

# Womankind

MATERNAL AND PRENATAL CARE CENTER

[www.womankindcleveland.org](http://www.womankindcleveland.org)



**Womankind Mission Statement:** To provide hope, help, and possibility to any pregnant woman by offering comprehensive integrative care in a loving, nonjudgmental environment.

SUMMER 2020

## Rising To The Challenge

In October 2019, I joined Womankind as the Executive Director. During this time, Womankind has gone through many changes, including the COVID-19 pandemic. I was asked many questions and given many opinions as to how we would continue to serve our clients. Looking at our financials, we truly questioned how we would meet the needs of those we serve. Volunteers, employees and board members came together and decided that the community needs us; as such, we continue to operate. We came together and decided that an emergency appeal was necessary to provide the funds needed to keep Womankind's doors open. Our donors came through and for that, Womankind will be forever grateful. We need each of you, still. Our numbers are increasing at our medical clinic which means that we are needed more than ever. As our client numbers are increasing, in turn, that means that our costs will be increasing. This is where we need you.

When the COVID-19 pandemic began, there were many changes we had to implement. We needed to limit the number of people in our offices at any one time. I began working at the front desk every Monday night for our weekly medical clinic and what I witnessed was inspiring. All of our doctors and nurses continued to come in without hesitation coming together for our clients. As I am writing this, I have tears in my eyes because what I saw was simply remarkable. Each person who walked through our doors was treated with kindness, love and respect. Although this pandemic has hit us hard, what I witnessed was proof that we are a needed resource in our community.

For over 45 years, Womankind has provided hope, help and possibility to any pregnant woman by offering comprehensive, integrative care in a loving, nonjudgmental environment. Throughout this newsletter you can see the various services Womankind offers; we are using this time to revamp our



*We work as a team to bring the best care to our clients in a loving, nonjudgmental environment.*

programming, to look at everything we offer and determine how to best serve our clients. My goals remain the same; we need more people to know who Womankind is and what we achieve every single day. We also need to empower and educate our clients. I will continue to reach out to the community, network with agencies and share the beautiful story of Womankind. Our community needs us and Womankind will not fail them.

As Mother Teresa said, "It's not about how much you do, but how much love you put into what you do that counts." I am asking each of you to think about how you can help our mission. Whether it is hosting a baby bottle fundraiser, volunteering at Womankind or coming into our offices for a tour, there is always

*continued on page 2*

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### President

**Robert D. Tayek**

Diocese of Cleveland (retired)

### Treasurer

**Albert S. Kirchner**

enTrust Financial Group

### Secretary

**Mary A. Bednar**

National Labor Relations Board (retired)

**Carol A. Fiorelli**

KeyBank (retired)

**Toni Gideon**

PNC

**Matthew Hutter**

Iconium Networks

**John F. Kraft**

Robert W. Baird & Co.

**Mona Maruna**

Alpha Property & Casualty

**Gus J. Skapek**

Elco Corp. (retired)

**Carol Kenney**

Miceli Dairy

## OUR SERVICES

All of Womankind's services are confidential, nonjudgmental and provided at no cost to our clients.

These include:

- Pregnancy test
- Comprehensive and integrative prenatal care through 28 weeks of pregnancy
- Assistance with third trimester care and delivery
- Professional counseling
- Support services for those significant to the mother
- Childbirth classes
- Breastfeeding information
- Post-abortion counseling
- Assistance with Medicaid and WIC application
- Maternity clothing
- Baby items (as available)
- Referrals for
  - Parenting classes
  - Adoption
  - Legal assistance

**If you need help, or know someone who does, please call us at 216-662-5700.**

# Chemarra Bryant:

## Director of Counseling and Support Services

Where do I begin? Well for about a year I was nudged to explore volunteer opportunities with Womankind. I would often read the Cleveland Women's Journal and the section dedicated to women's resources would leap off the page at me. This is where I discovered Womankind's Maternal and Prenatal Care Center. I moved forward in the Fall of 2019 with the volunteer process and was truly amazed at how Womankind was one of the missing pieces to the puzzle of my life's passion, serving others. Now I understand the reason for that powerful nudge because it led me to a position where I can truly live out my calling to help, serve, and educate women through the gift of counseling. I am also able to provide them with tools to receive the social services support needed to make their lives easier and pregnancies both healthier and more enjoyable.

In my free time, I enjoy the tranquility of nature and can be often found outdoors walking, running, or biking. I absolutely love arts and crafts and personalizing gifts for family and friends. Volunteering is also a big part of my life as I enjoy contributing my talents and time.

I am honored that the baton has been passed to me as the new Director of Counseling and Support Services at Womankind.



***“Chemarra is a spirited woman who first came to Womankind as a volunteer. From the first time I met her I knew she could make an impact.”***

***– Maggie Lallo,  
Executive Director***

## FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR continued from page 1

an opportunity to help. My door is open and I welcome your calls and emails. I also want to take this opportunity to welcome two new staff members, Chemarra Bryant and Alene Kalista. You will hear more about their roles here at Womankind as well as get to know them on a more personal level in their introductions, but I just wanted to extend a great big welcome to them both!

From the bottom of my heart, thank you. Thank you for your continuous support. Thank you for caring for our community. We would not be here today if it weren't for you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Maggie Lallo'.

**MAGGIE LALLO**

Executive Director

# Welcome Alene Kalista to Our Team



We are delighted to welcome Alene Kalista to our team at Womankind. Alene comes to us with a wealth of knowledge about women's wellness as well as a diverse background in education, health, and office administration. She thrives on finding innovative ways to reach out to the community and bridge the gap between those who work behind the scenes and the clients who benefit from

their support either through donations or volunteering. Inspiring women to trust their bodies and take an active role in their healthcare by respecting and showing compassion for them is of vital importance to Alene.

When she was 17 years old, Alene found herself pregnant and feeling very much alone. Fortunately, she was able to keep her baby and credits an organization similar to Womankind for offering her a network of support. They provided Alene with everything she needed to survive the difficult journey into motherhood.

In her free time, Alene loves to write, dance, walk, run, and do her "Feeding Body & Soul" fitness routine that she developed

***"Alene came to us with the mission of Womankind in her heart. Her experience working with others in challenging situations, as well as her spirit, will take Womankind to many places."***

***– Maggie Lallo, Executive Director***

to center herself and deal with everyday stresses. She also enjoys fixing new recipes with her husband and helping people discover the benefits of healthy eating. On Alene's first day at work she was overwhelmed by the kind welcome she received. "I immediately felt comfortable and part of the team. Maggie was excited to hear about what I could offer the staff and clients of Womankind and didn't hesitate to let me explore how my skills could best be utilized." While Alene was hired to work with us in the office, we quickly realized she had much more to offer. Alene is looking forward to the coming months as we reopen our doors and begin new and exciting programs!

## We Appreciate Our Nurses!

In May, we celebrated Nurses Appreciation Week with a delicious dinner and cake! We couldn't do what we do without the wonderful doctors and nurses who give so freely of their time for those we serve.



*Our medical director, Dr. Snelson, getting ready to see patients at our Monday night clinic.*





Angela, Dianne, and Doris are three of our volunteers who work tirelessly to ensure baby clothes are clean, matched up, and organized according to size and gender!



Doris is hard at work getting clothes ready for clients!

# A Day in the Life of Our Tuesday Volunteers

At Womankind, they are known as the “Tuesday Volunteers.” This special group of men and women consisting of Mike Cannon, Angela Palcisko, Karen Cogley and Dianne Suhy help run our baby item program. This program allows mothers, fathers or a caregiver to receive items such as formula, diapers and clothing at no cost. The “Tuesday Volunteers” come in every week to organize the clothing and make sure all items given to our clients are clean and safe. Our clients have stated many times how wonderful this program is. According to volunteer Mike Cannon, “The beautiful part of volunteering for Womankind is knowing that you are making a difference for someone in need.”

These volunteers understand the mission of Womankind; but more than understanding it, they live it. Every Tuesday, they work tirelessly to make sure the program is running efficiently. The volunteers work closely with each employee at Womankind. According to Maggie Lallo, “Our Tuesday volunteers truly don’t know the impact they are making. I welcome anyone to come to Womankind and just watch these

people work. There have been times where I have gone in the back needing something for a client immediately. They come together and get what is needed. It is spectacular to see them work!”

Tuesday is a busy day at Womankind as we also have our vital lab volunteers. These volunteers come every Tuesday morning to pick up lab work that was completed during our Monday medical clinic. The volunteer drives to St. Vincent Charity Hospital to ensure safe delivery of our labs. Without these volunteers, Womankind would have to pay out of pocket for a courier service. Through the pandemic, these men have continued to come through for Womankind.

The Tuesday volunteers are part of the reason Womankind still operates. As our organization grows and revamps the programs we offer, the one thing that will never change are the remarkable volunteers on Tuesday. From everyone at Womankind, thank you to our Tuesday volunteers! Your hard work and dedication to our mission does not go unnoticed!



Mike shows up every week to make sure our diapers are packaged and ready to go for our clients.

**“The beautiful part of volunteering for Womankind is knowing that you are making a difference for someone in need.”**

**– Volunteer Mike Cannon**

# Support Womankind's Mission

By Maria Tayek

Womankind relies solely on the generosity of individuals, organizations, foundations and corporations for funding. Donations can be made in various ways and for different reasons. These donations can be planned or can be reflective of the lives of donating individuals such as gifts of stock, trusts, wills, matching gifts or gifts of cash.

When Doug and Andrea Tayek's son Dominic James was stillborn, they decided they wanted to turn this tragic life event into something positive. They requested that any memorial gifts for Dominic be donated to Womankind in his name. "We asked that people donate to Womankind because we recognized that the services provided by Womankind could help other families avoid the tragic circumstances that we experienced. We are proud of the fact that our son Dominic made an impact on the life of each Womankind baby," Andrea Tayek proudly notes.

While the Tayeks worked directly with Womankind to facilitate their monetary gift, your financial advisor, tax professional or lawyer can also help you choose the contribution option that best fits your decision to support the important work of Womankind. Review the following options and select one that meets the level of support you want to provide to Womankind.

**Gifts of cash:** Womankind accepts gifts of cash, checks or credit card donations. Visit our website at [www.womankindcleveland.org](http://www.womankindcleveland.org).

**Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD):** This method of charitable donation allows taxpayers to make

IRA distributions payable directly to Womankind, a qualified charity, without treating the distribution as taxable income. The law permits up to \$100,000 per eligible (75 or older) IRA owner to be contributed directly from their IRA to a charity. Additionally, the distribution fulfills the IRA owner's Required Minimum Distribution for the year.

**Gifts of appreciated assets:** A gift of appreciated stock or mutual funds, made directly to Womankind, mitigates the capital gains on the appreciated value of your investments and you could possibly receive a tax deduction.

**Employer Matching Gift Program:** Your employer's willingness to match your charitable contribution to Womankind, through corporate matching gift programs, is an easy way to increase your overall support for our programs.

**Named beneficiary of retirement accounts, trusts, will and life insurance:** You can name Womankind as the beneficiary on these various accounts. At the time of death of the donor, Womankind receives the named funds.

**Corporate support:** Numerous opportunities exist for corporations to support Womankind.

Call Maggie Lallo or Alene Kalista at 216-662-5700 for more information on how you can support the important work being done by Womankind.

Check with your financial advisor to find the fundraising effort that best meets your needs.



## WOMANKIND GOLF OUTING RESCHEDULED

Sign up today for the 24th annual Womankind Golf Outing, **Wednesday, September 30, 2020** at Weymouth Country Club, 3946 Weymouth Rd., Medina, Ohio. Entry includes golf, lunch, dinner, auction and prizes. Ask about available sponsorships. Call Womankind at 216-662-5700 to register.

Please note: This event is subject to change per Ohio health regulations.

# Amy's Story...

By Maria Tayek

You are newly married, a new resident of the United States, uninsured, unemployed and pregnant. This overwhelming set of circumstances created a great deal of stress for Amy and Jesse McKinney. The couple found it hard to believe that there was nowhere to turn for help.

When the Eastlake, Ohio couple first found out they were expecting a child, they tried to obtain medical coverage. "Every time I spoke to someone on the phone and mentioned that I was unemployed, pregnant and an immigrant, they hung up!" Jesse, newly employed, had not completed his company's probationary period, so the couple had no health insurance. Amy is a native of Belfast, Ireland where she is on a career break from her job as a policewoman. She explains that in Northern Ireland, with national health insurance, there would be no financial obstacles regardless of how complicated her pregnancy.

"Insurance is not required and getting pregnant would have been a normal and routine experience for us, not a financial burden," she says. So Amy googled *free medical care for pregnant women* and found Womankind. "Google brought us together."

Womankind became her lifeline. "I wasn't sure about what kind of facility it would be, but everyone was friendly and welcoming," she explains. "They make you feel at ease."

The 31-year-old McKinney explains that she and her husband had not anticipated starting a family so soon. Her journey is also complicated by a lack of family close by for help and assistance. Her mother-in-law Debbie McKinney, who is also her neighbor, stepped up to help and has accompanied Amy on some of her clinic visits. Additionally Amy, who now is nearing her third trimester, formed close ties with the Womankind staff.

During one of her visits, she explains, she bonded with Nancy Pavlik, RN, Womankind's Director of Nursing. She laughs and says that the "Muddy Buddy" snacks brought them together.

"At a time when I have been going through the biggest change in my life, and not having parents close at hand for support, Nancy has made me feel at ease and like a friend. I feel like she has shared in my joy on this journey." Each staff member, she says, welcomes clients as family. She is impressed with the volunteers as well. "They don't have to be there, but they want to support you as a mother."

Amy's mother-in-law Debbie has also been very impressed with Womankind and loved that volunteers avail themselves to any and all visitors to teach them how to knit. As it turns out, Debbie McKinney's cousin also used Womankind services some 18 years ago for the birth of her second son. This knowledge also



*Amy McKinney and Director of Nursing Nancy Pavlik share a moment of friendship on a Monday night clinic.*

made Amy feel more secure in her decision to visit Womankind's Transportation Boulevard location.

Husband Jesse was unable to attend the clinics with Amy having to wait in the car as Womankind changed its procedures to comply with COVID-19 directives. But, she says, he has expressed how impressed he is with the level of care Amy has received and was thrilled to be able to share in the experience of mom and baby's first ultrasound. This allowed Jesse to bond with little Ronan James who is expected in September.

Care at Womankind is continuous through 28 weeks of pregnancy. For Amy and many women like her who do not have the benefit of having an obstetrician close at hand for questions, staff at Womankind are always available. "Even between visits, if I've had concerns, I have been able to call and leave a message which is returned expeditiously," she says.

Thinking back over her 28 weeks of Womankind visits, Amy says the center offers much more than just routine checkups. "Womankind is like a big warm safety blanket. They will make sure you are ready and prepared to leave their nest at 28 weeks and finish your journey in the right place for you."

The new mom-to-be says Womankind care is much more than just routine checkups. She has no doubt that she will be adequately prepared for the remainder of her pregnancy journey and Hillcrest Hospital delivery.

"I will miss going there," says McKinney. It's like going to have coffee with friends!" The 31-year-old McKinney says she will be eternally grateful to all the staff who have made her pregnancy a joyful experience. She is also looking forward to returning to Womankind to take advantage of the center's postpartum services. "I will need all the help I can get," she says with a smile.

# Self-Care: Principles To Live By

By Alene Kalista

Summer has finally arrived and it's the season for celebrations, backyard barbecues, and family vacations. It's also an opportunity to practice self-care, especially during these unprecedented times when many typical summertime activities have been canceled due to the pandemic we are facing. People often wonder what exactly does self-care mean? Isn't it just another word for being selfish? Quite the contrary! When we practice self-care, we are saying, "I can find a healthy balance between taking care of myself while still caring about and for others." While there can be many ways of defining this term, I like to look at it using four basic principles:

**Education, Relationships, Nutrition, and Meditation.** Let's embark on a short journey of learning how to implement these four principles into our daily lives so that we can be our best selves no matter what we are facing.

When we look at the first principle of self-care, Education, we can think of it in terms of how do we learn new things? Some of us prefer to read or listen to a book on a topic of interest while others may prefer to do a search on the Internet or attend a class/workshop. The most important thing to remember is that we need to continuously educate ourselves on how to stay healthy body, mind, and spirit. Perhaps that means learning a new skill or embracing a new hobby. It might mean getting involved in a community project. Whatever it is, we are lifelong learners and need to continuously stretch our minds by learning new things.

Relationships, the second principle of self-care, is all about our interactions with those around us. Do we have family or friends whom we can talk to about what is going on inside of us? Who are those people in our lives who share in our accomplishments but more importantly, those who will be there to help us "pick up the pieces" when our world comes tumbling down? Take a good look at your relationships and if you don't have those people who

are there for you in good times and in bad, try to join a group and meet those who may be searching to make that connection too.

Nutrition is another important component of self-care. While eating healthfully can mean different things to different people (there are as many diets out there as there are people, it would seem), most of us would agree that eating a balanced diet of fruits, vegetables, protein, whole grains, and some dairy is essential for a healthy body; and a strong body leads to a sound mind which, in turn, allows for proper self-care. Food, even snack foods, can

be very health-promoting for our bodies, especially when eaten with those we love. A great place to begin focusing on nutrition is <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/>. This will give you the basic guidelines for eating nutritiously and provide helpful resources for those with special dietary needs.

The final principle of self-care is Meditation. This can come in many forms including prayer, reflection, self-examination, or simple quiet time. How we do it isn't as important as just the fact that we do indeed

make time to meditate, quieting our minds on a daily basis and centering ourselves on proper care of our inner selves. Perhaps you can join a yoga class, do some guided meditation, go to your local church, or spend time in nature. Try one or a combination of these suggestions and feel the difference in body, mind, and spirit.

Whether you're an expectant mom, a new mom, or simply someone trying to find easy ways to develop healthy habits, it's important to find opportunities to implement self-care into your daily life. Educating yourself about what a healthy lifestyle entails, having positive relationships with people who care about your overall well-being, nourishing your body with the foods it needs to thrive, and practicing meditation are four principles anyone can adopt to bring peace and calm into a life that can be fraught with anxiety during these stressful times. So let's enjoy the summer and be good to ourselves!



*This beautiful piece of art was painted by our Director of Counseling & Social Services, Chemarra Bryant, to adorn our hallway!*



5350 Transportation Blvd.  
Suite 18  
Garfield Heights, OH 44125  
[www.womankindcleveland.org](http://www.womankindcleveland.org)

NONPROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
PERMIT NO 3136

Return Service Requested

JOIN US!  

*Womankind provides free prenatal care and a full range of support services to women and families in need.*



## Exciting Times are Coming for Womankind...

As we look to the future and the reopening of our doors, the staff is looking at ways to bring new and innovative programs into Womankind that will help empower women and offer opportunities for our clients. Some programs you might see offered in the coming months are:

- > Fitness for Moms
- > Nutrition for Moms and Babies
- > Childbirth Education
- > Parenting for Dads
- > Art Nights

Check out our website and our Facebook page as more details become available!