



The Gift of Life Foundation

2019-2020 Annual Report

Leading Change During a Global Pandemic





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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Leading Change During A Global Pandemic



Dr. Regina Traylor

What a difference a year can make. This time last year, we were celebrating the huge accomplishment of being awarded more than \$4 million in funding by the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA). We had recently completed the strategic planning process, which helped us develop measurable objectives and ways to implement new strategies.

We were seeing real growth in the expansion of Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) in Macon, Russell and Autauga, and Parent as Teachers in Pike and Crenshaw counties. We were also celebrating the full implementation of Parenting Forward, our new program for expectant and parenting teens, and Fathers in Action was hitting its stride. We had also opened the doors to a second GOL location to house our NFP staff, infant and early childhood mental health consultant, and a licensed counselor.

“It is my hope that when this “new normal” goes back to the “old normal” or some rendition of it, the lessons we have learned both in leadership and service will be looked back on with a sense of accomplishment and pride.”

Fast forward to March 2020. We, like much of the world, were stopped in our tracks due to the threat of coronavirus. Phrases once unheard of like “new normal”, “social distancing” and “flatten the curve” are now commonplace. Likewise, mental health awareness is heightened.

Those who were tech-adverse quickly realized that to function effectively they needed to adopt new skills — fast. Virtual platforms now drive when and how we meet. The stress of school closures and home schooling, job loss, remote work, fear,

racial and political unrest, and —worst of all — losing friends, family, colleagues and neighbors to coronavirus, have all made an indelible impact on our professional and personal lives.

But despite this time of great uncertainty and rapid change, I’m proud to say that Gift of Life never wavered from its responsibility to our families and community that look to us for leadership. I determined that we would do the following things: (1) **Keep our promise to clients**

by staying true to our mission to improve the health and well-being of mothers, babies and families ; (2) Keep our employees and clients safe; (3) Expand our outreach and strengthen our referral base; (4) Attract the top-notch talent we needed to build our team and increase our capacity to serve; and (5) Increase our impact.

Admittedly, the 2019-2020 year was challenging, but Gift of Life has done well thanks to the firm, steady support of our board of directors; the strategic planning and proactive measures taken by our leadership team at the onset of the pandemic; our commitment to fiscal management; and, most importantly, the deep commitment of the GOL staff to our families and the community.

This report outlines how we achieved what we set out to do. It is my hope that when this “new normal” goes back to the “old normal” or some rendition of it, the lessons we have learned both in leadership and service will be looked back on with a sense of accomplishment and pride. FY 2019-2020 serves as a reminder that nothing will stop our mission — not even coronavirus. ↻



Gift of Life Executive Director Regina Traylor met with many local, state and federal officials in FY 2019-2020 to discuss a wide range of issues including health care coverage, the state of rural health care in Alabama, health disparity and reducing infant mortality. At center, she and GOL board vice chairperson Dr. Grace Thomas, M.D., participated in a listening session hosted at Alabama State University with Alabama Senator Doug Jones in August 2019. At right, Dr. Traylor talks to WSFA anchor Tonya Terry about GOL’s expansion to Pike, Crenshaw, Macon, Russell and Autauga counties — areas that have disproportionately high infant mortality rates.



Careful stewardship, identifying cost-saving measures and pursuing new sources of funding became even more important during 2019-2020 when the impact of the coronavirus on our major funders was uncertain. GOL's leadership took proactive measures to ensure the financial stability of the organization prior to a major shutdown of businesses, including applying for funding through the Paycheck Protection Program, and adopting practical, cost-saving measures like utilizing only one location. Most of GOL's existing grant awards were re-funded, which reflects the confidence funders have in our ability to deliver outcomes even during a pandemic.



Among the awards Gift of Life received during 2019-2020 was \$60,000 from the Children's Trust Fund of Alabama to support our Nurse-Family Partnership program, and \$10,000 from the River Region United Way for our efforts to improve the health of women and children.



PRIORITY 1: WE KEPT OUR PROMISE

“By staying mission-focused and adopting new innovations, we kept our commitment to our families to deliver high-quality service.”

Though COVID-19 changed the way Gift of Life conducted business, it didn't mean the business of Gift of Life could not be conducted. Education, support and connection to community resources still remained our priority even if we had to deliver it in a different way. Fortunately for Gift of Life, transitioning to an organizational-wide telehealth protocol in response to coronavirus was made easier because GOL had already been successful as an innovator of the telehealth approach Mobile Family Coaching (MFC).

Originated at GOL in 2015, MFC uses the evidence-based Parents as Teachers curriculum to deliver parenting education for families primarily through text and social media messaging, FaceTime, Android video chat and now Zoom for individual and group meetings. Parenting lessons and developmental tools are also emailed or mailed to families.

In addition, GOL Nurse-Family Partnership adopted national NFP's revised enrollment and nursing education processes to ensure new nurses could be trained and enrolling moms could be done safely. Currently all GOL programs have shifted to 100% telehealth.

HOW WE DID IT:

- Family Coaching Programs' monthly Group Connections support group transitioned from in-person classes at the Montgomery County Health Department to being presented virtually using ZOOM. Though participation in group didn't increase, it didn't decrease either. GOL's PAT, MFC and FIA programs were able to maintain their pre-pandemic participation levels.
- Parenting Forward (PF) staff continued hosting creative activities and held online events for teens after area school closures prevented them from holding in-school parenting classes. Many of the PF moms and dads were graduating seniors this year, so we featured a mom or dad each day on our Instagram and Facebook pages to congratulate them for their achievement.
- Gift of Life Nurse-Family Partnership was part of national NFP's launch of the new GOAL MAMA mobile app, which provides a digital platform for moms to set short and long-term goals from eating healthy, getting a driver's license, obtaining baby's immunizations on time, to keeping medical appointments. For GOL nurses, the app was a great complement to video calls. It provided a safe way for nurse home visitors to help clients create steps to achieve goals, receive education, track progress, send reminders and offer encouragement.



Gift of Life staff found unique ways to make sure our families stayed connected, including creating a fun video and social media posts like this one that appeared on Instagram and Facebook, two of our most popular social media platforms.



Left, Nurse Home Visitor Jenni Bass captured the last moments of a recent telehealth visit with six-month old Alandrea and her mother Tamara Hale. The visit gave Jenni a chance to check on Alandrea's progress and reconnect with mom safely. Here, little Alandrea waves goodbye at the end of the call. Center, GOL Nurse Supervisor Kathy Pounds was tapped to serve on a national committee made up of 100 nurses across the U.S. and end users who helped create NFP's new Goal Mama app, which, as it turns out, couldn't have been released at a better time. Right, teen dad Jason Bailey is one of several high school graduates that we featured in an online salute to the Class of 2020. Jason graduated from Jeff Davis High and plans to enter the Montgomery Police Academy to pursue a career in law enforcement.

PRIORITY 2:

WE KEPT OUR STAFF & FAMILIES SAFE

In 2019-2020, Gift of Life implemented a comprehensive list of new measures to protect the health and safety of employees and clients.

Through the health and safety of Gift of Life employees has always been important to the organization's leadership, the challenges presented by COVID-19 emphasized the need for additional protocols to protect staff and the clients, and combine our efforts with those in the community to reduce community spread. Executive Director Regina Traylor and Director of Human Resources Annie Rogers drafted a three-phase return to work plan that included policies and recommendations that aligned with best practices recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and federal, state and local authorities. The plan included providing staff education on COVID-19, employee screening procedures, guidelines for working remotely, disinfecting and cleaning work areas and special accommodations for those with underlying medical concerns.

WHAT WE DID

- All nurse home visitors, parent educators and family coaches were directed to implement telehealth protocols. No in-person visits would be allowed until further notice.
- All group meetings, community classes, work-related travel and outreach activities were temporarily suspended.



Temperature checks, mandatory use of face masks while in the building, cleaning and disinfecting measures and remote working are all strategies GOL implemented to protect staff and clients.

New Building & Health Controls:

- Operating days and times are limited. Entry to the main building is by front entrance only. A new alarm system was installed to protect the property.
- All staff and visitors are screened upon entering the building. Mandatory temperature checks and a COVID questionnaire must be completed. Forms will be maintained in a file in the front office.



Community Generosity Helps GOL Families

Gift of Life received a lot of support from the community during 2019-2020. Donations of baby clothing, blankets, diapers, wipes, children's books, toys and beauty products for moms helped us meet the needs of clients who needed encouragement, or had lost jobs or other assistance and just needed a little help until they got back on their feet. Here, Gift of Life alum Jinhah Bliss contacted her former nurse Jenni Bass to donate several bags of baby clothes. Since completing GOL NFP, Jinhah has graduated from Alabama State University and just completed her first year as a teacher in Atlanta, Ga. Her daughter Christian is now three years old!

- Mask-wearing is required while in common areas in the building. Staff are to be distanced at least 6 feet apart.
- Hand washing or using an alcohol-based sanitizer should be completed upon entry to the building. All frequently touched surfaces such as workstations, countertops, copy machine and doorknobs should be cleaned with Clorox wipes located at the front counter after each use.
- An employee who has a fever at or above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or who is experiencing coughing or shortness of breath will be sent home. The employee should monitor his or her symptoms — including temperature checks at least twice daily — and call a doctor or use telemedicine if concerned about the symptoms.

An employee sent home can return to work when:

- He or she has had no fever for at least three (3) days without taking medication to reduce fever during that time; AND
- Any respiratory symptoms (cough and shortness of breath) have improved; AND
- At least ten (14) days have passed since the symptoms began.

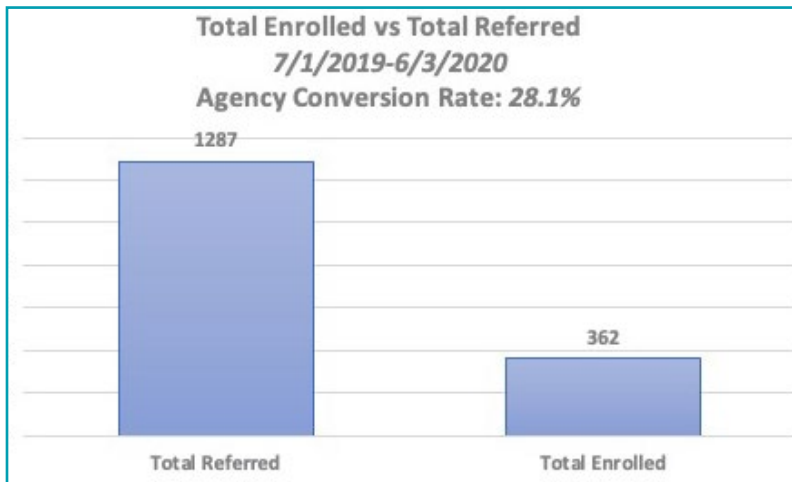
An employee may return to work earlier if a doctor confirms the cause of an employee's fever or other symptoms is not COVID-19, and releases the employee to return to work in writing. An employee who experiences fever and/or respiratory symptoms while home should not report to work. Instead, the employee should contact his or her immediate supervisor for further direction and quarantine for 14 days.

- Staff should notify their supervisor of the day they plan to visit the office. No more than 10 individuals shall be onsite at a time.

PRIORITY 3: WE EXPANDED OUR OUR REACH

*Gift of Life strengthened its community partnerships
and added new referral partners.*

Though COVID-19 challenged Gift of Life leadership and staff to adopt new approaches to service delivery, it also provided opportunities to cultivate new, and strengthen existing referral partnerships, increase enrollment in our expansion counties, and add new audiences to our website and social media platforms.



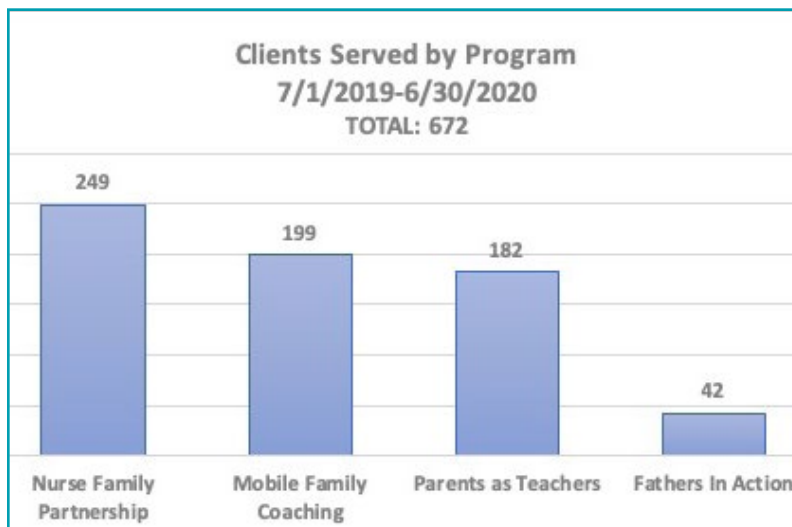
Top Referral Sources

- 46% Cope Pregnancy
- 21% Montgomery County Health Department
- 8% Montgomery Public Schools
- 7% My Care Alabama
- 18% New or Other Sources

Total Clients Served:

FY 2019: 672
FY 2018: 675

A DIFFERENCE OF JUST 3 CLIENTS

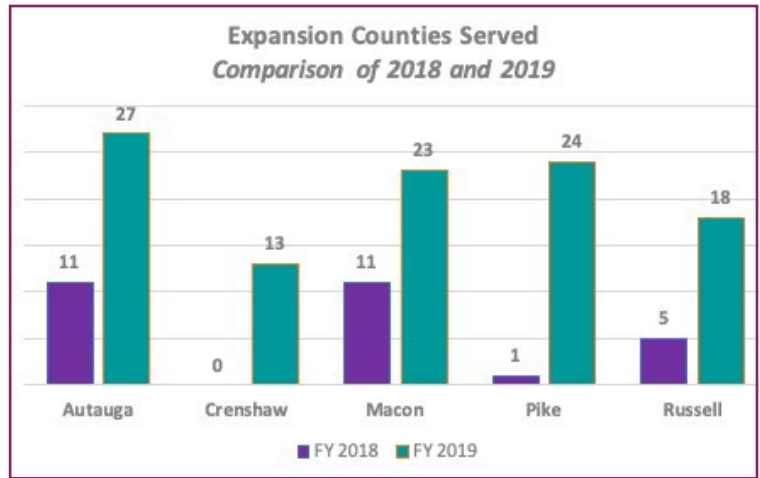
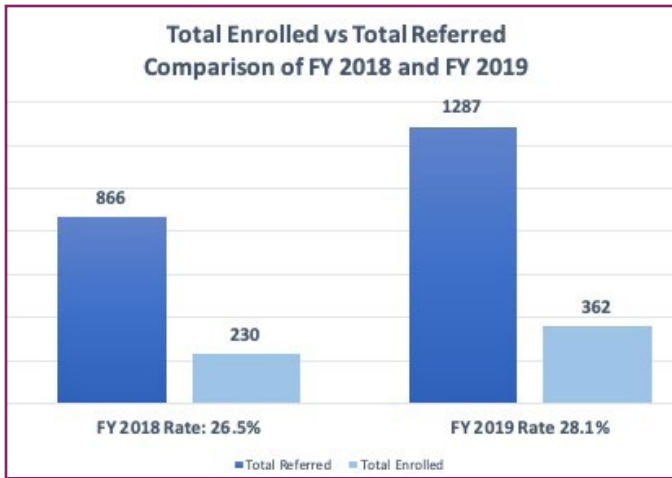


New Enrollments (7/1/2019- 6/30/2020)

NFP-Autauga	18
NFP-Macon	29
NFP- Montgomery	46
NFP- Russell	21
Fathers in Action	18
PAT- Montgomery	88
PAT- Pike	23
PAT- Crenshaw	13
MFC- Montgomery	106

TOTAL 362

*Parents as Teachers includes the number of teen parents enrolled in our new Parenting Forward Program



Both referrals, enrollment and conversion rate increased during FY 2019-2020. In addition, our programs in the expansion counties grew substantially over 2018's totals.

Gift of Life expanded our reach substantially through the progressive use of social media. The most dramatic growth occurred with visits to our website, which increased more than 60% over the last fiscal year. This can be attributed to more news content, job openings and interest in the new Parenting Forward program and an increase in the number of events sponsored or co-sponsored by Gift of Life.



FACEBOOK

Gift of Life Facebook added 426 new followers between June 1, 2019 to July, 2020. Followership increased 33.8% from 1,258 to 1,684.

Demographics: Gender: 89.9% women, 10.1% Men
Age: 28% (25-34); 24% (35-44); 17.4% (45-54); 5.4% (18-24)

Top location of subscribers in Alabama: Montgomery, Prattville, Birmingham, Auburn and Wetumpka



INSTAGRAM

Gift of Life Instagram has received a 32% increase in post interactions over FY 2018-2019. We currently have 274 followers, though post reactions often come from those now following the page.



WEBSITE (June 2019-July 2020)

How many have visited the website during the period: 8,102 page visits — up 62% over 2018-2019.

GOL website direct page visits: 855

(desktop, mobile or table device)

Top ways people access the website: Google (46%);



This photo of Gift of Life baby Averie congratulating his mom Calyn Harper at her graduation from ASU earlier this year was one of the highest viewed photos on our Facebook page. It received nearly 800 likes and shares and reached over 3,071 Facebook users.

Direct by inputting web address (39%); and Facebook/IG (6%)

Most popular pages on our website: Home page (6,562 page views); Parenting Forward (3,268 page views); Join Our Team (1,919 page views); Who We Are (1,264 page views); Staff (908 page views); What We Do (847 page views) and Referral/Enrollment Form (590 pages views).

PRIORITY 4:
WE ATTRACTED
GREAT TALENT

Gift of Life grew as an organization by adding new personnel processes and by hiring competent, experienced professionals whose passion for our work could move us forward

Gift of Life's recruitment efforts were enhanced during the 2019-2020 year by the introduction of the new APS platform, giving GOL its first, true online applicant system. Nine talented professionals joined our team and brought with them the requisite experience, education, and skills that not only complement our current operations, but will advance our mission and help broaden our reach.

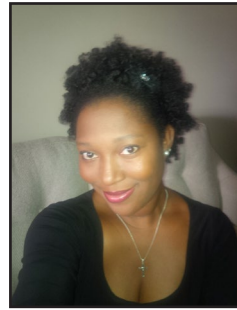
Meet Our New Team Members



Brittany Barnes
Nurse Home Visitor
NFP-Montgomery



Ashley Caver
Parent Educator
PAT-Montgomery



Articia Hunter
Licensed Clinical Provider
Healthy Start



Patrice Lockhart
Nurse Home Visitor
NFP-Montgomery



Kiambrri Mason
Infant Early
Childhood Mental
Health Consultant



Keonia Rogers
Parent Educator
PAT-Montgomery



Trevor Taylor
Controller



Michelle Trasher
Nurse Home Visitor
NFP-Montgomery



Robin Wood
Mobile Family Coach
Montgomery

EOTQ Award Recognizes Excellence

The GOL Employee of the Quarter recognizes high-performing employees who not only excel in their duties, but possess a positive attitude, are creative, and go above and beyond in their service to clients and/or Gift of Life. Each employee may submit only one nomination per quarter. Recipients receive a certificate, \$50 and one half-day of leave.

Our FY 2019-2020 winners were:

Jessie Yates, Kim Daly and Melissa Spivey



Jessie Yates
Fatherhood Coach
Healthy Start



Kim Daly
Administrative Assistant
Nurse-Family Partnership



Melissa Spivey
Parent Educator
PAT- Pike County



Gift of Life has a long tradition of recognizing the work of staff on professional days or months. Above left, GOL's nurses posed for a fun photo during National Nurses Week, May 6-12, 2020. Right, our administrative professionals were saluted for their contributions on Administrative Professionals Day, April 22, 2020, Bottom right, our family coaches were treated to lunch on March 1, 2020, the start of Social Work Month. In addition, HR Director Annie Rogers launched a new monthly "Spotlight" recognition program which recognizes high performers at Friday Forums.



PRIORITY 5: WE FURTHERED OUR IMPACT.

The 2019-2020 year saw Gift of Life strengthen relationships with the communities and partners that we work with, and make impactful contributions on the local, state and national levels.



Left, GOL mom Temea Thomas and son Jayce appeared on the national NFP website with Nurse Supervisor Kristi Gay.

Left, Nurse Supervisor Kristi Gay and NFP mom Temea Thomas were profiled in a story that was featured on the national NFP website. It discussed the special bond a nurse has with her client.

GOL continued its partnership with the Pay It Forward Dental Program. Led by Mobile Family Coach Kathy Lightsey, GOL moms receive free dental services in exchange for performing a certain number of community service hours. Pay It Forward is done in partnership with Hands on River Region.

GOL staff Kristi Gay, Jenni Bass and Jessie Yates served as subject matter experts for The Wellness Coalition’s virtual workshop Overcoming Barriers to Breastfeeding on July 29. More than 68 attended the session.



GOL renewed its collaboration with the Alabama Department of Public Health and Birmingham Healthy Start Plus to present the statewide 2019 Infant Mortality Summit, which was held on September 26-27, 2019 in Prattville and drew over 185 participants.



GOL’s Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) program was featured in the Yahoo documentary “Baby Brain”, which was released worldwide online and streamed on Apple TV in December 2019. Former GOL staffers Amy Trammell, Lori Rogers and her client were included.



Fatherhood Coach Jessie Yates (third from left, front row) launched “Barbershop Talk”, a new community fatherhood group, at Veteran Cuts barbershop, shown here. He was also tapped to serve as regional point person for Healthy Start’s Region 4A Planning Team, which develops plans for 101 Healthy Start fatherhood programs nationwide.



GOL’s Community Action Network launched its Safe Sleep Sunday’s Campaign in February 2020 in area churches. Here, deacons at Pilgrim Rest Church pose for a photo with safe sleep doll “Baby Marcus” after receiving safe sleep educational materials, and viewing a demonstration on ways to reduce sleep-related causes of SIDS.



GOL’s Parenting Forward Program gained the support of Iota Phi Lambda Mu, a service organization made up of professional women in Montgomery, who wanted to support teen parents enrolled in our program by hosting a community baby shower. About 14 PF participants received diapers, clothing, books and blankets. Parent Educators Tina Berry and Laura Collins will work with the group to host future sessions on important life skills like budgeting, self-esteem, applying for college, and job skills.

Gift of Life Outreach launched Operation Christmas Bottoms, a holiday diaper and wipes drive to support GOL families and meet urgent needs from partners like Mary Ellen’s Hearth, Friendship Mission and Mid-Alabama Coalition for the Homeless. Over 30 cases and 115 packs of diapers and 220 packs of wipes along with baby clothing, toys and accessories were donated by individuals, churches and organizations. The drive ran from November 1, 2019 through the end of January 30, 2020.





The mission of The Gift of Life Foundation is to improve the health and well-being of mothers, babies and families to build stronger communities.