

Hope Lodge News



Hope Lodge®

Fall 2025



AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY HOPE LODGE – KANSAS CITY

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Dear Hope Lodge Friends,

When someone walks through the doors of a Hope Lodge community, they find more than just a place to stay – they find comfort and community at a time when it matters most. One of those people is Penny, who shares her story below.

“Hearing the words, ‘you have cancer’ felt like a punch to my gut. My first thought was how I would tell my sons that I had been diagnosed with leukemia and that my best possible care was a clinical trial more than 700 miles away. I knew my family couldn’t afford the cost of long-term lodging, and the thought of being far from home without support was overwhelming.

A nurse told me about the Hope Lodge community – a place that provides free lodging to patients like me. I was skeptical at first . . . after all, how good could something free really be? Turns out it was a gift I could never have imagined. The Hope Lodge facility truly became my second home, providing me with over 450 nights of free lodging.

While my doctors cared for my body, the Hope Lodge community cared for my soul. I will always be grateful to the American Cancer Society and to every person who supports this program. You have given me more than time – you’ve given me hope. I now support the Hope Lodge program every year to help ensure others receive the same comfort and care I did.”

Penny’s story is one of many that we hear throughout the year, and it’s a powerful reminder that Hope Lodge communities across the country are more than just a place to stay. Thanks to you, the lights are on after a long day of treatment, the kitchens are open for preparing meals, and a warm and welcoming bed is there – providing guests some of the comforts of home. In addition, team members are on hand to offer support whenever it’s needed. These details may seem small, but together they help create a comfortable community people like Penny can rely on during their cancer journey.

Whether you’ve experienced this firsthand as a guest or you give because you believe no one should face cancer alone, please know that your support is vital. You help ensure that the more than 35,000 people who walk through the doors of a Hope Lodge facility each year not only find a place to stay, but also a community that surrounds them with care and hope.

Karol Iser – General Manager, Hope Lodge

Hope Lodge Helps EMPOWER People Facing Cancer

Since the first American Cancer Society Hope Lodge facility opened its doors 55 years ago, Hope Lodge communities across the country have provided free lodging and support to people with cancer and their caregivers traveling far from home for treatment. Now, Hope Lodge facilities across the country are extending their hospitality not only to guests staying there, but also to people facing cancer in the local communities through the new ACS EMPOWER (Engage, Move, Play, Optimize, Waken, Enrich, Resource) program. Tailored to local communities, the complimentary educational initiative provides holistic well-being, community connection, patient navigation, and emotional support for patients and caregivers. **Call your local Hope Lodge community or visit cancer.org/support-programs-and-services/acs-empower to learn more about the ACS EMPOWER program.**

Kansas City Celebrates Renovations, Renaming of Hope Lodge Facility



On hand for the ribbon cutting were Dave Benson (left), ACS executive vice president, North Region; Kelly Webster, senior program officer and general counsel, Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation; Karol Iser, Hope Lodge general manager; and Dr. Arif Kamal, ACS chief patient officer.

On September 25, 2025, the American Cancer Society (ACS) celebrated the grand reopening and renaming of the Hope Lodge community in Kansas City. The ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation Hope Lodge marked the culmination of a transformative \$7 million renovation aimed at improving access to care for people with cancer coming to Kansas City for treatment.

The event featured heartfelt remarks from ACS leaders and a moving testimony from Karol Iser, a cancer survivor and general manager of the Hope Lodge community, who shared how the Hope Lodge program provides comfort and community during guests' treatment journey.

Guests commemorated the facility unveiling by ringing bells, symbolic of the tradition many people facing cancer follow to mark the end of treatment. "Today, we are ringing the bell on the renovation of this life-changing facility," said Ashley Berndt, American Cancer Society director of development for Missouri and Kansas. "Thanks to our generous partners and community, we're removing barriers to care and offering guests a true home away from home."

Renovations to the 32,000-square-foot facility include eight new kitchens pods; a new dining and living area; administrative areas for staff, which include guest welcome and check-in areas and meeting rooms; new water heaters; a revamped movie room; a new meditation room; an updated gym; and updated guest rooms, which include new packaged terminal air conditioner units. The Kansas City community now boasts 42 private rooms, each with its own bath, and offers free transportation to nearby cancer treatment centers.

Since opening in 2000, the Kansas City facility has provided more than 438,000 nights of free lodging, saving guests an estimated \$26 million in lodging costs alone. With 31 Hope Lodge communities nationwide, the American Cancer Society continues to strive toward its vision of ending cancer as we know it, for everyone.

La Roche-Posay Becomes Official Skincare Partner of Hope Lodge

La Roche-Posay, a global leader in dermatological skincare, has been a valued partner of the American Cancer Society and the Hope Lodge program since 2021. Their support has helped provide over 7,000 nights of free lodging for people facing cancer and their caregivers traveling for treatment.

In 2025, La Roche-Posay expanded its commitment by becoming the Official Skincare Partner of the Hope Lodge program. This national partnership reflects the brand's dedication to supporting people with cancer and their caregivers during a deeply challenging time.

This year alone, La Roche-Posay will help fund over 5,000 nights of free lodging for patients and caregivers, easing the financial burden of care and offering relief to families seeking treatment away from home. In addition, each guest room will now include a skincare kit.

"This collaboration reflects our mission to support patients throughout their cancer journey," said Rachelle Mladjenovic, general manager of La Roche-Posay USA. "We're honored to partner with the American Cancer Society to offer practical care and comfort when it's needed most."

"The American Cancer Society is committed to removing the emotional, physical, and financial burdens that many people with cancer must face when they travel away from home for treatment," said Tamara Fernandez, vice president, American Cancer Society Hope Lodge. "Thanks to the generosity of La Roche-Posay, Hope Lodge guests can focus on what's most important – healing."

Thank you for your support of the American Cancer Society Hope Lodge program.



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