



Gianna House

Spring 2021

Celebrating 10 Years!

This month, Gianna House Pregnancy & Parenting Residence celebrates **10 years** since Sr. Diane Masson filed the Articles of Incorporation for a new nonprofit that would provide a safe haven for at-risk pregnant youth – a need that was not being filled by any other community service or government agency.

Every organization has its phases and we are no exception. The first could be called the *Creative Phase* during which the Board focused on location, construction, and meeting building codes (bricks & mortar). The second phase was *Administrative* in nature and produced a much-needed Outreach Program as well as the State Licensure, policies and procedures, programs and educational initiatives, and staffing required to open as a Residence Program. We accepted our first residents almost two years ago and during those two years have tracked results, tweaked processes based on preliminary experiences, and have expanded our outreach.

We are now entering a *Transformational* stage to take Gianna House to the next level in order to optimally serve the maximum number of moms and babies. With two years of Residence experience under our belts, programs and processes are being reviewed and refined; the staffing model is being revamped; networking is being expanded and alliances sought; and new revenue streams are under consideration.

By the grace of God and the guidance of his precious Holy Spirit, the leadership of Gianna House is being good stewards with your gifts and will continue to keep you up to date on the lives we are saving because of your faithfulness. Please continue to keep us in your prayers.

Cynthia Q. Greening



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Joella Bush, *Executive Director*

Sr. Theresa Mayrand, OP,
Community Outreach Director



Welcome to Joella (Jo Jo) Bush, new Executive Director of Gianna House! Jennifer Brubaker is seeking other opportunities and we are grateful for her time with Gianna House. Jo Jo is credentialed in social work and mental health and has over 30 years of practical, professional and educational experience. Her experience includes community outreach, transitional housing for the homeless, leadership and relationship building, staffing, curriculum development and establishing community partnerships. She is very strongly networked in the community and is already familiar with Gianna House having interned with us for a year.

Jo Jo is graduating with a Master’s in Social Work at the end of this month with macros in Leadership, Policy and Community Development; Child Welfare; and Mental Health. She graduated Magna Cum Laude in both her Associate of Applied Science and Bachelor of Social Work degrees. Among her awards, she is a member of multiple Honor Societies, winner of the Presidential Scholarship Award, and member of the Dean’s List four consecutive years. Jo Jo’s goal upon graduation was to run a community service organization to help young girls and women in crisis. Gianna House is so very blessed to have her join our team! Welcome, Jo Jo!

LAMIA + LAMIA

SALON • BOUTIQUE

Mark your calendars and join us on Sunday, June 6, 2021 from 12 noon until 6:00pm for a "fun" fundraising event at Lamia + Lamia in Grosse Pointe Woods!

We are combining our efforts to celebrate our young moms (and mothers everywhere in our community) with a June Garden Party. This wonderful event will be held at the Lamia + Lamia Salon & Day Spa at 19653 Mack Avenue in Grosse Pointe Woods. As 2021 comes into “bloom”, Gianna House is offering a spectacular shopping spree event for a donation of just \$20.

Twenty-percent of all sales of gift certificates, services, and boutique items will go to Gianna House, including online orders. To register for a shopping time (to ensure safe distancing) go to <http://www.giannahouse.org> or lamialamia.com.

We’ll have Refreshments, Complementary Goodie Bags, Raffle Prizes, Health & Beauty Tips and more! See you there!



WELCOME

New Members of the Leadership Team

The Board of Directors heartily welcomes three new Board members: Kelly Scheer, Sierra Donaven and Mike Fontana! You may wonder what Board members do, and I'll tell you it's much more than attending meetings. This is a hard-working, dedicated team of people with a passion for the mission of Gianna House. They are responsible for the active management and oversight of operations, budget, strategic planning, fund-raising, and community networking. They help ensure compliance with the State Licensing Authority and the I.R.S. and keep current on financial accounting for nonprofits. They raise public awareness and attract the expertise we need to optimally perform. They are amazing and we are so grateful for their service.



Throughout childhood, Sierra Leone Donaven felt a divine calling to commit her life to volunteer service and she has stayed that course. Residing in the Grosse Pointes, she is active in her community, serving on the beautification commission and city council, receiving multiple recognitions for her contributions. She has a long history of volunteering for not-for-profit agencies and has Bachelor's Degrees from Wayne State University and the University of Arizona. Professionally, Sierra is a retired federal special agent for the ATF arm of government, and her next goal is to begin a four-year ministry program. She is a motivational speaker, spiritual life coach, and enjoys gardening.



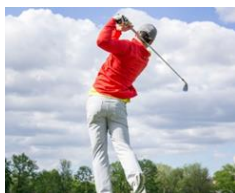
Mike Fontana will be a familiar name to the many wonderful Knights of Columbus Councils and Assemblies who faithfully support Gianna House. His mission is to offer his time, talent and treasure to help those less fortunate. Professionally Mike is Vice President of Mortgage

Lending for a residential mortgage organization and has a long and impressive community service career as well including leadership positions in CARE of Southeast Michigan, the Detroit Archdiocesan Vocation League, Holy Cross Children's Services, Trinity Community Care and Youth Catholic Professionals, just to name a few. Mike has Bachelor's and Master's Degrees from Wayne State University. He loves basketball and golf.



Kelly Scheer joined the Board in November 2020 and has proven, as expected, to be a dynamic member of our team. In February of this year, she was elected to Board Vice President. She also chairs our Marketing & Fundraising Committee. Kelly has her own consulting firm and is a professional executive coach.

She has a BA in Communications from Michigan State University. Prior to starting her own firm, she served as President and CEO of a human services agency, the President of a large independent and assisted living organization, and VP of Strategy & Operations for a national senior living organization. She joined Gianna House to support women and children in our community.



Details coming soon!

The Gianna House 8th Annual Sr. Diane Memorial Golf Outing is scheduled for Monday, August 25 at the very popular Greystone Golf Club in Washington, Michigan.



Sr. Theresa Mayrand is Retiring!

The Gianna House team is sad to say farewell to our dynamic Outreach Director, Sr. Theresa Mayrand. Sister is retiring at the end of April and she will be deeply missed. Her energy and creativity grew a fledgling program to a life-saving gift to hundreds of underserved moms and children in our community.

Meeting much more than their material needs, Sr. Theresa embraced all of our mothers in warmth, love, and acceptance. Sister Theresa, *“The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine to upon you and be gracious unto you.”*

BLESSINGS UPON BLESSINGS!

The caring and sharing of 56 people brought rich blessings to 43 of our Community Outreach mothers and their children at Christmastime. Responding to an invite posted on Facebook, they chose to gift one or more children with a toy and article of clothing. Adrian Dominican Sister Pat Magee facilitated this project for 118 children, contacting mothers to obtain each child’s age, sex, size, and a toy suggestion. Sharing this with sponsors, wrapped and labeled gifts began pouring into Gianna House to be picked up the week before Christmas. One mother emailed: *“Thank you for helping my little boy and girl, I was so happy I cried.”*

One sponsor spread blessings beyond Gianna House by purchasing 43 festive boxes of special Christmas cookies to help not only our families, but also her local caterer at this time of economic challenge to businesses. And not to leave out our mothers, each received a special gift bag with a scarf fashioned by our crocheting teacher and her friends, a packet of toiletries prepared by a GH friend and her family, a pair of slippers purchased by “Slippers for Mom,” and a \$50 gift card provided by a new donor and her friends. Indeed, blessings, upon blessings, upon blessings!



Throughout the pandemic, Gianna House has continued to offer mothers needing baby items and online classes four days a week on parenting, birthing, personal growth, nutrition, life skills, and even Zumba. The only onsite class offered was sewing, limited to four students at socially distanced machines.

One mother, Alissa, who has participated in almost all of our classes over the past two years including sewing, emailed: *“Gianna House gave me a little extra gift that I want to share with you. I'm excited that Gianna House taught me something I love to do, and a job came out of it based on me talking about the knowledge I knew from class!”* She was hired by a local store to help sew their merchandise. We applaud Alissa and rejoice with her.



Gianna House has a lot of exciting events coming up! Mark your calendars and watch for details:

June 6

Garden Party – Do something nice for yourself, your moms, grandmas, wives, daughters and all the amazing women in your life! *(See article on page 2.)*

August 25

8th Annual Golf Event at Greystone Golf Club in Washington, Michigan.

October 7

Biergarten at Atwater In the Park Brewery in Grosse Pointe Park

December 12

Living Nativity - Bigger & Better – at Gianna House

In less than 40 years, Gianna Beretta Molla became a pediatric physician, a wife, a mother, and a saint! On May 16 we celebrate the 17th Anniversary of St. Gianna’s canonization. St. Gianna inspires us all to surrender ourselves and what we desire to God and His will for us.

Words of Wisdom

“From the perspective of the Gospel, fundraising is a form of ministry - a way of announcing our vision and what God has planted in our hearts to accomplish. Fundraising is an act of inviting others into our ministry; of proclaiming what we believe in such a way that we offer other people an opportunity to participate with us in our vision and mission. We are not begging. Rather, we are declaring: ‘We have a vision that is amazing and God-given. We are inviting you to invest through the resources that God has given you: your energy, prayer, and finances in this work to which God has called us.’ Fundraising from the point of view of the gospel says to people: ‘I will take your money and invest it in this vision only if it is good for your spiritual journey and spiritual health.’ You will not become poorer; you will become richer by giving.” *From the files of Sr. Diane Masson, Gianna House Founder.*

What an amazing outlook on giving! Gianna House Pregnancy & Parenting Residence is inviting YOU – our faithful and new supporters – to invest in the future of our vital, God-given mission to benefit your own spiritual journey and health. Matthew 25 states, “Then the righteous will answer him and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you? And the king will say to them in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’”

A donation made today will significantly help Gianna House through this difficult pandemic season.

The pandemic has been hard on all, and community service organizations such as ours have experienced serious financial hits. Individual donations are down and grants are being diverted to pandemic relief. We are always looking for new and creative ways to fund our mission, and be assured that we use *extreme care* in spending your treasured donations. Checks made payable to Gianna House may be mailed to 21357 Redmond, Eastpointe, MI 48021. Or visit our website to donate at www.giannahouse.org. If you are donating in memory of a loved one or in gratitude for a special blessing, let us know. If you would like to be added to our prayer list, let us know that as well and we will keep you in our prayers. ❤️



What is more precious than the heart of a child?

Gianna House held its 1st Annual Living Nativity in December. It was a wonderful event and plans are already underway on making it bigger and better this year on December 12. But while we were setting up, a mother and her son, Barb & Paul (who looked to be a pre-teen) walked up to share a story that is absolutely what Christ and Christmas is all about. That morning, Paul asked his mom what she wanted for Christmas. Mom said, “I wish I could help the fundraising efforts of this place I read about called Gianna House.” Paul went to his room and returned with \$40 in \$5 bills that he had been saving up for months and said, “Let’s go!” They made a very long drive to get there to donate that \$40 and prayed that “God would multiply it many times over for the mission and ministry of Gianna House.” What a gift! What a mom! What a great kid!

MISSION

The goal of Gianna House Pregnancy & Parenting Residence is to provide a safe haven for pregnant youth and their newborn infants while providing spiritual, educational, and parenting support and resources to underserved women in our programs.

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Saving Lives – Two at a Time

Gianna House takes very seriously its responsibilities to the ethical use of donor dollars, each of which is used in the most thoughtful manner for maximum impact on those we serve. Our donors are valued partners in ministry to the underserved. Ways to contribute:

- ✓ In memory of a loved one
- ✓ In gratitude for God's blessings
- ✓ Via estate planning/wills/trusts
- ✓ Via IRA withdrawal
- ✓ As a family in lieu of individual gifts
- ✓ Or "just because" †

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info@giannahouse.org

Gianna House is a 501(c)(3)
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