



Inside Breastfeeding USA

March 2019

I. Greetings from the Board of Directors

The first public board meeting of 2019 was held on March 19. It included a financial report on the second quarter of our current fiscal year, the second required “reading” of the [revised bylaws](#), and a vote to approve them, as well as an overview of the board’s project management approach to implementing the strategic plan. The meeting closed with remarks from the president and discussion regarding member concerns and the need for a culture shift in treatment of volunteers at all levels.

[Video](#) -- the meeting begins at the 9:00 minute mark.

[Chat](#) -- written conversation during the meeting, mainly by listening members. The time-stamps reflect the clock time and don't line up with the time elapsed in the video.

From the President

Lead with love.

That’s the phrase I keep coming back to in this new role as president of the Board of Directors. I reflected on it a little bit in my remarks during the board meeting, and it’s been gratifying to see others picking it up as we carry the work forward.

Like most mantras or pithy catch phrases, it leaves a lot undefined. Our society doesn’t always cultivate or honor women’s leadership. And effective leading can take many forms and happen in many different roles. For a really beautiful and inspirational example of this, please read

Karyn DiNovo's description in the Volunteer Spotlight below of everything she brings to her own work for Breastfeeding USA.

For me, love has a lot to do with integrity and courage. I love our mission to provide evidence-based breastfeeding information and support to every family we can reach and to promote breastfeeding more broadly as both the biological and cultural norm. You don't have to venture far on the internet, though, to encounter hostility toward that cause, ugly assumptions about those who promote it, and beneath everything the whole complex corporate profit machine that wins biggest when parents wean early.

See the update below from our Advocacy committee about the upcoming March for Moms, and watch for future updates and calls to action. This advocacy work is how we confront the barriers and forces that obstruct and undermine our cause. Doing this work takes courage. Persisting in it takes more than outrage. It takes love.

Leading with love is also about working together, meeting folks where they are, establishing and maintaining rapport, collaborating and supporting one another. **The very same communication skills we teach our BCs for helping parents are invaluable in working with one another as well.** Plans and deadlines are necessary for progress toward goals. Just as necessary is honest communication, open minds and hearts, empathy for one another's struggles and detours, praise and appreciation for shared efforts, and joy in celebrating our victories, small and large.

My involvement with Breastfeeding USA is one of the best things about my life right now. Can you say the same, honestly? If so, please let those you work with know; let us share in your joy. If not, can you identify what is missing for you, what would need to change to find more satisfaction and pleasure in your volunteer work? Help us make those changes, by leading with love.

--Rebecca Ruhlen, President

From the Vice President

Greetings from your BfUSA board vice president! I am Jada Wright Nichols, and I am so honored to be a part of this amazing organization. I have just returned from one of my favorite professional conferences: Breastfeeding and Feminism International Conference, in Chapel Hill, NC. There, in addition to leading a discussion around myths related to breastfeeding, attachment, and development, I was able to connect with representatives from other organizations who are enthusiastically protecting and promoting breastfeeding support, policy, and equity. The theme of the conference explored the roots and wings of breastfeeding from around the world. I left feeling both grounded and limitless.

However, it was the BfUSA public board call the night before, as I was traveling to NC, from Atlanta, that completely filled me up. Did you have an opportunity to hear our new president, Rebecca Ruhlen call us out? Inspire us? Put us to work? And love on us, all while standing firmly on our new strategic plan? She is definitely leading with love, and I am proud to be aligned with her and with each of you.

In order to show the rest of the country how hard we are loving and working in our respective communities, I encourage you to join, and become an active member of your local and state Breastfeeding Coalition. Breastfeeding USA is a member of the United States Breastfeeding Committee, which is where all of the breastfeeding coalitions convene, both virtually, and physically. Breastfeeding policy and practice, in all forms, are supported by your coalition, and your community needs to know who and where you are. I enjoy advocacy work, and while I am proud to serve as your interim Advocacy Committee Chair, I would love to know how you are advocating for breastfeeding families in your own area, or what support you need in making that happen. Happy helping!

-- Jada Wright Nichols, Vice President

Changes to the Board

Ginger Gorrell is resigning from the Board of Directors effective March 31, 2019. After being appointed to fill an empty seat in 2016, Ginger was elected in 2017. During her years as a director, she has served as Secretary, Treasurer, and liaison to several critical committees. She has been indispensable, and we are deeply grateful both for her dedicated service in these roles and that she will continue volunteering at the national level in IT and Finance.

In much happier news, Lauren Logan has joined the Board of Directors, effective March 25, 2019. She fills the seat recently held by Kate Nadeau, which will roll open for election in 2020. Lauren brings to the board extensive experience as a local BC in Indiana as well as two years' capable service as Chair of the Elections committee (a position now in immediate need of filling; see job call below). We are thrilled she has agreed to the appointment and are particularly grateful that she will serve as liaison to the IT committee, an area of critical need.

Please join the board in extending thanks and good wishes to both Ginger and Lauren during these transitions.

Upcoming Events

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

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 (meredith.sinclair@breastfeedingusa.org)

The Spring 2019 #milkmemos landed in inboxes last week; this edition focused on tongue ties and featured some new content that we plan to make regular features of this external newsletter. The first new feature was a “breastfeeding story” around the theme of ties; thank you to Stormy Miller (BC with the North Central Florida Chapter) for sharing her journey and beautiful photos. We also added a chapter spotlight to highlight the work our chapters do in their communities. This issue featured the Montgomery County, MD chapter; thank you to Beth

Lichy for the write up. And thanks to Nicole Florek our #milkmemos editor for pulling everything together.

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.**

Communications is also seeking additional committee members; see our job calls below.

Finance

Chair: Amie Hood (Finance@BreastfeedingUSA.org)

We had our first Finance Committee meeting this month and continue to focus on making changes that meet goals in the Strategic Plan. On the agenda this month: I would like to consider moving some of Breastfeeding USA's assets into CDs, for passive income. These are still insured by the FDIC, so it's a stable investment.

If you are interested in serving on the Finance Committee and having more input into overall financial planning, please sign up! We would love to have you.

III. Volunteer News

New BCs

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

- Jillian Cardoza in California
- Nicole Florek in Indiana
- Rachael Woods in Illinois
- Hannah Powers in Minnesota
- Callie Counterman in Texas
- Jamie Martira in New York
- Lisa Rodriguez in California
- Kim Cierpik-Gold in Colorado

- Jessica Cabrera-Perez in California
- Trisha Irish in Iowa
- Erika Costanzo in California
- Hannah Ramirez in Texas
- Emily Ingram in Arkansas
- Kayla Skeate in Minnesota
- Candice James in California
- Kayla Williams in North Carolina
- Sara Strum in Maryland
- Melissa Thomas in Oregon

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

Volunteer Spotlight

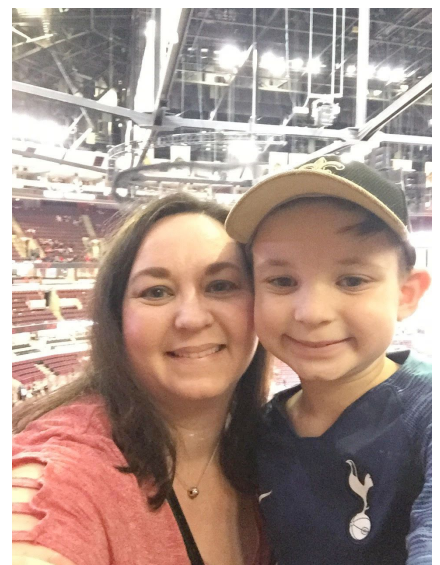
This month we'd like to highlight the contributions **Karyn DiNovo** makes to Breastfeeding USA! Karyn serves as the Membership Manager for Funding & Development and a key Candidate Tracking volunteer for Education.

Here's what Aimee Teslaw said of Karyn in nominating her for the volunteer spotlight:

"I've worked with Karyn since I became Funding and Development chair, but I've actually known her since the beginning of my involvement with Breastfeeding USA in 2012, as we were in the same cohort for our communications skills practice as candidates. We live on opposite sides of suburban Chicagoland, and so we've met in person at local conferences and meetups. Even before I worked with her I noticed that she is patient and kind, and that has proven to be true in her work in Membership. She is also highly organized and knowledgeable of the processes and systems we use in Membership, and was a quick study when we transitioned to using the CRM last year. I'm so glad she shares her time and skills with us at Breastfeeding USA. We are very lucky to have her."

Here's what Karyn shared about herself:

"I'm Karyn DiNovo, a BC from Shorewood, IL. I have a terrific husband who supports my passion for lactation and helping families breastfeed. I also have a 10 year old son, Vincent, who has grown



up around breastfeeding as both the biological and cultural norm for our extended family and friends.

I have been a BC for 6 years. At first I was a co-BC in Joliet then soon become a solo BC for the group. After a few years I decided to take on more of a role at the National level by volunteering with the Education committee in the Candidate Support workgroup. Soon after, I accepted the role of Membership Manager, in the Funding and Development committee. I am still involved with both, but my duties have grown in Candidate Support once we began the process of developing a new Learning Platform: Learn Worlds. Last year I took a step back from local BC meetings to focus solely at my volunteering at the National Level. My greatest joys in the volunteering have been transitioning Membership to CiviCRM, that I know will help grow our organization so much once all workgroups are integrated. Most recently we accredited our first class of BCs to complete the new learning platform. I continue to look forward in both my roles as we develop paperless membership cards (coming in the next year) and continue to grow Learn Worlds by enrolling current BCs and developing CEU modules.

My other roles in life include working in a research laboratory at Midwestern University in the department of Physiology, for 16 years. My husband and I are both invested in our son's passion for soccer as we travel with him to games and tournaments most weekends. My other volunteer role I share with my husband is our commitment to marriage, we are the local diocesan coordinators for the National branch of the Worldwide organization Catholic Engaged Encounter.

The one thing volunteering has taught me is to give of ourselves completely helps us grow stronger in our daily lives as women, as partners, as mothers, as friends and as co-workers, but in order to do so family time and self care must become a priority. I am grateful Breastfeeding USA has so many options for women to volunteer in their communities and nationally, all with the same goal: to empower women and breastfeeding families.”

Thank you Karyn 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!

****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](#).

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 Ginger Gorrell (ginger.gorrell@breastfeedingusa.org).

Elections:

We are seeking an Elections Chair for the 2019 year! This is a seasonal position for BfUSA (March - November) perfect for someone with punctual communication skills. The main job is releasing announcements; soliciting a committee and candidates; managing email list and the elections roster; and maintaining confidentiality throughout. Supporting documents and training available. Commitment time per week can vary, but July, August, and September are the busiest times.

Job Description:

a. Job Responsibilities:

- Recruits members of the Election Committee
- Through communication with the Board Secretary, identifies the specific Board needs and the number of seats available on the Board of Directors
- Publicizes the open Board of Directors positions and desired qualifications to the Voting Members, and calls for nominations
- Actively seeks qualified nominations
- Presents the slate of candidates and their statements to the Voting Members
- Arranges for ballots to be available to all Voting Members, and for ballots to be cast and counted in a classified manner

b. Job Requirements:

- Organized; provides written reports to the Board of Directors in a timely manner
- Communicates effectively in writing
- Keeps confidential all private information of candidates

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 Meredith Sinclair (meredith.sinclair@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.

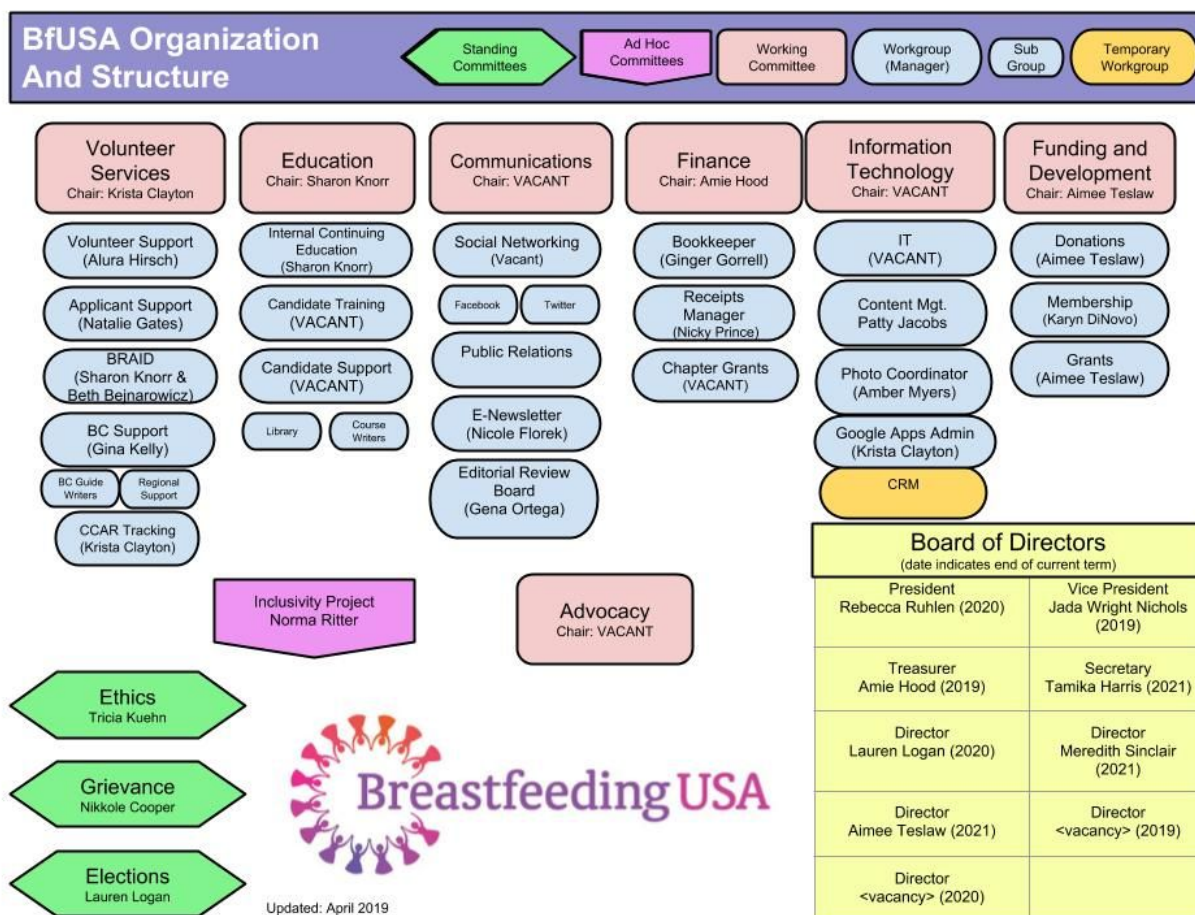
We are also looking for a **Grant Writer**. A key goal of Breastfeeding USA's strategic plan is to strengthen the organization's financial position over the next few years, and this includes the development and implementation of a grant writing strategy. If you have skills and experience in this arena,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

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	socialmediamanager@	Meredith Sinclair	Meredith Sinclair
Education	education@	Sharon Knorr	Rebecca Ruhlen (P)
Elections	elections@	VACANT	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@	VACANT	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

Ginger Gorrell

Meredith Sinclair