

Knights of Columbus Ultrasound Program Assists Pregnant Women in Paducah Area

Local Councils Provide Funds to Hope Unlimited for New Medical Technology

Three Councils in Paducah Kentucky joined together to facilitate donation of the 376th ultrasound machine of the Knights of Columbus Ultrasound Initiative program, to the non-profit pregnancy center, Hope Unlimited in Paducah, Kentucky. On September 24th, Bishop Medley of the Owensboro Diocese blessed the new machine along with representatives from Hope Unlimited and the donor Councils. Councils participating in local fundraising, which was matched by the Supreme Council, are: Holy Rosary Council #1055, Divine Mercy Council #11591 and Monsignor Anthony G. Higdon Council #10962.



A new 3D ultrasound machine donated by Kentucky Knights to Paducah's Hope Unlimited Inc. was blessed by Bishop William Medley in September 2013. Shown in left photo are (left to right) Hope Unlimited Board Member, FS Phillip Toon, PGK Gerald Roof, DD Pat Lipford, and Bishop Medley. Shown in right photo are representatives of local Councils in full regalia, Hope Unlimited Development Director Anne Bidwell, Fr. Frank Roof, Fr. Pat Reynolds, and Bishop Medley.

In January 2009, the Knights of Columbus launched a new initiative aimed at providing women considering abortion a new way of viewing the life within them.

At that time, the K of C Supreme Council matched funds raised by Knights in Florida and Iowa that provided two pregnancy care centers complete funding for the acquisition of ultrasound machines that have helped the centers to provide for the health of both mother and child.

As of Spring of 2013, numerous local and state councils have qualified for matching funds from the Supreme Council towards the purchase of over 334 ultrasound machines at a cost of over \$8.5 million. In Kentucky, this program has helped provide funding for several other ultrasound machines in northern and central Kentucky.

Ultrasound exams, which are medically indicated throughout pregnancy for a variety of diagnostic reasons, use ultrasound waves to scan a women's abdomen, creating a picture or "sonogram" of the baby in her uterus. Studies show that a high percentage of women and family members who view an ultrasound image of the baby's hands and feet, and hear the heartbeat of their baby change their previous plans and choose to continue life in their womb. Without K of C support, most pregnancy care centers would be unable to purchase the ultrasound machines, each costing tens of thousands of dollars.

The sophistication of today's medical technology provides a "window on the womb" said Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson. "Even from the early stages of pregnancy, a mother can see her developing child, hear the baby's heartbeat, and to recognize the miracle of the new life within her."

The Knights of Columbus Ultrasound Initiative seeks to provide medically certified pro-life pregnancy centers with the modern technology to monitor the health of babies in utero, and to allow mothers to visually experience their development.

The Knights of Columbus is the world's largest lay Catholic organization with more than 1.75 million members worldwide. The four principles of this organization are Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism. Last year, Knights gave more than 70 million hours of their time to charitable causes and donated more than \$158 million to charity.