

# SILICON VALLEY DESIGN



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# RONALD McDONALD HOUSE AT STANFORD

## Where Hope Has a Home

By Mary Ann McEwan, ASID, CID, MBA

Several members of our chapter participated in the joint *pro bono* project between the San Francisco Design Center and Ronald McDonald House at Stanford (RMHS), creating beautiful and functional rooms for the families who will be staying there. In our previous issue we featured **Melinda Mandell, ASID, Melinda Mandell Interior Design**, who herself had been a patient at Lucile Salter Packard Hospital Stanford as a child, and therefore had a unique perspective. IP members who donated to her rooms were All Natural Stone, Cambria, Chairish, Rohl, Serena & Lily, Sonneman Lighting, and Valet Custom Cabinets and Closets.

Each of our additional designers featured here were inspired in various other ways.



TOP LEFT:  
**Melinda Mandell, Rm 208**  
Photography: Michelle Drewes

TOP RIGHT:  
**Melinda Mandell, Rm 209**  
Photography: Michelle Drewes

BOTTOM LEFT:  
**Melinda Mandell, Sitting area**  
Photography: Michelle Drewes



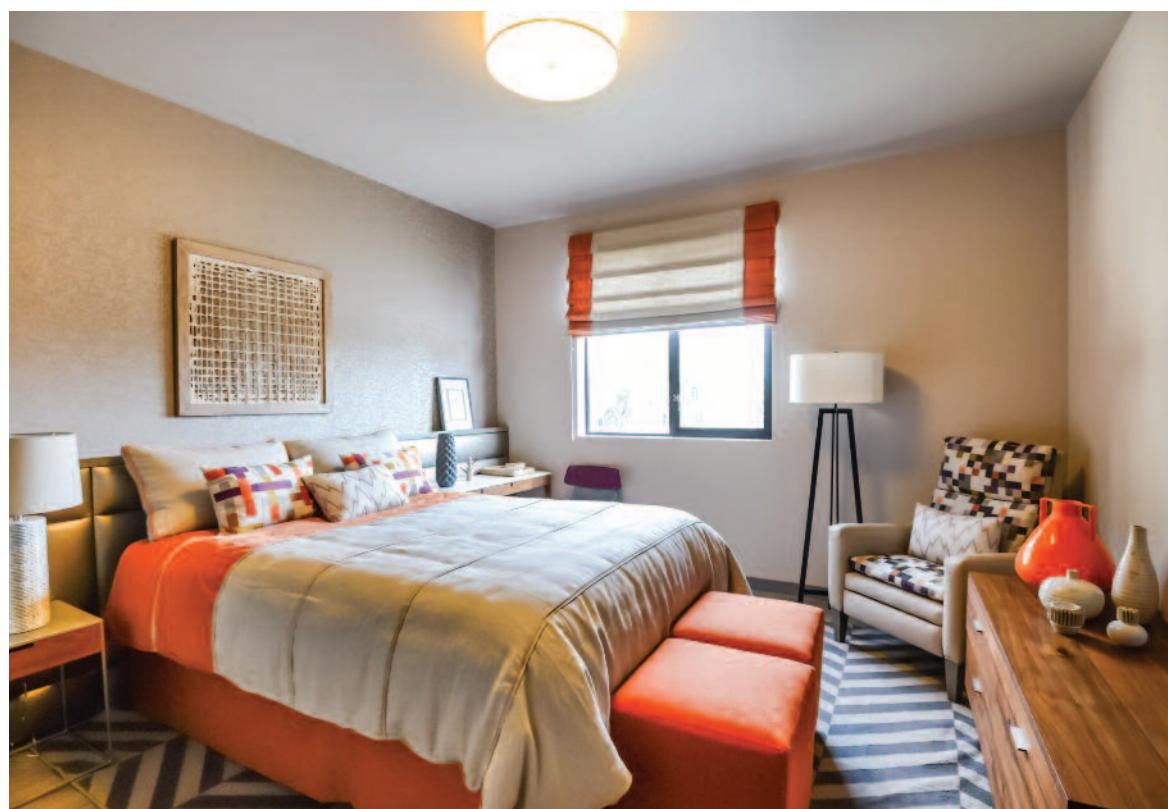
ABOVE:  
**Pamela Pennington, ASID and Amanda Morris, ASID, Rm 204**  
Photography: Suet Wong, ASID, CID, LEED GA

**PAMELA PENNINGTON, ASID** and **AMANDA MORRIS, ASID**, of **PAMELA PENNINGTON STUDIOS**, had been aware of RMHS for many years, since they were "right up the road" from them, and were inspired by the selflessness of those volunteering their time to help there as the facility continued to build and grow.

They were then equally touched by the generosity of their own clients and friends, once they shared their goals for the project. "It means a great deal to our staff personally to find a philanthropic cause where we could use our talents to create something truly meaningful in the service of families who need to be comfortable during some of the most stressful times in their lives."

As a team, they approached their design with the idea that "the space needed to be comfortable and flexible enough for the families to make it their own." They felt it was important that the room be designed to allow the families to relax, to experience light-hearted interaction and playfulness. The furniture should also be sturdy enough that they wouldn't have to worry about damaging anything.

Their long-time vendors and subcontractors "immediately said yes to helping, donating and providing their services to make it all possible." Most did not ask for extra recognition, but just wanted to contribute to this important project. One such example was an unusual gallery called Paintbrush Diplomacy, which showed them a group of art produced by children from around the world. The design team took one of the paintings and developed a wall covering printed from an enlarged version of the original artwork for use on one of the bedroom walls. They hope that this "wonderful, colorful image will inspire healing, care and community during the guests' stay." Chapter IP donors included Belmont Hardware and Sonneman Lighting.



RIGHT:  
**Pamela Pennington, ASID and Amanda Morris, ASID Rm 205**  
Photography: Bernardo Grijalva



**Risë Krag, Allied ASID** and her team members **Nicole Ghilarducci, Allied ASID** and **Liberty Nuris, Allied ASID** of **RKI Interior Design** wanted to create a "restful and inviting retreat for families," with colors inspired by nature and the surrounding Palo Alto landscape, bringing warmth and comfort into the room. To make the suite appear more spacious, they used a mainly neutral palette, and their finish selections require little maintenance.

The RKI team encountered a particularly unique challenge during the latter part of the construction process: their room was chosen to be ADA compatible two months prior to installation. To accommodate a wheelchair, their original plan was changed significantly. They had to think creatively to modify the design as walls were moved to fit a larger bathroom, therefore limiting the bedroom size. They quickly had to edit the space, eliminate some selected furniture, and search for new solutions.

Although this required that their space planning and furniture selections be revised, their primary goals for the room remained the same: design for a functional, adaptable, low-maintenance room; keep the room inviting; and look to the surrounding Palo Alto landscape for inspiration.

They also used their background in hospitality design to incorporate practical elements: no fixed headboard for easy movability, easy wash/wipe walls, vinyl faux wood floors for easy cleaning, a variety of lighting elements, solid wood dresser with storage, a custom curtain panel to hide the closet area, blackout shades for midday naps, art to match the views from the window, washable yet decorative bedding, and a linen corkboard for family notes and mementoes.

These three RKI designers were honored to be presented with the opportunity to use their skills and talents to help make a difference. Although they had previously made seasonal displays for the former RMHS facility, it was meaningful for their team to give back on this larger project. Their advice is to "expect changes, be flexible and have fun!" IP members who donated to this project were Belmont Hardware, Coast Lighting, and Rebarts Interiors.

ABOVE:  
**Risë Krag, Allied ASID, Nicole Ghilarducci, Allied ASID  
and Liberty Nuris, Allied ASID, Rm 231**  
Photography: Suet Wong, ASID, CID, LEED GA

For **JANA MAGGINETTI, Allied ASID**, of **JULIANNE QUELLE DESIGN**, the attributes needed by someone enduring crisis were "respite, calm, refreshment, nurture." Her guest room "Into the Woods" represents all these elements juxtaposed with "the wild of the woodland creatures." She incorporated "restful grays and calming taupes," along with a touch of whimsy.

The sitting room she also designed uses strong textures and patterns in tailored fabrics, contrasting dark against light, playful against traditional. She wanted to create a retreat that is "warm and cozy, where you can put your feet up to read as your children pull toys out of the nearby baskets" to play on the rug. The room is geared to all family members, with reading, playing, entertainment and work in mind.

As a young adult, Jana managed a clothing store at the Stanford Shopping Center, and first became aware of the nearby RMHS as a facility that provides for families in crisis. When she later learned of this design project, she was "hooked," excited about the opportunity to give back. She notes that out of her own blessings she wants to bless others.

She and her team wanted to create a safe, nurturing environment for family members, which would bring some normalcy to their lives. They selected materials that were durable, family friendly and germ proof. The products "will need to last...and last and last," but at the same time be cozy and inviting.



ABOVE:

**Jana M. Magginetti, Allied ASID, Rm 240**

Photography: Kathryn MacDonald

After they were given the initial set of plans, they understood the "default fixtures...what could be changed and what was non-negotiable." When they were able to view the space, there were surprise changes to the floor plan. In addition, there were many delays in the construction, which impacted the installations in the rooms.

In going through this experience, Jana "learned how to work within these parameters" and her best advice to handling these types of challenges was "to expect things to change, ask a lot of questions, and most importantly...adapt and move on." She also advises other designers considering *pro bono* work, "it will cost more than you expect...so fund raise early on and don't be afraid to ask for donations from supporters and vendors." IP donations in these rooms were by Benjamin Moore, Flor, and Serena & Lily.

LEFT:

**Jana M. Magginetti, Allied ASID, Rm 234**

Photography: Kathryn MacDonald



ABOVE:

**Lisa Staprans, Allied ASID, Rm 343**  
Photography: Ratna J. Khilnani, Allied ASID

**LISA STAPRANS, ALLIED ASID, STAPRANS DESIGN**, describes the laundry room she designed as, "a place of retreat with calming colors and nice light coming in through the windows." She incorporated elements created by artisans, and used wallpaper to warm up the room and add texture. Lisa had previously been asked to help the original RMHS facility to reuse some existing furniture; however, that project was put on hold and she was later asked to be involved in the new building.

She approached the design by incorporating bright colors in the cubbies for the kids, so they would have a place to play and read. For the parents, she created a long countertop for folding and working, as well as a place to sit while waiting for the laundry. She used Zero VOC paint from C2 Paint.

Lisa wanted the materials to be warm and inviting. For the countertop, she selected a new design in bright white to enlarge the space visually.

The wallpaper is washable and brings the color of the leaves outside into the space. The cabinets emulate the bark of a tree, neutral yet earthy to coordinate with the flooring.

Challenges in the project included a tight deadline, and working in rain and mud during installations. On the other hand, she considers this experience to have been "one of the best projects I have ever worked on." Lisa shares that her second son was born early and was at the ICU at Stanford for a week. From that time, she understood the stress that families go through, and was grateful for the opportunity to give back to Stanford Hospital. "This was the perfect fit."

She advises other designers to "absolutely" get involved in *pro bono* work if they have the opportunity. "We need to bring beauty and soul to as many environments as we can. It's the circle of life and the ripple effect!" The IP donation in Lisa's space was from Cosentino USA.

RIGHT:

**Sindhu Peruri, Associate ASID, Rm 303**

Photography: Robert Whitworth

**SINDHU PERURI, ASSOCIATE ASID, PERURI**

**DESIGN COMPANY**, wanted to design a room that "provided a sense of being on a journey," yet giving the feeling that one had arrived home. She wanted the colors and mood of the room to evoke an atmosphere of being fresh and uplifted, yet calm and serene at the same time. The artist Willem Racké painted an abstract landscape behind the headboard, and the Roman shade fabric depicts elephants walking with their trunks up. The art was donated by NYC artist Pam Smilow, fun Giclee prints of whimsical animals.

As a mother of two, Sindhu was touched by a particular story of a father struggling to save his daughter's life, and the fact that RMHS played a pivotal role in keeping the family together. She wanted to help the families not only stay together during a time of crisis, but do so in a comfortable environment, surrounded by beauty. Being involved in the project also helped Sindhu herself feel grounded, and focus on what really matters in a troubled world.

She chose materials that would be long lasting yet attractive. Most fabrics used are either heavy-duty commercial grade or indoor-outdoor textiles. She leaned towards mid-century modern furniture pieces for their timeless and functional qualities, and added some fun elements to the mix.

The biggest challenge for her on the project was not having the luxury of time. The way she managed this was "by being extremely organized in my thought process and sticking to my vision right from the start." Her own good fortune motivated her to help those in need.

She encourages other designers to give back in some form, even if it's a smaller size project. She notes that giving back also makes the donor feel good. IP donations for Sindhu's space were from California Closets in San Jose, Da Vinci Marble, Flor, and Serena & Lily.



RIGHT:

**Jennifer Glynn, Student ASID and**

**Ashlin Mahood, Allied ASID, Rm 211**

Photography: Helynn Ospina

**JENNIFER GLYNN, STUDENT ASID, HEIRLOOM HOME INTERIORS and ASHLIN MAHOD, ALLIED ASID, ASH INTERIORS**, had a vision to “create a warm and restful retreat for families caring for seriously ill children.” The color palette was “inspired by nature, the fabrics were selected to be soft and welcoming, and the art colorful and whimsical.” The layout of the room was designed with purpose and comfort in mind.

Ashlin’s sister Cynthia Mahood Levin is a RMHS Board member, and encouraged the two to become involved in designing a room. They were grateful to be included in the “amazing experience.” They wanted to maximize the function of the room, combining a healing environment with one that was family friendly. Materials were chosen for durability, cleanability, functionality and softness.

They found it challenging to design a space “for health recovery while being family friendly.” They made choices to fit in with the medical needs of various families, and “were delighted to learn about the products that our vendors carry that are designed to meet the exceedingly high hygiene and durability requirements that were necessary for this project.”

The two designers found a “tremendous amount of personal satisfaction” gained by helping others. Creating a “private and restful space for families in need so that they can focus on what is most important...the health and well being of their child, is immensely gratifying.” IP donations were from Currey & Company.



All of these designers felt a sense of purpose and pride in giving back to the community. They also had to juggle the strict requirements of RMHS with their own inspirations, much of which came from either the natural surroundings, a larger world view, or evoking a sense of inner calmness or playfulness. They all experienced changes in plans, delays, and weather challenges common in any construction project, yet found great satisfaction in being involved. We appreciate all of the participants, and especially those from our own chapter, for giving their time and experience to such a worthy *pro bono* project. Thank you to our IP members, as well, who generously donated their time and products to each of these rooms.