

AVA CARE
OF HARRISONBURG
ADVOCATE. VALIDATE. ANSWERS.

Summer 2024

HOPE IS POWERFUL

>> Suzy Kanode
Staff Patient Advocate

There are days we stand in awe of God's evident intervention in the lives of our patients at AVA Care. Recently, I met with Caroline*, a young woman experiencing an unexpected pregnancy. She was surprised by the immediate connection she had with her baby when the test came back positive. She and her boyfriend had previously agreed that they would have an abortion if this happened, but now she couldn't bring herself to consider anything but parenting. Her boyfriend, Jeremy*, was bewildered by this change of heart and plan. She shared with me a number of concerns they had discussed and have been unable to come into agreement about. To further complicate matters, a family member had spoken harsh words to Jeremy about how choosing to parent can negatively impact a person's life, which in turn crushed his spirit. It sounded like he was stuck in catastrophizing; believing worst-case scenarios about all of their concerns. Since he was not present for the appointment, I was only able to respond to Caroline. I assured her that it was not unusual to fear all of the "what-ifs", however, many couples have shared that by the time their babies were born, they couldn't imagine their lives without these precious ones. Part of

Continued on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE :: Celebrating 40 Years pg. 3 :: Annual Fundraising Banquet pg. 5 :: We're Hiring pg. 6

FROM THE DIRECTOR



SUSAN NULL

Connect with Susan at susan@avacareforyou.org or 540.434.7528

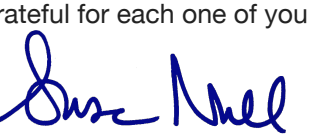
It was just two years ago that the Supreme Court handed down its landmark ruling, *Dobbs v Jackson Women's Health Organization*, which overturned *Roe v Wade*. This decision inspired reactions ranging from celebration to outrage, and the pregnancy center movement nationwide felt the impact. Since that decision, I have been asked repeatedly how *Dobbs* has impacted AVA Care. I wish I could say that it dramatically decreased the number of women seeking abortions. Because *Dobbs* sent the decision back to the states, rather than outlawing it entirely, abortion is still legal. Therefore access to abortion, specifically via the abortion pill, has only become more obtainable, with fewer restrictions than ever before. Medication abortion (using the abortion pill) has now surpassed surgical abortion as the leading method of terminating pregnancies.

This should concern us all. Never before has choosing abortion been easier than it is today. Never before has obtaining an abortion been less restricted. This makes every young woman vulnerable to the lie that because abortion is so accessible and increasingly socially acceptable, it must therefore be "safe" and "ok."

This year, we also celebrate two other anniversaries - our 40th anniversary of serving this community, and the 10th anniversary of the AVA Care of Harrisonburg name and our monthly donor program, Invest*Her*.

As we consider all that God has done in and through AVA Care over the last 40 years, there is much to be thankful for. As we consider the current culture, there is also much to be prayerful about. The work of AVA Care in this community has never before been more critical. We MUST be the first place women come when they believe abortion is their best or only option. Women deserve to have all of the information before making a decision about their undesired pregnancy, so that they can be educated on not only the short term risks of abortion, but also the lasting impacts it can have. Never before has your financial partnership been more important. Would you please consider becoming a monthly partner, an Invest*Her* with AVA Care? We are grateful for your financial support, which allows us to provide the valuable services that help save the lives of unborn babies and spare women in our community the regret of an abortion. We ask, too, for your prayers. I am so humbled and thankful that we at AVA Care are not in this alone.

I'm deeply grateful for each one of you,



HOPE IS POWERFUL cont'd

what we try to accomplish is helping our patients see that there is hope for the future because hope is powerful. We invite them to release their old dreams and to begin embracing new ones.

The next day, Caroline and Jeremy returned to see their baby on the ultrasound. Jeremy was able to meet with Bob, one of our male patient advocates. I filled Bob in on a few details that I hoped he'd be able to touch on. After the visit, Bob and I debriefed and not only had Bob been able to speak truth and hope in the areas I mentioned, but also in other issues that I had forgotten about. Some of the answers he gave Jeremy were almost identical to what I had given to Caroline! God had perfectly chosen this male advocate for this young man. As a result of their visits, both Caroline and Jeremy are leaning towards carrying and parenting their baby. I am reminded of Proverbs 25:11 "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver." God speaks through his people. At AVA Care, we speak life and truth in love over each woman and man who walks through our doors.



SUZY KANODE

**All patient names in this newsletter have been changed for confidentiality.*

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS



252 E. Wolfe St. (Dec 1984 – Jun 1991)



1014 Reservoir St. (Jul 1991 – Dec 1999)

Take a look at AVA Care's buildings in the past 40 years. Our God has been faithful every time!

Over the past 40 years, the Lord has faithfully provided spaces for Harrisonburg Crisis Pregnancy Center (HCPC), now AVA Care of Harrisonburg. The ministry's first home was on Wolfe Street near the downtown Kline's. HCPC then moved into a downstairs space in the Zapanta complex on the corner of Reservoir and MLK, Jr. Way. In 2000, the ministry moved into the space just above it and was there for over 20 years. In November 2023, we moved into the Copperstone One building, just over the fence. We praise God for his provision over the years!



833 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way (Jan 2000 – Nov 2023)



847 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way (Nov 2023 – present)

Celebrating 10 years as

AVA CARE
OF HARRISONBURG
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In 2014, Harrisonburg Pregnancy Center rebranded as AVA Care of Harrisonburg. Although there was a change in name and design and programs and services added, the heart of our mission has always been and always will be saving the lives of unborn babies and sparing women the regret abortion.

#GREATCOMMUNITYGIVE

An initiative of The Community Foundation





Thank you Park View Credit Union for sponsoring our $700 Power Hour prize!



Thank you iHeart Media for sponsoring our $1,500 Board Member prize!

Thank you for partnering with us as we create a culture of life in our community!

We are overflowing with gratitude for the generosity of our community and the provision of our God! Thanks to our friends and financial partners, we EXCEEDED our goal of $40,000 in the Great Community Give!

Celebrating 40 years

Grand total:

$42,243

$40,043 from donations

$2,200 from prizes won

THANK YOU

Integrity Custom Builders LLC

for your matching gift donation of

$3,000

THANK YOU

Mehegan & Sons Masonry Inc.

for your matching gift donation of

$1,500

THANK YOU

Keener Construction

for your matching gift donation of

$3,000

2024 Annual Fundraising Banquet

Save the Date

Tuesday, October 8th, 6:30 pm at Hotel Madison

Mark your calendars for our annual fundraising banquet. You won't want to miss this special night of celebrating our 40th anniversary, reflecting on what the Lord has done, and looking expectantly to the future. Our theme this year brings us to a place of praising God for all the ways He has moved and worked in and through AVA Care over the past 40 years. We also invite you to think about the generational impact the ministry of AVA Care has had over the past 40 years. Pause to consider the generations of people that have been saved because of each courageous woman who decided to keep the precious life inside of her. Now think about the many life-decisions over the past 40 years! Will you join us in this generational work?

If you are interested in serving as a table host or helping to financially underwrite this special night, please contact kayla@avacareforyou.org or call 540.434.7528.



A Wonderful Open House

Thank you to those who stopped by our Open House in the beginning of April. It was a joy to share our beautiful new clinic space as well as the services, mission, and stories of our ministry. Our staff and board members had a wonderful time of fellowship with AVA Care supporters. Stay connected for future opportunities to see our space and celebrate our 40th anniversary! If you'd like to schedule a personal tour, please reach out to our Executive Director, susan@avacareforyou.org or call 540.434.7528.





Front row: Amy, Kayla, Alicia
Back row: Dr. Teresa, Susan, Kara, Miriam

LOSS, TIMES TWO

>> Kara Durante
Director of Patient Services

Callie* is a college student who did not feel ready to be a mother. She had a whole career ahead of her that she wanted to pursue and this pregnancy was not in her plans. She and her boyfriend decided to have an abortion, but it was not the “easy” decision they had originally imagined. Callie came in for an after- abortion assessment appointment about five weeks after her medication abortion (taking an abortion pill). From the start of talking about her experience, she appeared to be holding back tears. As I asked several questions to open the conversation, I could sense she was someone who worked hard to keep her emotions close and guarded. Callie did share that the abortion was mostly what she expected physically, but she was not prepared for the emotional impact. Just seventeen days after the abortion, her boyfriend of nine months left the relationship, which left Callie feeling completely alone and isolated. He made her “out to be a villain”, saying, “you killed my child.” Callie was devastated. Not only did she lose her boyfriend, but she was left completely alone to pick up the pieces. His mother had previously told Callie if she ever were to get pregnant abortion would not be an option because they are “pro-life and very religious.” Since they did not want his family to know, they kept it a secret from Callie’s mother as well, even though they knew she would be supportive of the abortion decision. Callie expressed her frustration at seeing her ex-boyfriend around campus joking around with his friends and pretending that everything was “fine” while she was suffering from physical side effects of the abortion even weeks later. This exacerbated her feelings of loneliness. We have an after-abortion assessment program so women like Callie don’t feel so alone. Just like our other services, we take a holistic approach to care - physical, emotional, and spiritual. Callie said she prayed a lot when she was pregnant and believes God showed her what kind of relationship she should be in since she identified her previous relationship as "toxic" with a "few physical altercations." She knew she did not want her ex to be the father of her kids. We were then able to discuss healthy relationships and positive traits to consider in a future partner. Young women express many differing beliefs about how God sees them or their situation. Callie identified as a Christian, and believed that God allowed this pregnancy, not because God wants her to be a mother, but to teach her that she needs to be more responsible with her decisions. We know that this is not how God views her or her baby’s life. We know that God values all life regardless of the circumstances. Unfortunately, we serve a lot of young women who misunderstand God’s heart for themselves and their unborn babies. Thankfully, at AVA Care we are able to speak the truth about who God is and the love He has for each man and woman who walks through our door - no matter what they decide.

We have new and exciting changes to our team!

Join us in welcoming Jenny Andes, our new Finance Manager! We are excited and grateful to have her at AVA Care. Many, many thanks to Miriam Clark for serving as our Interim Finance Coordinator over the past two years. We are delighted that Miriam will be shifting to a new role at AVA Care as our Donor Data Specialist. Please congratulate these women on their new roles with AVA Care!



Miriam & Jenny

We're Hiring!

We are looking for individuals who:

- enjoy a personal relationship with God
- hold life-affirming values
- exhibit a strong work ethic
- love working in a team environment
- desire to make a difference in the Kingdom

If these describe you, please consider whether your qualifications and experience might have prepared you for one of these open positions.To apply, please send a cover letter and resume to apply@avacareforyou.org.



Scan to learn more!

Staff

Susan Null
Executive Director

Kara Durante
Director of Patient Services

Alicia Showalter, BSN, RN
Director of Nursing

Kayla Weber
Communications Coordinator

Deb Darrell, BSN, RN
Staff Nurse

Suzy Kanode
Staff Patient Advocate

Amy Hoover
Administrative Coordinator

Miriam Clark
Donor Data Specialist

Teresa Klansek, DO
Medical Director

Jenny Andes
Finance Manager

Emily Ritchie, MD
Volunteer Consultant for Ultrasound Services

Board of Directors

Aaron Lorson - President
Troy Suter - Vice President/Treasurer
Ally Padilla, LPC - Secretary
Michael Marsh, MD
Katelyn Will
Pam Gray
Jeff Stapel
Carrie Combs
Matt Hinkle
Matthew Gray

Vision

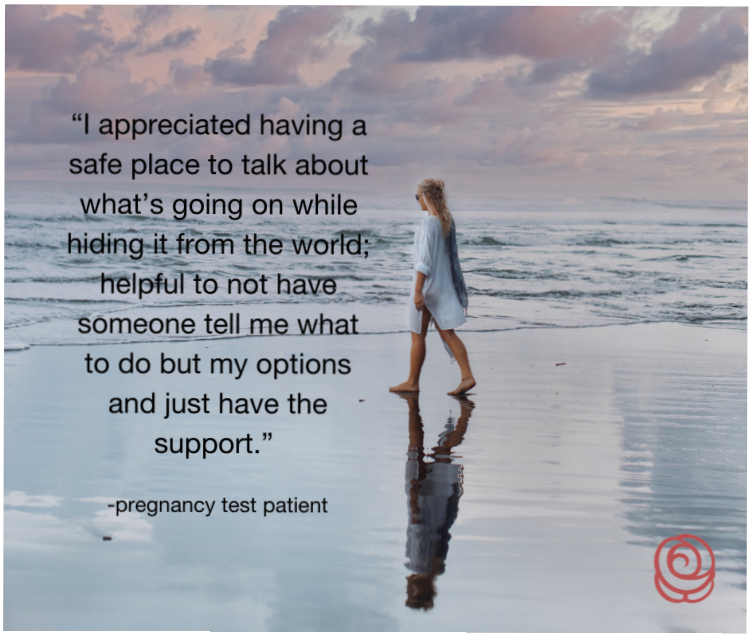
To be the most trusted source of care for individuals facing sexual health and pregnancy decisions in our community.

Mission

We are a Christian, life-affirming medical nonprofit that provides relevant testing services, education, and hope to individuals at risk of or facing undesired pregnancies.

Newsletter paid for and sponsored by:

PXI Print Signs Apparel



Friends of AVA Care

@avacarefriends

Connect with us on Facebook & Instagram!

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Urgent Volunteer needs:
Office Cleaners
Spanish Interpreters

Material needs:
Size 6 diapers

Wish List
Printer (Duplex, color)

Financial
One-time donations – visit support.avacareforyou.org
Invest*Hers* – ongoing financial partners
For more information, contact susan@avacareforyou.org.

WE'RE THE EXPERTS ON UNINTENDED PREGNANCY AND HERE FOR HER - NO MATTER WHAT SHE DECIDES.

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SUMMER 2024 NEWSLETTER

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Harrisonburg, VA
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