

# **Caritas Family Solutions Hosts 8th Annual Heart & Soul Gala Virtually**

January 27 2021 10:21 AM



**BELLEVILLE-** Caritas Family Solutions will be hosting their 8<sup>th</sup> annual Heart & Soul Gala virtually on February 6, 2021 at 7 p.m.

The gala serves as the nonprofit's largest fundraising event, supporting its mission of strengthening the social and emotional well-being of individuals and families in order to create healthy relationships, loving homes and strong communities. The agency's

services include adoption, pregnancy care for women experiencing homelessness, foster care, counseling and independent living for adults with disabilities among other service lines.

Because this year's event will be virtual, registration is free and guests are invited to attend from wherever they are. This year's one-hour production will include a live auction, special appearances from local celebrities such as KSDK's Rene Knott, and guest performance from rising country music star, Elvie Shane. Shane's recent breakthrough hit, "My Boy" is a powerful song about the love a father has for his stepson, a message that hits home for many adoptive and foster parents raising children who are not their own biologically.

Caritas Family Solutions CEO Gary Huelsmann said the goal of the event is to raise awareness about all of the services Caritas currently provides to more than 5,500 people throughout the Southern Illinois region.

"While we will miss gathering in person, we are very excited that the new opportunities this year's virtual event may bring, including potentially introducing our mission work to a new audience," said Huelsmann. "This year's Gala will get to the point, it's an hour of time and we'll be giving people a lot of information about what the critical needs are for the vulnerable populations we serve. As a nonprofit agency, some of our programs have been hit particularly hard by the pandemic so we want to engage with the community about how they can help. The event will be informative, inspirational and entertaining. We're hopeful that people will join us."

Huelsmann added that Fontebella Maternity Home, which serves pregnant women experiencing homelessness, Community Integrated Living Arrangements, and St. John Bosco Children's Center have all suffered economic impacts due to the pandemic this year. Guests can register for free for this year's Heart and Soul Gala by going to [www.CaritasFamilySolutions.org/gala](http://www.CaritasFamilySolutions.org/gala).

Founded in 1947, Caritas provides services across Southern Illinois from offices located in Belleville, Carterville, Mount Vernon, Olney, East Alton and Effingham. For additional information, visit [www.caritasfamilysolutions.org](http://www.caritasfamilysolutions.org).