

# BIRTHRIGHT<sup>®</sup> OF FREDERICKSBURG, INC.



**WINTER 2016**

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Fredericksburg, VA 22401

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**24-HOUR HOTLINE 800-550-4900 • LOCAL 540-898-8558**

## A Baby Makes Life Even More Worthy of Being Lived: JESSIE'S STORY

**L**ike most young women who approach our office for the first time, Jessie (names have been changed to protect identity) was anxious as she crossed the threshold into our Birthright office last August. And like so many others, Jessie had come to find out if it were really true — was she already a mother to a tiny child? A million questions flooded her thoughts. She knew it was a possibility, but having only just started her senior year of highschool, it seemed surreal to be thinking about motherhood.

Relieved that her older sister had accompanied her, 17-year-old Jessie walked into the small office to find our director, Lily, ready to offer compassion and support. As the news sunk in, Jessie gripped the pink rubber model of a tiny 12-week-old baby in her hands and tried to fathom the fact that this was nearly the size of her own baby.

By the time Lily walked her to the door and gave her one last reassuring hug, there was no denying it: she was really a mother. A new life depended on her regardless of her fears, her doubts and her dreams that had only begun to take shape with the end of school in sight.



*Lily Alarcon with a bundle of joy at Birthright Christmas party.*

Despite the initial resistance of her mother and the incredulity of her friends, Jessie knew there was no question about it: this child deserved her love. Fortunately, Jessie's boyfriend and father of the child, also understood what Jessie did: that life would still go on, dreams could still be dreamt, career goals could still be met. A child wouldn't stop that from happening, it would only make the adventure more wonderful.

For Jessie, senior year has started with a small growing tummy, but by graduation time this June, a little baby boy will be nestled in her arms. The ultrasound reveals that little J. E. is already growing long legs like his daddy.

As for Jessie, she looks forward to attending online college classes towards a degree in Business - while watching J.E. grow to be a big boy. Her advice

to other young women who face an unexpected pregnancy is to not be afraid to continue to reach for your dreams because motherhood is a gift. And isn't life more worthy of being lived when you have someone to live it for and with whom to share it?

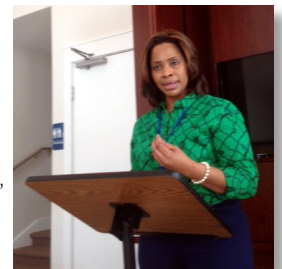


*Born to Lebanese parents, Little Tala Farah was born on November 16, 2015.*

*Baby Yoann, born January 10, 2016, with mother.*



*Aundrea Travis was our guest speaker in January as part of our continuing education series. A native of Texas, she is retired from the US Navy. Now a mother of three, she works as Housing Case Manager at Empower House, a local shelter for victims of domestic violence. ([www.empowerhouseva.org](http://www.empowerhouseva.org)) Hotline: 540-373-9373)*



## Numbers Are In! Statistics for 2015:

Visitors .....	909
Pregnancy tests performed .....	633
Clients who received maternity clothes .....	176
Layettes received .....	137
Telephone inquiries .....	550

## Join Us Again for Community Give!

**L**ast year, Birthright was among the many nonprofits in the Fredericksburg region to participate in the 24 hour Community GIVE! Event. The Community Give is a 24-hour day of giving on Tuesday May 3, 2016 from 12:00 a.m. until midnight. It is a day when everyone in our region is asked to make a donation and show support for the local nonprofit organizations that positively impact our lives every day. Donations can be made to us on May 3rd at [www.TheCommunityGive.org](http://www.TheCommunityGive.org). Please remember Birthright of Fredericksburg again this year!



*It is the right of every pregnant woman to give birth and the right of every child to be born.*

## DIRECTOR'S CORNER

**W**hat an amazing year! This year we celebrate the 40th anniversary of our outstanding organization "Birthright of Fredericksburg." We have faithfully served different generations of clients for four decades and will continue to do so thanks to all your hard work and dedication.

Our group of volunteers remains strong and ever willing to help all mothers-to-be. Our mission is to help all clients, but especially to save the lives of the little angels, who are a blessing from the Lord. I am so proud to serve alongside the most gracious, dedicated, and unselfish group of volunteers.

We have had a few personnel changes in our organization. On behalf of all our volunteers, I would like to express sincere gratitude to Kathy Mahoney for her extraordinary service as our Birthright newsletter editor for (a whopping!) 17 years. Our hats go off to you Kathy!!! I am thrilled to have offered this position to Julia Desilets, who happily accepted. I know that Julia will continue Kathy's outstanding standard of excellence! Our sincere thanks to both of you!

We have implemented monthly meetings to improve volunteer training by informative presentations and open dialogue with volunteers to answer questions and take suggestions. We also invite guest speakers from different organizations to share their unique experiences and perspectives in their particular organizations.

Last, but not least, we would like to express our continuous gratitude to all of our donors for your unwavering support throughout the year. Let it be known that without your generosity our mission wouldn't be able to be accomplished. You're a blessing and may the Almighty bless you in return.

*God bless you all!* Lily Alarcon, Director

## Social Media:

Like us on Facebook!



/Birthright of Fredericksburg



**DIRECTOR**  
*Lily Alarcon*

**OFFICE MANAGER**  
*Eileen Shea*

**TREASURER**  
*Barbara Carr*

**SCHEDULING COORDINATOR**  
*Linda Hildebrand*

**COMMUNITY LIAISON**  
*Donna Hart*

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR**  
*Julia Desilets*

**WEBMASTER**  
*Lori Fowlkes*

**HOURS OF OPERATION**

*Monday through Friday  
10:00 AM to 1:00 PM*

*Tuesday and Thursday Evenings  
5:00 to 7:00 PM*

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

*Donna Hart, President  
Eileen Shea, Secretary  
Barbara Carr, Treasurer  
Lily Alarcon, Director  
Rosemary O'Grady*

## NEW FACES, NEW ROLES

**T**he Birthright Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Julia Desilets has assumed the editorship of the biannual Birthright newsletter. She succeeds Kathy Mahoney who has been the editor for the past 17 years.

A Massachusetts native, Julia joined her family in Fredericksburg after she relocated from living in Europe. She resided in Rome for 12 years while discerning a vocation to a women's religious congregation. While in Rome, she received both her undergraduate and master's degrees. Currently, she is finishing a doctorate in Theology at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum) while working full-time for a non-profit in Washington, DC.

Julia joined Birthright of Fredericksburg in September of 2014 after visiting our booth at the annual parish ministry fair at St. Jude Church in Spotsylvania. Impressed with the pro-life organization's mission, she signed up for the fall training sessions and soon became a client advocate at our office.

The old adage about the busy people getting the job done certainly applies to the new editor. In addition to local volunteer work, Julia has been active in supporting a school in the small African country of Burundi.

## We need your help!

Birthright depends entirely on volunteer time, services, and gifts (monetary and in-kind). Please consider making a donation of the following:

diapers • baby wipes  
receiving blankets • baby towels

And please, don't forget to keep our volunteers and clients in your prayers!

## Birthright of Fredericksburg Anniversary

**I**t may be hard for many of us to believe, but our office will soon celebrate 40 years! Birthright of Fredericksburg opened its doors on November 17, 1976. We have many saved lives to celebrate! Please join us! Details of celebratory events will be forthcoming.

## BIRTHRIGHT INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

**T**he next Birthright International Convention will be held June 3-5, 2016 in Newark, New Jersey. See [www.birthrightconvention.org](http://www.birthrightconvention.org) for more information. The International Convention is a yearly gathering of representatives from all Birthright locations in the USA, Canada and the Ivory Coast.

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

### Barbara Carr

**O**f all the faithful Birthright volunteers in Fredericksburg over the years, Barbara Carr deserves special mention. Her loyal commitment to the 10:00 am shift on Tuesday mornings is not only a blessing to the numerous young women whom she has served, but it lends stability to the office calendar and staff - which is not to be taken for granted! Birthright depends entirely on the faithful commitment to life that volunteers like Barbara provide.

**When did you join Birthright?** I joined Birthright many years ago as a way to promote my pro-life values. Each day at Birthright is unique and brings with it new challenges. I remember one woman who came to us shortly after being released from jail; she was pregnant and unemployed. A case like this is rare and extremely challenging. We try to do the most we can within our means to help women like her who have numerous difficulties to overcome. We know that helping the mother is the best way to help the child. Fortunately, many of our clients' stories have a positive outcome and are a cause of celebration for all of us!

**What have you learned from your experience?** Over the years I have learned so much - not only from the many situations the expectant mothers have shared with us but also from the wisdom and love our wonderful volunteers provide. We all grow together in many ways by helping mothers and their babies build a life of hope for the future.

**Originally from:** Cincinnati, Ohio

**Number of Years Happily Married:** 56 years to a wonderful husband

**Church:** St. Jude Catholic Church, Spotsylvania

**Favorite Song:** Amazing Grace and Gentle Woman

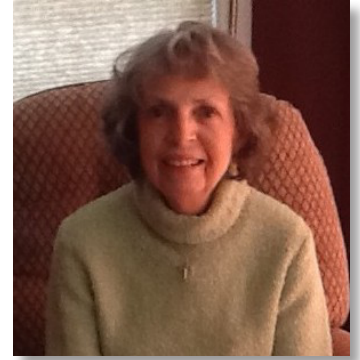
**Favorite Hobby/Pastime:** Interior decorating; watching college basketball, college football and pro football and baseball.

**Number of Years at Birthright of Fredericksburg:** 10+ years

**Number of Children:** 7 children, 21 grandchildren, and 3 great grandchildren

**Favorite Bible Verse:** Philippians 4:4-6: "Rejoice in the Lord always.

I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near. Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving make your requests known to God."



### Kathy Dandino

**B**irthright unites women from many different backgrounds around a shared value: life. All of our volunteers are involved because they know that life is a gift. Kathy Dandino shares with us her action in the pro-life movement from its beginnings just as she was expecting her first gift in the womb!

**When did you join Birthright?** Before I even knew about Birthright, I had taken an active role in defending life. I was a young 22 year-old mother for the first time when New York became the first state in the nation to legalize abortion (prior to the Roe vs. Wade decision). I remember how I felt at 8 months of pregnancy when this happened; I couldn't bear the thought of other young women like me considering an end to the life they carried in their womb. So, together with a few friends from church, I helped set up a crisis pregnancy hotline called 'Choices' in Utica, NY (circa 1968). We had a small office with a single phone in it. It was all we had, but it would make a difference. As a young mother, I felt strongly about the sanctity of life and I couldn't sit on the sidelines. I needed to do something to help women

make the best decision of their lives. Many years later, one of my daughters, Maria, followed in my footsteps by becoming local director of Birthright in Fredericksburg. I also got involved shortly afterwards.

**What have you learned from your experience?** I have learned that since I believe that life begins at conception, I must be pro-active about living that belief; I must 'put my money where my mouth is'. At first I wanted to do the 'easy work' and sit at the desk to answer phones and do paperwork as a receptionist. However, I soon realized that I had to go beyond my comfort zone and open my heart to the young women who walked in. I needed to rely on the Holy Spirit to do this.

The greatest challenge is when you are faced with a woman who is not open to life. You think to yourself, "there must be something I can do to save this child and save this mother, too!" All you can do is pray and trust that God gives you the right words to say at that moment. And He does!

**Number of Years at Birthright of Fredericksburg:** about 10 years; daughter, Maria, is a former Co-Director.

**Number of Children:** 2 daughters and 2 sons

**Favorite Song:** Ave Maria; it was sung at her wedding!

**Favorite Hobby:** Kathy and Ardie are both avid golfers!

**Number of Years Happily Married:** 51-1/2 years to husband Ardie; their 50th wedding anniversary was as special as the day they were married!

**Church:** St. Jude Catholic Church, Spotsylvania

**Favorite Bible Verse:** 1 Corinthians 13 - because it tells what love is and is not.

Kathy and her husband believe that, "Love is a decision we make every single day!"

## A Warm Welcome to Our New Volunteers

**A**t Birthright, we try to keep our doors open five days a week, 52 weeks of the year (or almost!). We wouldn't be able to do it without our faithful volunteers who make weekly or bi-monthly commitments of their time.

We warmly welcome the newest arrivals on our team of volunteers:

*Carleen Delio  
Mary Alice Markol  
Christine Thomas*

Thank you for joining us in our effort to save lives!

**thank you!**

## DONORS

*Susan Antos  
Suzanne Bevan  
Gladys Bowen Joan Burke  
Kathy Dandino  
Stephen Davezac  
Carleen and Richard Delio  
Stephen Dunham  
Elizabeth Dyer  
Thomas Elstner  
Patrick Fell  
Elizabeth Flanigan  
Mary Jane Flynn  
Henry Frydel  
Matthew Glancy  
Daniel Green*

*Mary Kenney  
Donna Landis  
Paul Landry  
J. Ross Lewis  
Laura Lyon  
Northrup Grumman  
Marie Savage  
St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church  
St. Mary Knights of Columbus  
St. Patrick Ladies Auxiliary  
Richard Wareing  
Richard Willing*

## Face Prayer

Heavenly Father, I embrace your grace this day, So that I might not: Think of another, Speak to another or Touch another, without first looking for Your Face in the other. I ask all this through Jesus Christ: God Incarnate, God with Skin, God made Poor, God with a Face. Amen!

by James Pinto, Jr, MEV  
Jim Pinto, Jr.  
[www.priestsforlife.org/missionary](http://www.priestsforlife.org/missionary)  
1.888.735.3448



## To Remember and Honor Those We Love

You can remember those you love with a tax-deductible donation to Birthright of Fredericksburg, Inc. We will mail a special note to the person you designate. Simply use this form to make this special donation:

### Special Birthright Donation

In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Designate the person you would like a special note sent to here:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

**We Need Your Support ...** Birthright is a non-profit, charitable organization supported by contributions. We are exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code, and all donations are tax deductible. We are independent, non-political, and non-sectarian. We're committed to helping women in crisis, single or married, regardless of age, race or religion.

- I would like to train as a Birthright client advocate. Call me!
- I would prefer to work in some other capacity such as office work, clothes sorting, fund raising, etc.
- I cannot volunteer at this time, but here's my donation for charitable works.
- I choose to donate on line using my credit card or PayPal: [www.birthrightoffredericksburg.com](http://www.birthrightoffredericksburg.com)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_