



ST. ELIZABETH | COLEMAN
PREGNANCY & ADOPTION SERVICES

2500 Churchman Avenue • Indianapolis, IN 46203
(317) 787-3412 • GivingBirthToHope.org

Services of Catholic Charities in Indianapolis

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Community Partner



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EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION - A COMBINED
156 YEARS OF SERVICE AMONG 10 EMPLOYEES

SEC values its staff member's loyalty, commitment and contribution to the continued success of St. Elizabeth | Coleman's programs and services.

Agency Directors: Renee Hummel - 26 years
Priscilla Kamrath - 22 years

Search & Reunion Specialist: Katrina Carlisle - 27 years

International Adoption Team: Jennifer Bigelow - 14 years
Stephanie Ralich - 7 years

Adoption Counselors: Cheryl Garlinger; 10 years
Nadja Radtke - 9 years

Administrative Team: Christine Higginbotham - 5 years
Carole MacAttee - 12 years

Facility Manager: John Diccico - 24 years



Front Row: Christine, Renee, Priscilla, Carole
Back Row: Jennifer, Katrina, Caitlin,
Cheryl, Nadja, Stephanie

CHRISTMAS - THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR

St. Elizabeth | Coleman is ramping up again for one of the busiest times of the year. Every year, our agency hosts a Christmas Gift Program. Numerous generous donors purchase Christmas gifts for current and former birthmother clients as well as Parent Support Group Members. SEC is grateful to have the opportunity to help mothers and their families at this special time of the year. Our goal is to bring joy and happiness to our clients with the help of our donors.

In 2017, a total of 34 families with 77 children received gifts from donors. The time and generosity of our donors is appreciated by our clients and agency and the growing number served throughout the community. If you are interested in being a donor, please contact Priscilla at pkamrath@secindy.org



ESSENTIAL ITEMS THAT ARE MUCH NEEDED BY OUR CLIENTS:

- Towels
- Twin sheets
- Dishes (single plates, bowls, cups, glasses are ok)
- Pots & pans
- Cooking Utensils
- Blankets (twin or queen)
- Silverware

For a longer list of wish list items, please visit our website: www.GivingBirthToHope.org

Fall 2018 Newsletter



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ADOPTION AWARENESS MONTH



Dear Friends of St. Elizabeth|Coleman,

November is Adoption Awareness Month, a good time to learn about modern adoptions and how adoptions touch lives.

In the past, adoption was seen as a secretive and hidden legal process. Records were sealed and birth families and adoptive families kept the process confidential. Adoptees were not informed of their biological heritage; the circumstances surrounding their birth families' decisions or had any contact with their birth family.

Today we know that this was not in a child's best interest, it did not help the adoptee form the best self-identity and it often left unanswered questions and the child longing to know more.

Open adoption has provided those whose lives are touched by adoption to have access to everything.

Birth parents can now have knowledge of the growth and development of the little life they created and build a relationship with the family and child. Adoptive parents can have answers to health issues and gain insight into some of their child's unique traits, provide answers their child will naturally have as he or she grows up and help their child nurture the inner self.

Adopted persons can know the love of both the birth parent and the adopted parent, understand the reasons a birth parent chose adoption and acknowledge the love they have for the

family that first gave them life, as well as love the family they live in – their adopted family.

Love rarely comes in neat tidy packages and families have been changing and evolving over time. Today we have blended families, multicultural families, single parent families, adoptive families, birth families and the list goes on. An adopted person will always be part of two families – their biological and their adopted family. Embracing all parts of family is important for a healthy sense of self.

Catholic Charities, through St. Elizabeth | Coleman, provides counseling for pregnant women and their families, families interested in adoption and adoptees with several important services throughout their lifetime. If you or if you know someone who would like more information regarding the option of adoption or the other professional services St. Elizabeth|Coleman provides, please contact 317.787.3412.

Sincerely,

David J. Bethuram

David J. Bethuram, MA, M.Min., CFLE
Executive Director
Secretariat for Catholic Charities
Archdiocese of Indianapolis

REFLECTING ON 27 YEARS. BUT WHAT COMES NEXT?

It has been my honor to work for St. Elizabeth| Coleman for the last 27 years. My journey into social work began with my own family. From the time I was a young girl, I had a desire to adopt children from another country. My dream was realized when my husband and I adopted two children from South Korea. Following those adoptions, we added two birth children to our family and later became foster parents for an agency called, "Homes for Black Children". During each of these experiences, I had an opportunity to interact with many social workers and I developed an interest in pursuing social work as a career. In 1986, I graduated with a degree in social work. I began working for Coleman Adoption Services in 1991 and transitioned over to St. Elizabeth when the two agencies merged. In the last 27 years, I have been, first and foremost, the adoption search and reunion counselor, but in addition to that role, I have been a birth mother counselor, an executive director and I worked with adoptive parents providing home study reports. Throughout these 27 years, I have been privileged to see adoptions move from 100% closed adoption agreements, to options for semi-open adoptions and then to options for 100% open agreements. I have seen the policies change from agency personnel selecting the adoptive parents for each child, to the birth mother selecting, meeting, and including the adoptive parents in her adoption

plan. After years of offering support to adoptees longing to receive their original birth certificates, I was delighted to witness the recent change in Indiana law. Effective July 1st of this year, all Indiana adoptees may request their adoption records be unsealed. If the birth mother has not made a request to block the release of her information, all records will be provided to the adoptee. This new law allows me to leave my position here with a feeling of closure, a sense of accomplishment and no regrets. I will sorely miss my St. Elizabeth | Coleman co-workers that have somehow become my family and I will miss all the birth mothers, adoptees and adoptive families that I connect with on a regular basis. However, there is a house in Florida waiting for my husband and I to move in and there is a beach calling my name...

Renee (Director of Pregnancy & Adoption Services at SEC) says:

Katrina and I started working together in the early 1990's when we both worked as caseworkers for DCS. I was thrilled many years later when St. Elizabeth and Coleman merged that I would be given the opportunity to work with Katrina again. Katrina's adoption knowledge and experience are astonishing. She has been a support to hundreds of birthmothers throughout the years. Since 2004, my office has been right next to her. I am going to miss our daily talks and her wonderful personality. I am

happy for her new journey in life. I cannot thank her enough for all that she has done for SEC.

Priscilla (Director of Community Outreach at SEC) says:

For the past 20 years, it has been a privilege and an honor to work with Katrina. She is a first-class professional with human spirit. During her career, she has helped countless mothers and families – counseling of birth mothers, placements with parents, search and reunion, transracial/cultural issues. We will miss her incredibly, but wish her Good Luck on her new life adventure.



Katrina Carlisle, Search & Reunion Specialist

24 KARAT SUCCESS!

"You are worth more than Gold" was the theme of our agency's successful 8th Annual Birthmother Luncheon on May 12, 2018. We wanted to honor our clients and their love for their birth children by letting them know that God and we feel that no matter what they have been told or believe, "They are worth more than the finest gold". Psalm 19:10. This elegant event allows us to celebrate our birthmother clients; acknowledging their courage, strength and love. This event includes lunch, musical entertainment, gifts, a balloon release and (of course) a chance for hugs and mutual support. This year, 20 clients attended our event. The age range of our clients was approximately 20-60 years. We look forward to next year's Birthmother Luncheon.



2ND ANNUAL FALL FESTIVAL TO CELEBRATE ADOPTION AWARENESS

On Saturday, Nov 3rd, SEC celebrated Adoption with Adoptive Families, Adoptees and Birthmothers. It also allowed our agency to honor and celebrate Katrina as she prepares for her upcoming retirement. Festival attendees enjoyed hayrides, face painting, refreshments, carnival games and various crafts. The weather was beautiful and so was the company. Thank you to all volunteers and staff members for your efforts in making this event successful.



VOLUNTEER SNAP-SHOTS

Deb & Beverly - What you didn't know about them!

Deb is a spunky and amiable person, who has volunteered at St. Elizabeth| Coleman for the past 3 years. She has now accepted the temporary position of Volunteer/Donations Coordinator. Deb has made a tremendous impact on our donations area by rebuilding and organizing it.

Fun Facts: Deb's mother was a member of the Greenwood Circle of Daughters of Isabella, our agency's founders. Deb and her husband of 37 years are active volleyball players competing in national contests!

Beverly is another devoted volunteer. Six years ago, Beverly started to volunteer at SEC. Bev comes every Monday to help us with clerical tasks.

Fun Fact: Beverly is an "adventurer". She loves to travel which includes road trips in the USA, Alaskan cruise and 3 trips to Europe. Bev told us she enjoys and will continue to volunteer because it makes her feel good to help mothers and children and work with the St. Elizabeth | Coleman staff.... and we are very thankful for her!



Deb, Volunteer/Donations Coordinator



Beverly receiving her 5-year of Volunteer Service Award from David Bethuram and Jan Kilies

17TH ANNUAL GOLF SCRAMBLE

The 17th Annual Bob Coffman Memorial Golf Scramble at Bluff Creek Golf Course was a success! Proceeds of this scramble directly benefit our agency's Pregnancy, Adoption & Parenting Programs & Saints Francis & Clare Catholic School. We very much appreciate & are grateful for the support of our golfers, hole sponsors and door prize sponsors. Please join us at the next Golf Scramble on June 23, 2019



One of the many Foursomes. Left to Right: David Bethuram, Luke Bickel, Bill Bickel, Tim Bush

LIFE-LONG SUPPORT

St. Elizabeth | Coleman is committed to providing support services to our client for a lifetime because Adoption is not a one-time event; undoubtedly it is a lifelong process. Our agency offers an online support group for our birthmother clients, one for our waiting adoptive families, a Parent Support Group and professional counselors are always available for one-on-one counseling as needed.

SEEKING VOLUNTEER

SEC is looking for a volunteer for a very crucial monthly task: Cleaning our fish tank. This volunteer must have some fish care knowledge. All supplies will be provided by our agency. Please help us keep our fish tank clean! For more info or to apply, email: chiggingbotham@secindy.org or call 317-787-3412.



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Catholic Charities
Providing Help. Creating Hope. Serving All.