppa Pig or Tommy’s favorite movie, The Lion King. They both love music; they sing together or play on Tommy’s toy guitar and mini piano. Mostly, Tommy just loves spending any quality time with his family and he never fails to light up with a big smile when his Dad greets him every day when he gets home from work.

Mia G. Lara – Age: 9
Mia has a past history of unknown Genetic syndrome. Her parents, Maria and Baldemar, describe her as an extremely happy child who is adored by her two older brothers, Marcos and Luis. She loves music, especially if it’s just music that comes from a toy. Like any child, Mia loves cartoons and movies. Some of her favorites include Dora the Explorer, Rosita Fresita, and Frozen.

Julie Gatica – Age: 8
Julie was diagnosed with Encephalitis and a traumatic brain injury caused by Influenza B. Julie loves playing hide and seek with her brother, Alexander, or heading to waterparks for a fun day in the sun. She loves to eat and some her favorite foods include spaghetti, tortas and quesadillas. Julie loves helping others and hopes to one day be able to walk with the help of a walker.

Dnaize Scott – Age: 14
Dnaize suffers from Cerebral Palsy, Epilepsy, and Spastic Quadriplegic Cerebral Palsy. He is described by his parents, Sarina & Jorge, as an extremely happy child who is adored by his siblings, Kana and Regis. Dnaize loves music and learning karate.

Andres Perez – Age: 12
Andres suffers from Spina Bifida, Seizure Disorder, and Chronic Kidney Disease stage 3. He has been wheelchair bound since birth. Despite his challenges, he excels in his studies and is a favorite of 6. His parents Sarina & Jorge & his siblings Vanessa, Jazmin and Jorge Jr. loves to spend time with him outside with his family, especially when they are able to travel together. He also enjoys outdoor activities, his favorite being soccer.

Onyedikachi Onukwugha – Age: 11
Onyedikachi has suffered from Cerebral Palsy, Seizure disorder, and Multiple Developmental Delays. Despite his challenges, Jerges, Onyedikachi enjoys playing with his siblings, Anthony and Mary, and loves to spend time with his friends at parks or watching the Lakewood Church movie nights. They also love listening to music together, their favorite is Christian music.

Steve Pacheco – Age: 18
Steve requires full-time care for his conditions which include severe global developmental delay, Seizure disorder, and Encephalopathy. Steve is non-verbal and is fed exclusively by G-tube feed. His younger sisters, Emily and Melody, help to keep him motivated by singing him songs; and reading to him. They know he is enjoying it when he smiles or slaps his hands. Steve especially loves when his parents, Anabela and Domingo, talk to him and allow him to touch their faces.

Christian Villegas – Age: 11
Christian, 11, lives with Seizures, Epilepsy, and Spastic Quadriplegic Cerebral Palsy. He is described by his parents, Lucero and Christian, as a joyful child who has “a strong view of life regardless of his disability.”

Alexia N. Flores – Age: 11
Alexia is an 11 year old girl who suffers from Cerebral Palsy, impaired mobility, and seizures. Alexia loves cartoons, especially ones with animals as the main characters. Maria has an extremely happy child who is adored by her two younger brothers, Darien and Najee. Alexia loves cartoons, especially ones with animals as the main characters. Maria has an extremely happy child who is adored by her two younger brothers, Darien and Najee.

Brice Mooring Jr. – Age: 3
A month after being born, Bryce was diagnosed with Arthrogryposis—conditions which include severe global developmental delay, Seizure disorder, and Chronic Kidney Disease stage 3. He has been wheelchair bound since birth. Despite his challenges, he excels in his studies and is a favorite of 6. His parents Sarina & Jorge and his siblings Vanessa, Jazmin and Jorge Jr. loves to spend time with him outside with his family, especially when they are able to travel together. He also enjoys outdoor activities, his favorite being soccer.

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Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep

Every night countless children sleep on make-shift beds – either sharing with multiple siblings, or worse, sleeping on the floor. In launching the A Better Night’s Sleep program, President & CEO Laura S. Ward introduced the idea that a $100 donation enables us to purchase the basics for a good night’s sleep: a twin bed (box springs & mattress), pillow, blanket and complete sheet set for a lucky child.

Since that launch date, HCC has provided beds to over 25,000 children in and around the greater Houston area through monthly bed distributions. This program not only provides every child with a bed, but also the opportunity to awake every morning well-rested and prepared for the day ahead.

Together, we can provide the foundation to help kids rise each day – rested and equipped – to undertake any challenges that lie ahead. If you are interested in learning more about this program and helping us ensure SWEET DREAMS for our children, please contact us at 713-524-2878 or visit www.houstonchildrenscharity.org. Applications are online year around.

Eggstra Special Delivery

It’s Annual Easter party time!! The Easter Bunny hopped to the grounds of Northland Christian School, on Saturday, April 6th and continued a tradition of more than 350 children from Houston-area agencies and families enjoying the day’s activities by host Houston Children’s Charity. Party-goers were treated to activities including a petting zoo, pony rides, moon walks, and train rides. Booths were set up for face painting, coloring and being creative with Play-Doh. Games were played, Eggs were hunted, and cotton candy and cookies were enjoyed by all.

Upon arrival guests received, metallic pinwheels, hand-decorated Easter Egg Hunt bags (decorated by Girl Scout Troop Destiny and NCL – Wildflowers) and bunny ears. The excitement increased when over 6,700 candy-filled Easter Eggs were spread throughout two fields for the traditional Easter Egg Hunt. And the additional 16,580 donated eggs will be stored upon local organizations and schools for distribution during the holiday season. Individual Easter Baskets, Rain Forest Café Bamba snackable meal sets, Camp Rex books, crayons, Play-Doh, Whataburger slap bracelets and board games were all gifted to each child prior to leaving.

To make it all happen, HCC teamed up with Wendy’s Old Fashion Hamburgers, Borden’s Dairy Company, PepsiCo, PAL dancers, Cookie Monster, Landry’s Inc. Rain Forest Café, Whataburger, Houston Police Department Recruitment Office, 501st Legion characters, Captain America, Houston Rockets Launch Crew & Cheerleaders, Klein Volunteer Fire Department, Taco Cabana and Northland Christian School to create an afternoon of precious memories. LaShonda Anderson, of Yesterday’s Play Today, helped keep the party’s excitement up with music and field games for all guests. THANKS to Stevie Merrill for capturing all of the magic in pictures!

Over 65 of Houston’s best volunteers were at the party. THANK YOU to NCL Wildflowers, ALL-STARS, Asurion, Houston Metropolitan Continental Societies, Inc., Frost Bank, Girl Scout Troop Destiny, Macy’s, Houston Methodist Hospital I-CARE, Greystar and our individual volunteers who make this party an event for all to attend.

Thanks to the outsourcing of generosity from the HCC Board of Directors and long-time volunteers Kim & Craig Finnigan, event favorites were graciously underwritten! Houston Children’s Charity would like to extend a special recognition to our gracious host Carolyn Lemm and Northland Christian School for allowing us to bring a smile to kids’ faces year after year. We are very thankful to all of you!

Volunteer Spotlight: SP Waltrip Masonic Lodge #1328

• How did you first learn about volunteering for Houston Children’s Charity?
One of our members Chris Merrill, and his wife Stevie, have worked with the charity for several years. We were looking for a group to volunteer with and they suggested this.

• How long have you been a volunteer for HCC?
S P Waltrip Masonic Lodge #1328 has been volunteering for over two years now.

• List the HCC programs that you have volunteered for.
A Better Night’s Sleep (AKA mattress chuckin’ as it is known around The Lodge) and the Back2School (backpack distribution) programs.

• Why did you decide to become a volunteer?
We had a need to become more involved and engaged with the community through charitable services.

• What do you like best about serving as a HCC volunteer?
The comradery at every event. We see each other regularly but it is fun to work together for a common goal.

• Do you have any advice for someone who is considering becoming an HCC volunteer?
Not going to lie...some events are more physically demanding than others. Bring your work boots and have plan on having a fun time at any of the events. It’s for the children!!!
**An Ocean of Fun**

On May 4th, 2019, 212 lucky recipients were invited to be part of the 4th Annual Houston Children’s Charity Family Day at the Downtown Aquarium. Participants included families from these selected affiliated organizations: Chariots for Children, TAPS Academy teens and their mentor, Alvaro Vallejo, Southwest Glen Mission and Urban Outreach.

Guests were gifted items including an All-Day Adventure Pass Wristband, a Concession Stand Meal Voucher, Game Tickets, an Aquarium T-Shirt, a Validated Parking Voucher per family, and a 15% Retail Discount. It's safe to say that our families were given the Landry's luxury experience!

To top it off, we could not have asked for better weather conditions; the sun was unobstructed by a single cloud, and the late-spring afternoon offered everyone a lovely breeze. The children were enthralled with the touch pools, the “splash pad,” countess rides on the Ferris wheel, yummy food and plush toy prizes!

HCC Volunteers Stevie & Chris Merrill worked closely with Landry's Volunteer Coordinator Clara McMichael to make sure that the children and their families got the most out of their day. We want to send a SPECIAL THANK YOU to the entire Landry's team for giving our clients a priceless day of quality family time and good fun.

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**It Takes A Village**

As Houston Children’s Charity works to create a world where every child has their very own bed, clothing, school supplies, transportation, health services, and joyful holidays, we depend on our community to help us do just that…. It Takes A Village!

We are making progress, assisting one child at a time, and measure our success by the number of children's lives that are touched. So far in 2019, various agencies and companies have invited us to continue to connect, develop, and grow awareness within our community. Without these relationships, Houston Children’s Charity would not have the ability to reach its full potential and address the needs of our community.

We are truly grateful to the organizations and companies who have opened their doors. Each of these events allow us to further our mission, build awareness, and raise funds for our special children.

- Aggreko Rental Solutions – Orange Day of Difference
- Asurion – MLK Day of Service
- BMW of West Houston – Drive for a Cause
- Clutch City Foundation – Clutch City Cares
- Eureka Heights Brew Co.
- Jamie Williams / San Jacinto College South – Dance Program Spring Show
- Krayton Polymers – Build-A-Bike Program
- Sweatii – Row X Flow at Define: Body & Mind Bellair and Row House
- Gallagher Charity Bowling Event
- The CarMax Foundation Volunteer Team Builder Program
OUR MISSION
Houston Children’s Charity is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for Greater Houston’s underprivileged, abused, and disabled children who have been otherwise left behind. The scope of our support is limited only by the availability of resources. Our goal is to leave no legitimate request for assistance unanswered.

OUR VISION
“Our Kids Are Everybody’s Kids”
Houston Children’s Charity, with the support of dedicated sponsors and committed volunteers, works to create a world where every child has their very own bed, clothing, school supplies, transportation, health services, and joyful holidays. We are making progress, assisting one child at a time and measure our success by the number of children’s lives that are touched.

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Gary D. Becker, Vice Chairman of the Board
Laura S. Ward, President & CEO
Penny Loyd, Past-President
Tad Brown, Past-President
Grant W. Guthrie, Vice President / Funding Co-Chair
John B. Johnson, Vice-President / Funding Co-Chair
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Edna Meyer-Nelson, Treasurer

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Michael F. Rogers
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Paul B. Loyd, Jr.
John L. Nau, III
David H. Ward

2019 Upcoming Events
“A BETTER NIGHT’S SLEEP”
Red Distributions – Every Month (Saturday)

“HCC CLOSET”
Semi-Monthly visits (Tuesday only)

“CHARIOTS FOR CHILDREN”
Spring – Fall

ADOPT – A FAMILY
October – December

TOY DISTRIBUTION
Week of December 16th – 21st

We are always looking to reach more families in need.
If you have a community event that you would like us to attend OR if you would like to start a fundraiser on behalf of HCC, please contact us.
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Volunteer Corner
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WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT!
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(713) 524-2878 or email us at hcc@houstonchildrenscharity.org

OUR MISSION
Houston Children’s Charity is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for Greater Houston’s underprivileged, abused, and disabled children who have been otherwise left behind. The scope of our support is limited only by the availability of resources. Our goal is to leave no legitimate request for assistance unanswered.

OUR VISION
“Our Kids Are Everybody’s Kids”
Houston Children’s Charity, with the support of dedicated sponsors and committed volunteers, works to create a world where every child has their very own bed, clothing, school supplies, transportation, health services, and joyful holidays. We are making progress, assisting one child at a time and measure our success by the number of children’s lives that are touched.

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2019 Upcoming Events
“A BETTER NIGHT’S SLEEP”
Red Distributions – Every Month (Saturday)

“HCC CLOSET”
Semi-Monthly visits (Tuesday only)

“CHARIOTS FOR CHILDREN”
Spring – Fall

ADOPT – A FAMILY
October – December

TOY DISTRIBUTION
Week of December 16th – 21st

We are always looking to reach more families in need.
If you have a community event that you would like us to attend OR if you would like to start a fundraiser on behalf of HCC, please contact us.
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Volunteer Corner
WE ARE ALWAYS IN NEED OF CARING VOLUNTEERS.
WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT!
Please visit us at www.houstonchildrenscharity.org to register.

Stay Connected
www.houstonchildrenscharity.org
www.facebook.com/houstonchilds
www.instagram.com/houstoncharity
twitter.com/houcharity

Out in the Community
We are always looking to reach more families in need.
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