

# big sky impact

SPRING 2018

NEWS AND

EVENTS

## I AM PLANNED PARENTHOOD: Angela DeKoning – In Her Own Words

“From 2005 to 2008, I was back and forth between health care providers trying to identify why I was drastically losing weight. Some people told me that it was psychosomatic and due to a bad attitude.

I went in for my annual exam with my provider at Planned Parenthood and she was taken aback because I had lost 42 pounds since my last visit and my skin was hanging from my body. I broke down and cried. She ordered a blood test for me and we found out that I have Grave's disease. My provider cared so much that she helped me find the root of my problem before the week was over.

I have been going to Planned Parenthood since I was 18, so I've been a patient for almost half of my life. Access to quality, affordable health care at Planned Parenthood has helped me stay healthy for my family. I am a single parent to my daughter, Gemma, and we have two dogs named Manny and Lucy. We like to spend time playing in the mountains, making crafts and art, and dancing to tunes.

I am forever grateful for Planned Parenthood. They showed me that they walk the walk and truly care, no matter what. Thank you, Planned Parenthood!” ■



*Angela and Gemma, Great Falls*

## WE ARE PLANNED PARENTHOOD: Foundations Helping Montanans

Planned Parenthood of Montana is grateful to recognize two of our new grantors — the **S.L. Gimbel Foundation** at **The Community Foundation**, and the **PacificSource Foundation for Health Improvement**.

Both of these foundations have generously chosen to support our new sex education Training Institute. This program will train and empower teachers and other youth serving professionals working on or near Montana's American Indian reservations to provide sex education to their students. By providing curriculum training to educators, PPMT will be able to exponentially impact youth in our state.

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## We are Planned Parenthood

Planned Parenthood is one of the most well-known brands in health care and advocacy. It is rare to cross paths with someone who doesn't know what Planned Parenthood does, or who we are. But it recently happened to me with a car service driver. I was in New York City for a meeting about patient experience with other CEOs and was headed back to the airport. The driver, a young immigrant, asked about my work, and when I told him, he asked, "Who is Planned Parenthood?" I gave a simple answer that Planned Parenthood is a provider of sexual and reproductive health care, education and advocacy, but afterward I thought about what I might have said.

## Who is Planned Parenthood?

Planned Parenthood is a mission-focused team of caregivers which includes clinical assistants, nurses, doctors, billers and coders, accountants, educators, advocates, fundraisers, and health center managers. Planned Parenthood is a community-oriented team of volunteer board members, including lawyers and artists and teachers and health care providers. Planned Parenthood is a crew of volunteers of all ages who educate their peers, call their neighbors, host events, and care for patients. Planned Parenthood is an army of donors who give to protect access, create opportunity, and provide care. Planned Parenthood is the teacher who welcomes a PPMT educator into their classroom, the elected official who introduces a pro-women's health bill, the community partner who provides a referral.

Most of all, Planned Parenthood is our patients. At the center of everything Planned Parenthood does are the 16,000 people from Montana and beyond who come to our health centers for services. Planned Parenthood is a transgender college student, a peri-menopausal woman, a young man, a mom of three, a Native American teen . . .

My greatest privilege as CEO of Planned Parenthood is to hear all of your stories of how Planned Parenthood has been a part of your life. The stories I hear are so varied that I know that I will never understand the impact that Planned Parenthood has on the life of every single person who walks through our doors as a patient, as staff, or as volunteers. But I am so incredibly grateful for the opportunity to learn—one encounter at a time—how each of those people is a part of Planned Parenthood. In this newsletter, I want you to get a flavor of those stories through profiles of some of the people who are part of our mission.

**Who is Planned Parenthood?**  
**WE are Planned Parenthood.**

Onward,

Martha Stahl, *President and CEO*

## PPMT Board of Directors

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## I AM PLANNED PARENTHOOD: Pryor Teen Council

During the summer of 2017, Nona Main, the educator for PPMT's Native American Outreach Program (NAOP) worked diligently, alongside Billings area educator Joli Mathis, to bring together youth from Pryor and Billings at the Teen Council Retreat. It went off without a hitch and the Pryor Teen Council had five youth attend. It was the very first retreat for four of the youth, and for many it was their first real exposure to anything related to sex education. The youth really enjoyed the retreat experience, which prepared them for the Teen Council kickoff at the beginning of the school year.



The teens were excited to get things rolling in their school community. When school started they recruited four more teens to join, with a final total of nine Pryor Teen Council members participating for 2017–2018 school year. Now that the members of the group are more comfortable with sex education they are also gaining skills as peer educators. The Council has identified three issues they feel their peers need to learn about: healthy relationships/

consent, sexually transmitted infections, and birth control methods. The NAOP educator will continue to focus on these issues with the youth through the end of the school year. They will also work together to develop lesson plans to present to their peers this spring. Their first presentations will be to their peers in their high school/middle school classes in Pryor, with the possibility of expanding to reach other local schools in the community. ■

## PLANNED PARENT-WHO?

**With so many faces of Planned Parenthood, it can be hard to remember which Planned Parenthood organization does what. Here's a primer on the Planned Parenthood family of organizations.**

**Planned Parenthood of Montana (PPMT):** PPMT provides health care and sexual health education in Montana. PPMT operates five health centers, in Billings, Great Falls, Helena, and Missoula. The education department provides information and programming in classrooms and beyond and includes the Teen Council program and the Native American Outreach Project. PPMT is not involved in electoral politics and can not endorse candidates. Gifts to PPMT are tax deductible.

**Planned Parenthood Advocates of Montana (PPAMT):** PPAMT is the advocacy and political arm of Planned Parenthood in Montana. PPAMT advocates for the reproductive rights and access to health care for Montanans. This advocacy includes grassroots organizing, lobbying, and issue education. PPAMT may endorse candidates in local and state-wide races, produce a voter guide, and educate voters. PPAMT also has a PAC, which further supports electoral work. Gifts to PPAMT, a 501(c) 4, are not tax deductible.

**Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA):** PPFA is the federation of all Planned Parenthood affiliates, including PPMT. PPFA provides resources and training to affiliates, including medical standards and guidelines, development support and best practices, access to tools such as our online appointment scheduler, and more. Gifts to PPFA are tax deductible.

**Planned Parenthood Action Fund (PPAF):** PPAF is the advocacy and political arm of Planned Parenthood nationally. PPAF advocates for the reproductive rights and access to the health care for people across the United States. This advocacy includes grassroots organizing, lobbying, and issue education. PPAF may also endorse candidates in federal races, produce a voter guide, and educate voters. PPAF also has a PAC, which makes contributions to candidates. Gifts to PPAF are not tax deductible.

## I AM PLANNED PARENTHOOD: Mariah Welch

Mariah Welch embodies the PPMT and Planned Parenthood Advocates mottoes to **Care and Act: No Matter What**. Her relationship with and unwavering support of Planned Parenthood in Montana began as a patient and continued as a member of Teen Council. Her journey has led to her service as a member of the PPMT Board of Directors and as PPAMT's Vice-Chair. All the while she has been a student and is pursuing her Bachelor's Degree in Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies and Political Science with an emphasis in Public Law.

Mariah credits Planned Parenthood with providing her the health care services she needed as a young athlete, the information she needed to make informed decisions about her reproductive health care, and the skills to sustain healthy relationships. Inspired to give back to an organization that had provided her with so much,

*mariah joined our esteemed teen council program and says the program "taught me how to properly educate others on their sexual and reproductive health, all while empowering me to have a voice of my own."*

Her enthusiasm and commitment to engage in electoral politics is contagious. She consistently shows up to recognize and express gratitude for elected officials who provide leadership on our issues and helps hold accountable politicians who threaten access to the full range of reproductive health care including abortion. One of her many successes was ensuring Planned Parenthood's funding was at the forefront of the 2016 Montana Governor's race. On numerous occasions, sometimes dressed as a pack of birth control pills, Mariah asked gubernatorial candidate Greg Gianforte about



*Mariah is in the center, with a bullhorn, protesting with other PPAMT supporters*

his position on the issue. Her persistence resulted in the candidate publicly admitting his desire to defund Planned Parenthood.

Reflecting on her years of experience, Mariah says, "I care about Planned Parenthood because I am passionate about the amazing services our staff provides, the advocacy work we do in order to provide our patients with those services, and the inclusive education we provide to people all across the state of Montana." ■

## WE ARE PLANNED PARENTHOOD: Working in Coalition to Protect Montanans

Planned Parenthood Advocates of Montana is working closely with coalition partners on two initiatives for the 2018 ballot. Over the coming months we will provide updates on this important work and look forward to your help in protecting Medicaid Expansion and in defeating efforts to discriminate against transgender Montanans.

### Working to Defeat I-183

We continue to work in coalition with partners around the state to defeat I-183. As a reminder, this is a proposed initiative that would require Montanans to use public facilities, such as locker rooms and restrooms, that correspond with the gender on their original birth certificate. This unnecessary and costly policy will force Montanans to prove their gender to anyone who demands it in order for them to access facilities in public spaces, such as parks, libraries, and schools.

Montanans understand I-183 is bad for Montana's economy, communities, & schools. Since the fall of 2017 we have provided training to over 400 Montanans. We're not just organizing to defeat I-183; we are building a strong base of grassroots leaders across the state ready to speak up against discriminatory legislation in the future.

*continue on next page*

## Healthy Montana

In February, a broad group of organizations working to improve the health of Montanans filed initiative language for the 2018 ballot with the Montana Secretary of State that would increase the state tax on tobacco for the purposes of funding Montana's Medicaid program and other health initiatives.

The proposed ballot initiative would raise the state tax on cigarettes and other tobacco products and use the new funds to prevent nearly 94,000 Montanans from losing their health insurance. The revenue would also pay for veterans' suicide prevention programs, long-term care services to help seniors and people with disabilities stay in their homes, and programs to prevent kids from smoking and help smokers quit.

"We are proud to be working on this critically important effort to prevent our patients and thousands of other Montanans from losing their health coverage," said Martha Stahl. "Increasing the tobacco tax has proven to save lives and reduce the negative impacts of cancer and heart disease on health outcomes and our economy."

In 2015, the Montana Legislature approved Medicaid eligibility for low-income Montanans who otherwise were left in a coverage gap without access to affordable health care. Since its passage, 93,950 Montanans have enrolled for health coverage under the guidelines. Without this initiative, those Montanans would lose coverage. ■

## PPAMT Board of Directors

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## WE ARE PLANNED PARENTHOOD: Especially When We Are Together

We may be biased but a room full of PPMT supporters is as fun as a crowd can get. From a Barn Dance in Helena to Karaoke for a Cause in Missoula to a Pint Night in Great Falls — PPMT supporters consistently come out to show support for empowering thousands of Montanans to make informed health decisions.

We owe the businesses and organizations that were kind enough to host events a tremendous amount of gratitude. Friendly businesses, like the ones listed here, provide spaces for PPMT supporters to gather in solidarity, bring awareness to PPMT's services, raise money and recruit

volunteers. For that, we encourage your patronage of and owe a huge thank you to:

**Billings**—  
 Billings First  
 Congregational  
 Church, Good  
 Earth Market,  
 Last Chance  
 Pub & Cider Mill,  
 Yellowstone Valley  
 Brewing Company



**Missoula**—The Badlander, Caffe Dolce, Draught Works Brewery, Highlander Beer, Imagine Nation Brewery, The Public House, The Roxy Theater, Ten Spoon Vineyard

**Helena**—Gulch Distillers, Plymouth Congressional Church, Ten Mile Creek Brewery

**Bozeman**—Bozeman Brewing Company, MAP Brewing

**Great Falls**—Mighty Mo Brewing Company

**Red Lodge**—Red Lodge Ales Brewing Company

**Whitefish**—Whitefish Community Center  
 A sincere thank you to all the Stewardship Committees, members of the PPMT Board of Directors, and volunteers who help make these events a success.

Despite the challenges PPMT has faced in the last year, we've still managed to come together, share a meal or drink, and have fun.

We can't wait to see you at the next PPMT party.



## Foundations continued from p1

According to PPMT's Director of Learning, Jill Baker, "We are so grateful that both these foundations have recognized the need and importance of helping individual communities deliver important education programs to our fellow Montanans who live on reservations. PPMT's Native outreach work is a priority for Planned Parenthood, and we could not do this without the assistance of grantors who value this part of the country, and the vulnerable populations whom we serve."

Marian Blankenship, Pacific Source Foundation Vice President noted, "Our Foundation's mission is to promote community health improvement, guided by the touchstones of better health, better care, and lower costs. We are pleased to support Planned Parenthood of Montana as they partner with local tribes toward educating and preventing teen pregnancy among Native American youth."

We will do a full feature on our reservation education program in an upcoming newsletter. But for now, a Big Sky big "thank you" to the S.L. Gimbel Foundation at The Community Foundation and PacificSource Foundation for Health Improvement for seeing the need and stepping up to help make a solution possible. ■



Planned Parenthood of Montana

1116 Grand Ave, Suite 201  
Billings, MT 59102

[plannedparenthood.org/montana](http://plannedparenthood.org/montana)

Non-profit Org  
U.S. Postage  
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### Planned Parenthood of Montana Health Centers

#### Billings West

(406) 656.9980  
1844 Broadwater #4

Monday . . . . . 8 am – 6:30 pm  
Tuesday . . . . . Closed  
Wednesday . . . . . Closed  
Thursday . . . . . 8 am – 6:30 pm  
Friday . . . . . 7:30 am – 6 pm

#### Billings Heights

(406) 869.5040  
100 W. Wicks Lane

Monday . . . . . Closed  
Tuesday . . . . . 7:30 am – 6 pm  
Wednesday . . . . . 8 am – 5 pm  
Thursday . . . . . Closed  
Friday . . . . . Closed

#### Great Falls

(406) 454.3431  
211 9th Street South

Monday . . . . . 8 am – 5:30 pm  
Tuesday . . . . . 8 am – 12 pm  
Wednesday . . . . . 8 am – 5:30 pm  
Thursday . . . . . Closed  
Friday . . . . . 8 am – 5:30 pm

#### Helena

(406) 443.7676  
1500 Cannon Street

Monday . . . . . 8 am – 5:30 pm  
Tuesday . . . . . Closed  
Wednesday . . . . . 11 am – 7 pm  
Thursday . . . . . Closed  
Friday . . . . . 8 am – 5:30 pm

#### Missoula

(406) 728.5490219 E. Main Street

Monday . . . . . 9 am – 6 pm  
Tuesday . . . . . 9 am – 6 pm  
Wednesday . . . . . Closed  
Thursday . . . . . 9 am – 6 pm  
Friday . . . . . 9 am – 6 pm

Saturday (First and third Saturday of every month) . . . . . 9 am – 12 pm

#### Billings Administration

Monday – Friday only  
(406) 248.3636



### Give Local • May 3 – 4, 2018

This **May 3** and **4** join thousands of Montanans who are making a commitment to "give local" through a special community giving event. In 2017 we raised just over \$15,000. Our goal for 2018 is \$20,000!

#### It's easy to participate.

Go to your give local website listed below. Click on "Join These Awesome Nonprofits" and search Planned Parenthood of Montana, then click "view profile" and select the donate button. You can donate even if you do not live in one of the host communities.



**MISSOULAGIVES**  
[missoulagives.org](http://missoulagives.org)



[yellowstonegives.org](http://yellowstonegives.org)



[greaterhelenagives.org](http://greaterhelenagives.org)