

Inside Breastfeeding USA

April 2019

I. Greetings from the Board of Directors

From Director Aimee Teslaw

Dear Breastfeeding USA Insiders,

Thanks so much for your continued service to Breastfeeding USA. I hope spring is treating you well. It's finally warming up where I live outside of Chicago, and while I love all of the seasons (yes, even winter!), there is something especially forward-looking about spring. On my daily dog walk everything around me is greening and working toward becoming the full summer version of itself. And I get to appreciate it every day it as it grows and changes.

Inside Breastfeeding USA we are growing, changing, and looking forward as well. While the Board of Directors presented the [2018 Strategic Plan](#) last fall, it has been up to individual committees to implement the strategies therein. I write to you today as both the director who is the liaison to the Funding and Development workgroup and as the chair of the same workgroup. I've been working with a couple of great committees on some of the 2018 Strategic Plan that will help us shore up our financial future.

After almost 9 years charging the same membership fee, our Strategic Plan directs us to raise the fee to \$35 annually in order to meet our goal of having a breakeven annual budget, and to support future investments that will reduce the burden on you, our valuable volunteers. Read more about it below--you'll note the option to renew early before the fee goes up on July 1. With my Funding and Development chair hat on, I've been working with Amie Hood as Finance chair, Patty Jacobs as Website manager, and Karyn DiNovo as Membership manager, with significant technological assists from Ginger Gorrell in her new role as interim IT chair. We have made a great team--all of our members have a passion for improving the organization and it shows in their work on this team.

In response to the strategic plan, we've also reinstated the Finance Committee, and one of our first accomplishments there was to formalize a policy stating that chapters that raise funds can use those funds toward Breastfeeding Counselor membership fees. If you are in a chapter with earmarked funds, and you want to use them for your BC's fees, please email membership@breastfeedingusa.org. I'd like to thank committee members Patty Jacobs, Nicky

Prince, Ginger Gorrell, and our leader and Treasurer Amie Hood, for each being flexible to meet and grow along with the organization.

Lastly in funding news, as suggested by the Strategic Plan, on April 16, the Board of Directors unanimously voted on to adopt a 100% Board Giving Policy. What this means for the organization is this: our directors believe so strongly in Breastfeeding USA that we support it financially too. Last year our consultants asked us to give thoughtful consideration to a policy that invites directors to consider what level of giving is in keeping with their household budget and choices. This policy serves to grow organizational finances directly as well as indirectly, by positioning us for grants that require 100% board giving.

If you are excited by all this news of looking forward and planning for the future and you'd like to join in the growth, please note that both Finance and Funding and Development have positions open, which are described in the Volunteer News section below. We'd love to have you join us!

Warmly,
Aimee Teslaw
Director (2018-2021)

New Chairs!

Kirsten Richardson will head up our annual Elections processes this year. Kirsten is a BC in Charlotte, North Carolina with two young children. As chair, she will be assembling the Elections committee in the coming weeks and rolling out announcements regarding board nominations soon after. We are delighted to welcome Kirsten to her first national volunteer position with Breastfeeding USA.

Ginger Gorrell will now serve as interim IT/Website chair, while our search for a more permanent appointee continues. Ginger is an experienced IT volunteer and served as liaison to IT while she was on the Board of Directors. She has agreed to fill this vital role through September 2019, unless a new chair can be appointed before then. We are deeply grateful that Ginger is willing to continue sharing her skills, time, and energy in important leadership roles with Breastfeeding USA.

Upcoming Events

- Saturday, May 11 - March for Moms in Washington, DC

If you know of upcoming regional or local events that might be of interest to our BCs, please submit to communications@breastfeedingusa.org for inclusion in the next newsletter.

II. From Committees

The following committees have updates to share with volunteers this month.

Advocacy

Interim Chair: Jada Wright-Nichols (Advocacy@BreastfeedingUSA.org)

2019 March for Moms - Saturday May 11

The United States continues to face a number of serious issues involving maternal and child health, including rising maternal mortality rates, inequity and discrimination, poor family leave policies and lack of access to affordable health care. As breastfeeding advocates, we can play an important roles as change makers.

The third annual March for Moms will take place this year on the National Mall in Washington, DC on Saturday, May 11 from 1:00-3:30pm, with local marches in various locations across the country. Attending the March gives us a great opportunity to publicize Breastfeeding USA and to promote breastfeeding as an important part of the drive to improve maternal and child health.

The event is family-friendly and includes inspiring speakers, music and community engagement in support of and around critical maternal health legislation. Last year's event provided us with a wonderful opportunity to share information, network with other organizations and have a fun afternoon.

For more information, visit marchformoms.org. For those local to Washington, DC, please contact Beth Lichy (beth.lichy@breastfeedingusa.org) if you would like to join a Breastfeeding USA meet-up for the March.

Communications

Interim Chair: Meredith Sinclair (communications@breastfeedingusa.org)

Communications would like to welcome Emily Ingram and Callie Counterman to our social media team. Emily and Callie will be working to reboot our Instagram presence and to create a Breastfeeding USA Pinterest page. So look for those in the coming month! We will also be working on a fresh set of Breastfeeding USA memes and infographics using our new nonprofit Canva account. If you have talents in graphic design, please let us know.

If you would like to submit a breastfeeding story to be featured on our website, in #milkmemos, and/or on Breastfeeding USA's social media platforms, please contact Meredith Sinclair

(meredith.sinclair@breastfeedingusa.org). We are especially seeking stories about breastfeeding beyond infancy for the next issue of #milkmemos.

Finance

Chair: Amie Hood (Finance@BreastfeedingUSA.org)

We just wrapped up the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2018-2019, and with that brings some exciting news! The Board voted to implement a 100% giving policy, effective this fiscal year. This means that each Board member commits to making an annual donation to Breastfeeding USA. This is in keeping with Goal Two, Year One of the Strategic Plan and will make the organization eligible for more grant funding.

Did you know that Breastfeeding Counselors may use held Chapter funds to pay their membership dues? We are updating the BC Guide with that information so it is clear to all BCs in the future.

As a reminder to membership, Quarterly Reports are available upon request. Please don't hesitate to email finance@breastfeedingusa.org if you'd like to see the most recent reports.

Funding & Development

Chair: Aimee Teslaw (funding@breastfeedingusa.org)

Membership Fee Increase

We are moving forward with the three-year [2018 Strategic Plan](#), and a team of representatives from Funding and Development, Finance, Website, and Membership are tackling the initiative to strengthen the organization's financial position by instituting a membership fee increase. Starting July 1, 2019, the annual membership fee for Breastfeeding USA will be \$35. Along with this, we will be promoting membership to the general public as a way of fostering a larger, more engaged Breastfeeding USA community.

Between now and July 1, 2019, you are welcome to take advantage of the current \$25 membership fee by renewing your membership early for next year. Simply follow these directions: On our website, breastfeedingusa.org, click **Log In** in the upper right hand corner of the page to sign on to your Breastfeeding USA account. Select **Renew**, fill in your information, and click the Join button at the bottom of the page.

In keeping with our core values of serving families and engaging volunteers from all walks of life, we will continue to offer a membership payment plan for the new \$35 membership fee.

If you have questions about Breastfeeding USA's 2018 Strategic Plan or the fee increase, you may direct them to funding@breastfeedingusa.org.

If you have any questions about your membership, accessing your account, using chapter funds to pay membership fees, or the membership payment plan, or if you'd like to cancel your Breastfeeding USA membership, please email membership@breastfeedingusa.org.

Membership Expiration Dates - New Look! New Location!

I am very excited to announce a new look and a new location of your membership expiration date on your Breastfeeding USA "My Account" page, see image example below (red box = current roles; blue box = expiration date).

The red box is your current roles within the organization, if you feel these roles are incorrect, please email membership@breastfeedingusa.org or BCSupport@breastfeedingusa.org. All volunteers should have the role of "Breastfeeding USA Volunteer", this allows you to access the For Volunteers portion of the website. If you are an accredited BC you will have the role of "Breastfeeding USA Counselor". All paid members have the role "Current Member". From the day your membership expires up until 2 weeks past your due date, you are in a "grace period", your role will still say "Current Member" but your Civi Membership Expiration date will say "No current memberships found." If you are 2 or more weeks past due on your membership your role changes to "Member Expired" and Civi Membership Expiration will say "No current memberships found."

It is important to note that you will receive notification from the website when your membership expires (unless you are a recurring member, your renewal happens automatically and you receive a receipt of payment). I encourage as many of you as possible, on your next renewal, choose "recurring membership", it ensures your never lapse in membership and reduces the number of volunteer work hours. Again, if you have any questions or feel there is a mistake on your My Account page, please email membership@breastfeedingusa.org.

Karyn DiNovo
Membership Manager

Facebook Donate Buttons

Facebook is discontinuing the Donate button as we know it --the one that you may have set up to link to the Donate page on our website. It will automatically change to a Learn More button. (You may have received an email about this from Facebook.) You can feel free to edit the button however it might serve your chapter best. It looks like the best two choices for Breastfeeding USA might be "Contact Us" or "Learn More". If you choose Learn More you can direct it toward the national website or perhaps even your chapter's listing on the website.

Directions for editing this button can be found here:

<https://www.facebook.com/help/1638565256396310...>

If you have any questions, please feel free to email funding@breastfeedingusa.org.

III. Volunteer News & Tips

New BCs

We'd like to welcome the following new BCs who completed the course in April:

Samantha Wodopian in IL
Andraya Dickinson in OK
Anne-Marie Lanouette in DE
Emma Moody in OR
Elena Ryan in CA
Beverly Reyes in FL

We are so glad you are here and look forward to working with you!!

Volunteer Spotlight

This month we'd like to highlight the contributions **Natalie Gates** makes to Breastfeeding USA! Natalie has been a long time volunteer with Applications and became workgroup manager recently.

Here's what Christy Sharer had to say about Natalie:

"Natalie is dedicated to BreastfeedingUSA and the missions and values of our organization. She takes the time to listen and wants to make sure that each applicant is provided a fair and thorough review process. She is always willing to help out and invest her time into growing the

organization. I am so thankful to be able to work alongside of her on the Applications Review team!"

Here's what Natalie shared about herself:

"I have been a Breastfeeding Counselor since 2015, and an Applications volunteer starting just a few months after I was accredited. I became the Assistant Manager in 2017, and the workgroup Manager in 2019. I have greatly enjoyed volunteering on the national level, and Applications is a wonderful workgroup to be a part of!



I am an IBCLC working in private practice in Denver, Colorado. I have three children - Violet is 7, Fiona is almost 5, and William is 2. We have three guinea pigs named Aspen, Willow, and Maple. In addition to Breastfeeding USA, I also volunteer with Special Kids, Special Care (a non-profit supporting families in the transition from NICU to home) and the Colorado Breastfeeding Coalition."

Thank you for your dedication to Breastfeeding USA!

If you would like to nominate a Breastfeeding USA volunteer for the volunteer spotlight, please let Meredith Sinclair (meredith.sinclair@breastfeedingusa.org) know!

Chapter Highlights: Growing In-Person Meetings

We plan to start collecting your great tips on running and growing your chapter to include in the "For Volunteers" section of the website as we continue to revise and curate the information there. We also plan to continue the section of #milkmemos begun last issue that highlights the work of a local chapter.

Have a topic you'd like to see us cover or want to write up something great your chapter is doing? Please email communications@breastfeedingusa.org.

Here are Beth Lichy's thoughts on the important role in-person meetings play in supporting breastfeeding. Thanks to Beth for starting this series!

Why In-Person Meetings

We live in a non-stop, high-tech society which is filled with stress. Always being on our devices has its ups and downs. Constant access can help parents quickly find answers to breastfeeding questions, but it can also overwhelm us with TMI (too much information.)

No matter how many YouTube videos we watch or Facebook groups we join, there is something unique about learning to breastfeed with other mothers in the room. There are no hard-and-fast rules of breastfeeding. Different positions work for different dyads. Some moms prefer to cover up; others don't. I love to hear the various ways families "make it work" at our meetings. It might be exclusive breastfeeding, pumping for work, combining breast and bottle or a myriad of in-betweens.

We've had our share of both laughter and tears at meetings. We've created a non-judgmental space where mothers can discuss their triumphs and trials. Breastfeeding Counselors (BCs) are there to facilitate and offer evidence-based information, but it is truly the moms who lead the meetings. Participants may range from the mom who hasn't yet been able to breastfeed at all to the mom who has breastfed several children and is learning to cope with a larger family.

It does take extra effort to get out of the house with a little one in tow. It takes time to build up a core of mothers who look forward to a mom's meet-up each month. However, it is worth every ounce of effort to see mother-to-mother support in action.

The next part of this series will discuss tips for setting up an in-person chapter meeting in your town!

It's Worth It! Setting up In-Person Chapter Meetings

There are many ways to start a group. Finding a good meeting place is important. Whenever possible, it is best to find a "neutral" place. A church or other house of worship may not be comfortable for members of other faiths to visit. Is there parking available? Is it well-lighted for evening meetings? Accessible by public transportation? Handicapped accessible?

I reached out to our local hospital, who runs a weekly moms group, prenatal classes, etc. but was happy to host a free group for breastfeeding moms. They had empty space in their resource center, a block away from the hospital, which was available in the evenings. We were able to set up a regular schedule of monthly meetings there.

Be creative when you seek a meeting space. Libraries, community centers, health care provider offices are some typical places meetings are held. I know of a group that met in an old age home. The residents were happy to see the little ones come in and out. Another group met in a

local fire station which had a community room. Drop-in café-style meetings can be held in local coffee shop or restaurant. A few groups have held meetings in a local baby store, such as the recently closed Babies R Us stores. Is there a local yoga studio or health food store in your area that might be willing to host?

Traditionally, many support group meetings have met in a private home. Although that might not be ideal, it is worth considering for several reasons. It can be cozy and convenient, easy to reach and have some comfortable sitting space for moms and babies on the floor. It works well for small groups and can be a stepping stone towards developing a core group of moms.

It make take some pounding the pavement, but it's worth it! Some meeting spaces come with a built-in audience. For example, holding a prenatal class in an OB or midwife's office can lead to contacts for a postnatal group. Attracting attendees will be discussed in the next section.

Look for this and the rest of Beth's series on the website soon!

****Volunteers Needed****

We hope you will consider the following organization needs for a match with your time and talents. If you have interest in tasks not listed here, please contact Krista Clayton of Volunteer Services (VolunteerSupport@BreastfeedingUSA.org) or complete [this interest form](#).

Communications:

The Breastfeeding USA Communications Committee is looking for additional members for our **social media workgroup**. Currently, we maintain a presence on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#); we plan to reboot our Instagram presence in the coming months.

Tasks in this workgroup include:

- Curating external content that may be of interest to our social media followers. This involves identifying items to share, participating in the vetting process, and creating a header “hook” to go with that content.
- Monitoring our social media accounts for comments and shares; assisting with responses to messages via social media.
- Connecting with like-minded organizations and breastfeeding advocacy efforts via social media.
- Developing campaigns with original Breastfeeding USA content.
- Engaging readers with questions.

We are in particular need of one or more BCs who are **Instagram** “savvy” who would be willing to take the lead on building our presence on that platform.

We'd also welcome volunteers with **meme-creation** skills - experience working with graphics, images, etc - to help us create eye-catching images for social media and other marketing.

Newsletter Writers/Editors: The strategic plan calls for the development of an inward facing newsletter (like this one!) and the expansion of the public facing #milkmemos to a monthly publication. To work towards these goals, we need volunteers interested in curating content, writing content, and editing/assembling content.

If you have questions or are interested in any of the above tasks, please contact communications@breastfeedingusa.org.

The Breastfeeding USA Editorial Review Board (ERB) is seeking new workgroup members. This workgroup is responsible for editing and vetting Breastfeeding USA original content for the website and social media.

We particularly need volunteers who have strong editing skills or who are IBCLCs and able to vet content.

If you have questions or would like to join this workgroup, please contact Gena Ortega (gena.ortega@breastfeedingusa.org).

Funding and Development

Do you enjoy communicating with and motivating others? Join the Funding and Development team! We are looking for a **Funding and Development assistant**, and while fundraising experience is a bonus, much of this work can be learned on the go with the right attitude and some excellent communications skills. The assistant will spearhead funding campaigns like #GivingTuesday and the end-of-year campaign from start to finish, creating emails, social media posts, and working with fun incentives, all with the aim of sharing our enthusiasm for Breastfeeding USA and encouraging our stakeholders to donate to the organization. This is a great position for anyone looking to have a future leadership role in the organization.

We are also looking for a **Grant Writer**. A key goal of Breastfeeding USA's strategic plan is to strengthen the organization's financial position over the next few years, and this includes the development and implementation of a grant writing strategy. If you have skills and experience in this arena, come join us in Funding and Development.

Direct your questions about these positions to Aimee Teslaw (aimee.teslaw@breastfeedingusa.org).

Finance

Finance is seeking volunteers experienced in **bookkeeping, accounting, and/or non-profit finance**, or who would be interested in learning the ropes. Contact Amie Hood (Finance@BreastfeedingUSA.org) to learn more.

Technology:

The Board is still looking to fill the **IT Chair** position. In the meantime, we are also looking for people who would enjoy helping in IT for a few hours a week. We will train willing volunteers to perform specific ongoing tasks that are necessary for Breastfeeding USA's operations.

If you have questions or are interested, please contact Lauren Logan (lauren.logan@breastfeedingusa.org).

Organization Contacts

Committee	Email	Current Chair*	Board Liaison**
Advocacy	advocacy@	Jada Wright-Nichols (VP)	Meredith Sinclair
Bylaws	(no direct email)	Ginger Gorrell	Amie Hood (T)
Communications	communications@	Meredith Sinclair	Meredith Sinclair
Education	education@	Sharon Knorr	Rebecca Ruhlen (P)
Elections	elections@	Kirsten Richardson	Tamika Harris (S)
Ethics	ethics@	Tricia Kuehn	Ginger Gorrell
Finance	finance@	Amie Hood (T)	Amie Hood (T)
Funding & Development	funding@	Aimee Teslaw	Aimee Teslaw
Grievances	grievance@	Nikkole Cooper	Tamika Harris (S)
Inclusivity	(no direct email)	Norma Ritter	Jada Wright-Nichols (VP)
Information Technology	website@	Ginger Gorrell	Lauren Logan
Volunteer Services	volunteersupport@	Krista Clayton	Tamika Harris (S)

*Board policy is to have most committees chaired by volunteers not currently serving on the board. When another suitable volunteer cannot be found, however, a board member may serve as interim chair. Our bylaws require that the Treasurer serve as the chair of the finance committee.

**Board liaisons are informal positions designated by the board and intended to facilitate communications between committees and the board.

Contact the Board of Directors via email: bod@breastfeedingusa.org.

Breastfeeding USA Board of Directors:

Rebecca Ruhlen, President

Jada Wright Nichols, Vice-President

Tamika Harris, Secretary

Amie Hood, Treasurer

Aimee Teslaw

Meredith Sinclair

Lauren Logan