

## FEATURE STORY A TALE OF THREE LAWYERS

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## A TALE OF THREE LAWYERS

### GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP THROUGH THESE 30 YEARS

Jesus warned, "Woe to you lawyers." Still, the history of the National Institute of Family and Life Advocates (NIFLA) shows how lawyers instead became a blessing to pregnancy centers in peril around the nation. Providentially, NIFLA's founder Thomas A. Glessner connected with two other lawyers – and those relationships proved key to the pregnancy center movement as decades passed.

At the outset, Glessner sought counsel from his longtime friend Michael Farris, who founded the Home School Legal Defense Association. As Glessner shared his vision of creating an organization to be the legal advocate for pregnancy centers, Farris suggested the HSLDA membership model to protect the work of pro-life centers. This model was appealing as it would allow pro-life centers to pay an affordable annual fee for a variety of legal services, such as legal audits, legal trainings, legal materials, training conferences, and legal advice.

Meanwhile, Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) began (then known as the Alliance Defense Fund) to fund legal cases and projects, with Alan Sears as its first CEO. Today ADF is the nation's foremost legal defender of First Amendment freedoms, including religious liberty and pro-life advocacy.

Alan Sears met Tom Glessner in early 1993. They strongly liked each other as both shared their visions of what each fledgling organization could accomplish for the kingdom of God. At one of its first grant meetings, ADF awarded NIFLA a very generous "start-up" grant of \$50,000. **Little did they know then what a critical relationship had been made and that God would use it to bless America.** Such help, along with another God start-up grant from Mrs. Beverly LaHaye and Concerned Women for America (CWA), launched NIFLA.



NIFLA's network of pregnancy centers grew dramatically over the decades, along with the ferocity of political attacks against the pregnancy center movement. By 2015, California passed a law to mandate pro-life centers post large-font signs in their waiting areas to advertise the right to a state-funded abortion, along with the 800-number. Centers faced the choice of advertising for the abortion industry or being shutdown by the state.



NIFLA filed a lawsuit against California on behalf of its 155 California member-centers, asserting that the law was an unconstitutional violation of free speech rights – forcing the pregnancy centers to speak a message that was in utter opposition to their fundamental beliefs.

ADF came alongside NIFLA as our case, NIFLA v. Becerra, traveled all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. By this time, Mike Farris had become CEO of ADF, and he argued the case before the Supreme Court. NIFLA prevailed in the case, which the Cato Institute described as the most important free speech case in a generation.

Three lawyers, whose paths crossed in the early days of the pro-life movement, connected to yield a significant legal victory for pregnancy centers but also for the free-speech rights of Christian ministries around the nation. The life-affirming services offered at these pregnancy centers are available because YOU have continued to support NIFLA. And they exist because of the work of committed legal professionals who, as shown in this tale of three lawyers, serve to protect the pregnancy center movement.

## MEET OUR BOARD

### JIM DUNDAS - MEMBER, BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF NIFLA

Jim pastors a church in Delaware and is the founder and president of Hope National, a Biblical counseling pregnancy center ministry. Jim earned a BA in Biblical Literature and MDiv from Westminster Theological Seminary, along with additional graduate education in Counseling-Psychology. Jim was ordained in 1986 and served as an active-Duty Navy Chaplain for six years. As well as founding and directing a pregnancy center, he's been a board member of two pregnancy medical clinics and served as chairman. **We have found his experience in these roles to be invaluable. We are so grateful to have Jim on our team, and we value his counsel and spiritual insight.**

*We know Jim places Christ at the center of his life. And that encourages us to do the same in our work here at NIFLA.*



## MEET OUR DONORS

### RICH WAXHAM - DIAGNOSTIC HEALTH GROUP

"Diagnostic Health Group was started in 1986 in Frederick, MD with the philosophy of bringing ultrasound systems to the medical community at the best prices. **The first ultrasound system we provided to a pregnancy center was in 1999 when NIFLA started recommending them for centers and got us involved in the cause.** We have sold over 180 systems to pregnancy centers and have enjoyed seeing several of those centers featured in the Life Sentinel.

We like to think that those systems have saved many lives. Actually seeing the baby and things like a beating heart, moving limbs, or facial profile through the "window to the womb" makes pregnancy centers much more effective. **The centers are the first line to provide information to pregnant women in their time of need, and we congratulate them on what they do.** We thank the pro-life ministry and we are proud to be one of the pioneers in providing ultrasound systems to pregnancy centers."

## MEET OUR MEMBERS

### DARIA - WOMEN'S HOPE MEDICAL CLINIC AUBURN, AL

"Congratulations and Blessings to Tom Glessner and the other members of the National Institute of Family and Life Advocates for thirty years of godly service to the Lord and the pregnancy centers across our nation!



I would like to extend my gratitude to the members of NIFLA for their continued guidance and support to the Women's Hope Medical Clinic for over 27 years. **I am especially thankful for the legal help and prayer we received after our clinic was vandalized following the Supreme Court leak last May,** not to mention all the years of limited obstetric ultrasound training for our staff nurses and legal director training offered to me. It has been a joy to see all the Lord has done through our ministry with NIFLA's support, and I am expectant of all He will continue to do in the years to come!

Congratulations and Blessings to Tom on this 30th Anniversary."



## CELEBRATING

**GOD'S VICTORIES OF THE PAST THAT PROPEL US INTO AN ABORTION-FREE AMERICA.**

"See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you."  
ISAIAH 42:9



October 24-26, 2023

NIFLALeadershipSummit.com

Guest-Speaker: Winsome Earle-Sears, Lt. Gov. of VA



## PRESIDENT'S HIGHLIGHT

THOMAS GLESSNER, J.D. - PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER

Thirty years ago, on April 1, 1993, NIFLA officially began. These three decades of pro-life service have gone quickly. We now have over 1,700 member pregnancy centers and medical clinics. Your support has allowed more than 6,000 medical professionals to become proficient in the legal and medical "how-to's" of the provision of limited ultrasound. Pro-life pregnancy centers

have achieved a significant victory in the Supreme Court, and we remain committed to continuing the fight.

With each victorious ruling to restrict death comes an increased need to support life. More pregnancy centers need training on how to come alongside these families who are welcoming new life. More medical professionals need training on how to provide limited ultrasound. More legal battles present themselves every day as the enemy fights for death. In short, we are now marching with an opportunity to end the tyranny of abortion in our nation while fostering the culture of life.

We cannot achieve this great calling and mission without your support and help. Together, under God's guidance and His mighty hand, we are making a difference, and lives are being saved.

Would it be possible for you to make a generous, tax-deductible donation right now? Your gifts and support are reaping eternal dividends.

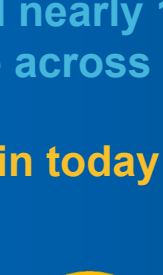
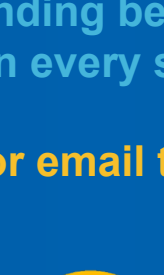
Under The Mercy,  
Tom

### BECOME A CORPORATE SPONSOR!

NIFLA's corporate sponsors share a vision to train, equip, and protect life-affirming pregnancy centers. They receive ongoing updates on the political and social trends that affect the work of pregnancy centers and the pro-life movement at large.

Would you consider standing behind nearly 1,700 centers serving communities in every state across the nation?

Click, call, or email to join today!



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