

# footprints

## INSPIRED BY YOU

At a time when the world has turned upside down, and young women and men are not sure who to trust or where to turn when faced with life's changes and challenges, Waterleaf is here to offer hope. Every member of the Waterleaf family, including you, is instrumental in reaching, serving, and inspiring these women and men.

*We dedicate this newsletter to you, our faithful friends, with deep gratitude for your support. Our ability to inspire and to be inspired is made possible by you.*



## YOU MAKE THEM SO HAPPY!

The women and men we serve express their gratitude in so many ways. Some visit the clinic with their child(ren) to personally thank the team, some pose for pictures or make a video, some send texts, some send thank you cards, and some leave Google reviews. This year, we've had the honor of connecting with patients and clients from all over the world. Some needed medical services, some resources, and some pregnancy loss support. Whether we served them in the clinic, or found them a center closer to home, they experienced love. THANK YOU for making all this possible.



*Aspire and Waterleaf in general just helped me. I have support. I have a system. I have people who are here for me. I utilize literally all the women here. ... I'm so grateful to what they do here. And how much they help the community and the women who can't afford to go to a doctor's office.*

I had no idea you were in Illinois when I landed on your website. I reached out because I liked your name and everything about your site seemed so warm and welcoming. I'm so thankful for the support I've received from Waterleaf.

I just wanted to thank you so much. I couldn't be more grateful. Can't tell you how much of a difference you make in this world.

You helped me make one of the best decisions of my life. I'm so grateful that God sent you my way.



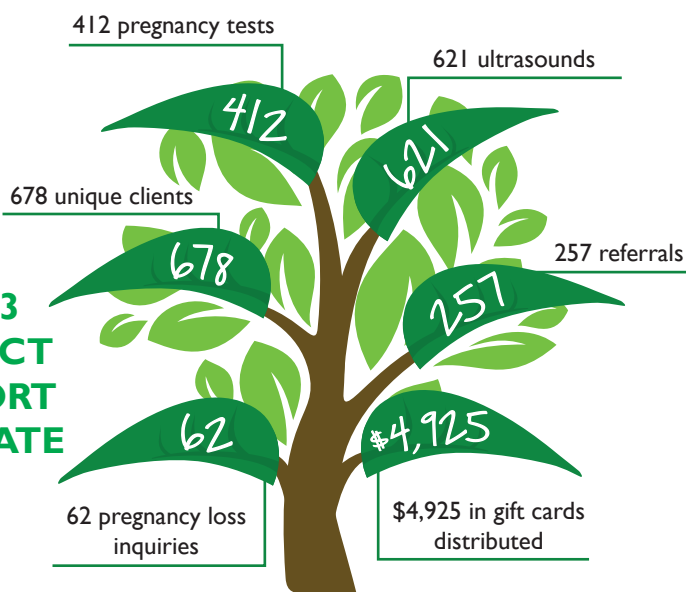
*When I thought there was no where to go I found Waterleaf.*

I had been nervous before I came here but after an hour and a half of talking to 3 amazing women I feel myself very comfortable and calm. Thank you very much for both medical and mental help! It's really very inestimable support for a pregnant woman.



*The best service and hospitality. Felt very comfortable.*

## 2023 IMPACT REPORT TO-DATE





## HOPE STARTS HERE

This is Waterleaf's tag line intended to let potential patients know we are here to help. Hope is commonly used to mean a wish or desire for something. For our patients, hope for their future dispels the feeling that their lives are over because they are pregnant. Giving them hope is fundamental to our mission. This is possible because of your faithful support.

As Christians, we know that hope is a virtue, a gift from God that gives us confidence, joy, peace, power, and love. From our faith perspective our hope is not **FOR** something, our hope is **IN** God's promises and faithfulness. Hope is vital if we are to maintain a proper outlook on the events of our lives.

For Waterleaf, the events of last year could lead us to despair; could cause us to cower in fear. Indeed, we face an uncertain future given recent legislation in Illinois, the current cultural 'norms,' and division throughout our country. What we do know is that with hope **IN** the Lord, our resolve to courageously stand for life has never been stronger. Throughout this newsletter you will witness the enthusiasm and energy of the work of your Waterleaf family. You will see that Hope really does start here!



***"Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." —Isaiah 40:31***

## STANDING FOR LIFE IN SPRINGFIELD

In April, Waterleaf was invited to participate in the Illinois Right to Life rally in Springfield opposing the anti-pregnancy center Senate Bill (SB 1909). At first, I was uncomfortable and reluctant to accept. However, we promised to Stand For Life! In saying "YES", we spoke boldly at the rally about the value of pregnancy centers in Illinois. Saying "YES" put us in front of our state representative where we personally and passionately shared the importance of our work and the truth of how we operate. It may not change the outcome of SB 1909, but continuing to say "YES", even when it's uncomfortable, keeps us in the fight. This is all God asks of us. Thank you for all your interest, support, prayers, words of encouragement, and faith in Waterleaf as we courageously Stand For Life!

As expected, this bill passed at the end of the day on May 10th. With Hope **IN** God's divine plan, we are staying in the fight! Keep Praying, Keep Standing For Life!

—Julie Garofalo, Executive Director



Top right: Julie Garofalo, Executive Director at Waterleaf speaks at a rally for pregnancy resource centers in Springfield on April 26. Above left: Several legislators stopped by to show their support for life. Above right: IL Senator Terri Bryant offered supportive words for pregnancy centers. Bottom: A large crowd came out to support pregnancy centers.

# IS THAT YOU CALLING ME, GOD?

## Jackie's Story

It was God that brought us to this area. Living nearby, I would frequently drive by Waterleaf. It was through Fr. James that I learned more about the center. I was at a point in my life where I was questioning what I can do with my time that would mean something. I knew it was a God moment when I called Waterleaf and they said a volunteer cohort was starting that very week. As I turned to prayer trying to figure out if this is where I was being called, I remembered being pregnant at 18 without anywhere to go and feeling super alone. It was in that moment I realized it was the right thing for me to be that helpful person to women in the same situation.



Jackie Gullett

Throughout the training, I was so concerned about getting the script just right because I thought it was all about “the talk.” I was intimidated but came to understand the ease and authenticity of Waterleaf’s appointment process. I discovered how the entire encounter with a patient relies on the Holy Spirit and the power of the ultrasound. I began to understand God does the work of changing hearts. Our patients are His gift to us, and we are privileged to serve them when they are most vulnerable. For me, it’s such a gift to have a conversation about faith with our patients and to pray with them.

Being at Waterleaf is completely different from any other work environment I’ve experienced. It feels good because there is a common purpose, and everyone is so caring and genuine. I see how much help is available at Waterleaf and Aspire. I see how meticulous they are in providing the highest levels of care. I see so much good! I would have loved a place like this when I was 18 and alone. As a donor and a volunteer, when it comes to sharing what my husband and I have to give, it’s a no brainer – Waterleaf is our choice!

## Destiny's Story

When Planned Parenthood came into Aurora, I was part of the prayer walk. I live nearby and for years uplifted Waterleaf in prayer and prayed that God would tear down the walls of PP every time I drove by. Our passion for the unborn compelled my husband and I to step out in faith to financially support Waterleaf. The newsletters we received let us know the impact of our contributions over the years. While we joyfully continued to support Waterleaf through the years, little did I know how Waterleaf would impact my life.



Destiny Baker

For years, I lead a Women’s Bible Study at my church, but felt God calling me out of that ministry. In faith, I stepped away. I prayed all that summer about what was next for me. When the Waterleaf fall newsletter arrived, the first article I read was about a woman named Destiny. That’s when I contacted Waterleaf about volunteering. Nothing happened at first, and I continued to pray. A couple months later, everything fell in place, and I started my Waterleaf volunteer training.

I was immediately impressed with the length and thoroughness of the training. Understanding the why of how we serve women appealed to my rational and logical way of thinking. Waterleaf’s consistency of care and level of excellence is so important to me. Everything is run so well and the people I work with are such a joy. Waterleaf is a good fit for me, and it was worth the prayers, the patience, and the wait. I know without a doubt this is where God was calling me.

It is such a privilege and honor to walk alongside women who are at a crossroad in their lives. The spiritual component of our work is most encouraging to me. The opportunity to have an eternal impact on their souls is the most fulfilling part of my service. The love and compassion we share when discussing options, offering resources, and praying together is surely directed by God. For so many women, the walls come down when we simply love them when they need it most.

This past year was the first time we attended Evening of Hope. We were amazed at the number of supporters in attendance, and so moved by Ambrea’s testimony. To experience Evening of Hope as both a donor and a volunteer was such a gift. As a donor, I understood the impact and importance of our continued support. As a volunteer, I understood the impact of answering God’s call. My faith in Waterleaf and its mission has grown so much in the last year. Waterleaf is absolutely worth the investment of my time, talent, and treasure. I am so grateful for the continued support of you, my fellow donors. In complete confidence I can say, don’t ever doubt the impact of investing in Waterleaf.

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As we continue to serve more women and men, we’ve strategically positioned our team to meet these demands. In December, God graciously provided us what we needed.



**Cindi Logan** as our full-time Nurse Manager. Cindie joins us with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Northern Illinois University and 30 years of experience. Her professional nursing experience includes diverse roles in healthcare management providing expert care to pediatric and adult populations. Cindie enjoys the arts, dancing, traveling, and hiking. Cindie and her husband have been married 21 years and have two wonderful teenagers.



**Margi Masbaum**, our part-time Nurse Manager for many years, moved into to the role of Pregnancy Loss Specialist – a role that speaks to her heart. In this role Margi ministers to women who have suffered a loss of their pregnancy whether that loss is due to miscarriage, stillbirth, abortion, or adoption. Margi is uniquely qualified to serve in this capacity given her extensive experience in nursing and counseling combined with her many years here at Waterleaf serving thousands of women navigating unexpected pregnancies. Margi’s transition to this role was perfectly timed. Since the beginning of 2023, we have had 62 individual requests for pregnancy loss support.

We have been blessed to also add 9 fully trained volunteers to our team as Advocates, Nurses, and Resource Specialists.



## PLANNING YOUR LEGACY

Legacy has two meanings – “money or property left in a will” and “the long-lasting impact of particular actions or of a person’s life.” The term Legacy Giving combines these two concepts and is a thoughtful way to make an impact by your generosity and by making a cause you care about an important part of your life story. Your gift might also prompt others to consider their own giving goals and inspire them to do the same. There are many ways to design a legacy gift and some of them make it possible to leave a larger gift. However, a legacy gift of any amount has a lasting impact.

We are thrilled to announce a legacy partnership with the Catholic Order of Foresters (COF) a leading fraternal life insurance organization based in Naperville. COF is a highly reputable not-for-profit insurance company that has been supportive of the Waterleaf mission for many years. The COF Fraternal Legacy Rider enables owners of certain qualifying life insurance policies to leave a gift in the amount of an additional 5% of the policy’s death benefit to Waterleaf at no additional cost to them or their family.



For more information go to: <https://www.catholicforester.org/waterleaf> or scan the QR code to connect with our general agent and Waterleaf supporter **Tom Wesolowski**.



## RUN FOR LIFE 2023



Our second annual Waterleaf Run for Life will be here before you know it. We will once again be hosting this 5K Run, 2.2 Mile Walk, and 1 Mile Fun Run for kids on **Saturday, September 9th at 8:00 am**. This run will take place at the certified Waubensee Lake Course in Aurora at the Pavilion entrance.



There are several ways to participate in the Run for Life:

- Register to run or walk on race day
- Volunteer to help
- Sponsor our race



Scan the QR code or visit the race website at:  
<https://raceroster.com/events/2023/75486/waterleaf-run-for-life>

**Registration begins June 1, 2023**

## GIFT CARDS GALORE - FLYING OUT THE DOOR

At Waterleaf, we use gift cards to support our patients and clients. Some are used for immediate assistance, some for participating in our Earn While You Learn education program, and some for new baby gifts after moms deliver. During the first four months of 2023, we have distributed \$4,925 in gift cards and estimate we will distribute \$15,000 in gift cards by the end of the year – a 25% increase from 2022! Every single one of these gift cards are donated by individuals, schools, churches and other organizations. Our greatest need is gift cards in \$20 or \$25 amounts to gas stations, grocery stores, fast food restaurants, or stores like Walmart, Target, or Meijer. Our gift card inventory is running very low. Ask us how you can help!



## BABY BOTTLES FOR LIFE



Our baby bottles have been literally flying off the shelves since beginning the 2023 campaign in January. Waterleaf supporters have filled over 2,900 bottles already! If you would like to organize a baby bottle campaign with your church, parish, or school please visit our website at [onechoiceonlife.org](http://onechoiceonlife.org) to find out more information or contact **Megan Barnhart** directly at 630-701-6270.

## HELP WANTED: GARDENERS

If you have a green thumb and a couple of hours a week, consider joining our gardening team. Contact

**Julie Garofalo** 630-701-6270 or [julieg@waterleafwc.org](mailto:julieg@waterleafwc.org) for more information.



# YOU BROKE THE RECORD - OVER \$400,000 GIVEN

The Evening of Hope Gala gathers so many of our faithful supportive friends, volunteers, and staff to celebrate and cherish how blessed we are to be part of the Waterleaf family.

At this year's Evening of Hope *Lucky 13*, we filled the entire ballroom with over 800 brothers and sisters. We caught up with each other, welcomed countless new supporters, heard heart-warming testimonies, and danced away to the sound of the band Soda. It was a night to remember.

If you were unable to attend or would like to relive the night, watch the video at [onechoiceoneline.org](https://onechoiceoneline.org). For those of you who heard Ambrea and Tae's story, enjoy this recent picture of Jazari. Ambrea recently returned to work and, while she misses her little man like crazy during the day, they are all doing well.

## LOOKING FOR A WAY TO MULTIPLY YOUR GIFT?

Maximize your support with a corporate matching gift. Many companies offer philanthropic programs and will financially match donations that their employees give to nonprofit organizations.

At Waterleaf, we are grateful for the many donors who have supported us through their employers' matching gift programs. In 2022, we received over \$37,000 in matching gifts, triple the amount in 2021! If you would like to multiply the impact of your gift, ask your employer if they have a matching gift program. Most companies will match 1:1, but others match 2:1, 3:1 and even 4:1! There are also companies that match volunteer hours with a set monetary donation. Whatever the match, you will increase the impact of your gift to Waterleaf.

Check with your employer about their matching gift program. Or learn more by contacting **Megan Barnhart**, Development Director at Waterleaf at 630-701-6270.



Ambrea and Javonte with baby Jazari at the 2023 Evening of Hope



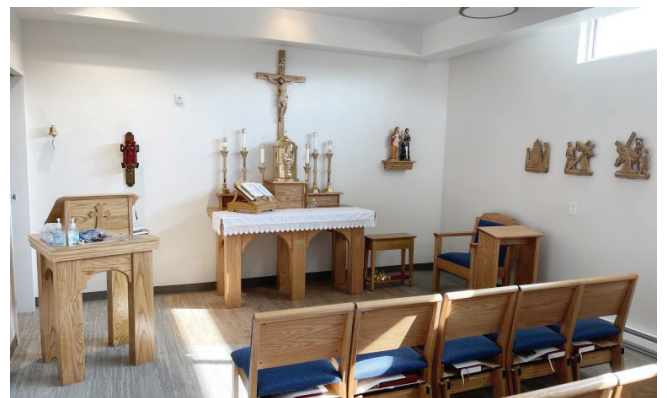
Baby Jazari at 5 months

## SEEING IS BELIEVING

Everyone who visits Waterleaf is so impressed with the building, the team, and our story. They generally say "I had no idea. I'm so glad I took the time to visit and see for myself."

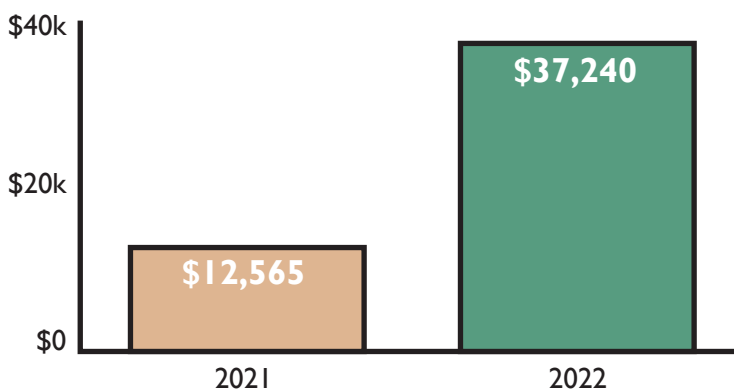


You are welcome to Waterleaf at any time during business hours to pray in our beautiful chapel. Or join us for daily prayer, weekly mass or adoration. Visit [onechoiceoneline.org](https://onechoiceoneline.org) for the schedule.



Want to see the clinic? Schedule a tour during business hours or schedule an exclusive **"Behind the Scenes VIP Tour."** These nights are intended to give our donors an opportunity to bring new friends to our clinic for a tour, meet some of our staff, and learn more about our life-saving mission. All you have to do is gather a group, pick a date, and we will do all the rest to arrange this private evening here at Waterleaf. To learn more contact **Megan Barnhart**, Development Director at Waterleaf at 630-701-6270.

## WATERLEAF MATCHING GIFT DONATIONS





# THE TRUTH IS THE TRUTH WHETHER YOU BELIEVE IT OR NOT

Over the past couple of months, we have been speaking to so many of you regarding the Deceptive Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers Act (SB 1909) which is designed to discredit centers like Waterleaf and subject us to unfounded claims, investigations, and fines for how we serve the women and men who voluntarily seek our services. Be assured that Waterleaf provides professional services with compassion and love. Below are responses to the most frequent myths of how pregnancy centers are deceptive.

## “Pregnancy Centers do not have Medical Professionals”

The Waterleaf staff includes 8 actively licensed registered nurses and 6 certified sonographers. Each of these 14 individuals has extensive experience serving in hospitals, clinics, and private practices. Some are currently employed by local doctors and clinics and volunteer at Waterleaf



during their free time. These medical professionals work under the supervision of our Medical Director, Dr. Tony Leazzo, DO. Additionally, every ultrasound is reviewed and signed by licensed and experienced OB/GYN practitioners who volunteer their time for this important work. Bottom line — **Every** patient is served by a nurse. **Every** ultrasound is performed by a sonographer and reviewed and signed by a doctor.

## “Women are Deceptively Lured to Pregnancy Centers Thinking They will Receive an Abortion”

Since the internet is the vehicle of choice for gathering information, Waterleaf maintains an optimized website that provides clear and truthful information about our services and which clearly states “we do not perform or refer for abortions, nor do we administer the abortion pill.” We work with a marketing company that specializes in pregnancy centers and is well versed in digital marketing designed to reach women facing unexpected pregnancies. Our Marketing Director, Sam Entile, monitors every aspect of our branding, advertising, and publications to assure everything is based on reliable sources and is truthfully and

accurately presented. When speaking with potential patients who have asked about abortion services, our team is clear about what services we provide and what services we do not provide. This is reiterated in the written confirmation of the appointment. **Every** patient, regardless of her intention, signs a consent form that clearly states the scope of our services. Finally, this consent is verbally reviewed with the patient at the beginning of the appointment. Patients are never forced to make an appointment, nor are they forced to stay for their appointment.

## “Women are Coerced into Keeping their Babies”

At Waterleaf, we use a linear model of service for our pregnancy screening services called the Focus Method. This assures every patient, regardless of her intent and regardless of who sees her, is served in a professional and holistic manner. Each Waterleaf team member is extensively trained in this method before they are authorized to engage with patients. It is a script-based method that specifically excludes words, phrases, or language that could be perceived as deceptive or coercive. This process allows us to focus on what women most want and need to know during a pregnancy screening – “Am I pregnant?, Is it viable? What are my options?” Our goal is always to give women the information and support they need to make a truly informed decision.

## “They Only Care About the Babies and Abandon Women Once the Baby is Born”

Waterleaf is blessed with an exceptional team of Resource Specialists who provide six pillars of support to any client who wishes to take advantage of what we offer. The pillars of support include Resource Assessments, Plans and Referrals; Education on a vast array of topics from baby care to budgeting to healthy relationships; Counseling; Male Mentoring; Pregnancy Loss Support; and Spiritual Formation. These services are made available to any patient, not just pregnancy patients. These services are designed to support the patient and empower them to move forward with confidence. Waterleaf works with many organizations and community partners to provide access to whatever is needed. Our services are available for as long as a client chooses.

