



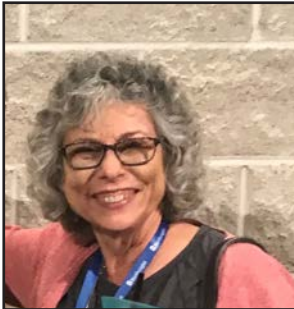
Birthright

of Grand Junction

June, July and August, 2026

2nd Quarter Newsletter

*"It is the right of every pregnant woman
to give birth and the right of every baby to be born."
~Louise Summerhill*



DIRECTOR'S LETTER

As summer settles across Western Colorado, many families are enjoying vacations, family gatherings, and celebrations with loved ones. While the pace of life may feel a little slower during these warmer months, the mission of Birthright of Grand Junction continues every day as we provide hope, practical assistance, and compassionate support to women facing challenging pregnancies. One exciting opportunity on the horizon is the Birthright International Convention, which will be held September 18-19 in Salt Lake City, Utah. Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, two of our volunteers will have the privilege of attending this year's convention. We are incredibly grateful for this gift, which allows our volunteers to continue growing in their ability to serve women and families in our community. The annual convention brings together Birthright staff, volunteers, and supporters from across North America and Africa. It serves as an important opportunity for networking, education, and collaboration among those dedicated to supporting women experiencing crisis pregnancies.

Attendees will have opportunities to:

- Participate in presentations and workshops focused on pregnancy support, counseling techniques, volunteer development, and community outreach.
- Exchange ideas and best practices with representatives from other Birthright chapters.
- Learn about organizational updates, new initiatives, and training opportunities designed to strengthen local centers.

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Donor's Generosity

This same generous donor has previously provided funding for volunteers to attend International Conventions. The first opportunity came in June 2018, only a few months after the opening of Birthright of Grand Junction on March 10, 2018, when one volunteer attended the convention in Ontario, Canada. The second opportunity occurred in 2023 when volunteers traveled to Chicago, Illinois.

Ontario Canada Convention photo

Phone: 970-644-5788 ❖ www.birthrightgj.org
253 White Ave, Grand Junction, CO 81502 ❖ DONATIONS: P.O. Box 1984



Donor's Generosity

This same generous donor provided funding for volunteers to attend a Second International Convention in 2023 when volunteers traveled to Chicago, Illinois.

*Chicago International 2023 photo
Co-Directors Louis Summerhill and Stephanie Fox
(founder's twin daughters) with Pat Bowman*

The Ontario Convention featured several outstanding speakers whose messages continue to influence our work today. Dr. Josephine Lombardi, Associate Professor of Theology at the St. Augustine School of Theology in Toronto, spoke about the Cardinal Virtues and how they relate to developing life skills. John McGrath, an experienced broadcaster and CEO of a public speaking institute, provided practical instruction on creating meaningful and effective presentations. Dr. Michael Horne delivered a thoughtful presentation on the important distinction between helping individuals and enabling unhealthy behaviors. At the 2023 Chicago Convention, attendees heard from guest speaker Vlad Marmardlo, who addressed the growing public health crisis of isolation and loneliness. His presentation explored the different forms of loneliness and their long-term impact on emotional, mental, and physical well-being across generations.

Another memorable speaker shared her personal journey of carrying two pregnancies and choosing adoption for both children. Her story ultimately became one of hope, healing, and reunion. She later met her husband, started a family, and was blessed with two additional children. Years later, her adult children who had been placed for adoption sought out their birth mother, resulting in a joyful reunion and a blended family that now celebrates life's milestones together. Her story was a powerful reminder of the lasting impact that love, courage, and support can have on multiple generations.



Speaking of memorable journeys, I recently had the pleasure of reconnecting with Julie Franchini, who served as Director of Birthright of Farmington, New Mexico, for 23 years. Julie was visiting family in Grand Junction, and our meeting brought back wonderful memories from the early days before Birthright of Grand Junction officially opened. In April 2017, Melody Corpening and I traveled to New Mexico to learn from established Birthright centers as we prepared to launch our own location. Our first stop was Farmington, where Julie welcomed us with warmth and generosity. Birthright of Farmington had already been serving women and families since 1975. We then traveled to Albuquerque, where we met Mary Mericucci, who founded Birthright of Albuquerque in 1971 and was still serving as director when we visited. Mary faithfully dedicated decades of her life to serving women in need before she passed away in 2023. Both Julie and Mary graciously shared their knowledge, experience, and encouragement with us. Before we left, they filled our Tahoe with diapers, baby clothing, and supplies to help launch our ministry in Grand Junction. Looking back, those moments of kindness and support played a significant role in helping Birthright of Grand Junction begin its mission of serving local families.

Blessings, *Pat Bowman*

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS

Our volunteers remain the backbone of Birthright's ministry. Lory has dedicated countless hours to updating and expanding our community resource network. She has visited existing partner organizations, verified contact information, and sought out additional resources that may benefit the mothers we serve. Drawing upon relationships she developed throughout her professional career, Lory has opened new doors and identified valuable services for our clients. Her daughter has also been instrumental in helping connect Birthright with additional resources within the healthcare community. We are deeply grateful for their dedication and willingness to serve. We would also like to extend our heartfelt condolences to volunteer Julie Halberg and her family following the passing of her father after a courageous battle with cancer. He passed peacefully surrounded by his loved ones. Our thoughts and prayers remain with Julie and her family during this difficult time.



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

The support received during this quarter has been truly remarkable. Every donation, large or small, directly impacts the women, children, and families we serve. Because of your generosity, Birthright is able to provide emotional support, maternity and baby items, referrals to community resources, and a welcoming environment where women know they will be treated with dignity and compassion.

We extend our sincere gratitude to:

- St. Bridget Circle
- The Catholic Foundation Diocese of Pueblo
- Knights of Columbus Council #1062
- Our many private donors and supporters

Your commitment to the dignity of human life makes this ministry possible. Thank you for standing beside us as we continue serving women and families throughout our community.



BIRTHRIGHT INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

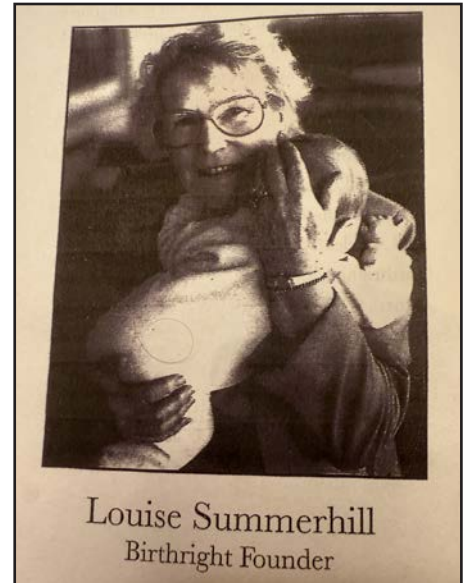
Birthright International has recently announced an important change in how support services are provided nationwide. The long-standing 24-hour hotline, 1-800-550-4900, has been retired in favor of a modern online communication platform available through Birthright's website at birthright.org. Through the LiveChat feature, women can connect directly with trained Birthright representatives in a format that many individuals seeking assistance prefer today. This transition reflects a thoughtful effort to meet women where they are. Many people now feel more comfortable reaching out online, where they can seek help privately, safely, and at a time that works best for them. While the method of communication may be evolving, Birthright's mission remains unchanged: to offer friendship, support, and practical assistance to any woman facing a challenging pregnancy. Thank you for your continued prayers, encouragement, volunteer service, and financial support. Together, we are making a meaningful difference in the lives of women, babies, and families throughout our community.

LOUISE'S PRAYER

Dear Lord,

Protect all of us in our work and in adherence to the Charter, I ask that all the problems that upset us, may be resolved according to Your will, that we may learn to love generously and to forgive readily when needed. And I ask that I, personally, may always be ready to listen, to understand and to guide wisely, according to Your will. I ask for unity and peace, so that wherever the Birthright name is used, others will see clearly that the essence of Birthright is love.

Amen



MOMS WE SERVE

The heart of Birthright remains the women and families who come through our doors seeking help, hope, and understanding.

Recently, we had the privilege of walking alongside a grieving mother who experienced the devastating loss of her full-term baby during delivery. While no words can erase such profound heartbreak, we were able to offer emotional support, compassionate listening, and connect her with a support group specifically designed for mothers who have experienced infant loss. She expressed deep appreciation for the care and guidance she received during such a difficult season.

We also continue to serve several long-term clients whom we have supported for more than three years. Some of these mothers have welcomed multiple children during that time and continue to rely on Birthright for encouragement, resources, and practical assistance.

For two mothers facing transportation challenges, our volunteers make regular home visits to ensure they continue receiving support. Another mother receives visits twice each month due to ongoing personal struggles and needs. Through these visits, we provide emotional encouragement, baby supplies, parenting support, and perhaps most importantly, a reminder that she is not alone.

Every situation is unique, but each one reinforces the importance of being present, listening without judgment, and offering practical help rooted in compassion and respect.