

the Advocate

Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts

winter 2017

A Letter from Dr. Jennifer Childs-Roshak

President and CEO of PPLM



Natasha Moustache

Dear Friends,
We've just concluded the end of a tumultuous year - for Planned Parenthood, for the reproductive rights and justice movement, and for our country. Now, at the beginning of 2017, we face uncertainty. We're deeply concerned about our patients whose hard-won access to high-quality, nonjudgmental sexual and reproductive health care may be threatened. But along with this uncertainty comes overwhelming resolve - resolve to fight for the gains we've made; to keep our doors open for the patients who depend on us; to care, no matter what.

In the weeks and months since the presidential election, my own resolve has been strengthened and my spirits buoyed by an amazing surge in support for PPLM. **Here's a snapshot of what happened in the week following the election:**

- **Online donations to PPLM increased 32 percent compared to the same week last year.**

- **Young Friends, our group of rising philanthropists, grew by 23 percent in two days.**
- **Our health centers scheduled 265 IUD insertions, compared to 52 the week before.**
- **We received over 200 volunteer inquiries, compared to 16 inquiries the week before.**

This statistical snapshot, impressive as it is, only begins to hint at the energy and determination I see every day among PPLM's patients, staff, volunteers, and donors. We will never back down! Unprecedented levels of support from all corners keep pouring in. In fact, we're poised - and determined - to make Massachusetts a national leader in health care and equal rights by defending and expanding access to birth control, safe and legal abortion, and other vital services.

Many of you are asking how you can help PPLM create a world where sexual and reproductive health care is not the privilege of a few, but everyone's right. We are grateful for your inquiries, your partnership, and your resolve. As Planned Parenthood gears up for the biggest fight of our lives in the days, weeks, and years ahead, we've included a few ways you can take action today.

Thank you so much for your compassion and dedication, and for standing with PPLM.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jen".

Jennifer Childs-Roshak, MD, MBA

Six Ways You Can Help

Make an additional gift to PPLM today to ensure we can continue providing high-quality, affordable care to all people across the Commonwealth.

Include PPLM in your estate plans and take advantage of the PPFA Bequest Challenge (see back page for details).

Organize your own fundraising event. Call 617.616.1600 x1764 or email events@pplm.org for more information.

Contact your federal and state elected officials and urge them to defend the rights we've fought so hard for, protect health care access, and stand with Planned Parenthood. You can find contact information at wheredoivotema.com.

Register to volunteer at pplm.org/volunteer.

Add your name to the national "I Stand with Planned Parenthood" campaign at istandwithpp.org.

advocate focus: *Roe v. Wade*

As *Roe v. Wade* marks its 44th anniversary, PPLM spoke with attorney Jamie Sabino about what may lie ahead for the landmark ruling issued by the United States Supreme Court, which affirms the legal right for a woman to have an abortion, as protected under the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. Jamie is a Planned Parenthood Advocacy Fund (PPAF) board member and a past chair of both the PPLM and PPAF boards.

Could *Roe v. Wade* be overturned during the next four years?

JS: The U.S. Supreme Court currently has a majority of five Justices who support the right to privacy, including the right to abortion, and three Justices who oppose abortion. With one existing vacancy likely to be filled

by a *Roe* opponent, the majority of five would still stand. But if one of the current sitting judges leaves the court in the next four years, a second appointment could shift *Roe* opponents to the majority. So, yes, there's a significant chance that the U.S. Supreme Court could overturn *Roe*, but it wouldn't happen right away.

Should we be concerned about access to safe, legal abortion here in Massachusetts?

JS: No. We are protected in Massachusetts by our state constitution and by our state laws, which will remain intact even if *Roe* is overturned. In fact, our state laws provide even greater protection than federal law, because they explicitly allow abortion and mandate its coverage by state Medicaid funds.

What about archaic laws in Massachusetts that ban or restrict access to abortion and even contraception?

JS: These outdated laws are unconstitutional and unenforced, and they've been implicitly repealed by newer statutes. But Massachusetts has to show its commitment to women's rights by wiping these laws off the books, once and for all. For several years, PPAF has been the lead proponent of *An Act Updating the Public Health Laws*, which would expunge these statutes. This work is part of PPAF's overall agenda, which includes passage of a contraceptive access bill and other legislation to protect reproductive rights.

istandwithpp.org

advocate spotlight: Nora Mishanec

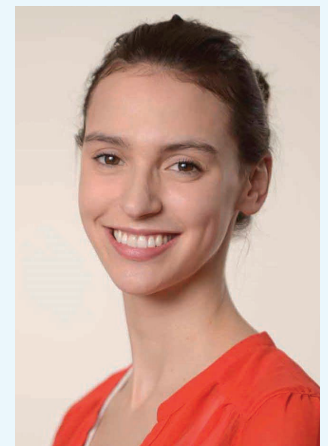
What does it take to become a Young Friend of PPLM? According to Nora Mishanec, it's easy: "Passion, commitment, and \$10 a month." Young Friends (YF) of PPLM is a group of people ages 21 to 35 who grow the PPLM family by engaging friends and colleagues, and work to secure vital funds that support PPLM's work.

"Our generation is bombarded with messages from social media. YF is different: at events that are meaningful and fun, YF gives us the chance to share real conversations, brainstorm, and build community."

As a new Wellesley College graduate, Nora joined YF after looking for volunteer opportunities that would address her interests in social justice and women's rights. She also wanted to learn fundraising skills, so she could apply them to causes she believes in. Now a member of the YF Steering Committee, Nora reports that personal connections between PPLM supporters have been inspiring. Most recently, on December 7,

YF hosted a sold-out "Big Bash" that welcomed 100 supporters. Nora says the event, in these uncertain times, was "very reassuring, because we all realized that PPLM's doors will stay open, no matter what."

Since the November presidential election, YF membership has doubled, and the group has big plans to grow and engage its membership. Nora's own commitment will remain strong even as she departs soon for Madagascar to take up a position as a Peace Corps agriculture volunteer. "I'll be thousands of miles away," she says, "but I'll still be standing with PPLM."



For information about Young Friends of PPLM, contact Caitlin Quinn at cquinn@pplm.org or visit pplm.org/youngfriends.

President's Society Conference Informs & Inspires



From left to right: Ilene Greenberg, Jen Slonaker (PPLM vice president of education and training), Dianne Luby, Elizabeth Munro

On October 18, a lively group of PPLM's core supporters came together in Boston for the 2016 President's Society Conference, an inside look into the organization's top priorities, goals, and challenges. This annual, invitation-only event is open to members of the President's Society who contribute \$1,000 or more annually to PPLM, and to members of the PPLM Council (formerly the Overseers Council), some of PPLM's most active organizational ambassadors and reproductive rights champions.

Attendees were joined by PPLM's executive team, senior staff, and youth activists. The energy of these diverse PPLM representatives made for hours of compelling presentations and discussion, all in the context of Planned Parenthood Federation of America's 100th anniversary - a milestone celebrating national gains in access to sexual and reproductive health care for all.

Dr. Childs-Roshak welcomed participants, noting that PPLM has played an important role in Planned Parenthood's long history,

pioneering initiatives in health care, education, and advocacy that serve as models for similar programs at other Planned Parenthood affiliates. She invited members to look to the future with PPLM, as it continues to innovate and deliver compassionate, high-quality care to more than 30,000 patients each year.

Workshops led by staff provided participants with "crash courses" in four key areas:

Messaging Matters: How the PPLM community can broaden support by delivering clear, consistent information about Planned Parenthood's services and values.

Planned Parenthood Advocacy Fund: What supporters can do to advocate for legislation that will protect and improve access to reproductive health care and sex education.

Business Development and Community Engagement: What PPLM is doing to increase its presence in the community, expand educational outreach, and build new strategic partnerships.

Contraception for the Future:

How PPLM's medical staff are using long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) and other birth control methods to prevent unintended pregnancies, especially among teens.

Said PPLM Council member Ashley Houston Mason, "I've been a supporter for eight years and I always learn something new - this year's conference was no exception. I left the conference feeling confident I can be an informed, effective voice for PPLM and its mission."

The conference culminated in a working lunch featuring a youth panel whose members shared personal stories of PPLM volunteer activities. Nadya Okamoto explained why she founded her own nonprofit, Camions of Care, to counter taboos around menstruation and to increase access to menstrual hygiene products. High school student Nina C. recounted her experiences as a peer educator in PPLM's *Get Real* Teen Council. Paul Gels, PPLM communications manager, spoke to the essential need for PPLM to continue its investment in programs that mobilize, train, and empower the next generation of leaders. Lastly, Nora Mishanec answered questions about Young Friends of PPLM (see "Spotlight," page 2).

These young activists exemplify the drive, hard work, and passion of PPLM's future leaders, and the enduring power of PPLM's mission.

For more information about the President's Society and the PPLM Council, please contact Lisa Malley, Director of Individual Giving, at lmalley@pplm.org.

faces & places



Upcoming Events

Celebration of Choices

To benefit the Planned Parenthood Advocacy Fund of Massachusetts

Tuesday, March 28, 2017, 6:30pm

Visit pplmvotes.org/choices for details.

Support PPLM at one of our upcoming house party events.

May 11th: Milton House Party

May 18th: Brookline/Chestnut Hill House Party



The Planned Parenthood Bequest Challenge

As part of its 100th anniversary, PPFA is launching a special Bequest Challenge to support its affiliates now as well as in the future. When you confirm a bequest commitment to PPLM, PPFA will award us a grant equal to 10 percent of your future gift's value, up to \$25,000, this year. If you want to participate in the Bequest Challenge but keep the amount of your gift private, PPLM will still receive a grant of \$1,000. The challenge creates a meaningful legacy and provides immediate funds for current work.

For more information, please contact Lisa Malley, Director of Individual Giving, at lmalley@pplm.org, visit www.plannedparenthood.org/bequestchallenge, or call 617.616.1644.



Images (top to bottom): **1.** Michael Anderson, Eliza Anderson, John Henn, Belinda Rathbone, Sam Anderson at the Cambridge house party; **2.** Chelsea Schwam, Paul Gels, and Michaela Hughes with Condomino at the Young Friends Big Bash; **3.** Stephanie Toti, Senior Counsel at the Center for Reproductive Rights, and Joanne Mueller at our gathering of President's Society Sponsors. (Images 1 & 3: *Natasha Moustache*)

Please support PPLM by visiting www.pplm.org/donate or email development@pplm.org.