

President's Message

We've all read some version of the Starfish story about the young boy who was observed throwing as many beached starfish back into the ocean as he could and being told that saving those few could hardly make a difference – but it sure made a difference to those he saved.



Like that boy, we at Gianna House are striving to **save lives "two at a time"**, mother and child, and you have made that possible through your backing. It is said that when someone cries out to God, ours are the hands and feet God uses to answer those prayers. What an honor and privilege!

This letter to you, our friends, is brimming with all we are achieving this year through some **creative new concepts** despite the challenges the pandemic has presented. It's important to us that you know we are being good stewards of your giving and what we are able to accomplish as a result. Inside, you will read about our mission expansion to serve young mothers up to age 25, our extension to online learning for mothers registered in our Outreach Program, our very successful golf fundraiser, and new program development to give vision and possibilities to those whose life experiences to date have been woefully limited.

As grant monies are diverted, rightly, to life-saving causes resulting from COVID-19, we have also looked at **creative ways** to continue to fund Gianna House for future moms and babies. We share them here for your reflection on what ideas might work for you and your family:

Family Christmas Gift: Many people struggle with Christmas gift ideas. We are so very blessed and our needs are few. I witnessed one family gathering where people just walked around just handing out gift cards. Instead, ask your family members to pool the money they were going to spend on gifts and make **a Family Christmas Gift** to Gianna House.

In Memoriam: Use your gift to Gianna House **in memory of a lost loved one**. We would love to share your gift and their name in our next newsletter and on our website.

In Gratitude: Have you and your family been blessed this year – with good health, a salary raise, answers to prayer, a new addition? Consider a **gratitude gift**.

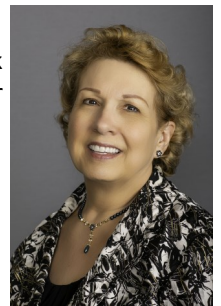
Legacy Giving: Prayerfully consider making arrangements to continue to support Gianna House in your **estate planning or legacy giving** arrangements. Wills, trusts, and insurance are a few of the methods people use.

Get a new deduction. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act allows taxpayers taking the standard deduction to claim up to \$300 in charitable deductions.

Use your IRA. If you are 70½ or older, you're eligible for a great tax break. You can give directly from a traditional IRA to a 501(c)(3) charity without having to declare that amount as taxable income, as you would a regular IRA withdrawal.

It's never easy or comfortable talking about money, but it is a necessary task as we continue to carry out our mission to support those who choose life for their unborn children.

President, Gianna House Board of Directors



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COVID 19 Pandemic

When COVID-19 hit, struggles with job loss and worry about obtaining vital necessities were real and far-reaching. Gianna House had to find creative ways to continue to provide for underserved women during this unprecedented time.

Although we could not accept new residents during the first, uncertain months of the pandemic, we celebrated the August birth of our resident's beautiful, healthy son. But how could we continue our class-based Outreach Program?

In looking for ways to continue to help while our center was quarantining, Outreach Program Director Sr. Theresa Mayrand developed online learning opportunities for community mothers to be able to continue to attend our classes. In our learning environment, mothers who take classes receive "baby bucks" they can use to purchase items from our closets filled with diapers, wipes, clothing, etc. – all donated to Gianna House throughout the year.



Sr. Theresa Mayrand– Community Outreach Director

Starting in May, modified classes were led virtually by our volunteer facilitators. As each class is completed, mothers email what they need for their babies and then pick up their items each Monday from the Gianna House porch. Thus, no COVID testing or social distancing is required and the much needed Outreach Program continues.

Carmen, a Macomb County mom, shares: "I found GH very soon after COVID hit my community. I was newly pregnant and very nervous for resources. I had recently lost my stable job and money has been very tight with the conditions of the world shutdown. I was home, which made it very easy to conduct classes online and to earn diapers and other baby supplies for my son. I'm very happy GH is here to help women and families like me. They are a true blessing."

A Wayne County mom, shares: "My name is Myleka and I am a single mom to five beautiful children ages two to 12. Gianna House has been a real blessing to moms like myself during COVID-19 by offering classes to help further educate us about parenting. Not only did Gianna House bless us mentally but they have also helped by blessing us with the necessities that we need for our little ones. I have been blessed with diapers, wipes, pull ups, clothing and toiletries from Gianna House during this pandemic and it has helped me tremendously. Being able to reach out for help at a time like this and receive it was a real blessing. I would like to thank Gianna House and all of their sponsors for helping me and my family. Thank you for thinking about moms and families like mine during this pandemic!"

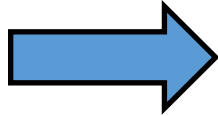
Finding teachers with the capability to conduct online classes was a bit challenging, but networking with established groups such as CARE of Southeast Michigan, Ascension Health System's Southeast Michigan Community Health, and Community Housing Network, Inc., has been a great help. And it works both ways – they provide great classes and we refer moms to their programs.

Neefesha Marion, LLMSW, of Ascension Infant Mortality Program's Jubilee Parenting Support group, states: "As a part of our national mission at Ascension, our goal is to serve the most vulnerable populations. We have partnered with community organizations such as Gianna House. It has been a great experience working with Gianna House providing women and families parenting education."

CARE's Early Learning & Parent Education Director, Tonia Pauli, comments: "At CARE, we appreciate working together for the greater good. We recognize and thank Gianna House for their unwavering support of the moms in our community. Through our state's COVID-19 closures, Gianna House has collaborated with us to continue to provide workshops and education."

Residential Program

Meet Elizabeth!



My name is Elizabeth Barton and I recently accepted the role of Program Intern. Having completed my undergrad at Oakland University in social work, I am continuing my education at Madonna University for a master's level social work degree. I enjoy time with family, crocheting and traveling. My life's motto is *'This too shall pass'* and I share this with our young residents to demonstrate that whatever situation we find ourselves currently in, through hard work and dedication we all have the potential to change it. We strive to empower our moms to make good choices with the understanding that their current situation is not permanent and does *not* define who they are.

As Program Intern, it is my job to develop programs that provide a productive and supportive experience at Gianna House; activities that focus on interpersonal life skills, hands-on undertakings, parenting classes, and general life skills development. Topics range from coping mechanisms and crafts that promote critical thinking and problem solving, to how to properly feed and diaper your baby. We understand the need to support our moms in their evolution from teenhood to motherhood and are implementing activities to create as smooth a transition as possible.

Part of our program prepares them for independent living. We are developing a cookbook with easy to follow recipes and minimal ingredients for beginners to encourage residents to enjoy and embrace the skill of healthy meal prep. We are also working with them on earning money and how to budget through our Baby Bucks program. Residents are paid in Baby Bucks for tasks such as passing a clean room check, completing chores, and exceeding expectations. They receive a budget log for their Baby Bucks to track deposits as well as purchases from our baby closet, similar to what they will one day soon need to do with a checkbook.

We have some wonderful volunteers supporting our programs. One such volunteer is a *Doula* - a woman who provides guidance and support with creating a birthing plan, teaching birthing positions, helping with breast feeding, etc. We have another volunteer who is certified to teach first aid and CPR and leads classes for both staff and residents. These are critical skillsets for new moms and we are excited to have the opportunity to provide them.

Next on my horizon is to expand our programs that support a healthy lifestyle, promote mental health wellness, and give residents an opportunity to give back. We will be partnering with other nonprofit organizations at which our residents can volunteer. Serving others will empower and encourage them to be change agents - for themselves and for their community.

Have Patience. God Isn't finished yet.

Philippians 1:6

Making Room for More Moms

Soon, when you drive by Gianna House, you may see contractor trucks and hear saws and hammers while we work on two important projects that will make major improvements for our residents while increasing the number of mothers and babies to whom we can provide a safe home.

The first project will be to add a new heating and air conditioning system for the entire second floor, which is mainly comprised of baby/mother rooms and staff offices, and will also provide desperately needed relief to our aging boiler heat system. The new system will ensure our facility is warm during the cold winter months and cool in the summer. The new, much more efficient system will also significantly improve ventilation in the building, ensuring that indoor air quality is at its best.

A concurrent project will convert the aging bathroom in the North Wing into two bathrooms, each with showers and raised baby baths to allow mothers to stand and safely bathe their babies. This renovation will bring Gianna House into compliance under State of Michigan requirements for the Americans with Disabilities Act while creating a much more dynamic use of the space.

These two projects are absolutely necessary to be compliant and to increase the number of pregnant youth we can serve but, unfortunately, they won't be cheap. Initial estimates are in the range of \$100,000 for both and we will be conducting a Capital Fundraising Campaign to finance these sorely needed upgrades. We already received one generous donation.

If you feel that this campaign is somewhere you can make your mark and give a gift that will be forever meaningful, we would be pleased to answer your questions and discuss your ideas. If God has financially blessed you and you would like to fund the project in its entirety, we would be honored to name the wing after you or a loved one you wish to honor. Please contact Board President, Cynthia Greening at 586-549-5879 or cynthiagreening1@yahoo.com and she will be happy to answer your questions. You may also use our new **TEXT TO GIVE** feature by simply texting **capital** to **586-400-2446**.

TEXT TO GIVE

Our new online platform allows **supporters** to text a donation right from their phone or tablet - anytime, anywhere. Register your payment method just once. Once your payment method is set up you may set your donation frequency to **once, weekly** or **monthly**.

Simply Text **Gianna** to **586-400-2446**. Saving this number in your phone will allow you to donate easily again as desired.



Now serving young moms ages 13 to 25!

During our first 18 months as a residential home, Gianna House has provided care and shelter to 15 teenage girls, three of whom gave birth while in residence to two boys and a girl. What a blessing to serve these young families!

Our experience to date has made it clear that the need for a residence for pregnant youths is broader than our original focus of 13-17 year olds. The majority of calls received have been from young women 17-25 in age who are pregnant or have recently given birth. Our mission is to provide a safe residence to young mothers while providing spiritual, educational, and parenting support and resources to underserved women. Gianna House is dedicated to helping young mothers who have chosen life for their children.

We are excited to announce that we have expanded our mission to include young women 13-25 years of age who are pregnant or who have recently given birth (and need just as much support, guidance and love as those who are pregnant). We have open rooms and we want to fill them with those most in need.

Gianna House works with each mother to provide an individual service plan that is specifically designed upon arrival by our amazing team. The plan incorporates the young mother's goals during her stay at Gianna House, including educational, career, and life goals for herself and her child. We will help her meet those goals while providing a private room, a safe and nurturing environment, and educational opportunities such as parenting and independent living classes and experiential learning.

One of the most important outcomes of this level of care is that our young women start to believe in themselves and feel empowered to be the best possible mothers. Further, they build a positive and strong self-image that they can use to reach their personal and parenting goals.

If you know a young mother who is in need of housing and/or resources please refer them directly to me at jbrubaker@giannahouse.org or they may call 586-315-2583.

Thank you all so much for your love and support! God Bless



Jennifer Brubaker, Executive Director



"The littlest feet make the biggest footprints in our hearts"



Jennifer Brubaker, Executive Director

Gianna House 7th Annual Sr. Diane Memorial Golf Outing



Resident enjoying the day at

SEA Life Michigan Aquarium

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

- St. Gianna Beretta Molla



Baby Boy Born 9/4/2020

Gianna House 7th Annual Sr. Diane Memorial Golf

A big round of applause to ALL who supported this year's golf event, which was held on August 14 at Greystone Golf Club. The golfers had wonderful weather, a scenic and challenging golf course, and an outstanding dinner of steak filet and chicken. Judging from the comments at the end of the day and our survey, it was a huge success! This is one of our most important fundraisers and we raised over \$28,000 primarily due to the generous donations from businesses, churches, and individuals. These funds will continue to support our pregnant teens and their babies through the good works of Gianna House.



Special Thanks to all who sold and purchased our raffle tickets for our cash prize drawing. In addition, there were many opportunities to win raffle basket prizes. Ten items were included in our silent auction; a Mayan Riviera vacation for one week, 50" television, 3 hour sailboat cruise on Lake St. Clair, a Taste of Italy Food Basket, Greystone golf package, and plenty of wine packages to name a few.



Congratulations to our first place winners (*pictured*)

Jon Grebe, Jim Roemer, Bill Smith, and Dennis Wedell

We look forward to welcoming our winners back next year as our reigning course champions and extend an invitation to all our golfers to mark their calendars for next year's event – Monday, **AUGUST 23, 2021**

Congratulations to our Contest Hole Winners:

Closest to the Pin for Men: Drew Spooner
Closest to the Pin for Women: Mary Cafferty

Longest Drive for Men: Ryan Webb
Longest Drive for Women: Christine Potvin

Straightest Drive: Landon Vick



THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SPONSORS AND DONORS

Recognition and thanks to Bill Chope - CREST FORD of Center Line for offering a one year lease of a Ford Edge for our **HOLE IN ONE CONTEST**. Although there was no winner this year, perhaps we will have one next year in 2021!

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Jim Odell

Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church

Tom Pulliam

St. Ambrose Catholic Church

St. Clare of Montefalco Catholic Church

St. Vincent Ferrer Church

The Wujek Calcaterra Family

Our many volunteers and friends

thank
you!

When Ordinary People do Extraordinary Things

When a generous family heard of the struggles of one of the mothers who participate in our Community Outreach Program, they jumped in offering to *adopt* our mother's family and help in any way they could.

Beverly is a single mother who has always worked hard to provide for her children. Her factory job caused a serious hand injury. When physical therapy didn't help, surgery was deemed necessary. Her employer offered to cover the cost of the surgery, but weeks turned into months and the surgery has yet to be scheduled. Despite the wrist pain and hand brace, she found a hotel job – but when the pandemic hit, she was laid off. Recently they started calling back employees, but with several children who all have to school online, she has to remain at home to assist.

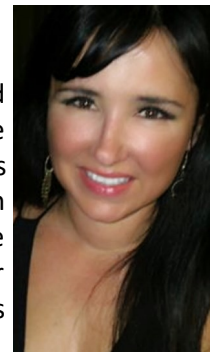
Enter the generous family who offered to help Beverly with rent, car repairs, and insurance. She had just finished paying off her 2009 used car but was unable to afford needed repairs and insurance. Our anonymous angels paid the nearly \$2,000 repair bill and car insurance, as well as offering help with rent!



Maria Van Dyke and Cherish Fields

The Board of Directors enthusiastically welcomes new Board Members Maria Van Dyke and Cherish Fields! Both of these wonderful women bring fresh ideas, diverse experience, and community networking to Gianna House.

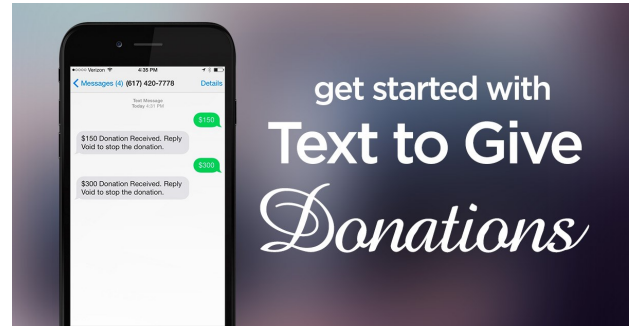
Maria Van Dyke founded a Spanish Immersion Montessori preschool operating in Clawson and recently expanded to a second center in Midtown Detroit. In addition to learning Spanish, the children practice early childhood educational concepts through song, movement and play. Maria is inspirational, focused, goal driven, and a successful businesswoman, and we were thrilled when she accepted our invitation to join the Board. She is active in other community service organizations including Team Rubicon (serving areas hit by natural disaster) and Habitat for Humanity. She also volunteers in a small poverty-stricken community in Mexico. Maria enjoys roller derby, salsa dancing and travel.



Cherish Thomas Fields, founder of *Cherish Our Youth*, understands all too well the struggles of the population we serve at Gianna House. Cherish was in the foster care system from the age of 1 to 17 at which time she entered the University of Michigan, earning a bachelor's degree in sociology and a master's in social work. Because of all she endured as a child, she became a social worker and child welfare advocate. Cherish is passionately dedicated to changing the child welfare system and works tirelessly to help youth in foster care. The name of her Christian-based ministry, *Cherish Our Youth*, is intended to help kids feel valued and to learn how to cherish themselves, and is a call to action for society to cherish this next generation. Cherish feels for youth who have lost hope and strives to build them back up. She is married, a mother of a toddler girl, and winner of the Foster Alumni and Social Worker Awards. We feel very blessed to have her join our leadership team.

A CONVENIENT WAY TO SUPPORT GIANNA HOUSE

Simply Text **Gianna** to **586-400-2446**. Save this number in your phone and give to Gianna House anytime you feel the need.



Gianna House is participating in the Kroger Community Rewards Program and we invite you to choose Gianna House as your charity. It works through your Kroger Plus Card purchases. If you don't have a Kroger Plus Card, stop in at any Kroger customer service counter and ask for one.

If you have a Kroger Plus Card, simply go online at <http://krogercommunityrewards.com>. If you don't already have a Kroger Plus Online Account, select CREATE AN ACCOUNT. Enter all relevant data for your account.

Once you have a Kroger Plus Online Account, select SIGN IN and enter your sign-in ID and Password. Then select ENROLL NOW. Enter your organization number **AN626** for Gianna House and select SEARCH. Next select Gianna House and select ENROLL. That's all there is to it. If you are having an issue with your password and or email address, call 1-800-KROGER, press 5 for customer service, then press 5 to speak to a customer service representative.

Thank you to those who shop Kroger and designate Gianna House on your Kroger Rewards account. From this program, GH receives a small donation from Kroger for each dollar you spend — at no cost to you. This designation must be renewed each year so re-enroll in your Kroger rewards.

Did you know that you can now support Gianna House with every purchase you make on [Amazon](#)? Make sure you are on the [AmazonSmile](#) page and select Gianna House Foundation as the charity of your choice. 0.5% of your purchase goes straight into our bank account and it adds up!



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A commitment to Our Donors

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.

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



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