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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

At Gemma, the concept of "accompaniment" is central to our mission and a core component of our culture. But what does accompaniment really mean in practice?



Many people hear the word and think of music — a singer is accompanied by a person with a guitar or piano. It's a helpful image: neither participant overshadows the other. Instead, each contributes something unique, working together to create something stronger than either one could alone. That is exactly what accompaniment looks like at Gemma.

We walk alongside the children, youth, and families who come to us, and we offer support that is collaborative rather than directive. The people we assist help shape the direction of their care and our work with them. Our role is to be present, responsive, and genuinely helpful.

We stay with families on their journey for as long as they seek our help — bringing evidence based tools, guidance, and encouragement to the process, while ensuring that every step is taken together. Clear communication, respect, and authentic support are all aspects of our approach. Ultimately, accompaniment is about walking *with* people.

We walk alongside our colleagues in this work, too. Our teams lift each other up on the hardest days and celebrate successes together. By encouraging and accompanying one another, we strive to ensure that the children and families who participate in our programs feel the steady care of a dedicated team. This collaboration is a big part of what makes Gemma special.

Our guiding vision at Gemma is to create a world where everyone knows they matter. By living into accompaniment each day, we endeavor to bring this vision to life in a profound and meaningful way — within our programs, across our teams, and throughout the communities we assist. You are a big part of this work, too. Thank you for accompanying Gemma on this journey!

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristen".

Kristen E.M. Gay, Ph.D.
President and CEO



Because of You, the Holidays Were Bright

This holiday season, Gemma was filled with moments of care, connection, and celebration, made possible by the generosity of our community. From thoughtfully selected and wrapped gifts to shared traditions across our programs, your support helped create holiday joy for the youth and families we accompany.

Throughout the month of December, dedicated volunteers wrapped over 500 gifts, stuffed 60 stockings, and transformed the children's residence with warmth and joy by adorning the stair railings with more than 125

large stuffed animals. In total, more than 500 youth and families participating in Gemma's programs received presents and gift cards, tangible reminders that they are seen, supported, and valued.

We are deeply grateful to the nearly 200 individuals and groups who supported our annual holiday collection. The impact of your generosity extends far beyond the holiday season, ensuring that youth and families in our communities know they matter – during the holidays and all year long.



More than 175 families enjoyed a special Thanksgiving meal thanks to donations of "Everything but the Turkey" gift bags this fall.



Volunteers wrapped **500+ gifts**, stuffed **60 stockings**, and adorned the stair railings of the children's residence with more than **125 large stuffed animals**.



500+ youth and families participating in Gemma's programs received presents and gift cards.



Close to 200 friends, both individuals and groups, supported Gemma's annual holiday gift collection.

Our Capital Campaign: Celebrating a Milestone and Forging Ahead



Thanks to the incredible generosity of our community, including the Stratton Foundation as our lead donor, we have reached our initial \$3 million fundraising goal for the Campaign for Gemma! We could not be more grateful for the trust, confidence, and

partnership our supporters have extended to Gemma with our transformational Martin Luther School (MLS) expansion and relocation project.

This milestone represents far more than a number. It reflects a community coming together to embrace the vision of an exceptional new MLS campus, one that clearly shows our students how much they matter. This generous support ensures that our new school campus will be a place that honors, nurtures, and empowers our students to explore, learn, overcome adversity, and grow academically, socially, and emotionally to reach their fullest potential.

What the Campaign Is Making Possible

Funds raised through the capital campaign are supporting interior renovations that are well underway at the new MLS campus at **5200 Butler Pike in Plymouth Meeting**. The transformation of the building from a former corporate headquarters

into a bright and modern school is remarkable. The end result will include more than 30 spacious classrooms, private offices for counseling, two lunchrooms, outdoor learning and recreation spaces, a black box theater, a library, a multi-purpose gymnasium, and more.

Construction will begin soon on a two-story addition with the gymnasium and electives classrooms. The goal is for MLS to open the school year in September on the new campus... stay tuned for updates!

Phase 2 of The Campaign

While we have reached our initial fundraising goal, the Campaign for Gemma continues. Building on the foundation we have established with our generous donors, this next phase of the campaign will raise support for a new outdoor sports facility with a track, multi-sport turf field, and ample seating for spectators. This sports facility will fuel our students' pride in themselves and their school, support the growing athletics program, and provide even more opportunities for our current and future students to compete, grow, and excel.

Thank You for Believing in Us

Thank you to everyone who has supported this project so far! You are joining with Gemma to create a fantastic new Martin Luther School for our students — **so they know how much they matter!**

Visit www.gemmaservices.org/capital-campaign to learn more or contact us at info@gemmaservices.org.

Construction Progress: February 2026



Growing Panthers Athletics Program



Since expanding to include grades 9–12, Martin Luther School's athletic program has grown too! "At MLS, athletics are an important part of who we are," says Eva Morrison, Head of Martin Luther School and VP of Education for Gemma Services. MLS participates in the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) and Penn Jersey Athletic

Association in three sports currently at the middle and high school levels—flag football, basketball, and track. "Athletics are not separate from learning and not just about competition," Morrison says. "Athletics give students a place to build confidence, learn teamwork, and push themselves in healthy ways."

The school plans to expand the physical education department and athletics program offerings to include more opportunities for students to participate in interscholastic sports, discover interests and talents, and strengthen crucial teamwork and leadership skills.

"The new gymnasium will be a great setting for our physical education curriculum and interscholastic sports," says Brent Byerly, MLS Athletic Director. "It will have lots of seating for spectators, helping us build a home crowd and get the community involved, too." Byerly adds, "The outdoor turf field is very exciting for

our student athletes. We are looking forward to having additional teams and hosting home games on campus."

Once on the new campus, MLS will add more sports to its roster. "Next year we will add a cross-country team, and we are evaluating interest in other offerings like soccer, girls' basketball, and bringing back cheerleading," Byerly says. "The goal is to be able to offer multiple options for each season."

Athletics play a powerful role in strengthening students' confidence and school spirit. "As our program continues to grow, my vision is for every student to feel a deep sense of belonging, pride, and connection to being a Panther," says Morrison. "Athletics at MLS support the development of the whole student and strengthen our school community in very meaningful ways!"

To read more about the new MLS campus and sports facility, visit www.gemmaservices.org/capital-campaign.



Welcome to Brent Byerly, Athletic Director



We are pleased to welcome Brent Byerly to Martin Luther School (MLS) as Athletic Director! He brings more than 15 years of experience, most recently as Athletic Director at a charter school in Philadelphia. He graduated from Lock Haven University with a Bachelor of Science in Health and Physical Education

and earned his Certified Athletic Administrator certification through The National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association.

In his role, Byerly is responsible for managing MLS' athletic initiatives, including managing three sports teams, coaching staff, scheduling and logistics, and more. "With the addition of athletic facilities at the new campus, I am excited to increase sport offerings and strengthen school spirit and community engagement," Byerly says.

Lisa Hand, MLS Supervisor of Safety and Administration, states, "Brent's experience, collaborative approach, and dedication will be a tremendous asset to our school community. We look forward to the energy, vision, and expertise he brings as he supports our student-athletes, coaches, and families."

Creative Expression Through Art



At Gemma, art plays a vital role in helping children heal and grow. "We use art as an avenue to promote self-expression and a way for children to cope with their feelings," says

Debbie Kubis, Supervisor of Adjunctive Therapy in Gemma's Residential Treatment Program. Kubis uses many art mediums including painting, modeling clay, scrapbooking, coloring, crafting, and more.

"Creative activities present great opportunities to try something new, safely make mistakes, either self-correct or accept help, and reach a goal," Kubis explains. "We help them move through challenges they experience when trying something for the first time, so they can master new skills."

Art is a core component of the curriculum at Martin Luther School (MLS), too. "Creative expression offers profound social and emotional benefits for our

students, especially given the unique challenges they navigate," says Margo Wunder, MLS Art Teacher. "The art room is a safe, low-pressure space where students can explore identity, experience success, and develop confidence through hands on creation," Wunder continues. The art they create is often on display and clearly shows students' budding talents and pride in their work.



Whether in school or after school, art and creativity has a powerful place in children's healing journey at Gemma. "Art provides a meaningful pathway toward self-understanding and a stronger sense of belonging," Wunder shares.

To learn more about Gemma's Residential Treatment Program and Martin Luther School, please visit www.gemmaservices.org.

Making Summer Camp Possible



For many children and teens in foster care, summer can be a time of uncertainty. "Gemma's Campership Fund helps youth in foster care access safe, enriching summer experiences that build confidence, connection, and joy," shared Tiffany Chenery, Director of Treatment Homes and Adoption at Gemma.

Since its inception, Gemma's Campership Fund has made it possible for hundreds of youth to attend summer camps and participate in recreational activities throughout the year, enabling them to try new things, build friendships, and discover interests and talents. These experiences offer more than fun. They provide opportunities for growth, independence, and positive memories that last long after summer ends.

Thanks to the generosity of friends like you, these fun summer opportunities are possible. One Gemma supporter shared, "I didn't have the chance to go to summer camp as a child. Supporting the Fund is my way of making it possible for kids to experience camp and to give them the opportunity to learn and grow in a fun atmosphere."

To help make enriching activities possible for youth in foster care, you can donate securely online at www.gemmaservices.org/donate or with the enclosed envelope.

Spotlight: Two Corporate Supporters

Gemma is fortunate to count many businesses among our supporters, and several engage with Gemma multiple times throughout the year. Whether donating financially to support our annual fundraising, sponsoring our *Chefs for Gemma* event, or volunteering with their teams on site for a cleanup day, their contributions uplift our mission.

Berkshire Hathaway's Blue Bell office has supported Gemma through on-campus work days for decades. From keeping our Plymouth campus playgrounds in top shape for kids to play to building fences — they help keep the grounds looking beautiful. The team also collects gifts and gift cards during the holiday season, this year contributing dozens of "Everything but the Turkey" gift bags to help families have a festive holiday meal. "Gemma consistently delivers meaningful results for children and families, and we are truly grateful for the impact they make," says Kassie Erb, President of Fox & Roach/Trident Charities.



In addition to those efforts, Fox & Roach/Trident Charities has supported Gemma's mission through annual grants, greatly helping us to accompany more

than 3,000 youth and families each year. "Nearly 30 years ago, we awarded our first grant to support the incredible mission of Gemma Services, and we have proudly continued that support ever since, having donated more than \$100,000," says Erb.

Lockton Companies is another corporate friend whose relationship with Gemma started with a volunteer day. That first day of service, hosting an activity for youth in residence at Gemma, has led to a 10-year relationship that is going strong. "Knowing that we can bring a little light and fun into the lives of the children Gemma assists is something we look forward to each year," says Kristen Gibbs of Lockton Cares. "The joy we help create and experience ourselves is incredible."



The Lockton team also visits Gemma each December to decorate the stair railings of the children's residence with stuffed animals and supports our annual holiday gift and gift card collection for youth and families.

"Lockton is so excited to continue our partnership with Gemma," Gibbs says. "We look forward to having a positive impact on the lives of those at Gemma, just as you have had such a meaningful impact on us!"

Thank you to these and all of our corporate friends for helping Gemma create a world where everyone knows they matter! To learn more about how to become involved with Gemma, please contact us at volunteer@gemmaservices.org.

Q&A with Chef Alex Kemp

Chefs for Gemma 2026 will feature Chef Alex Kemp of My Loup. Here are his answers to a few questions we asked him!



What is your favorite thing about cooking in Philadelphia?

I love cooking for our guests! Everyone is so curious and

willing to try new things. It keeps us on our toes and inspires us to be our best!

Do you have a favorite cooking or meal prep "hack" to share?

I like to make big batches of vinaigrette – a vinaigrette can be used to season anything!

What is your favorite dish to cook?

Chicken and Matzoh Ball Soup. It is super comforting and reminds me of eating with family. We have a version on the menu at *Pine Street Grill* and it's my favorite to dig into.

What is your favorite meal or dish to eat in Philadelphia?

Korean BBQ at *Kim's BBQ* — the assortment of the banchan is incredible, and I can't resist that smell of meat grilling on the charcoal.

What excites you about being the featured guest chef at *Chefs for Gemma 2026*?

Gemma has always picked chefs that I look up to — especially my wife, Amanda! I am always looking for ways to connect with our community, and Gemma is such a meaningful organization for so many. I'm truly honored to be a part of this year's event and can't wait to support Gemma's programs for youth and families.

Visit <https://bit.ly/Chefs2026> for event info!



GRAB YOUR SEAT AT THE TABLE!

APRIL 10, 2026

The Vogt Foundation's



FEATURING

CHEF ALEX KEMP

of

my Loup

and

Libbie Loup Hospitality



Photo by Nicole Guglielmo



Scan for Info
and tickets

*Benefitting Gemma Services' Programs that Accompany
Youth and Families Through Life's Challenges*

<https://bit.ly/Chefs2026>