

President's Message

CELEBRATION!

Our Fall edition of the Gianna House newsletter is dedicated to Sister Diane Masson and her inspirational vision and the sacrifices that she and many others made to open the Gianna House pregnancy and parenting residence for young pregnant teens this year. This is truly a celebratory time as we transitioned in September from a temporary to a permanent license and we are grateful to all of those who have helped to make Gianna House a reality. We are excited about the positive changes that State licensing has enabled and how the focus is now on our facility's operating effectiveness and support of the State of Michigan's first licensed residence for young teens. Our hearts and our hands are doing God's work.

Gianna House has fully transitioned from a residence-in-waiting to an active and fully functioning and caring home for pregnant teens and their infants. Already, the inquiries, referrals from other similar programs, and media outreach efforts are filling our residential beds and enabling Gianna House to become a referral asset within the tri-county region.

We are happy to report that we have retained our 501(c)3 status as a tax exempt organization. Without the tax-deductible generosity of our caring donors and benefactors, this could never have been possible. Virtually all the revenues Gianna House relies on to fund operations and programs come from our many generous donors, other non-profit organizations, church groups, and grants. In addition, Gianna House continues to receive in-kind donations of baby and similar supplies and services from businesses and individuals. Such donations, in amounts both big and small, arrive at Gianna House continuously. The tireless support of our community volunteers helps to complete the work necessary to keep the programs and building running smoothly.

There are a number of exciting and positive changes occurring as we restructure the Board to be focused on ways in which we can transparently manage how donor funds are being used and to illustrate the enduring impact that Gianna House is making in the lives of its residents as they become contributing members of our communities. I would like to share several with you:



Mary Alice Simpson, President

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Board of Directors

Mary Alice Simpson, MS, RN

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Vice President

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Thomas Masson

Treasurer

Members

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Rev. Stanley Pachla

Denise Brooks-Williams

Mary Ann Ceravolo

Advisor

Hon. Dan O'Brien

Jennifer Brubaker

Executive Director

Presidents Message Continued

- ◆ We sincerely appreciate the dedicated efforts of those Board members who have served in the essential roles from 2011 through 2019 that helped Gianna House to realize the dream of state licensure and to be able to open its doors as a pregnancy and parenting residence. I want to especially acknowledge past President, Nancy Hauff, PhD., RN, who stepped down from the Board to return to her academic pursuits and other health and wellness efforts to help the underserved. Her efforts and those of its many past board members stayed laser focused to realize Sr. Diane's vision. The Honorable Dan O'Brien has relinquished his board seat to assist the board as an Advisor after seven dedicated years as a member and officer. Diane Trombley, RN left the board once she reached her goal of helping to achieve state licensure status.
- ◆ I am honored and humbled to have been elected to replace Nancy Hauff as Board President and promise to fulfill my responsibilities with dedication, honesty, and with God's watchful oversight of our board's planning and completion of tasks at hand in His name. Aiding in Board Officer roles are: Cynthia Greening, Vice President; Tom Masson, Treasurer; and Eric Backman, Secretary.
- ◆ We have a wonderful board of enthusiastic, team oriented and talented-beyond-measure professionals and community leaders. Regulatory documents and roles and responsibilities are being updated to reflect our growing organization. As the organization's needs change, we seek new board members who have expertise in areas of Accounting, Marketing, and Fund Raising. Our two newest Board members are Denise Brooks-Williams, Henry Ford Health System, Sr. VP and CEO of the North Market and resident of Detroit, and Mary Ann Ceravolo, Esq., and resident of Grosse Pointe.
- ◆ The Board of Directors has transitioned its focus from the licensing and construction requirement successes to one of operational support of the amazing staff under the direction of Jennifer Brubaker, its Executive Director who leads both the Residential and Community Outreach programs. Along with her professional staff and diversified community volunteers, Gianna House is at last putting all the programs and state-approved policies and procedures to the test on a 24-hour basis, 7 days a week. As teens are approved to enter the residential program, they are entering into a safe and nurturing home environment, many of them for the first time feeling secure and loved. The staff are adjusting to efficiently and effectively manage teen residents and an ever-expanding Community Outreach program which has served greater than 8,000 mothers and children in our tri-county communities.



- ◆ We are developing a digital strategy that will create a more efficient and secure information management environment. While we work on our digital strategy that includes our website and brochure enhancements and new secure donor application, we will continue to depend on the comprehensive mailing list of donors' and friends of Gianna House to mail out a final newsletter. Thanks to Deborah Pulis, Events & Contributions Coordinator, who has dedicated her talents and organizational efforts to administer the newsletter development and publishing efforts for the past 4 years, we are able to reach a wider reaching audience each year. We are requesting ***preferred and current email addresses*** so that our growth news and upcoming events reach out as broadly as possible. The goal is to establish awareness of the communication changes that will come and to actively gather current email addresses. Please visit www.giannahouse.org and click on **UPDATED CONTACT INFORMATION** on the homepage so we can begin gathering this information but will also continue to provide to those who do not use email or the internet the option of a mailing address to which donors can still send checks if they wish.
- ◆ Based on security information provided by Cybersecurity professionals and our Gianna House banking partner, PNC, our new donor system will save time and provide a sense of confidence in GH's ability to protect our donor's identity and bank accounts. Over time, we will be transitioning donors to use our website donor application, ***Payeezy***, which will be more secure for the generosity of one-time and recurring donors than sending checks in the mail or credit card information in the US postal system. This application provides an encrypted channel between your bank and the GH account with PNC. No one ever sees a donor's bank account information or Gianna House's. We will transition to this service over the year, but we will also continue to provide to those who do not use email or the internet the option of a mailing address to which donors can still send checks if they wish. The ***Payeezy*** application is housed on the Gianna House website at www.giannahouse.org Check it out!
- ◆ Our staff and residents have a new wired and wireless network, enhanced network capacity, and new computers to help them step into the contemporary world of computing. We are most grateful to the kind donation of the network infrastructure and funds to purchase new computers.



Monitor's Office

Resident Study Area



If You Could Be There...Would You?

Sister Diane Masson once shared this poignant request that I repeat now in her memory:

IF YOU COULD BE THERE.....WOULD YOU?

If you could be there to open the door of residency in a loving and caring environment to a nervous, pregnant adolescent, under the age of 18 years, and invite her into a personal relationship with Jesus and the experience of a sound spiritual life, **would you?**

If you could be there to form a personal relationship with her, to share her joys and sorrows, to applaud her decision to choose life for her baby, and to encourage her to seek a better life for herself and her child, **would you?**

If you could be there to educate and encourage her regarding her pregnancy, birthing, childcare, parenting, nutrition and life skills; to provide for her physical, psychological, emotional, medical, educational, social and recreational needs and to celebrate the birth of her baby, **would you?**

If you could be there to journey with her through exit planning, resume writing, job training, Gianna House graduation, aftercare services and referrals, **would you?**

NOW YOU CAN BE THERE...BUT WILL YOU? BY JOINING THE GIANNA HOUSE FAMILY OF DONORS YOU CAN AND WILL BE THERE AS WE PROVIDE ALL OF THESE SERVICES TO OUR RESIDENTS!

Over this past summer, the Board calculated the fixed expenses to support the Gianna House operations and programs are significant, estimated at approximately \$400,000- \$450,000 per year.

Through our fund raising events, appeals and campaigns, you have most generously and charitably opened your hearts to support its every need. Thank you and may God continue to bless you and those you hold most dear.

This Fall newsletter is full of the encouraging details and news of the growth of our programs and our people. Step inside these pages that illustrate how your help matters.

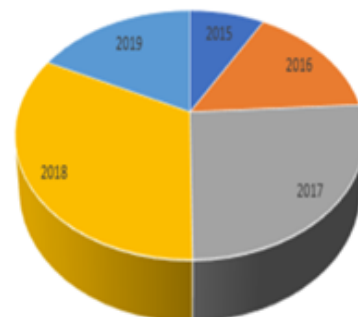
The best is yet to come!

Mary Alice Simpson, MS, RN

Board President

	\$ Contributions	Donors
2015	\$100,420	1429
2016	\$192,723	836
2017	\$314,051	1142
2018	\$396,474	1163
2019	\$215,465	610
	\$1,219,133	5180

Total Contributions and Gifts 2015- 2019 YTD



2015 2016 2017 2018 2019

Gianna House: on the rise!

Upon receiving our license and holding our grand opening on May 3, 2019, Gianna House strategized on a recruitment plan to get our mom and baby suites occupied. The feat appeared to be challenging at first as we watched our doors function as a revolving door. No doubt, this brought frustration as we worked on getting the tweaks out and revamping. The days were long, the halls seemed lifeless and the sound of silence was great but over the next few months we obtained not one, not two but three residents. Suddenly, there were not enough hours in the day to get everything done. The staff worked tirelessly scheduling and transporting residents to appointments, providing nutritious meals, enrolling residents in school but most of all building relationships that we hope will last a lifetime.



At the end of summer one of our residents gave birth to Gianna House's first infant resident. He simultaneously made his entrance and history as the first male to sleep in Gianna House overnight. He and mom are healthy and doing great as they learn each other's sleep schedule. As for us? ***We are great! We have expanded our family.***

Another resident was named "Resident of the Month" for being an excellent student, resident and going above and beyond Gianna House expectations despite being 8 months pregnant. She has defied the odds by completing daily chores, staying up late to study, waking up early for school and earning all A's and B's since she's been enrolled. We are proud to witness the positive energy she brings to Gianna House.

In addition to Gianna House filling its rooms with teenagers and the cries of a newborn baby we decided to add a flare by engaging them in a Halloween door decoration contest. Each resident decorated their door. The finished product was put on our Facebook page for our followers to vote. The winner was announced October 5, 2019.

And last but certainly not least, we are happy to announce Gianna House's collaboration between its Community Outreach and Residential program by hosting our first Mommy & Me sleepover. This invite only event was presented to community outreach moms and their pre-teen daughters between the ages of 9-13 years of age. Our residents will also participate and serve as mentors as we strive to help strengthen the bond between moms and daughters, assist the daughters with coping with hormonal changes, transitioning from middle to high school, identity crisis, bullying and much more.



Winner– Door Decorating Contest



Alive & Well

Gianna House's Outreach Program continues to grow and to provide wonderful learning experiences for mothers. During the first 9 months of 2019, 107 different mothers were served by Gianna House and class attendance totaled 786. Let's take a peek at some of the classes offerings.

In *"Mommy and Me": Sing and Play*, we find a circle of moms sitting on the floor with their little ones tucked close to them. They sing, do rhymes, finger plays and have fun enjoying music and rhythm together.

In *"Prenatal and Infant Care"* insight on the stages of pregnancy and fetal development is offered by a hospital birthing-center nurse, while a NICU nurse discusses newborn care.

Child development and expectations; child bonding; normal range of sleep, rest, activity and crying patterns; as well as communication skills and discipline are discussed during an 8-week series on "Parenting" presented by an Ascension–St. John Providence Hospital instructor.



Mommy and Me Class

"Oral Care" class gives expectant mothers information on conditions that may affect their oral cavity during pregnancy, and on how to care for the newborn's mouth and prevent early decay. This is taught by senior dental hygiene students from Baker College.

An engaging discussion takes place in the *"Exploring Breastfeeding"* class in which questions on all aspects of breastfeeding are answered by health department specialists, and mothers learn of federal law requiring employers to allow time and a private space for breastfeeding or pumping breast milk.

"Toilet training" is the topic of a class where a behavioral therapist shares great tips on how to know when a little one is ready to begin training and how to make this a fun experience for the child.

"Alternatives to Anger" and *"Mindfulness"* classes offered by a MSU Extension Behavioral Health Speaker give important insights on emotional well-being.

"Safe Sleep", *"Car Seat Safety"* and *"Lead Poisoning"* classes presented by Macomb County Health Department give mothers important information needed to keep their little ones safe.

"Spiritual Journey" class explores the heart of scripture themes and growth in relationship with God.

In a series *"The Self Reflection/Creative Writing"* class encourages poetry written based on personal life experiences and invites clients to reflect on their life experiences and to express their thoughts in writing.

Alive & Well Continued

Sessions by a Lakeshore Legal Aid lawyer impart important insights on issues which many Gianna House mothers face such as: custody, domestic violence, and landlord-tenant problems. After each *“Legal Aid”* session, free 30-minute private consultations are offered.

“Enrichment classes”, “Crocheting”, “Scrapbooking”, “Yoga” and *“Sewing”* offer refreshing options. *“Money Management”* classes discuss how to create and stick to a basic budget, ways to decrease expenses and increase income, banking basics, debt reduction, and improving credit and savings.

In response to requests for information on *“Starting a Business”*, classes on this topic are presented by the Small Business Association and by SCORE.

While learning, mothers who come to class are earning *“Baby Bucks”* to purchase needed baby items such as diapers, wipes, infant clothing, and mom and baby toiletries.

Classes, however, offer much more than knowledge and baby bucks. Time and time again, mothers say they look forward to attending Gianna House classes because this affords an opportunity to meet and share with other mothers; a place to give voice to what they are experiencing; and a time for themselves – a break in their busy schedule.

This fall Gianna House is creating a special place for classes to be held - a quiet area, away from the noise and bustle of first floor where classes are currently held. Partners have painted the walls and ceiling of the large room on the lower level and have created a photo display of our moms and their little ones. The rest room on that level has new plumbing and fresh paint. New comfortable chairs and a portable wall were purchased through donations of alums of Dominican High’s class of 1979.

How blessed we are by the many class facilitators who freely share their time and knowledge, by the dedicated Partners who come weekly to offer childcare for mothers needing someone to tend their little ones during class, and by the numerous individuals, groups, and parishes who donate countless baby items for the baby store.

*Gianna House’s Outreach Program
ALIVE and WELL indeed!*



"Love is the most beautiful sentiment the Lord has put into the souls of men and women."

-St. Gianna

Save The Dates

Saturday, February 1, 2020



Friday August 14, 2020

Sr Diane Masson Memorial golf outing

WE ARE EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE THAT WE ARE MIGRATING OUR NEWSLETTER TO A DIGITAL FORMAT IN 2020. PLEASE BE SURE PROVIDE YOUR PREFERRED EMAIL ADDRESS(ES) TO THE FOLLOWING WEB LINK AT WWW.GIANNAHOUSE.ORG

Our web site will soon be a one-stop repository for our readers to be able to go back to older newsletters and GH information, instead of trying to find an old paper copy to see photos and read stories about our progress.

Our Updated Mission & Vision Statement

MISSION

The goal of Gianna House is to provide a safe residence for pregnant teens and their newborn infants while providing spiritual, educational, and parenting support and resources to underserved women in our programs.



To improve the lives of teen moms and their babies by providing them with the opportunity to live in a safe and loving environment that provides educational, life skills, and career planning that positively impacts the youth, their child and the community.

Answered Prayers

This past spring, as residents began residing at Gianna House, our House Mother, Eugenia Hill realized that our mini van was no longer equipped nor reliable in transporting residents and their unborn children safely to their destinations. Gina turned her need to Jesus and her prayers were answered.

In late May, a \$10,000 donation from a Dominican High '79 alum, Laurie Comrie, in honor of her former religion teacher, Sr. Joan Weitz, was delivered to Sr. Theresa Mayrand. At the same time, Bill and Jenny Chope donated \$7,000. With these two very generous and unexpected donations, we were able to purchase a Ford Transit. Crest Ford donated unlimited service on the vehicle.



We picked up the functional, comfortable and safe Ford Transit on June 17th. The Transit has traveled many miles since taking mommas and baby to and from doctor appointments.

As you can see, Gianna House is on the rise as it continues to make moves that will enrich the lives of parenting and pregnant moms. If you would like to be a blessing to this organization, let our Creator guide your heart in giving this holiday season. We are always in need of the following items.

- ◆ Diapers (newborn, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
- ◆ Wipes
- ◆ Clothing 0-3T
- ◆ Baby floor mat gyms
- ◆ Baby tummy time gyms
- ◆ Car seats/Strollers
- ◆ Nursing Pads
- ◆ Amazon Gift Cards
- ◆ Kroger Gift Cards
- ◆ Target Gift Cards
- ◆ Teething Toys
- ◆ PJ's For Teem moms (all sizes)
- ◆ Breast Pumps
- ◆ Woman Toiletries
- ◆ Baby Toiletries
- ◆ Gift cards to recreational activities (zoo, museums, movies, art gallery, etc)
- ◆ Gift cards for teen girls for clothing, shoes, etc
- ◆ Bottles and pacifiers

For additional information you may always reach out to Executive Director, Jennifer Brubaker at jbrubaker@giannahouse.org

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MISSION

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Gianna House is a 501(c)(3) Michigan non-profit organization. We welcome any donation of time talent and/or treasure.



A commitment to Our Donors

Gianna House takes seriously its responsibilities to donors and the ethical use of donor dollars. Our fundraising budgets are carefully considered each year through our budgeting process and are used in a thoughtful way and practical manner in order to have the most impact on our programs. We consider our donors to be our partners and work to maintain long-standing relationships with each. Our goal is to match your wishes for impacting mothers, children and our communities with appropriate services and programs. We are all about families at Gianna House. We welcome all donors and partners as part of that family.

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info@giannahouse.org