

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GEORGE MARK CHILDREN'S HOUSE ANNOUNCES NEW HUMMINGBIRD PROJECT
Special Fund Expands Impact for Children with Life-Limiting Conditions and their Families

(SAN LEANDRO, CA) July 11, 2023—[George Mark Children's House](#) today launched the [Hummingbird Project](#), a new campaign to raise both awareness about the experiences of children facing life-limiting conditions and funds to expand the extraordinary care and quality resources available to them and their families. Kick-started by a generous donor, all donations made to the Hummingbird Project will be matched dollar for dollar, up to \$500,000, through the end of the year.

The Hummingbird Project is inspired by CEO, Shekinah Eliassen's personal story as a George Mark parent. In 2012, her son Lars lived only three weeks before he died as a result of a brain disease. She and her husband were fortunate to find George Mark Children's House where they were able to spend precious time with their son.

"Lars' presence on this planet, although very brief, has shifted the course of my life, my husband's life, the lives of our two other children, and the lives of so many others," Shekinah Eliassen, CEO, George Mark Children's House says. "As a bereaved parent who experienced the magic of care at George Mark firsthand, I am empathetic to what families go through. I am committed to providing more children and families with the same compassion, comprehensive care and opportunities to heal and grow that my family and I received."

George Mark Children's House families rely upon its critical programs – including respite, transitional and end of life care—as well as its daily, life-giving moments of joy, play, wonder and connections, experiences sometimes hard to come by for children with chronic medical needs. Because of community engagement efforts like the Hummingbird Project, the first-of-its-kind organization can deliver its services at absolutely no cost to families, in a beautiful home-like and child-friendly setting.

Why Hummingbirds?

Hummingbirds have a special meaning at George Mark. They are a sign of healing, comfort and hope, especially when patients, families, and staff need the support most. They are a constant physical presence, making their home in the many gardens and grounds surrounding the George Mark Children's House.

"It seemed only fitting we name our campaign after these magical creatures," adds Eliassen. "Every donation will ensure our House is always alive and *humming* with memory-making programs and activities like art, music, swimming, pet therapy or birthday parties."

Many who spend time at George Mark point to singular moments that are transformational, hope-filled, and life-changing. Considered *Hummingbird Moments*, the organization encourages families, contributors, volunteers, staff and community members to share their own personal "Hummingbird" stories to help uplift and inspire us all. A growing Hummingbird Moment showcase is featured at georgemark.org

About [George Mark Children's House](#)

George Mark Children's House, located in San Leandro, CA, is the first freestanding pediatric palliative care home in the United States. The organization provides life-affirming care for children with illnesses that modern health care cannot yet cure, or for those who have complex medical conditions. Respite care, transitional care, end of life care and bereavement support are all offered at no charge to medically eligible children and their families. Since opening its doors in 2004, the organization has served more than 1,000 children. As the hallmark of care at George Mark is that families never see a bill, the organization raises funds in order to provide its services, through individual giving, private donations, foundation grants, corporate sponsorship and community support.

###