



Gianna House

Pregnancy & Parenting Residence

SPECIAL EDITION
SPRING/SUMMER 2025

GIANNA HOUSE NEWSLETTER SPECIAL EDITION

A Year of Impact: Looking Back, Moving Forward, and Bridging the Seasons

In this special edition, we reflect on and celebrate the successes of 2024 while embracing hope and looking ahead to the exciting energy and opportunities of 2025.

IMPACT & INSPIRATION

Residential Spotlight

“Hello, my name is **Cheisy**, and I’m from the Dominican Republic. I’m 23 years old, and I’m a proud mom to a beautiful baby boy. I came to Gianna House back in February 2024, around 4-5 months pregnant, after facing some challenges with my family due to my pregnancy at such a young age. When I first arrived, I was scared and uncertain of what the future held. But from the very first day, Gianna House welcomed me with open arms, providing not just a roof over my head, but a sense of peace and security. I felt truly cared for, knowing my baby and I would have everything we needed. That sense of stability has been such a blessing. Since coming here, I’ve been working closely with our caseworker to create a plan and set goals for my future. Every day, I’ve been focused on making progress. The resources and support I’ve received from Gianna House have been invaluable in helping me achieve those goals. One of my dreams was to find a job, and thanks to a class on resume building, I was able to secure a position as a customer service coordinator. This is just one of the many ways Gianna House has opened doors for me. Fun fact, thanks to one of our finance/entrepreneurship classes, I’ve been inspired to start my own jewelry business, which I’m hoping to launch by the end of this year. What I’m most grateful for, though, is how Gianna House has given me the opportunity to grow emotionally and financially—for my son’s future and for mine. The incredible staff here truly care about us, and that kind of support is something I’ll always treasure. Being a young mom, especially without a strong support system, can be overwhelming and lonely. But at Gianna House, I’ve found a loving, safe space that believes in me and is helping me thrive. My hope is that Gianna house continues to inspire and support young mothers like me for many years to come.”



Community Outreach Spotlight



My name is Gwynel Cooper, and since February 2024, I have proudly participated in the Community Outreach Program at Gianna House. This incredible program has equipped me with essential resources that have significantly impacted my life, providing everything from basic necessities like food and clothing to vital educational opportunities that empower me as a parent.

One of the highlights of my experience at Gianna House is the onsite classes. These engaging sessions have enhanced my knowledge and helped me develop valuable skills that I can apply in everyday life. The Bright course lessons, in particular, are designed to foster personal development and boost confidence, which is instrumental for my growth.

Additionally, I look forward to the monthly shopping days, where I can use “baby bucks” to select items for my family. This unique system allows me to shop with pride, making me feel valued and respected rather than like a charity recipient. It’s a meaningful experience to pick out things for my children without feeling like a mere statistic. Thanks to the unwavering support and encouragement from Gianna House, I am motivated to pursue continuing education. I am excited about the opportunities ahead and am determined to create a brighter future for both my children and myself.

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Joella E. Bush LLMSW, *Executive Director*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT by Dennis Brescoll

We are nearing the completion of the two years that I will serve as President of Gianna House's Board of Directors, and I am happy to report that 2024 was a good year, and we are well into 2025 with even more great news to report for our organization. On behalf of the young women and babies we serve, the staff, volunteers and board of directors, we would like to **thank you for your generous support of our mission of "saving two lives at once"** through our residency program for young pregnant at-risk women and their babies and our community outreach program serving community mothers and their babies.

Now here is some of the **GOOD NEWS** that I am happy to report to you:

1. The good news begins with our having been **at or near full capacity of moms and babies in our residence house**, some of whom have since made their way to independence in parenting, housing, and employment. We are so proud of the success stories Gianna House has helped generate for these young women and their babies. Much of the credit goes to our staff led by our outstanding **Executive Director Joella Bush** who with her team have recruited residents and community moms and have helped them to be in a position to deliver healthy babies and to move on to independence through obtaining medical care, transportation, health insurance, education in parenting and financial knowledge and obtaining affordable housing.

2. We have negotiated a **long-term lease** with the Archdiocese of Detroit of our residence house to extend our lease through 2040. This gives us the stability to plan for the future in this fantastic location.

3. In 2024, we recruited and welcomed new members to our board of directors to lead in the roles of Treasurer, Strategic Planning/Metrics, Grants/Revenue, Facilities Management, and Volunteers/Community Events. These board members are hardworking and seasoned in their fields and are making a true difference in helping us achieve our mission goals.

4. We have **begun replacing our antiquated boiler system**, which our experts have told us might not last through the next heating season, with a new HVAC system that will provide efficient heating and cooling to our entire residence building. The electrical work has been completed on the project, parts and equipment have been obtained by our contractor, and the work on their installation of Phase One of the project is now complete. **We thank the generous contributions to this effort by the Pulte Family Foundation, St. Veronica's Parish, the Van Elslander Family Foundation, the Knights of Columbus, and individuals like you.**

We now must raise an additional \$96,000 of the increased \$396,000 cost to complete the project, and we

look for your further generosity to help us accomplish this goal. Many thanks go out to **Tom Masson**, who has advised and helped steer our team, and Dixon Kirkland, who led our board in this HVAC replacement process.

The new HVAC system will allow us to **almost double the capacity for housing moms and babies.** We will be able to occupy what has been the functionally unusable north wing of our residence due to inadequate heating and cooling there.

The white boxing and insulation that have been installed on the third floor of our residence house as part of the HVAC project will help to ensure that the fire suppression pipes on the third floor are adequately heated so that we do not have a recurrence of the pipes bursting in extremely cold weather, which led to the Christmas-time 2022 flood.

5. Our **11th Annual Sr. Dianne Masson Golf Tournament** held at Greystone Golf Club & Banquet Center on August 19, 2024, successfully raised \$33,000 in revenue for Gianna House. Our great staff and our Golf Committee Co-Chairs Jamie Spriet and Dixon Kirkland led this effort. We had good weather, and the golfers I spoke with enjoyed the course, the dinner, beverages, and the camaraderie of participating in the golf and bidding on the prizes we offered. Many thanks go out to our staff, board, volunteers, sponsors, raffle and golf bag prize donors, and golfers who all contributed to making this a truly positive event.

6. Finally, our revenue committee, consisting of our Executive Director Joella Bush and board members Cynthia Cockrel, Jamie Spriet, and Colleen Thompson, has worked diligently to search for grants within our mission and has completed the often arduous grant application process necessary for obtaining those grants. This hard work has already resulted in Gianna House securing several significant grants, including a \$50,000 grant from United Way called "Launching to Independence Through Career Exploration." Our revenue committee has continued to write grant applications for further opportunities that, if successful, could be game changers for our future operations.

So, from the bottom of our hearts, we **THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU** for all you have done to help with our success in 2024 and the start of 2025 through your generous support of our mission of "saving two lives at once." With your continued support, we believe the good news will continue well into the future.

Dennis Brescoll

Dennis Brescoll, Esq.
Board President

Community Outreach By the Numbers

Because of your incredible generosity, Gianna House has become a beacon of hope for over 500 local families, providing them with essential items that brighten their lives during challenging times. Your contributions have sparked a wave of kindness, leading to impressive results that reflect the impact of our collective efforts:



564 families served--from September 2024 to March 2025, each finding solace in knowing they are not alone.

48,998 individual diapers--ensuring that little ones have a comfortable start and that parents can focus on what truly matters.

469 packs of wipes-- offering cleanliness and convenience for busy caregivers.

2,356 toiletry items--empowering individuals with the dignity of personal care.

8,078 pieces of baby clothing-- wrapping infants in warmth and love.

1,807 pieces of adult clothing--providing comfort and confidence to those in need.

453 blankets--creating cozy sanctuaries for families to gather and find warmth.

303 winter gear items--equipping families to face the cold weather with hope and protection.

186 pieces of baby equipment--facilitating safe and nurturing environments for the youngest among us.

227 jars of nutritious baby food--supporting healthy infant growth and development.

412 cans of baby formula-- ensuring that newborns receive the necessary nourishment.

33 families adopted for a joyful Christmas in 2024-- bringing the magic of the season into their homes with love and care.

These numbers represent lives changed and futures rewritten. Your compassion is the driving force behind these successes, turning aspirations into reality... thanks to you!

BRIDGING THE GAP: From Funding to Impact

At Gianna House, grants are more than financial contributions—they fuel the transformation of lives. In 2024, we were blessed to receive funding from a number of generous grant makers who recognized the importance of our mission and chose to invest in the futures of the young mothers we serve. This critical support helped us bridge the gap between our mothers' needs and what we can *provide*. Whether funding the Launching to Independence Through Career Exploration program, Healthy Moms and Babies programming, housing essentials, holistic care services, or our HVAC project, each grant strengthened our ability to meet women where they are and help them move forward.

We are proud to highlight some of the key grants that helped shape 2024:

- PULTE FAMILY CHARITABLE FOUNDATION FUND and UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME
- PULTE LEGACY FOUNDATION
- VAN ELSLANDER FAMILY FOUNDATION
- SEMPQIC ADVANCING HEALTHY BIRTHS
- ST. REGIS CATHOLIC PARISH
- 100 WOMEN WHO CARE
- COMERICA BANK
- DETROIT LIONS FIRST DOWNS PROGRAM
- HAP CARESOURCE
- ROTARY CLUB OF DETROIT
- BUILDING BRIDGES
- FR. KERN FOUNDATION
- UNITED WAY

None of this would be possible without the dedication of our **Grant Writing Committee**: Cynthia Cockrel (Grant Chair), Jamie Spriet (Past President), and Joella Bush (Executive Director). Behind every award was a team of passionate, strategic individuals who worked tirelessly to research opportunities, craft compelling proposals, and build meaningful relationships with funders. Their behind-the-scenes efforts were vital in securing resources that created a real, lasting impact.

FRIENDS OF GIANNA HOUSE

Your unwavering support is a blessing, and we want to express our heartfelt gratitude! **THANK YOU FOR BEING THE GIFTS THAT KEEP GIVING!!** Your contributions, whether financial donations or tangible goods, profoundly impact our mission and the lives of those we serve.

No matter the amount, every donation plays a vital role in our efforts! No contribution goes unnoticed or unappreciated. Thanks to your generous support, our residents and the families we reach through our community outreach program receive the essential items they need to thrive. These essentials include everything from nutritious food and clothing to educational supplies, personal care items, and diapers, wipes, and baby equipment, which make a significant difference in their everyday lives.

While we cannot list ALL of our donors in this edition of our newsletter, we want to acknowledge just a *few* organizations that continue supporting our good work. Together, we are making a real difference in our community and *saving two lives at a time!*

- Soiree at Stone Manor - Seth and Ruth Kreuger
- Grosse Pointe Historical Society
- Grosse Pointe Realtors Association
- Motor City Casino (Gianna House 2024 Christmas Wishlist and Christmas Tree Donor)
- St. Issac Jogues School (Harvest Fest Donation Drive)
- St. Anne Parish (Christmas Gift Cards)
- Community Choice Credit Union
- Comerica Bank - Lions First Downs Program
- Delta Sigma Theta of Macomb
- The Order of the Eastern Star - Chapter Mary Electra #127 (Donation Drive)
- Pastor Genna Hines and Dr. Sharon Smith - Heart to Heart Ministries and Evangel Christian Church
- St. John Vianney (Gianna House 2024 Christmas Wishlist Donor)
- Animal Clinic of Sterling Heights (Gianna House 2024 Christmas Wishlist Donor)
- Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Omega Xi Omega Chapter (173 Hygiene Kits)
- Kindness 4 Human Kind (Hosted two donation drives)
- Macomb Community College (Donation Drive)
- Clinton Valley Church (Donation Drive-Cianna's Internship Drive)
- Holly Family Regional School (Middle School Donation Drive)
- Shamrock 555 Foundation
- St. Veronica Parish
- Lamia & Lamia Salon and Spa
- Knights of Columbus (various councils)



The Power of Community:

Fundraising to Fuel our Mission

At Gianna House, fundraising is more than raising dollars—it's about raising hope. Each donation, event ticket, and sponsorship represents a belief in the potential futures of the women and babies we serve. While grants provide the foundation to launch and sustain vital programs, our fundraising efforts fill the critical gaps, ensuring that no mother or baby is turned away due to a lack of resources. These community-powered events not only support our mission...they build the very heart of it.

2025 Fundraising Events at Gianna House

Tree of Life

Ongoing

Leave a lasting legacy by purchasing a leaf, acorn, or stone in honor or memory of someone special.

-Sr. Diane 12th Annual Golf Tournament

Monday, August 18th @ Greystone Golf Club

A day of golf, fellowship, and giving back in memory of our beloved founder.

Night at the Races

Friday, October 3rd @ Athena Banquet Hall in Roseville

An energetic evening of food, fun, and friendly competition for a great cause. Derby attire is encouraged.

Giving Tuesday

Tuesday, December 2nd – Online Giving Event

This global movement of generosity will help us continue empowering young mothers and their babies.

Holiday Open House and Donor Appreciation

Sunday, December 8th @ Gianna House

Celebrate the season with us as we thank our amazing supporters and showcase our progress.

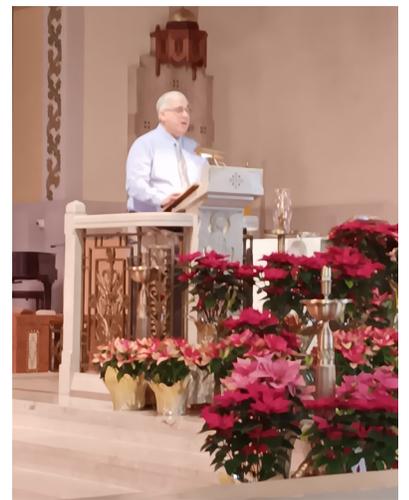
End of Year Giving

November 1st - December 31st

Make your final gift of the year one that transforms lives and creates a lasting impact!

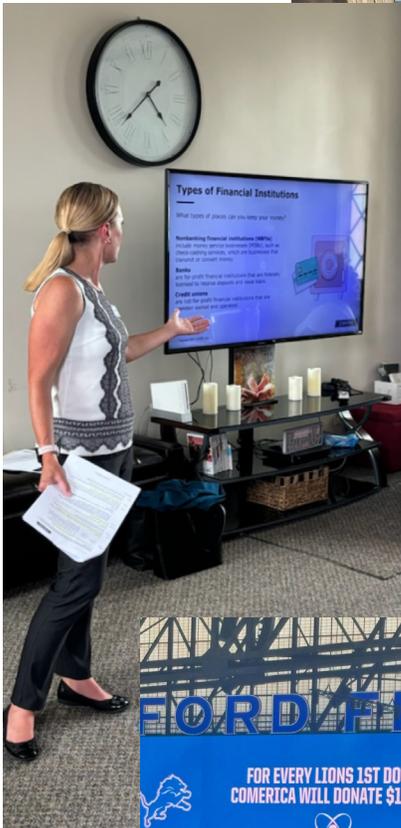
Be a part of something powerful. For event registration, sponsorship opportunities, or to donate, visit www.giannahouse.org

Let there be community.... for where there is community, there is GROWTH and EMPOWERMENT





2024 Soiree at Stone Manor A very special THANK YOU to Seth and Ruth Kreuger and the Grosse Pointe Historical Society for selecting Gianna House as the charity of the year!



Comerica Bank supports community through the Lions First Downs Program and Financial Literacy for the moms and babies at Gianna House!



Open house and Tree of Life Reveal 1 Executive Director and Board President, Past and Present Board of Directors

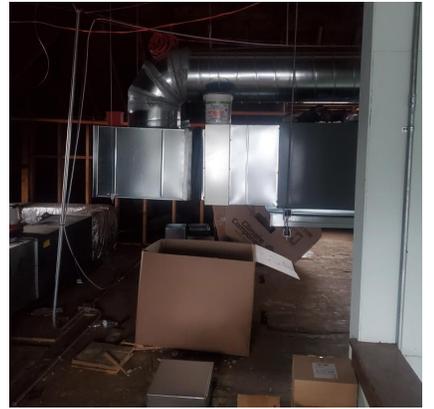
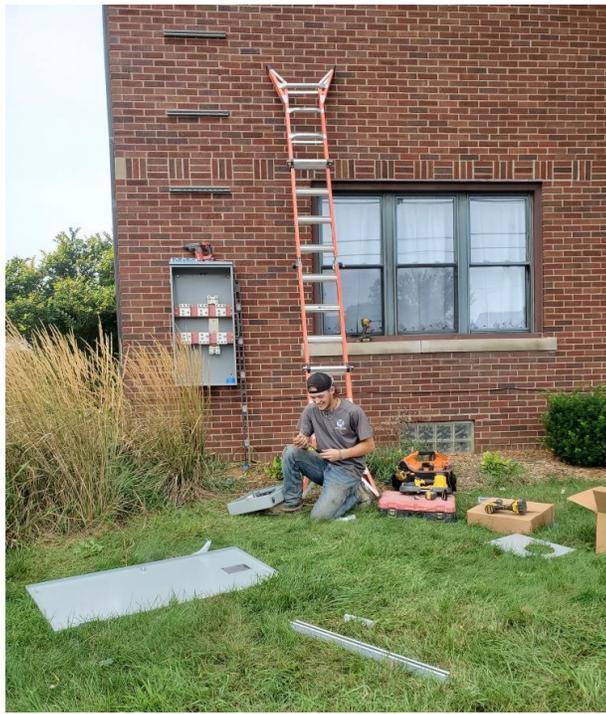


Thank you for believing in our Mission to...
SAVE TWO LIVES AT A TIME!



Gianna House joins APEX as they support Turning Point

HVAC Installation



Adopt a Family for the Holiday



Gianna House Spotlights



Welcome To Our New Board Member

We are thrilled to welcome **Jamey Kozierowski** to the Gianna House Board of Directors. Serving, helping, and protecting family, community, and clients is a calling and responsibility Jamey takes very seriously. Shortly after moving to Michigan 25 Years ago from the East Coast, she “fell” into risk management and insurance, invigorated to take responsibility of her clients’ success and futures. Understanding the strategic goals of corporate partners while identifying root causes and issues of potential loss provides

unique “boots on the ground” success. Jamey is a Senior Vice President of Business Insurance for Marsh McLennan Agency. As a single mother attending PSU in the nineties, Jamey dreamed of starting a place just like Gianna House. Joining the board is a bucket list dream of hers. Jamey and her husband, Keith, still reside in St. Clair Shores with their daughter, a Senior at the International Academy of Macomb. Their son is a freshman at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, and their eldest son, daughter-in-law, and gorgeous 2-year-old granddaughter reside nearby in Eastpointe.

We also want to express our deepest gratitude to Colleen Thompson and Victoria Seay for their dedication and service on the Gianna House Board of Directors. Their leadership has left a lasting impact, and we wish them the best in their future endeavors.



Welcome To Our New Case Manager

Join us in welcoming **Haley P** to Gianna House! With extensive experience in social work and a former intern, she will be instrumental in supporting our moms and babies and helping them navigate their path to independence.

Haley graduated from Wayne State University at the beginning of 2024 with my bachelor’s degree in Community Health, with a minor in Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies.

I was introduced to Gianna House with my senior internship completed in my last semester, where I helped take on the role of the residential Case Manager. I gained a lot of experience with my internship, where I completed tasks as the Case Manager, including: getting residential case files ready to be audited, conducting educational groups with the residents, and working on SMART goals with our current residents. Upon graduation, Gianna House kept me as their official residential case manager, where I continued to apply my healthcare knowledge in a community setting. In addition to the case manager role, I work full time at a specialty medical clinic where I am working to develop a diabetic education program. Eventually, I would like to use my degree and experience to run a health education program that is brought in by large corporations such as General Motors or Ford. I am grateful for Gianna House for giving me the opportunity to continue working hands-on with community moms and babies within an educational program!



Celebrating Volunteerism

Gianna House and staff provide a warm and welcome place for new Moms. It is a privilege to volunteer there. I was already a nurse when I became a mom in the early 70’s and even with the information from nursing school, I found Lamaze Childbirth Classes really helped me be ready for birth. The classes gave me information to share with my doctor who was very respectful. I retired from Ascension Providence’s Alternative Birthing Center as a birth nurse and Childbirth

Educator and now welcome the opportunity to help the moms at Gianna House get information on how to get ready for birth and caring for their infants including help with breastfeeding if needed. Everyone deserves a safe place to begin life as a parent.

-Helen Callans – Volunteer



Lead Monitor

I am a passionate and authentic person about helping people. I love people Agape. I model the behavior I want to see, and I firmly believe in our mission to save two lives at a time with a hand up not a handout. I’ve been working to assist children and families since 1995. I am very happy to be a part of the Gianna House team.

-Lugina

Intern Spotlight

For the past eight months, Gianna House has hosted three dedicated social work interns from local universities, specifically Wayne State University and Oakland University. Our internship program has been designed to provide these students with immersive educational opportunities encompassing essential social work theories and critical skills needed for their career advancement.

Shalma Ahmed, earning her master’s degree, has actively engaged in case assessments and developing intervention plans for our residents. Meanwhile, while pursuing their bachelor’s degrees, **Tyechia Stevens** and **Cianna Bertholet** have been instrumental in organizing community outreach programs and facilitating workshops promoting mental health awareness.

Each of these hardworking individuals graduated this May, and their contributions to our organization have been invaluable. They have enhanced our services and provided residents with critical resources and information, enriching their overall experience at Gianna House. Through their passion and commitment, they have made a lasting impact on our community, demonstrating the powerful role of social work in supporting those in need.

Letter from our Executive Director — Joella E. Bush, LLMSW



As we step into a new season filled with promise, I want to take a moment to reflect on some of the incredible things we have accomplished together. The past year has been one of growth, resilience, and profound impact. Through your unwavering support, we have transformed lives, provided stability to young mothers, and empowered them with the tools to build a hopeful future. In 2024, you showed up in powerful ways. From our Annual Sr. Diane Memorial Golf outing to our inaugural Tree of Life event, these events were successes and powerful reminders of the love and unity behind our mission. As we look to continue this momentum in 2025, our fundraising efforts will focus on:

- Phase Two of our HVAC project – HEAT THE HOUSE
- Expanding hands-on career training and certifications for our mothers
- Continuing to create initiatives for Healthy Moms – Healthy Babies
- Upgrading our residential facilities for safety, comfort, and growth
- Creating a sustainability fund to ensure long-term program stability

To reach these goals, we will continue to host our signature events, build corporate partnerships, and invite more supporters into our circle of care. Each mother's journey to independence begins with the generosity of people like YOU—and together, we can build futures full of hope, healing, and love. Thank you for continuing to walk alongside us and making this work possible. Your support empowers the women and babies we serve every day.

With gratitude and hope,

Joella E. Bush, LLMSW
Executive Director
Gianna House

FUEL THE FUTURE: Creative Ways to Give & Get Involved with Gianna House

In a world where every contribution counts, we invite students, parishes, corporations, and individuals to stand together and continue a powerful legacy of hope and transformation. Your involvement can directly impact lives, ensuring that vital resources and support systems remain accessible to those in need.

Here are a few ways you can help:

1. **Organize Fundraisers:** Host events such as bake sales, Wines for Humanity, Painting with a Twist, or charity runs. Engage your community and rally support for our mission that saves lives.
2. **Monthly Donations:** Visit our website and set up a recurring monthly donation to create a steady stream of support. Even small amounts can accumulate to make a significant difference by the end of the year.
3. **Awareness Campaigns:** Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Use your voice and social media platforms to spread awareness about our cause and work. Share our stories and inspire others to contribute by raising funds for Gianna House for your birthday.
4. **Corporate Sponsorships:** Ask your company to lead by example by matching your donation or becoming a sponsor for one of our signature fundraising events. This dual impact fosters a culture of giving.
5. **Volunteer:** Donate your time and talents to Gianna House! Your hands-on support is invaluable and strengthens our bond with the community.
6. **Engage in Educational Programs:** Collaborate with local schools to create programs that teach the importance of charity and social responsibility. Together, let's honor the legacy of those who came before us and build a brighter future. Your actions today can save TWO lives tomorrow. Join us in this vital mission!

Additional ideas

- IRA Giving
- Legacy Giving
- Monthly Giving
- Rounding Up at your favorite merchant
- Penny/Bottle/Product Drive

What will you commit to giving today??

Transforming shared beliefs and hopes into action...

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 for those we serve. Our donors are valued partners in ministry to those who are underserved. Ways our donors make a difference:

- ✓ 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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