



Birthline Bulletin

Everything Life Affirming

Winter 2023

Serving families in need from conception to kindergarten.



*“My child, my joy, my hope, my light!
You are a treasured gift from God,
not just for me, but for the world.
What amazing things you will do!”*

-- Birthline Board Member

Hope & Holiday Cheer



As we enter this joyous holiday season, I am filled with gratitude and excitement as we reflect on the incredible year we've had at Birthline. It warms my heart to share the many moments of joy we've been able to create together. Thanks to the generosity of our donors and the unwavering dedication of our staff and volunteers, we have been able to bring hope into the lives of the families and children we serve.

Some examples of particularly heartwarming initiatives were the gifts of family portraits and grocery store gift cards for several deserving families in our community. Through the kindness and support of a local photographer, we were able to capture the essence of love and unity in beautifully crafted portraits, preserving precious moments for these families to cherish forever. Some examples are found on the cover of this newsletter! Additionally, with the provision of gift cards to local grocery stores by the Knights of Columbus St. Therese of Carmel Council 13124, we were able to alleviate some of the burdens that the holiday season can bring, ensuring that these families can enjoy festive meals together.

These acts of generosity not only brighten the holiday season for the families we serve, but also reinforce the sense of community and care that defines Birthline. As we celebrate the season of giving, let us continue to spread hope, joy, and holiday cheer to all those in need.

Wishing you and your loved ones a heartwarming holiday season filled with love, laughter, and the spirit of giving.

Andrea Estrada
Executive Director

Former Client Comes Full Circle

In this special edition of our Bulletin, we are thrilled to highlight one of our brightest stars! Ita (short for Itandehui) first came to us in 2015 when her daughter was one year old. They were living with family and Ita just needed help in the form of diapers and baby supplies. A few years passed and we didn't see her until 2018 when she returned with her second baby, a toddler boy. Ita was employed part-time while her mother looked after her children, but an unfortunate accident left her jobless and in need of financial support. Birthline came through with the physical items she needed but, more importantly, her counselors encouraged Ita to take English classes, and to aspire to a better career and a more financially secure future. Ita took their advice to heart. Eventually, she began volunteering at Birthline a few times per week. During much of 2019, she would leave home early in the morning to catch a bus to Birthline to help wherever she was needed: sorting clothes, cleaning the office, translating for clients, etc.



When the COVID pandemic forced most of Birthline's volunteers to stay home, Ita was offered a job through our Evolution Program. She gladly accepted. From April to July, Ita and Jeanne Hansen were virtually alone in the office, seeing clients outdoors. Over time, Ita proved herself as a reliable and compassionate team member. Clients appreciated having someone to speak with in Spanish and with whom they could discuss shared experiences.

Over the past three years, Ita moved into the role of Client Manager, working full-time at Birthline. She now sees over 100 clients per week, helping to comfort and reassure them, just as she was encouraged by her counselors. Our clients love Ita, and constantly thank her for her warm, welcoming demeanor and the firm but gentle way she demands accountability!

Through hard work and discipline, Ita just bought her very own condominium home, the ultimate sign of family stability and independence. Ita is a role model for our clients of what is possible, and we could not be more proud of all she has achieved!

Birthline's Impact Year-to-Date

Total Clients Served	Client Appointments Per Month	Newly Enrolled in County Services
2,013	354	286
Diapers Distributed	Baby Shower Gift Bags Given	Total Value of Baby Shower Gift Bags
197,183	207	\$51,750

CHANGES AND HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

The End of an Era: Program Director Jeanne Hansen Retires

For the past 16 years, Birthline has been fortunate to have had Jeanne Hansen's expertise and devoted leadership. After retiring from a full career in public health, Jeanne came to Birthline to volunteer on a part-time basis. Gradually she got more involved until, in 2020, she was hired full-time as Program Director. During her many years of service, Jeanne oversaw numerous changes to our organization, including our transition to a case management system of care. She also enrolled Birthline as a Diaper Bank distributor, and forged countless partnerships with county-wide service providers so our clients could have wrap-around resources such as car seats, formula, and more.



Spry and dynamic as ever, the time has come for Jeanne to focus her energy closer to home. Before leaving, Birthline's Board and staff treated her to a farewell lunch and gifted her a beautiful "Excellence in Service and Leadership" award. She has promised to stay in touch, and we will hold her to it! Jeanne, bless you for your many years of selfless dedication!

Some of Birthline staff and volunteers at Jeanne's farewell lunch.

Holidazzle - Birthline's Annual Holiday Event is Growing UP

For years Birthline has hosted a special Christmastime event for clients. This year our event promises to be bigger and better than ever before! Introducing... **Holidazzle - A Family Christmas Celebration!** On Friday, December 15, our updated event is moving across the street to the South Clairemont Recreation Center. The larger space will enable us to spread out, and have fun, come rain or shine. Clients will "shop" at tables of clothes, toys, and stocking stuffers, all organized by age and gender, so they can pick out for themselves what best suits their family's needs. We will also have a gift-wrapping station, children's activities, festive snacks, and hot cider. Additionally, this year we invited representatives from various San Diego County institutions to help clients sign up for needed services including WIC, CalFresh, and First 5 classes.



Volunteer "Elves".

It's not too late to join the merrymaking! If interested in volunteering, please call our main office or email Dianah at Dianah.Lopez@birthlineofsd.org

Devoted Board Member: Maureen Sterk



Maureen at a Parish Outreach event.

It all began with dropping off baby shower items and she fell in love with Birthline's mission of serving mothers and children. Few organizations are blessed with a volunteer who is full of grace, energy and prayer; a quiet force who always shows up weekly volunteering time, and who also generously donates talent and treasure as well. At Birthline, that quiet force is Maureen.

Birthline is so grateful for the 18 years of service Maureen has devoted as client manager, treasurer, Board member, and chair of our Parish Development committee. She is largely responsible for the marvelous relationships we have with our churches and their annual fundraising efforts, from direct appeals, baby gift bags, Christmas giving trees and community outreach. She has been an integral part of Birthline's Board of Directors for 4+ years providing operational oversight and governance. Maureen is also a busy wife, mother of three, grandmother of five, friend to many, an avid skier and active member at Our Mother of Confidence Catholic Church in University City.

Thank you, Maureen, for your steadfast dedication, energy and talents shared over many years!

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Birthline Selected as a Las Patronas Grant Beneficiary!

We are thrilled to have been chosen as a Minor Beneficiary for the 2023-2024 term. Las Patronas is a committed group of volunteers who fundraise to provide grants for critically needed capital items to nonprofit organizations throughout San Diego County. In our case, funds will be used to update some of our office furnishings, including the addition of wall-mounted diaper changing stations, functional desks for our client managers, and more comfortable seating for our reception area. Thank you to Las Patronas!

LAS PATRONAS
PARTNERING WITH THE SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY SINCE 1946

Spread the Word : Birthline Needs a NEW HOME!



Birthline's Future Site Wishlist:

- 2500-4000 sq ft, first floor, no stairs
- Near a bus line, between highways 8 & 52 and west of highway 15
- Two bathrooms or a shared common bathroom on site
- Generous parking and in a safe neighborhood
- Signage visibility from the street
- Price: reasonable and open to creative solutions including unused space in churches or other nonprofits.

Consider purchasing or donating a property to Birthline:

An inspired generous donor could purchase a property and/or donate a property and benefit from the tax benefits and possible naming rights or even rent it back to Birthline for an income stream.

Thank you for sharing with others and for being our eyes and ears out in the community!

If you have any ideas, please contact Andrea at Andrea.Estrada@birthlineofsd.org

Year End Giving & Tax Benefits**

End of year philanthropy that makes sense includes annual IRA Required Minimum Distributions (RMD's), that can go tax free directly to Birthline and save on taxes by reducing your taxable income.

Also, donating appreciated assets, including stocks and bonds, is a simple and tax efficient way to donate. ** Please consult your tax advisor.

Legacy Estate Gifts**

As you and your family discuss philanthropy or update wills or insurance policies, please consider Birthline. Any gift you leave that names Birthline as a beneficiary will ultimately go to Birthline tax free so we can continue stabilizing families and transforming lives!

Or consider selling an appreciated property or 2nd home, putting the proceeds into a Charitable Remainder Trust, and benefit during your lifetime from the interest off the invested income. Later, Birthline becomes the recipient of the remaining funds upon passing, and the donor receives some naming rights for their gift.

Your actions to remember Birthline financially in the future is a gift that keeps on giving.

Questions? Contact Mary at Mary.Bones@birthlineofsd.org

Community Partners

Thank you to the many organizations across San Diego which have so graciously opened their doors and hearts to Birthline in recent months:

- Our Mother of Confidence
- St. Mary Magdalene
- St. Therese of Carmel
- Mary, Star of the Sea
- St. Martin's (La Mesa)
- UCSD Newman Ctr.
- Our Lady of Refuge
- St. Augustine HS
- Cathedral Catholic HS

Office "Spruce Up" Dec. 18-22

Our offices are in need of some TLC! If you have time to spare, come help us move furniture, paint, and tidy up. Many hands makes light work!

Contact Dianah for more information: Dianah.Lopez@birthlineofsd.org

