

Standing Strong with Cecile Richards



Cecile Richards and Jennifer Childs-Roshak at PPLM's Boston office.

This spring, Cecile Richards visited Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts (PPLM) to say "see you later" to staff before she stepped down as president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA). Afterward, PPLM President and CEO Jennifer Childs-Roshak caught up with Cecile to take a look back at her remarkable tenure.

JCR: After 12 years at the helm of PPFA, what are you most proud of?

CR: There are many, many things I'm honored to have been a part of at Planned Parenthood, but one that will always stand out is winning the fight to get birth control covered under the Affordable Care Act. We rallied hard around the issue, because we knew how much access to birth control would mean to people in this country. I'll never

forget the day President Obama called Planned Parenthood to say that he was about to announce that women would get all forms of birth control fully covered under their insurance plan – no matter what.

JCR: One of my proudest moments was when we passed the Contraceptive ACCESS Law protecting that progress here in Massachusetts. That came right on the heels of the Trump-Pence administration actively working to undermine access.

CR: The work you're doing here in Massachusetts is truly heroic. Despite the many challenges we face, nothing heartens me more than seeing states like Massachusetts stand up to protect the care of its citizens. Now, if only the rest of the country would follow suit!

JCR: At PPLM and across the country, it's so important that we're fighting back, investing in young people, and elevating our patients' voices.

CR: Exactly. We're at an unprecedented moment in our history, when so much is at stake – but our supporters have shown up time and time again. You know, when I first came to Planned Parenthood, people used to ask, "Where are the young people?" I never hear that anymore!

To put it in perspective: 12 years ago, we had 3 million supporters. Today, we've grown to 12 million. We are more than twice the size of the National Rifle Association. Not that it's a contest.

JCR: Cecile, thank you for everything you've done for reproductive rights. Thank you for inspiring so many leaders in this movement – including myself. You're going to be missed.

CR: Thank you, Jen. It's been the honor of a lifetime to do this work with you and all of the incredible people who make up the Planned Parenthood family. And even though I am stepping down from this job, I'm not stepping back from this movement. I look forward to many years of friendship – and of working alongside you, joyfully, as one of Planned Parenthood's 12 million supporters!

ceo's corner



Natasha Moustache

Dear Friends,

As PPLM's fiscal year draws to a close and we embark on a new strategic planning process, I'm reflecting proudly on our accomplishments and looking ahead with excitement and conviction. The plan's key elements – to expand access to care for all who need it; to leverage PPLM's award-winning education and

research programs; and to combat persisting sexual and reproductive health care disparities – will serve as a roadmap for the next three years and set PPLM on course for a strong future, despite the hostile national political landscape.

You'll read in this *Advocate* about PPLM innovations that already address some of these strategic priorities. Our education programs have been in the news for their exceptional relevance to the national campaign against

sexual violence. Our community outreach program is drawing new patients, many of whom face systemic barriers to care. On the advocacy side, we're taking up Cecile Richards' inspiring challenge to be a "north star" in the fight for reproductive health and rights.

Our most immediate priority is to fight back against President Trump's recently released domestic gag rule, which would make it illegal for health care providers like Planned Parenthood to provide preventive care to our patients through the Title X family planning program. This rule would also make it illegal for doctors, nurses, hospitals, and any other provider in the Title X program to tell patients how they can access safe and legal abortion.

Your support makes it possible for PPLM to work strategically to face these attacks, to take care of our communities, and to prepare for what is ahead. Thank you for standing with PPLM during these unprecedented times.

Jennifer Childs-Roshak, MD, MBA
President and CEO

advocate spotlight: Sex Ed Programs Teach Communication & Consent



Natasha Moustache

Ori Ayalon speaking at the Brookline/Chestnut Hill house party in May.

Raising awareness about sexual assault and harassment prevention isn't just the province of movie stars. PPLM's sex education programs address the core issues behind the current #MeToo movement by emphasizing sexual consent, communication, autonomy, and respect in the context of building healthy relationships.

This approach, effectively delivered to young people, plays an essential role in combatting the sexual misconduct epidemic that #MeToo has brought to light.

PPLM has long provided education about consent, first offering sex education in schools and community settings in the early 1990s. In 2005, PPLM launched *Let's Be Honest*, its parent education program, as well as *Get Real*, an evidence-based curriculum for middle school and high school students that currently reaches nearly 250,000 students in 33 states and Ecuador.

Peer educators in the *Get Real* Teen Council now help hundreds of students in Greater Boston and Central Massachusetts understand consent and healthy relationships. *Get Real* Teen Council member Ori Ayalon is proud of her work: "People don't always connect what's happening in Hollywood to what's happening in our own backyard. Through unbiased information, I help my peers think about their own boundaries and ask themselves 'What does a healthy relationship look like to me?'"



PPLM Connects with Communities Statewide

A dynamic new program has put three full-time PPLM Community Outreach Specialists (COS) on the road to spread the word about PPLM's expert health care services and educational resources. Every week, these energetic staff members deliver presentations to health care professionals and educators, run workshops and meetings, participate in conferences, health fairs, and community events, and have hundreds of meaningful conversations. By raising PPLM's visibility and building trust among new constituencies, our specialists are helping improve the health and well-being of communities across the Commonwealth.

Angelique B., Central Massachusetts COS

"I'm constantly connecting with new people in new ways. I try to help folks overcome the fear and stigma that can come up when we talk about sexuality and sexual health."



Angelique's focus on reaching college students takes her to different campuses to meet students, faculty, staff, and others who want to learn more about PPLM's services. She offers information about sexual health care; explains options for protection and contraception; and reminds students to get tested for STIs. Off campus, Angelique's work sometimes takes

surprising turns: she recently dispensed information about PPLM resources at a hockey weekend attended by thousands of Worcester Railers fans!

Joleen C., Greater Boston COS

"We ask ourselves: How can we tailor our presentations and resources to fit the health needs of the groups we're working with, whether they're people of color, LGBTQ, immigrants, homeless, or people with substance use disorders (SUD)?"



Joleen works with SUD care providers and clients in residential treatment and recovery facilities and many other venues, where she connects with people who may never have sought care at a PPLM health center. Joleen consistently emphasizes PPLM's vital role in providing compassionate, nonjudgmental care to everyone – no matter what.



Sophie H., Western Massachusetts COS

"I grew up in Western Massachusetts and it's great to be back, working to ensure that PPLM is a visible, trusted partner in the region's health care network."

Sophie's varied outreach activities in a sprawling four-county area include regular visits to Chicopee's Western Massachusetts Regional Women's Correctional Center and the nearby Western Massachusetts Recovery and Wellness Center. There, Sophie delivers information to women of all backgrounds who are often left out of the health care system – those awaiting sentencing, facing incarceration, or preparing to leave prison. In these and other settings, Sophie offers culturally appropriate information to empower women to take charge of their sexual health.

Is your organization interested in scheduling a COS presentation?
Please visit pplm.org/bdce or email marketing@pplm.org to learn more.

faces & places



Above, at the Planned Parenthood Advocacy Fund of Massachusetts (PPAF) Celebration of Choices gala in February: PPLM board member Catherine West and incoming PPLM board member Wanda McClain; gala co-chairs Aidan and Abigail Flanagan; Planned Parenthood Federation of America/Planned Parenthood Action Fund Executive Vice President Dawn Laguens; PPLM/PPAF President Jennifer Childs-Roshak; Representative John Scibak; gala co-chairs Alison and Zander Packard; PPAF board member Grace Zakim and Young Friends of PPLM member Gaby Goldstein. (Credit: Natasha Moustache). Left: PPAF supporters at the Boston rally to resist the Trump-Pence administration's domestic gag rule in May. (Credit: Nina Gallant). Below: Greater Boston Get Real Teen Council members Theo, Hannah, Julia, Dinah, and Ori advocating for the *Healthy Youth Act* on Beacon Hill at the PPAF Youth Lobby Day in January.



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