

## Heat's Allen supports diabetes research

BY MICAELA HOOD  
Staff writer

Miami Heat guard Ray Allen and his wife, Shannon, love living in South Florida, especially during the winter months.

"Just being able to get a cabana at the W Hotel and sit back with my family during the middle of the season is wonderful," the two-time NBA champion said.

The couple, who have been married since 2008, also hang out in Key Biscayne, where they enjoy some private time with their children. "When we first moved here we lived at The Ritz-Carlton, and sometimes we'll just go for the weekend and hang out by the pool," Shannon said.

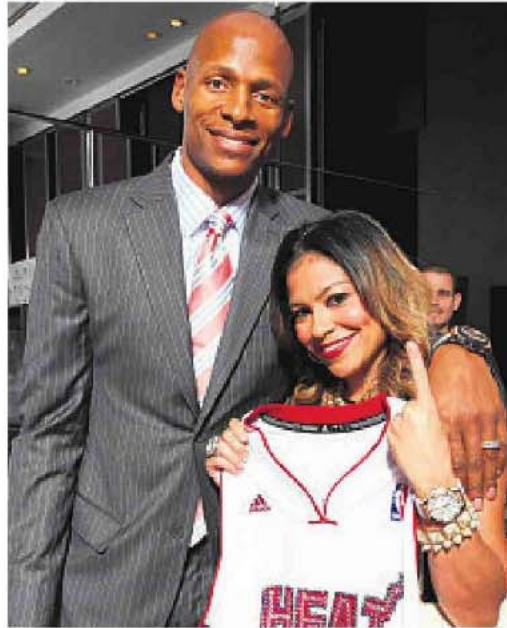
We caught up with Allen and his wife at the Hublot store inside the Bal Harbour Shops, where the "He Got Game" actor celebrated the unveiling of three watches he co-designed with the Swiss luxury watch company. On Monday, they will be auctioned at the Ray Allen Golf Classic and Ray of Hope Luncheon, at La Gorce Country Club in Miami Beach.

All proceeds will go to the Diabetes Research Institute Foundation and JDRF. The couple became advocates for diabetes after their son Walker, now 7, was diagnosed with Type 1 when he was 17 months old.

This past summer, Allen and his son testified in front of Congress for diabetes research and funding. "For [Walker] to be ... in front of Congress to support children all over the world, it was, I think, such an incredible and empowering moment for him," Shannon Allen said of their visit to Washington, D.C.

But the Heat champ believes you don't have to be a superstar athlete to make a difference.

"Often we look around and say, 'How come government doesn't do this?' or 'How



HUBLOT/COURTESY PHOTOS

Ray and Shannon Allen became advocates for diabetes research after their son, Walker, was diagnosed with Type 1.



Watches Allen co-designed will be auctioned to support diabetes research.

come President Obama doesn't do this?" But if we raise our voices, we can create some type of steamroll to get people [in political office] to understand."

Their experience with diabetes, and how it has affected Walker, has taught the family

a valuable lesson: Always seek a second medical opinion, especially if you're a parent. "When Walker was first diagnosed, the doctor discharged him from the hospital, they thought he just had the flu," Shannon Allen said.

Added her husband: "Too often [people] take advice of the doctor or a nurse. We think that they're God, and that's the end-all-be-all. But there's nothing wrong with getting a second opinion and there's nothing wrong with making sure a doctor looks twice. It could save your child's life."

*The golf tournament takes place 10 a.m. Monday, with the luncheon at 11 a.m., at La Gorce Country Club, 5685 Alton Road, Miami Beach. Tickets start at \$1,000 for the luncheon and \$2,500 for the tournament. Info: [Diabetesresearch.org/Ray-Allen-Golf-Classic](http://Diabetesresearch.org/Ray-Allen-Golf-Classic)*

