When Ja’Leisa White-Newhouse learned in 2018 that she could help others by donating her newborn baby girl’s placenta, she knew it was something she had to do.

Da’Kota Washington was born by C-section in August, and her placenta was the first to be donated as part of Arizona’s new program giving moms and their babies a chance to help others.

“If you donate, you can make a real difference for people,” Ja’Leisa said. “It makes me feel great for Da’Kota to just be born and already doing something amazing.

“With that kind of start, I know she will do good things in life.”

Someday, Da’Kota will be able to advocate for placenta donation and other gifts that can be given.

“Placentas go into the trash,” Ja’Leisa said. “In the trash doesn’t help anyone. Donate it and make a difference for others who have wounds that won’t heal on their own.

“You might even help someone from your own family.”
You’re expecting a new baby

You’re about to bring a new baby into the world so you’re busy planning for the birth. Thank you for taking time to learn more about how donating your baby’s placenta to Gift of Life Michigan can help others with serious medical needs.

Can any pregnant mom donate?
Expectant mothers of any age who will give birth with a planned Cesarean Section at St. Joseph Mercy Ann Arbor can take advantage of this unique opportunity as long as there are no disqualifying medical conditions. Those would include any infections or viruses such as HIV, hepatitis or other conditions that could be transmitted to recipients.

What you would donate
With your permission, your baby’s umbilical cord and placenta — which are normally discarded after birth — can be donated. Your child’s birth would in no way be affected, and there is no risk to you or your baby.

Donating your baby’s placenta is considered a gift, and payment for donated tissue and organs is illegal under the National Organ Transplant Act of 1984. Similarly, your donation wouldn’t cost you or your family anything.

Who and how you would help
Placentas are special, and the need is great. They provide nutrients and oxygen to your growing baby and that makes them particularly useful as donated tissue.

Your gift could help patients with an array of needs, including:
- Burn victims
- Diabetics who have difficulty healing wounds
- People with eye disease
- Those needing gum or dental procedures
- Victims of traumatic injuries and more

Your baby’s legacy
The placenta technically belongs to your baby, so that means your child would begin his or her life as a donor, helping others heal and live healthier lives. What an incredible legacy right from the start.

How to participate
It’s simple: Just tell Gift of Life Michigan and your physician that you want to donate your baby’s placenta. Email donation@golm.org or call 800-482-4881.

Gift of Life will arrange for you to speak to a coordinator who will set up a convenient time to complete donation documents and answer a series of questions regarding your medical and social history. The interview will take about 20 minutes.

After your baby is delivered, the placenta will be tested and processed under strict guidelines and with accepted medical and ethical standards.

For more information, visit golm.org/placenta
Contact Gift of Life Michigan
phone 800-482-4881  •  email donation@golm.org