



Choices Women's Medical Center is very proud of our medical staff, male and female, every one of whom excel in both skill and compassion, whatever your health needs are. We introduced you to Dr. Mary Jane Bovo, our new Associate Medical Director in a previous newsletter. This month we are delighted to highlight three more outstanding women who make your visit here so exceptional: Physician Assistant Delisa Banks; Nurse Practitioner Jennifer Winter and Amy Cousins, M.D.; Our newsletter staff asked them why they are so passionate about women's reproductive health.

**Delisa Banks, Registered Physician Assistant, State of NY**

As a young Physician Assistant student, I assisted in my first delivery. I was hooked! I gravitated to OB/GYN because I loved the thought of taking care of a woman throughout her life, from adolescence through pregnancy, menopause and beyond.



I love the idea and the reality of being involved in meaningful parts of women's lives, their sexual health, reproductive health, abortion care, walking them through their childbearing years and even dealing with cancer. I feel excited when young teens visit Choices, and I get to be the first to explain how her reproductive system works, how to protect herself from infections or discuss her birth control options. I am passionate about OB/GYN because this field of medicine allows me to practice preventive medicine and teach women how to prevent disease and optimize their health. When the door to the examination closes, I am honored to be the one listening to a woman who tells me all of her fears, problems or desires. These are privileged conversations that take place in medicine.

What is my advice to women? A healthy outside starts from inside. Take care of yourself first. Women tend to take care of everyone else, but in order to do so you must put yourself first. Your job [outside the home] will take a large part of your lifetime and energy. The only way to be fulfilled is to do the best job possible. The only way you can do the best job possible is to love what you do. And I do!

[Note: Delisa is a graduate of Kingsborough College in Brooklyn and Touro College and worked as Physician Assistant at many health institutions including Maimonides Medical Center and Brooklyn Hospital before coming to Choices. She received the Clinical Achievement Award from the Department of Physician's Assistants.]

**Jennifer Winter, Nurse Practitioner**



I'm interested in all aspects of women's health because I think that total well-being is not determined only by biological factors and reproduction but also by the effects of work, stress, nutrition, etc. Reproduction, a woman's right to determine her fertility, is very important to me because empowering women by giving them choices with regards to their health will also have an impact on the choices they make in other facets of their lives. That's why protecting that right is very important.

I've had the pleasure of working with many women from very low socio-economic status and I've found that poverty is an important barrier to positive health outcomes for women – I feel it is my mission to assist them, to facilitate them having a healthier life –and having a healthier reproductive life has a positive impact on their family.

I've been a Nurse Practitioner – sometimes called an Advanced Practice Nurse – for about 15 years, and I am most proud of my work initiating a Health Literacy Program for women in Newark, NJ for a large Spanish-speaking population. We helped women learn to read in their native language as well as English, and that in itself opens up so many opportunities for them. If they can't read, they can't read medical instructions, things others take for granted. I was honored to be on the cover of Nursing Spectrum magazine for the Health Literacy Program. And now, I'm very excited to work at Choices.

[Note: Jennifer is a veteran of the US Air Force Reserves; she traveled to 6 diff countries as a medic and received Airman of the Year awards before being honorably discharged. She received her M.A. from Columbia University with honors, her B.A. from Rutgers in nursing.]

**Amy Cousins, M.D.**



I worked as a general practitioner for several years but I've always felt strongly about OB/GYN – and abortion was always an issue I felt strongly about. My mother worked for a doctor who very influential in the issue of making abortion legal, and this had a big influence in my life. I've always felt the autonomy of women was very important and I've always been strongly pro-choice.

I worked at Southern Tier Women's Services in Upstate NY – the main provider of abortion services in that area. When the anti-abortion movement led by Randall Terry's "Operation Rescue" began mobilizing to blockade and shut down clinics in the early 80s and 90s, Southern Tier was a major target. I testified before Congress in favor of the National Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FOIA) law, and told Congress: "If a woman's life is in danger and a doctor refuses to do an abortion, then that is malpractice." For this I was named the "Enemy of the Day" on right-wing Christian talk-show host Pat Robertson's 700 Club.

When a woman chooses to end her pregnancy, it may not be a hard choice, it may be an obvious choice, but it is a big choice, nonetheless. I had an abortion myself, and I feel very strongly about providing non-judgmental, helpful care to women. Women are intelligent, morally capable human beings – not pathetic children whose decisions must be made for them.

[Note: Dr. Cousins graduated from Harvard Medical School and completed two residencies, one in surgery and one in OB/GYN. She was Chief Resident in OB/GYN at Mt. Sinai. She received the Blair Award from Family Planning Advocates in 2009.]

Now, can you guess?

Which one of our three great health providers, Jennifer, Delisa or Amy:

- Has won National Championships in competitive ballroom dancing?
- Loves to bake, especially for her 4-year-old twins?
- Wishes she had more time to spend bowling?

Answers will appear in our June newsletter.

[Click here to make an appointment with one of our providers now!](#)

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