



CSP Employee Profile: Julie Kronen, Surrogate Mother Case Manager, East Coast

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About CSP

The Center for Surrogate Parenting, Inc. (CSP) is a world-renowned surrogate parenting program with offices in Encino, CA, Las Vegas, NV and Annapolis, MD. CSP was established because we strongly believe that couples who are ready and willing to take on the responsibility of parenthood deserve that opportunity. Having a child with the help of a surrogate can be an exciting and fulfilling way to meet that need.

The surrogacy process allows a child to be biologically related to either one or both parents. It also gives the couple the opportunity to become involved in the pregnancy itself. Finally, since their child is conceived only because of their own existence, the true genesis of the child is its creation in the minds and hearts of the couple.

Julie's Story...

CSP Surrogate Case Manager Julie Kronen has always had a passion for helping people. Growing up the youngest of three siblings in Maryland she had dreams of becoming a doctor. Her dolls were always doctors or nurses and she relished the idea of caring for people when she was older.

After Julie grew up and went on to college, her dreams turned to motherhood. She had always wanted to become a mother, but was told at an early age that it may not be possible for her to carry a pregnancy safely due to her hip problem. Despite this hurdle, she still kept hope in her heart that carrying a pregnancy would be a possibility for her.

Julie explains, "I had always wanted to be a mother before anything else. I knew that having children might not be an easy feat or might not even be possible so I didn't want to wait long after marriage to start a family."

She married her husband Mike at the age of 22 and was thrilled to find out she was pregnant when she was 23. Not only was she blessed with a pregnancy, she found that she was safely able to carry her baby despite her hip issue.

Julie went on to have her second child three years later. It was during this pregnancy that the seeds of wanting to become a surrogate mother began to flower in her heart and mind. She felt so lucky to have been able to have safe, healthy pregnancies and she wanted to pay it forward by helping a family who had struggled with fertility.



"I started looking into egg donation or even surrogacy after having my second child because I knew I wanted to help someone else in creating a family. I knew though that the time had to be right."

Julie decided that it was best to complete her own family before carrying a pregnancy for another family. She went on to have her third and final child at the age of 29. During this pregnancy, which was also healthy, she knew that while she was done having children of her own, she was not done being pregnant. Shortly after she gave birth to her son, she applied with CSP to become a surrogate mother.

"When I chose CSP, they had already been in business for 25 years. Their website was thorough, answered all my questions and left no doubt that I would be in good hands if I was chosen by them for surrogacy."

Julie's first journey for CSP took place in 2009 when she carried twins for an international couple. The twins were healthy and full-term and the fulfillment that she found in helping this deserving couple filled her heart with indescribable joy. The couple had suffered a devastating amount of losses before coming to CSP and the fact that she

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was able to help them finally become parents gave her a deep sense of peace and gratitude. It also ignited in her a passion for surrogacy that continues to this day.

While pregnant with her first set of surrogate twins Julie decided that she wanted to fulfill her childhood dreams of a medical career and go back to school to become a nurse. She realized that her early childhood dream of being in the medical profession was still living inside her. Being a surrogate mother and helping a family in need gave her the push of confidence that she needed to chase this long-held dream.

“When my first surrogacy was coming to a close, I decided the time was right to go back to school for a medical career. While I would have rather been an OB/Gyn, the time commitment away from my children was a deterrent so I decided to do the next best thing and aim to be a labor and delivery nurse.”

She also made the decision to come back as a surrogate mother with CSP again and help another family. Six months after the delivery of her surrogate twins she applied with CSP to begin another journey. Even though she was taking classes and raising her own children, her passion for surrogacy and helping a family carried her through and energized her.

“I knew I had it in me to help one more family create a family. I also knew what the time commitment would be and decided I could fit it in with me being in school. So I reapplied, met my second couple and proceeded on with surrogacy and school.”



Julie with her husband and their three children

Julie and her family developed an incredibly close relationship with her second intended parents. In 2011, she gave birth to her second set of twins- a boy and a girl. The relationship between her and this family has continued and blossomed throughout the years. They still speak regularly and see each other from time to time. She was even included in their baptism.

Julie's desire to be a surrogate mother continued, but physically another surrogate pregnancy was not in the cards for her. It was at this time that she decided to fulfill her desire to help childless families by continuing to support CSP. She began helping to organize CSP's East Coast support group meetings under the supervision and guidance of counselor Barbara Cohen and she acted as a cheerleader and support person for her surro-sisters in the group.

“Barbara graciously allowed me to volunteer with organizing surrogate group meetings in Annapolis. This allowed me to attend group meetings, continue friendships with fellow surrogates and meet more in the process.

Julie graduated from nursing school in May of 2015 and passed her exam in July of the same year. On September 14, 2015 she accepted a position as a Labor and Delivery nurse at the Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring, Maryland. This is the number one hospital in the state for deliveries- they had over 9,600 births last year!

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Scrapbooking Your Journey

How to create a keepsake for your surrogacy journey

There is no better way to preserve precious memories than to create a scrapbook. While the digital era has brought us convenience and nearly unlimited storage, there is something satisfying and warm about flipping through the pages of a scrapbook and reliving your most cherished memories.

As you go through your surrogacy journey, now is a great time to think about documenting the process. Whether you are an intended parent or a surrogate mother, these beautiful keepsakes will be treasured for years to come. Not only is making a scrapbook an excellent way to document your own journey, it can make a beautiful gift for your surrogate mother or intended parents.

Whether you are creating a pregnancy scrapbook or documenting the first year of your child's life, the steps and process of making a classic scrapbook are the same.

First, take a trip to your local craft or hobby store and purchase your supplies. You can often find coupons online for these stores, so be sure to check for those before taking your trip. You can, of course, also find all of these supplies available for purchase online.



You will need:

- A scrapbook album in a pattern and size that you like. 12"x12" is a standard size.
- Cardstock in neutral colors that coordinate with the colors of your album. These are usually used as a photo mat or background.
- Patterned paper. You can buy this by the sheet or as a part of a color-coordinated package. These can be used as photo mats, page accents, or backgrounds.
- Acid-free glue sticks or other scrapbooking adhesives.
- Scissors. While any scissors will do, it is helpful to have a special pair that is sharp and dedicated to your scrapbooking project.
- A pen with archival safe ink to use for journaling. This pen should be waterproof, acid-free, non-bleeding and fade-proof.
- Embellishments. This is where you can really have some fun! Ribbons, lettering, stickers, beads, frames- there are an endless array of scrapbook embellishments available at your local craft store, so go wild!

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Once you have your basic supplies it's time write out a simple overview of milestones that you want to include in your scrapbook. This will ensure that your keepsake has a clear vision and tells a story. A bit of planning early on will also make it easier to put together your scrapbook when you are ready. For example, if you are documenting your surrogate pregnancy you may include milestones like your match meeting, screening appointment, transfer day, ultrasound, etc. You can also write down little stories that you might want to tell on the pages of your scrapbook.

Stay organized! When making a scrapbook collecting memories can quickly get out of hand. Having a special folder or envelope to store small items that would make nice additions to your scrapbook can help you ensure that these items don't get misplaced.

Now you need photos! While it's easy to print your photos at home, it is not necessary. You can easily have your pictures printed at your local drugstore or department store. This is usually as easy as uploading or emailing the store your photos and picking them up.

Plan out your events and know which photos you are going to want to document in advance. If you print in bulk you can sometimes get a discount. Photo selection is always difficult, so be sure to give this a lot of thought in advance. You can even keep a folder on your phone or computer that contains the best pictures for each of your milestones.

Finally, collect small keepsakes, such as receipts from a lunch with your IPs or surrogate mom or ribbon from a present and tuck these away for your scrapbook as well. These personal items add to the story that you are telling and help add a personal touch to every page.

When you are ready to assemble your scrapbook, refer back to your overview of milestones. Use this to help create your story. Plan the theme of each page and sketch out the layout that you might want in advance. You could also just place important photos, add your page titles, and then add embellishments as you go. There really are no rules! Let the scrapbook reflect your personal journey and personality. Telling short stories on some of the pages is a great way to create an overall narrative and add a piece of your heart to every page.

There is nothing more satisfying than creating your very own keepsake. Let your heart be your guide and allow yourself to embrace your creativity. Whether you create a scrapbook for yourself or for your surrogate mother or intended parents, you will have a project that you can be proud of and will remember forever. ■



Only two days after she accepted this position she accepted an offer from CSP to become a Surrogate Mother Case Manager for the East Coast team. The previous case manager had moved on from the position and Julie's expertise and experience with surrogacy would make her an integral part of the team. While she had been helping Barbara with the support group meetings for years, she jumped at the chance to officially become a staff member and make a career of her passion for surrogacy.

“Joining the CSP family as an employee has been the most amazing choice I have ever made. I don't consider what I do with CSP as work – I consider it pleasure. Working for CSP has allowed me to extend my surrogacy passion by helping welcome new surrogates and watching them move through their own surrogacies. I live vicariously through their experiences.”

Julie's work at the hospital perfectly complements her work with her fellow surrogate mothers. While she does not give out medical advice in her position at CSP, her medical knowledge helps her foresee any issues that may come up during the course of a surrogate pregnancy. It also allows her to continue contributing to bringing new life into the world even after her days as a surrogate moms are behind her.



Julie with her fellow CSP Surrogate Case Managers Michele, Carole and Melissa

“I never realized how the compassion I learned in working with my couples would transmit in working with my hospital patients. Frequently, I draw upon the experiences I have encountered in the surrogacy world and apply them in being as compassionate a nurse as I can be. And, in learning from antepartum and postpartum patients at the hospital, I am better able to care for and manage the surrogates I follow with CSP.”

Julie is an incredible mother, a caring nurse, and a dedicated member of the CSP family. We are so lucky to have her on our team and we are thankful for her continued contributions to CSP and the world of surrogacy. When asked about her future at CSP, Julie is characteristically enthusiastic and committed.

“Surrogacy has impacted my life in such wonderful ways. I cannot imagine ever doing anything else that would be as monumental and as beneficial as it is helping other people experience the joys of parenthood through surrogacy. I once had someone tell me they thought surrogates are doing G-d's work. I witness this through miracles I have seen in my own surrogacies and those I follow now. Through surrogacy, I have seen that dreams really can come true.” ■



CSP FACTS
WE'VE BEEN THE
WORLD'S LEADING
SURROGACY AGENCY
FOR OVER 37 YEARS!

creatingfamilies.com



CSP's East Coast office has moved!

Please note new address as of 09/01/2017:

125 West Street, Suite 302

Annapolis, MD 21401

Intended Parent Case Manager Perla Piekutowski is thrilled with the new space. She explained, “The new space is centrally-located and easily accessible. We were all very excited to move in and get to work in the new location!”

Would you like to contribute to the next issue of this newsletter? Please send ideas and suggestions to **Nancy Lawrence at nancy@creatingfamilies.com**

Thank you!