

Los Angeles Midwives, First LA Midwifery Team with Hospital Delivery Privileges

LOS ANGELES—On Wednesday December 16, midwives, nurses and birth professionals from across California joined a Zoom celebration to congratulate Lilit B. Sarkissian and Naomi E. Drucker on the “birth” of LA’s newest midwifery practice, Los Angeles Midwives, A Professional Nursing Corporation. The midwifery team is the first with delivering privileges at Cedars-Sinai Hospital—providing both home and hospital birth options to women in Los Angeles.

Los Angeles Midwives co-founders are Certified Nurse-Midwives whose primary offering is birth services (delivery, prenatal and postpartum care) to expectant mothers, and Well-Woman Care to women ranging from 12-80 years old. The event was a chance to learn more about the founders, the type of care they provide, the future of birth in a post-COVID Los Angeles, and how midwives can help improve women’s health in California.

“I’m so excited about this moment. Since I was 9 years old, I knew I wanted to deliver babies and provide care to women at this most precious and empowering moment of their life” said Lilit Sarkissian. “I have dedicated my life to learning about and working in this field as a researcher, bedside nurse, childbirth educator, nursing professor and today—as a midwife.”

Los Angeles Midwives seeks to provide care to women that empowers them by giving them the choice between birthing at home, or in a hospital while maintaining the personalized care that is a hallmark of midwifery. Childbirth is a pivotal moment in a woman’s life and both midwives believe that the self determination of women to make the best health care decision for themselves and their babies begins with having access to the options that best fits with their vision of their ideal birth.

The festive event, which took place in the Year of the Midwife, not only celebrated the creation of this new business, but also the expansion of the type of care that Los Angeles Midwives provide to women. The program began with a warm remembrance of Debbie Frank, who was a midwifery leader and pioneer in Los Angeles who opened the door to making this type of care possible in the LA area.

“Lilit and I dreamed while working side by side as nurses - that we would one day become midwives and create a practice that could help bridge midwifery care from the home to the hospital,” said co-founder Naomi Drucker. She added, “many



women desire midwifery care but hesitate for fear of losing that continuity if things get complicated- which is when they need their trusted team the most! Also a change of birth setting either by choice or by necessity should not require a change in provider which could create a margin for error due to unnecessary information handoffs.

While everyone was in attendance to celebrate this new milestone, they also wanted to learn how Los Angeles Midwives would be impacted by California’s recent passage of SB 1237, the Justice & Equity in Maternity Care Act. The guests were joined by Paris Maloof-Bury, CNM and Kathleen Belzer, CNM, the current and past Presidents of the California Nurse-Midwives Association, who provided the guests with an overview of the new California law, and its envisioned implementation in the State.

“The California Nurse-Midwives Association and I want to congratulate Los Angeles Midwives on their opening, and look forward to their success!” said Maloof-Bury. She added, “I’d like to invite Naomi and Lilit to help us at CNMA to chart a way forward for other nurse-midwives and hospitals across California to expand this type of offering, thus giving women and birthing people greater access to midwifery care in the setting of their choosing, along with the continuity and safety that come from integrating midwives and hospitals.”

Private practice midwives in California are currently allowed to deliver a baby in a home or birth center setting, but generally do not serve women in hospital settings. It is rare for midwives to have delivering privileges in the LA area, which is what makes Los Angeles Midwives an appealing option for women who want to receive midwifery care, but want to have the peace of mind of the labor and delivery resources available in a hospital setting.

Both founders are able to provide this type of care because they were long time labor and delivery nurses at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, received their Certified Nurse-Midwifery degree from Frontier Nursing University, and completed their midwifery clinical rotations with the UCLA Midwives group.



They embrace the Hallmarks of Midwifery while understanding how to be most effective in a hospital setting.

Keeping with the “birth” theme of the celebration, the event ended with the midwives “revealing” their new logo, which was designed by a very appreciative new dad as a way of thanking Lilit and Naomi. Since, both Lilit and Naomi serve as adjunct clinical nursing faculty at UCLA and Mt. St. Mary’s, respectively, the night couldn’t end without a little active learning game. The participants answered fun questions such as “how many high heels does Naomi own? how old would Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing, be today? and, what do Naomi and Lilit’s husband’s have in common?” The answers being 0, 200 and both men have delivered one of their children.

The evening’s celebration ended with a hopeful outlook on the years ahead for Los Angeles Midwives and midwives from across the country as they continue to work to improve health outcomes for women at all stages in their life, especially at some of the most pivotal moments of their lives.

For more information, visit www.LosAngelesMidwives.com

Glendale Launches Artsakh Creative Retail Pop-Up Program

GLENDALE—The Glendale City Council recently authorized the implementation of Artsakh Creative, a pilot retail accelerator program for the short-term rental of City-owned commercial tenant space. Selected businesses will be allowed to operate rent-free for a period of one to six months in the City-owned retail units at 117, 123, 127, and 131 North Artsakh Avenue. The application period opens December 21, 2020 and will be ongoing.

Applicants will also have the option apply to implement ongoing events and programming in the Artsakh Paseo, the pedestrian-friendly area on North Artsakh between Wilson Ave. and Broadway, instead of utilizing the available units. The City of Glendale is looking for retailers to complement its vision for an Arts & Entertainment District which establishes Artsakh Avenue as the heart of the district through a

concentration of entertainment, arts and culture venues, retailers, and programming.

Businesses will be selected based on the following criteria: Creative experiences that are in line with the goals of the City’s Arts & Entertainment goals; A well thought out marketing plan; Applicant’s previous experience in operating retail pop-ups and events; Unique and well-crafted products, items, or services that complement and do not detract from existing shops in the Artsakh Paseo; and Adherence to LA County Health Department guidelines for COVID-19 protocols for retail shops and community events.

For more information on the program including the types of businesses the City is targeting, tenant responsibilities, proposal requirements, and a link to the online application, please visit ChooseGlendaleCA.com/Artsakh-Creative.

Western Prelacy Allocates \$50,000 to Aid Children Of Artsakh

The Western Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church announced it will allocate \$50,000 for aid to Artsakh.

“Artsakh and the people of Artsakh are in our soul, in our life, in our work, in our minds every day and every hour, whether we are asleep or awake, day and night,” said a statement from the Prelacy.

The allocation was made in response to the appeal by His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia who has declared 2021 the “Year of Artsakh.” This allocation is earmarked specifically for need

children of Artsakh to receive supplies, food and clothing, gifts and toys, and to mark the holidays.

“We call on our benefactors, donors and all organizations supporting Artsakh and the people of Artsakh to wipe the tears of the children of Artsakh with their Christmas gifts and continue to support the disaster-stricken Artsakh and the people of Artsakh forever, because the need is great and the wound of our nation is deep, because today Artsakh is the crying conscience of all the children of our nation and people,” said the Prelacy.

Our deepest condolences go out
to Mark Geragos
and the entire family
on the loss of his beloved mother,
Betty Geragos.

May her memory shine bright
for all who loved her.

Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry
Board of Directors