



Choices for... *Life*

Spring, 2009

SPECIAL VOLUNTEER ISSUE

Volume 1, Issue 2

"...before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; and before you came out of the womb, I sanctified you..." —Jeremiah 1:5-6

Our Volunteers Help Save Lives...

Embracing Options would like to take this opportunity to highlight and thank the people who are the heart and soul, and the hands and feet of the organization. Without them, this ministry could not exist. Their duty and dedication in assisting young women and men through life crises cannot be measured. Who are these amazing heroes? **Our volunteers!**

Two of these "Volunteers of Valor" are **Karen Givens** from the Bay & Goodman satellite and **Joy Gelsomino** from the Arnett Blvd. satellite.

Karen Givens: *"What keeps me coming back to EO are the young girls of this city. I love hearing their stories and sharing the love of God with them. Lives are changed right in front of me and to be able to be a part of that is awesome! I also love the atmosphere of EO, because Kirsten is a Godly role model and it is a great thing to be around awesome women of God. Helping to bridge the gap between God and the city of Rochester is wonderful and I love being used by God."*



Joy Gelsomino: *"It is a pleasure to give my time to the Lord at EO. I realized it was a great place to learn how to share the Gospel. Sandi is a fantastic mentor so it didn't take long before I was hooked. Now it is an honor to share in the lives of these precious young ladies and to carry the love of Christ into it. I come from a very different world but they sense the compassionate listening ear God has given me. It amazes me when they sit and listen so intently; I know then that God is using me. I truly enjoy boldly looking into the small window of opportunity we are given and fill it with His love."*

Know someone suffering from the trauma of a past abortion?

Post-Abortion Counseling Education or P.A.C.E. can bring healing and wholeness! For more information, please call Jennifer Burch, PACE Director or Althea Pitss-Swails, Co-Facilitator at Embracing Options, 585-235-0690 or 585-697-0003.

Baby Bottle Fund Drive Kicks Off!

Mother's Day is a perfect time to kick off **Embracing Options Annual Baby Bottle Fund Drive!** Running through Father's Day, June 21, the campaign is another way EO helps give a voice to the unborn and their parents. Consider asking **YOUR** church to participate this year! Call the Arnett office, 235 -0690, to coordinate the pick-up of bottles for your congregation.



Please return your baby bottles even if they're empty. Each bottle cost EO 85 cents...so if you return them unused, we are still blessed!

Reaching The Schools

This spring, EO formally launched its new Teen Abstinence Program. To date, we have presented our program in several RCSD public high schools and a middle school! Our focus is to equip young people to make life-affirming choices and be intentional about their future. We have added **Malcolm Cody** to the abstinence team to help better direct our program to a co-ed audience.

The Joy of Seeing God Work!

John Gramlich, Director, Embracing Options Advisory Board

It has been over four years since EO opened on the Westside of the City of Rochester and a year since the opening of the center on the Eastside. We have experienced many miracles in that time. We have been blessed to witness young girls and women choose to uphold life in the face of great adversity, seen women healed from the scars of past abortions, and the birth of babies into the loving arms of moms. The Gospel has been sown in many a heart. We know that many of you have



prayed and others have watered...and our counselors have seen those same hearts receive our Savior. We have witnessed God stirring hearts to give support to this ministry. Some in small but special ways, such as a child emptying their piggy bank into a baby bottle and some in great ways with a check at a time of great financial need. We have seen many hands come together to arrange a banquet, assemble baby bottles with a precious note inside, while others have come to paint, install toilets and renovate. It is a joy to see the Lord work in the hearts of so many of His people moving them to serve in so many ways. Thank you all for blessing EO in these varied ways and I encourage you, if the Lord is calling you to engage in some way at EO, please contact us. I know you will be blessed!

“Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the Gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.”

Answering the Call...

**Sandi Clawson,
Director, EO Arnett**

When the Lord pricked my heart with the call to volunteer at a local Care Net Pregnancy Center over 10 years ago, I had no idea the plans he had for me. Jeremiah 29:11: *“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.”* At the time, I felt badly that we didn't have a lot of money to spare because I wanted to bless them financially with everything we had. However, the Lord spoke to my heart instantly that I may not have money, but I have time. So I volunteered every week for six years counseling women one-on-one, sharing the love of Christ as only the Lord can do through us.

I say this to challenge you that if you feel the Lord tugging at your heart to help EO and the young women who walk through our doors, please call one of our offices to get info on our next Care Net volunteer training dates. Be aware that when you respond you need to be prepared for the abundance of blessings that the Lord will pour out into your life and heart. God bless you!

Volunteers of Valor

**Kirsten Smith,
Director, EO Bay & Goodman**

Amazingly, EO has been operating at the corner of Bay & Goodman for just over a year! Time flies when you're having fun! And the “Joy” does not go away! It is always a tremendous blessing to be a part of a changed life, a saved life or a new life! Only in God can we offer true and meaningful support! That support comes from wonderful willing hearts, wholly surrendered to Him, and engaged in the battle for life and death!

In this issue, we salute our volunteers, who just like you, are equipped with unique gifts and life experiences to effectively minister to clients. Ask any one of our volunteers and they will tell you what an exciting and awesome privilege it is to serve God in this way!



Spring Fundraiser

On March 26, EO opened its doors to the community when it hosted an open house. This was a very empowering experience for the community, staff and volunteers alike. The public was able to tour the offices of the His Branches building, as well as dine on quality chocolate desserts. The pinnacle of the event was Mr. **David Dey's** inspiring message, “Answering the Call of the Unborn.”

This event would not have been such a success without the dedication of so many volunteers. Thank you for attending this special event and for your ongoing service to Christ!

EO would like to thank **Jen Poole** for her gigantic effort in spearheading this event!

Want to donate to EO through your United Way donation?

1. Check the last box in Paragraph #3 on your UW Form.
2. Write “His Branches, Inc.” and enter our organization ID Number: 2480
3. Contact EO to inform us of your donation. This will allow the Finance Dept. to appropriately distribute any contributions.

Looking For...

EO Arnett is in need of a mid-volume printer/copier.

EO Bay & Goodman is praying for an ultrasound machine in order to show our girls their little BABY growing inside!

**embracing
OPTIONS**

Embracing Options is a ministry of

**His
BRANCHES**

And a member of

**CARE
NET**

EO at HBI
342 Arnett Blvd.
Rochester, NY 14619

EO at GNOC
916 N. Goodman St.
Rochester, NY 14609
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