

# ALPHA NEWS

ALPHA Pregnancy and Parenting Support

Spring 2016

*Most important journeys begin one step at a time. The excitement and thrill of a new baby creates both a sense of excitement and a sense of urgency. ALPHA Pregnancy and Parenting Support is there every step of the way that first year. That includes you as well, our generous donors and supporters, community members and friends. Behind the scenes at ALPHA a pace has been set and our momentum is growing.*

*It has been a busy year for ALPHA and we have undertaken a few ambitious endeavors. We've had new staff and new Board members join us, we said good-bye with gratitude to former staff Devon, Mayra and Pat, and Board members Jeannie and Ingrid. We introduced a new donor development software and a new phone system, launched a re-designed website, performed a mini-makeover of the ALPHA offices with a new paint job and some re-organization. We launched a new direct mail appeal, continued with our beloved baby bottle drive, Mother's Day cards and flowers, a Tea Party, a Service Auction and our pledge drive all while celebrating 35 years of working with our families.*

*Meet the "ALPHA" team—Patti Fox, Pauline Perez, and Flora Bolivar:*

**Executive Director:** *Patti has over 20 years' experience in non-profit program development and management in Southern California working with youth and families in self-sufficiency, workforce development and foster care programs. With a bachelor's degree in English from the University of San Diego and a Master's degree in Counseling Psychology from San Diego State University, she has worked as a crisis intervention counselor, taught at the college level and worked within the community college system implementing Welfare to Work programs. Patti has served as the Executive Director of ALPHA since April 2015 managing fund development, program services and agency operations.*

**Bilingual Family Resource Specialist:** *Pauline is the bilingual/bicultural Family Resource Specialist as well as the Car Seat Safety Technician. A graduate of Chapman University with a degree in Social Science, she is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Psychology. Her education and background as an in-home therapist working with children and their families and as an advocate for young families is an asset to ALPHA. She works one on one with clients on parenting, infant development and prenatal needs as well as ensuring proper car seat installation and child safety education to all eligible clients.*

**Bilingual Office Manager/Bookkeeper:** *Flora has been with ALPHA for 2 years, as the office manager. A local from San Luis Obispo County, Flora is bilingual/bicultural and has worked with nonprofit organizations in San Luis Obispo County for the last 20 years. Flora has an insider's awareness of the challenges and needs of raising a child in this area. Her compassion and her ability to treat each person with dignity and respect enables her to connect each family to the agencies and services they need. Flora's duties have grown to encompass bookkeeping, fund development and is instrumental in the day to day operations of the agency and its client services.*

## ALPHA Board of Directors

Lisa Fraser	President
Sal Caminada	Vice President
Lynn Lindley	Treasurer
Yvonne Maddalena	Secretary
Liz Clarke	Director
Sallie Joyce Higgins	Director
Shannon McOuat	Director
Chuck Clarke	Emeritus Member

## ALPHA provided clients in 2015 with:

- ◆ 95 car seats; distributed with safety education
- ◆ 716 clothing orders for infants
- ◆ 133 orders of maternity clothes
- ◆ 290 items of baby equipment including high chairs, strollers, and baby beds
- ◆ 8000+ diapers
- ◆ 117 newborn layettes
- ◆ 800 containers of food
- ◆ 419 cans of formula (approximately 6000 meals for infants)
- ◆ All clients receive info about perinatal and postpartum depression and drug/alcohol/tobacco use through the Beginning's brochure at intake.



***ALPHA fulfills a specialty niche by providing comprehensive, individualized support for pregnancy and parenting families up through the milestones in their infants first year of life. We believe that through kindness, support and compassion we empower women and strengthen families.***

## **In Appreciation**

A great big thank you to our partners who help us help our families:

- Central Coast Funds for Children (CCFC) for awarding ALPHA \$3,500 to purchase car seats to support our car seat program.
- The City of San Luis Obispo for a \$4,000 grant for infant formula.
- The County of San Luis Obispo for awarding ALPHA a \$12,000 grant in support of services to vulnerable families with babies.
- The United Way Emergency Food and Shelter Program for \$4,000 for formula and baby food.
- Rita's Rainbows for amazing and continued support for ALPHA babies.

A special thank you to The Center for Family Strengthening for continuing to fund the Postpartum Depression Support Line and the Beginnings Lifestyle brochures.

Thank you to the caring individuals, churches, and businesses who took part in 2015 Change for Life fundraiser and for the countless hours volunteered in coordinating and selling handmade Mother's Day cards and bouquets. An extended warm thank you to all that assisted and supported this beautiful fundraiser. And, of course, many thanks go to the Board of Directors, the Barn Ladies, office volunteers, interns and individual donors who ensure that ALPHA continues to thrive!

*ALPHA depends on the kindness of our friends, our supporters, to continue to provide services to over 500 families in San Luis Obispo County. We appreciate your generous support.*

## **Collaboration Community**

Alpha staff witnessed the true meaning of community collaboration last month. A young client came in to pick up her layette 8 months pregnant with her second child and shared her dilemma. She and her boyfriend and their 15 month old baby lived with her family. Her family decided to move out of the county and gave them a week's notice. They did not have any rental history since they paid her mom cash for rent and they didn't know what to do. They also mentioned the condition of the house they had been living in; water leaks and mold.

Our staff jumped in with both feet to assess the situation; high risk pregnancy, a toddler, potential homelessness, and the exposure to mold. Our Family Resource specialist called upon our community partners for assistance. Within a week, this young couple was in their own apartment, safe and dry.

A week later, their little girl was born. It does take a village! Our thanks and sincere appreciation to all who helped: The LINK, 5 Cities Homeless Coalition, Lopez High School, and Womenade of San Luis Obispo.



Faith Ann Fieldhouse with Mother's Day Flowers.

**"All children need a little help, a little hope and someone who believes in them."  
M.J**

## Upcoming Activities

**April 1 – April 30:**

### ALPHA Diaper Days

Help us reach our goal of 5,000 diapers by the end of the April. Diaper drop-off sites and on-going diaper drives scheduled throughout the County. Dollars for Diapers donations accepted on-line through the ALPHA website or our Facebook page.

**April 23** - Afternoon Tea at the Mission, Ticket info at 541-3367

**April 15 – May 8** Mother's Day Cards and Flowers 541-3367

**April 26** - Volunteer Appreciation Celebration Potluck at the Ludwick Center, 6-8pm, RSVP 541-3367

**May 1** – Change for Life Baby Bottle Drive begins and runs through Father's Day, June 19<sup>th</sup>. Bottles are available in local businesses, churches and through the ALPHA office. This is a major source of income for us.

*ALPHA provided assistance to over 500 families throughout San Luis Obispo County in 2015, of that 64% self-identified as Hispanic and 31% as Caucasian, 26% were employed and 36% were unemployed, and 64% of clients were between the ages of 20 and 33 years of age. Most of the 500+ women and families served are low or very low income and/or at risk and experience barriers to accessing services and resources due to cultural constraints as well as socio-economic challenges. We experienced over twice as many first time clients in 2015 than in the previous year, 219 versus 95, and we continue to serve homeless and undocumented families, as well as those needing support with substance abuse, housing and employment.*



Top Center: Flora Bolivar, Patti Fox, Lisa Fraser at Children's Day in the Plaza 2015.

Bottom left: Chuck & Liz Clarke at Avila Beach for the Giro della Costa Centrale.

Bottom right: Jeannie Burns-Slater, Tess Stapleton, Mayra Valencia, and Flora Bolivar



## Hearts and Flowers

**ALPHA NAMES IN THE NEWS:** Congratulations to Lisa Fraser Alpha's Board President for being recognized as a 2016 Woman of Distinction and to former Board Secretary Ingrid Pires for receiving the Isabel Ruiz Humanitarian Award.

**HEALING THOUGHTS:** for Paul Bonjour, Joe Brundage, Sally Equinoa, Faith Ann Fieldhouse, Terry Foster, Gladys Freund, Mary Grimes, Walt Gonyer, Paula Gurney, Carol Hannula, Maria Jackson, Bea Jeong, Mary & Jack Lanigan, Ernie Martin, Richard Morris, Maria Mulder, Pat Nulton, Trudy Nungaray, Elisa & Al Vega, and Sonja Wagner

**REMEMBERING:** Sadly, we have said final farewells to many longtime supporters and volunteers over the past year. Heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of: Charles Bove; Terry Burrow's mother and brother, Irene Strateny and Fr. Thomas; William Damery; Roberta Dengate; Lorraine Denk; Margaret Fisher's daughter, Diane; Charlotte Greathouse; Henry Hitchcock; Anita Landry; Harry Luis; Patricia McNamara's daughter, Laura; Greg Morris; Celia Braun's mother; Marie Romero; Buzz and Gretchen Rademacher; Tony Ranelletti; Monsignor Joseph Stieger; Emily Tilton; Stephanie Valliere; Ernie Martin, and June von Ruden.

**Charitable Bequests:** Please consider a Charitable Bequest, a legacy, to honor a friend or family member. A charitable bequest is simply a distribution from your estate to a charitable organization through your last will and testament. There are different kinds of bequests using very specific language to indicate the precise direction of your assets, and to successfully carry out your final wishes. In any charitable bequest, be sure to name the recipient accurately, including ALPHA's federal tax identification number. Contact ALPHA for more information, 805-541-3367.

**Every donation counts at ALPHA and supports families in**

**San Luis Obispo County. Will you help your neighbors?**

**\$18** = 1 can of infant formula

**\$25** = 2 bottles of prenatal vitamins

**\$80** = One month of diapers

**\$85** = A convertible infant car seat

**\$500** = A security deposit loan for a pregnant mom

15% of San Luis Obispo County families live below poverty level. Often a can of formula or extra diapers helps them get through the month. Please consider helping ALPHA help these families.

**“We can do no great things – only small things with great love.”** Mother Teresa

To provide support, practical assistance during pregnancy through a child's first year, and education on pregnancy and early parenting throughout San Luis Obispo County.

**Alpha Pregnancy & Parenting Support**

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info@sloalpha.org

Follow us on Facebook @ San Luis Obispo ALPHA or visit:  
www.sloalpha.org

**Contact Us:** For more information on the events, or for more ways you can help. Thank you for believing and supporting our mission.

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**Every child deserves a healthy beginning.**