AVA CARE
OF HARRISONBURG
ADVOCATE. VALIDATE. ANSWERS.

Summer 2026



Freedom Found in the Why

>> Suzy Kanode, Staff Patient Advocate

Nadia* visited AVA Care for the first time because she had recently become sexually active and, after having several partners, wanted to get tested for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). As an 18-year-old who grew up in the Church, she had mixed feelings about sex before marriage. She knew her church and parents taught that sex should be reserved for marriage but never had an explanation of why. It was my pleasure to gently explain biblical sexual integrity to Nadia. I helped her understand why God's good gift of sex is best enjoyed within a loving and committed marriage relationship. Many people simply think 'no sex before marriage' is God's way of withholding something good and pleasurable from humans. However, the Bible and modern scientific research agree that this is actually for everyone's benefit. Knowing this, I encourage women to see abstinence as God's loving and protective boundary that allows them to thrive in life.

> ***"...this program provides the space to speak Truth over women who may have never heard it before, who need to be reminded of their worth..."***

Nadia was grateful for this new perspective and marked on her exit evaluation that she was committing to abstinence until marriage. Nadia asked me to help her pray for forgiveness and to restore her relationship with God. At the end of the visit, I sent her home with links to various Bible and discipleship apps. I

Continued on page 7

INSIDE THIS ISSUE :: We're Hiring pg. 2 :: Fundraising Banquet pg. 3 :: Abortion Amendment Update pg. 4

FROM THE DIRECTOR



SUSAN NULL

Connect with Susan at susan@avacareforyou.org or 540.434.7528

Friends,

The year is flying by so quickly and before we know it summer will be over. Fall will potentially be a challenging season for Virginia and for AVA Care. In the Commonwealth, we are facing the unlimited abortion amendment on the ballot in November that, if passed, will enshrine abortion into our state constitution (see page 4) and if passed abortion will be legal up to 40 weeks of pregnancy (current limit is 26 weeks, 6 days). Even now, the abortion pill is more easily accessible than ever, with little to no restrictions in Virginia.

In regards to AVA Care, we have some open positions, specifically a Staff Nurse position (urgent need), and Spanish interpreters (see below).

Your partnership has never been more critical than it is now. Because we are partners in this work that God has called us to at AVA Care, I'm asking a few things of you:

1. Please pray for our state and the ministry of AVA Care.
2. Vote "NO" to the unlimited abortion amendment on November 3.
3. Please prayerfully consider increasing your financial giving; consider becoming an Invest*Her.*
4. Ask the Lord what part you can play in helping to fill the staff and volunteer needs at AVA Care, and pray for His provision.

As we prepare for our upcoming fundraising banquet, we are reminded of our theme – Courage Under Fire. We are indeed under fire from the evil one, and we must stand courageously in what the Lord has called and equipped us to do.

We give thanks that Jesus has already won the victory. We remain confident in who He is and in whom our strength comes from.

Humbled to stand courageously with you,



Join our Staff

Staff Nurse (28-32 hrs/wk)
Staff Patient Advocate (32 hrs/wk)

Send a cover letter and resume to apply@avacareforyou.org

Volunteer

To learn more contact kara@avacareforyou.org.

Healthcare Professionals
(RN, NP, PA, or MD)
Spiritual Mentors
Spanish interpreters

Donate

Your financial gift today can impact someone's tomorrow.



AVA Care Annual Fundraising Banquet

Tuesday, 9.15.26



Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.

Nehemiah 4:14b

There is so much at stake this year as the Virginia Constitutional Amendment for Unlimited Abortion will be on our ballots in November. That's why we've chosen our theme this year as *Courage Under Fire*. No matter what attacks may come, we remain confident in the truth that the battle belongs to the Lord, and we take comfort and strength in the exhortation in Nehemiah 4:14b. Just as the people of Jerusalem surrounded and defended those completing the Lord's work in Nehemiah 4, we need people in our community who are willing to surround and defend AVA Care in the months and years ahead. Let's courageously stand together as we save the lives of unborn babies and spare women the regret of abortion.

Interested in learning more about attending? Contact kayla@avacareforyou.org or call 540.434.7528.

#GREATCOMMUNITYGIVE

An initiative of The Community Foundation

- **$39,184.21 donated to AVA Care!**
- Power Hour won for the fourth year in a row resulting in a $1,000 cash prize sponsored by Virginia Wealth Advisors
- 135 unique donors gave to AVA Care
- Thank you to Keener Construction, Mehegan & Sons Masonry Inc., and Cardinal Dental Specialists for their matching gift donations totaling $7,500.
- $2.8 million+ raised for the 156 participating nonprofits



GRAND TOTAL: $40,184.21

Thank you to everyone who supported AVA Care by donating and praying over the success of this fundraising initiative.

BE INFORMED

Abortion Amendment:
Know the ballot language and what it means

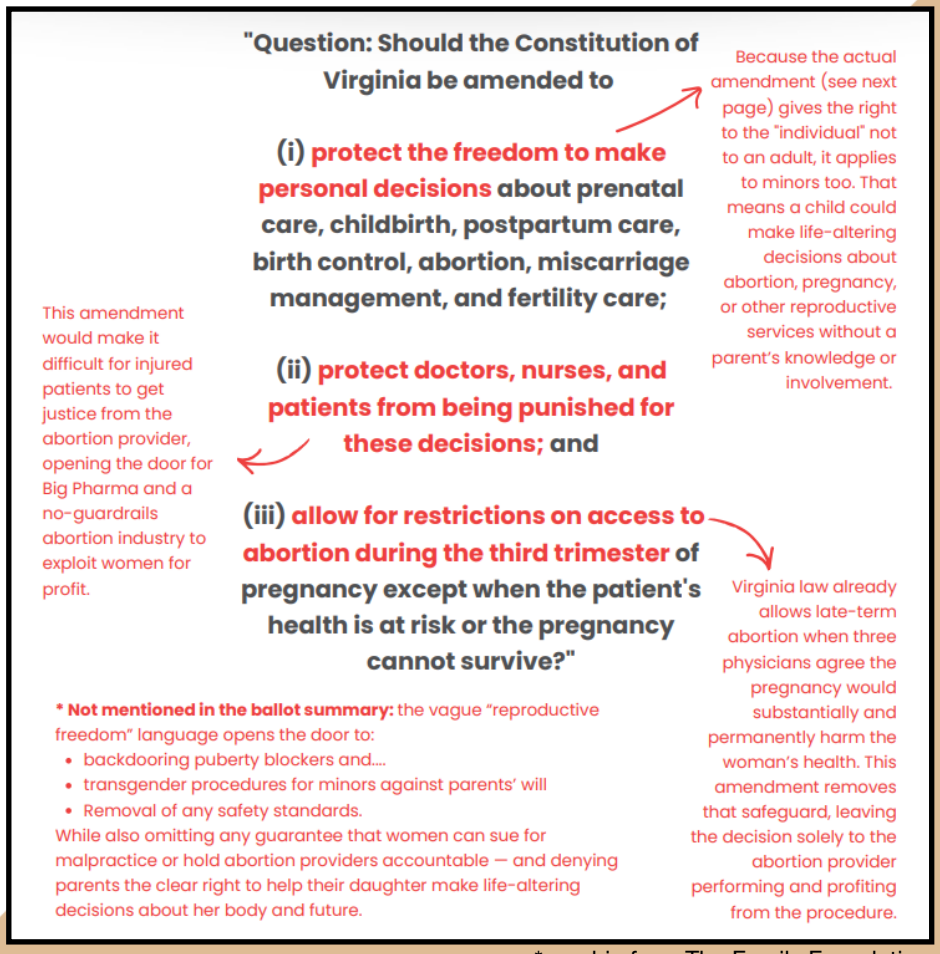
AVA Care of Harrisonburg is not (never has been and never will be) a political organization. However, many political outcomes affect us and our patients. With the upcoming vote on the proposed amendment for unlimited abortion to the Virginia Constitution (November 2026), it is imperative that men and women who believe in and desire to protect the sanctity of all human life understand what is at stake. We must be informed on how to protect unborn babies and the women who believe abortion is their best or only option.

Through AVA Care's After Abortion Assessment service, we have seen up-close the physical, emotional, relational, and spiritual effects abortion can have on women, and it's heartbreaking. We shudder at the thought of increased access, decreased safety standards and virtually no regulations. Our greatest desire is to save the lives of unborn babies and spare women the regret of abortion, but we can't do it without you.

Vote your biblical values in November! The language that will be on the ballot is tricky and you may agree with portions of it, but don't be fooled. This amendment seeks to enshrine the right to abortion up to birth, erase parental consent, and strip away safety standards. Be confident when voting and understand what the ballot language and amendment actually says.

We plead with you—pray that God's people will exercise their civic duty to vote, that the amendment will not pass, and that He will restore Virginia to a state that protects and celebrates LIFE.

To view full document and other similar resources, visit our Be Informed page.



*graphic from The Family Foundation

Welcome our new staff member!

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT



Jason Reese
Church and Community Relations Coordinator

"In my role as the Church and Community Relations Coordinator, I have an opportunity to serve our faith partners and church communities by fostering strong relationships and identifying partnership opportunities. Our shared vision for ministry and mission align with my personal value system of serving those who minister and ministering to those who serve."

We're thankful for our Male Patient Advocates

So far this year, AVA Care has served 13 male patients who have attended pregnancy test appointments with their partners. We asked our Male Patient Advocates some questions about their experiences in this role. Here are a few of their comments and thoughts.

"Every male that comes with his partner has a unique story. It is a privilege to care about the man in the story...While we respect their decision, I'm thankful for the opportunity to help them think through the different options that come with an unplanned pregnancy. We also know that what the man thinks about the pregnancy is a significant factor in what Mom decides. Commending him for coming and encouraging [his] support for Mom and the baby is a blessing that we can extend."

– Larry

"What has impacted me most about the [Male Advocate role] has been finding vulnerability rather unexpectedly. Men present as strong, unshakable, determined and then, by gently asking questions, [I begin] to see the facade erode, realizing many are searching for someone to hear them and help them find hope.

I appreciate knowing men who have dedicated their time to step into an emotion-charged environment knowing they will be profoundly affected. And then [praising God] for the opportunity to be His ears and allowing Him to provide words of acceptance and value that are far greater than [we are] capable of."

– Bob

"Caring for all of our patients, including their partners, regardless of the path they ultimately choose models how Jesus loves us. In the New Commandment, Jesus did not command us to judge one another or condemn one another, He commanded us to love one another just as He loves us. Loving and caring for our male patients could be the very encouragement they need to, in turn, be an encouragement and true support structure for their partners."

– Jason

The father of the baby often has a major influence in the decision-making process for an unintended pregnancy, that can be through apathy, pressure, or support. Our volunteer Male Patient Advocates provide a space for these fathers to share their own concerns, ask their own questions, and receive empowering care. We believe providing support for the male partner is yet another way we can serve *her* well as she walks through an unintended pregnancy.

A Misconception of AVA Care Saved a Life

>> Kara Durante, Director of Patient Services

In recent months, we've received an increase of out-of-state calls from women seeking an abortion in Virginia. We explain the services we offer, and that we do not perform or refer for abortion. Although it's clearly stated, some arrive at our clinic still assuming we offer the procedure, only to become frustrated or upset when they learn otherwise. A few choose to stay for their appointment, though often with visible disappointment. Others leave as soon as they understand we do not perform abortions. We always strive to provide clear, accurate information about what each appointment includes, and while we offer education about abortion procedures and risks, some still mistake that for offering the service itself. Thankfully, Mary* understood the value of our services and decided it was worth the 4.5-hour drive from out of state. Approximately four months before her appointment with us, Mary learned she was pregnant for the second time and financial limitations prevented her from pursuing an abortion. During our conversation, she expressed that she was comfortable with abortion no matter how far along she was and stated that, as long as abortion remained available, she intended to pursue one. I challenged her to consider whether finances were the only reason she had paused her decision months earlier or if she was wrestling with the decision more than she let on. As a mother, she already understood the deep bond and connection that she had with her one-year-old daughter. We discussed the potential emotional and physical impacts of abortion. Although she stated that her first abortion years ago had not affected her significantly, I reminded her that each experience can be different. At her ultrasound appointment, Mary was 19 weeks and 2 days along in her pregnancy. Despite seeing her baby and being well into the second trimester, she left intending to still have an abortion. I texted and called to follow up, but never heard back. Several months later, we received a fax from an OBGYN office requesting Mary's records. I was hopeful that this was for prenatal care and not abortion follow-up. Fortunately, when I called to check-in and ask, she answered and said that she and her partner decided to keep the pregnancy! She shared that they had further conversations with both sides of their families and felt like they had good support to have another baby. Since Mary lives out of state, I connected her with a pregnancy resource center near her home so she could continue receiving support. We are grateful that Mary saw the value in AVA Care's services and found the encouragement and support she needed to choose life for her baby and is now moving forward with confidence and hope.



IGNITE

Empowering the next generation of life advocates

On Monday, June 8, we welcomed fourteen high school students to our second IGNITE event. They were eager to learn more about AVA Care's services, the current abortion culture, and how they could make a difference in their schools and communities. These students were empowered to protect life, but to also show compassion towards mothers who are facing unintended pregnancy. We cannot wait to see how this generation of life advocates boldly defends life now and in the future.





> Thank you for pursuing the heart of the mother and encouraging me to do so as well. I pray the Lord will bless your work forever and that you will continue to reach these women who so desperately need you and the love of Jesus you show them.
>
> *-IGNITE student*

Want to be notified about future events? Complete our interest form!

Freedom Found in the Why *(continued from cover)*

have every confidence that God will lead her to make healthier relationship decisions and enjoy a deeper relationship with Him.

This is a beautiful example of one of the reasons we provide STI testing at AVA Care. While this program is designed to serve women who are at risk of unintended pregnancy, it also provides the space to speak Truth over women who may have never heard it before, who need to be reminded of their worth, or who are seeking another narrative than the current culture. One of our greatest prayers is that women leave AVA Care changed for the better. Being a place where women, like Nadia, enter bound by sin and walk out in freedom is a great joy. Thank you for being a part of life-change at AVA Care.



SUZY KANODE

Staff

Susan Null
Executive Director

Kara Durante
Director of Patient Services

Alicia Showalter, BSN, RN
Director of Nursing

Kayla Weber
Communications Coordinator

Suzy Kanode
Staff Patient Advocate

Amy Hoover
Administrative Coordinator

Miriam Clark
Donor Data Specialist

Jenny Andes
Finance Manager

Carter Gardner, RDMS
Sonographer

Jason Reese
Church and Community Relations Coordinator

Jeff Domingus, DO
Volunteer Medical Director

Emily Ritchie, MD
Volunteer Consultant for Ultrasound Services

Board of Directors

Carrie Combs – President
Katelyn Will – Vice President
Matt Hinkle – Treasurer
Jeff Stapel – Secretary
Michael Marsh, MD
Pam Gray
Matthew Gray, CFP®
Lorenzo Carrazana
Manny Fisher

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.

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

Newsletter sponsored in part by:

PXI Print Signs Apparel

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Financial:
- One-time donations
- Become an Invest*Her* *(monthly financial partner)*
- Planned/Legacy giving

Material Needs:
- Diapers size 4, 5, 6
- Blank journals
- Small baby board books
- Small baby toys

Wish List:
- Please visit our new wish list registry at: *support.avacareforyou.org/in-kind*

Stay Connected & Informed

Follow us!

Friends of AVA Care

@avacarefriends

Sign up for our monthly email updates to see more…

- AVA Care happenings
- Upcoming events
- Prayer requests
- Critical updates

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

AVA CARE
OF HARRISONBURG
ADVOCATE. VALIDATE. ANSWERS.

847 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way | Harrisonburg, VA 22801
Address Service Requested

SUMMER 2026 NEWSLETTER