



# Inside Breastfeeding USA

## May 2020

### Greetings from the Board of Directors

Breathe. Everybody, just breathe. Inhale. Exhale. Repeat. The breath is fascinating to me, because it happens whether we think about it or not, and yet, we may take control of our breathing, with intention and attention. Here, in the midst of a global pandemic that began with a respiratory virus, as well as worldwide race riots, following the suffocation of an unarmed black man, I want to encourage you to breathe. There is so much stress, uncertainty, instability, loss, grief, despair, and lack, all around us, with no reasonable end in sight. It is in times like these, that all we can do, is take a hold of who is important, and breathe. Reach out to those who need help, and breathe. Sit with yourself, and breathe.

Inhale hope. Exhale despair.  
Inhale peace. Exhale grief.  
Inhale love. Exhale loss.  
Inhale fortitude. Exhale instability.  
Inhale gratitude. Exhale uncertainty.  
Inhale optimism. Exhale stress.  
Breathe.

As helpers, caregivers, and volunteers, we have to take care of ourselves, so that we can continue the ministry of helping to take care of others. As members of Breastfeeding USA, we have each answered a call to serve families who are in need of fulfilling the cycle of life by breastfeeding. More than ever, we are becoming aware of how important this phase of life is, as there are conversations around first foods, food security, food safety, and social separation. The families that we are serving are facing challenges that we have never imagined while breastfeeding our own children. As volunteers, it is essential that we turn inward to ourselves, stop, and breathe, in order to muster up and maintain the safest and most effective ways to render our supportive services.

We can learn to use the four types of self-care: physical, emotional, social, and spiritual. Physical self-care includes sleep, stretching, walking, exercise, enjoying nutritious meals, enjoying comfort meals, and resting. Emotional self-care includes stress management, exhibiting emotional maturity, forgiveness, compassion, and kindness. Social self-care includes

honoring boundaries, tapping into support systems, exploring positive social media, communication, time together, time alone, and asking for help. Spiritual self-care includes meditation, prayer, connections, nature, journaling, creating, and seeking sacred spaces. Find opportunities to care for yourself everyday. Your family and your community are looking to you.

One of my favorite thoughts from a childhood hero is Mr. Rogers reflecting on advice that his own mother gave him as a child. When he was a boy, and would ask his mother what to do about the scary things that he saw on the news, she would say to him, "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping." We are the helpers; they are looking to us, and therefore, we must continue to breathe.

Jada Wright Nichols  
Breastfeeding USA, Vice-President

## Congratulations!

We'd like to welcome the following new BCs who were accredited in April and May:

Kimberly Nelson Rusch (IL)  
Ashley Robinson (NY)  
Kristin Szerszen (IN)  
Claire Naughton (RI)  
Teresa Purkiss (OR)  
Ashanti Rivera (CT)  
Betsy Portillo (CA)

## Virtual Meetings

During this pandemic, we've had to change our ways of working to accommodate social distancing. Breastfeeding USA has developed the following set of guidelines for BC use.

The organization is offering access to a paid Zoom account, without the 40 minute limit on free accounts. With the org account, you can have up to 100 attendees and can host meetings as long as you need. You are welcome to use your own account, as well. This is just something extra we're offering to help our Breastfeeding Counselors serve their communities.

**This access is intended exclusively for BCs, so please keep the login information private and only use this for Breastfeeding USA meetings and support.**

### Login Information:

The associated email is: [finance@breastfeedingusa.org](mailto:finance@breastfeedingusa.org)

The password is (case sensitive): Zoombfusa2019

## **Scheduling Meetings**

Please consult the Meetings calendar in Zoom before scheduling a meeting to confirm no one else has anything scheduled at the same time. There can only be one meeting at a time.

## **How to Use Zoom**

You can use Zoom for classes, support meetings, and one-on-one help. There are a number of tutorials on the Zoom blog, so please check there to familiarize yourself with this tool, if it's your first time:

[https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/217214286-Watch-Recorded-Training-Sessions?\\_ga=2.986481.190462630.1584387873-927589482.1568744982&mobile\\_site=true&zcid=1231](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/217214286-Watch-Recorded-Training-Sessions?_ga=2.986481.190462630.1584387873-927589482.1568744982&mobile_site=true&zcid=1231)

Zoom meetings can be attended by anyone with a phone, smartphone, or computer. The moderator has control over muting participants to eliminate background noise. Participants can raise their hand to speak. There is also a chat room for discussion. In a small group, these features aren't as necessary, although muting to eliminate background noise is good practice. The video option allows you to see participants, especially if they have questions about latch or positioning.

## **Protecting Privacy**

- Do not save or record meetings
- Avoid sharing links to meetings on public-facing pages. If you need to do so for attendance, follow these safety measures:
- Use the waiting room feature in meetings and request participants use their real names (first name, last initial for privacy) so you can distinguish real participants from spammers.
- Automatically mute participants and disable screen sharing for anyone but the host.

## **Best Practices for Video Meetings**

- Prepare your space. Have props or any relevant information you may want to share easily accessible. Have documents and/or websites open.
- Make sure your space is well-lit. Search tech magazines for tips on lighting.
- Pretend everyone is gathered in the same room to make the conversation feel more comfortable.
- Host a few Zoom/Google Meet meetings with friends to get used to being on camera, and to figure out how the software works.
- For longer meetings (such as classes), be sure to work in breaks. It's still possible to work the three learning styles (auditory, visual, kinesthetic) into classes.

- If there is a set topic or for classes, you can email participants with a list of household items or even craft instructions for demonstrations.

## **From the CT Chapter of Breastfeeding USA**

The CT Chapter has shared some of their tips for setting up a video support group.

Set up through zoom:

1. Acquire login information for zoom national account email  
[Amie.hood@breastfeedingusa.org](mailto:Amie.hood@breastfeedingusa.org) to have approval to access
2. Create an event in zoom for your meeting
3. Share event meeting link only with those you want to attend meeting

Set up through Google Meets:

1. Access your gsuite dashboard with BFUSA
2. Create an event in your calendar for the time of the meeting
3. Click add video conferencing
4. Go back to your gsuite dashboard and click on meet, you should now see your event

Share your meeting ideas to get the word out:

- Join mom groups that are local and share your event
- Share with birth centers, email or FB message to ask if they will share your breastfeeding support group (can they share every week?)
- Share with local pediatric offices, email or FB message
- Ask moms to “bring a friend” by inviting them too
- Local birth worker groups (doulas, midwives, etc.) Ask them to share the event

Other ideas:

Create FB or instagram promotion videos. Record a short message from you with what the meeting is like or inviting moms to join.

Create the event through your main chapter page on FB, that way the event can be public. Ask your followers to share the event.

Create images in Canva (free breastfeeding or infant images on unsplash.com)

Tips on what to have at support meeting:

- Breastfeeding props: breastfeeding pillow, baby doll, fake breast, flanges,
- Have protocols, videos, and articles pulled up to share your screen and send after
- Pen and paper to take notes and get people’s email or phone # for follow up

## **Committee Updates**

## Ethics

From Patty Jacobs: As Compliance Officer of Breastfeeding USA, it's my responsibility to chair the Ethics Committee. It "supports the ethical conduct of Breastfeeding USA volunteers in organizational management, committee work, Breastfeeding USA Counselor services, and all other actions identified by the [Code of Ethics](#)." I also receive the emails that come to [Feedback@BreastfeedingUSA.org](mailto:Feedback@BreastfeedingUSA.org)

Ethics Advisors make up the other volunteers on the Ethics Committee. We have been fortunate to have had excellent Ethics Advisors in Breastfeeding USA, and each has done the important work of moderating intra-organization concerns and conflicts between volunteers.

With the recent retirement of Ethics Advisor Tricia Kuehn, (Thank you Tricia!) we're looking to fill 3 positions of Ethics Advisors.

If you have any questions about the Ethics Committee or are interested in working on the Ethics Committee, please contact me directly or at [Ethics@breastfeedingUSA.org](mailto:Ethics@breastfeedingUSA.org) .

## Volunteer Support

Thanks to the 93 BCs who responded to our recent survey! Your gift should arrive in the next week or two. 73% of respondents prefer to connect with Breastfeeding USA through their organizational e-mails. 25% of respondents would like to be mentored by a more experienced BC and 18% are willing to be mentors. We received many helpful tips and we hope to institute your suggestions over the coming months.

BC Support has a team of volunteers who are calling each BC individually to check in, see how you are doing and how Breastfeeding USA can further help you. Please use these calls as an opportunity to share your thoughts! Contact [BCSupport@BreastfeedingUSA.org](mailto:BCSupport@BreastfeedingUSA.org) for additional information.

## Funding and Development

With sensitivity to the physical and financial suffering brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, the spring membership drive we had budgeted for was suspended. Unfortunately, it's true that membership is down right now from this time last year, a drop that correlates with the IBLCE announcement that volunteers with recognized organizations such as Breastfeeding USA would no longer earn hours at a flat rate, but would need to document a large number of hours to qualify to sit the IBCLC exam.

We would like to revive the idea that membership is a good way for families to support the organization, and we firmly believe that having something to offer our BCs and families for being members is enticing. While swag is nice (and was budgeted for a membership drive and member appreciation, both), it would also be lovely to lean on our mission and provide evidence-based information directly to our members again in the form of the outward-facing newsletter #milkmemos. Please see the call for volunteers for this newsletter below.

The good news is that our successful fundraising in past years is helping to keep us on good financial ground. (One of my dad's frequent mantras has always been S.Y.M.—save your money. And we have!) We owe gratitude to our BCs who help us fundraise, and to our Finance Committee for their excellent stewardship of our financial resources. We are planning to go through with our year-end fundraising efforts, and Nancy Mohrbacher has offered copies of her new book *Breastfeeding Answers: A Guide for Helping Families* (the update to *Breastfeeding Answers Made Simple*) to help us incentivize BCs to fundraise with us. We have many reasons to look forward at Breastfeeding USA.

## Finance

It's hard to believe we're there already, but we are in the process of working on the budget for fiscal year 2020-2021. Forecasting income and needs will be tricky right now, during a pandemic and financial crisis. That said, we are on solid financial footing and hope to remain so as we move forward.

Thank you to all of you reading this note. You show your dedication through your work and your annual membership that allows us to reach more families.

If you are interested in volunteering with the Finance Committee, we are looking for volunteers with a background in accounting, bookkeeping, or nonprofit finance. If you are interested, please contact volunteer support. As always, financial reports are available upon request at [finance@breastfeedingusa.org](mailto:finance@breastfeedingusa.org)

## Community Engagement

**Co-Chair: Kim Cierpik-Gold & Interim Co-Chair: Meredith Sinclair**  
[communications@breastfeedingusa.org](mailto:communications@breastfeedingusa.org)

Do you love Facebook? Do you love supporting breastfeeding from wherever you happen to be? Please consider volunteering your time with our Facebook team! These Facebook groups are run by BCs at the national level:

- [Working and Breastfeeding - Breastfeeding USA](#)
- [Nursing Beyond Infancy: Breastfeeding USA](#)
- [Nursing Twins/Multiples - Breastfeeding USA](#)
- [Breastfeeding USA: Allergies, Eczema, and Food Sensitivities](#)

If you would like to be a part of this effort, please contact [communications@breastfeedingusa.org](mailto:communications@breastfeedingusa.org)

The Editorial Review Board is currently auditing our online breastfeeding articles and needs your help. We have an immediate need for authors with capacity to write articles on the following topics:

- Milk calculator (as on Kellymom) - amounts to bottle feed breastfed babies
- How to pace bottlefeed
- How to choose the right flange size
- Storing your milk safely
- Nursing strikes

If you would like to write about these or other breastfeeding related topics, please contact Gena Ortega ([gena.ortega@breastfeedingusa.org](mailto:gena.ortega@breastfeedingusa.org)).

Share your story or your photos:

If you would like to submit a breastfeeding story or photos 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](mailto:meredith.sinclair@breastfeedingusa.org) . We are also interested in hearing your stories about your work as a BC or Breastfeeding USA volunteer. Breastfeeding photos are always welcome.

## Calling All Volunteers!

Are you up-to-date on your CCARs? [Please log your volunteer activities here.](#)

If you would like to nominate a Breastfeeding USA volunteer for our volunteer spotlight, please contact [beth.lichy@breastfeedingUSA.org](mailto:beth.lichy@breastfeedingUSA.org)

All Breastfeeding USA Volunteers are invited to consider how your time and talents might contribute at the national level. Even small jobs can make a big difference! Please feel free to reach out to a committee directly if you have interest in the work they do.

The Community Engagement Committee is always looking for folks with a passion or skill set for any of the following areas:

- Visioning outreach and publicity campaigns
- Designing outreach materials for chapter use
- Creating memes, infographics, and other visuals for social media and our website
- Curating external content that may be of interest to our social media followers
- 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

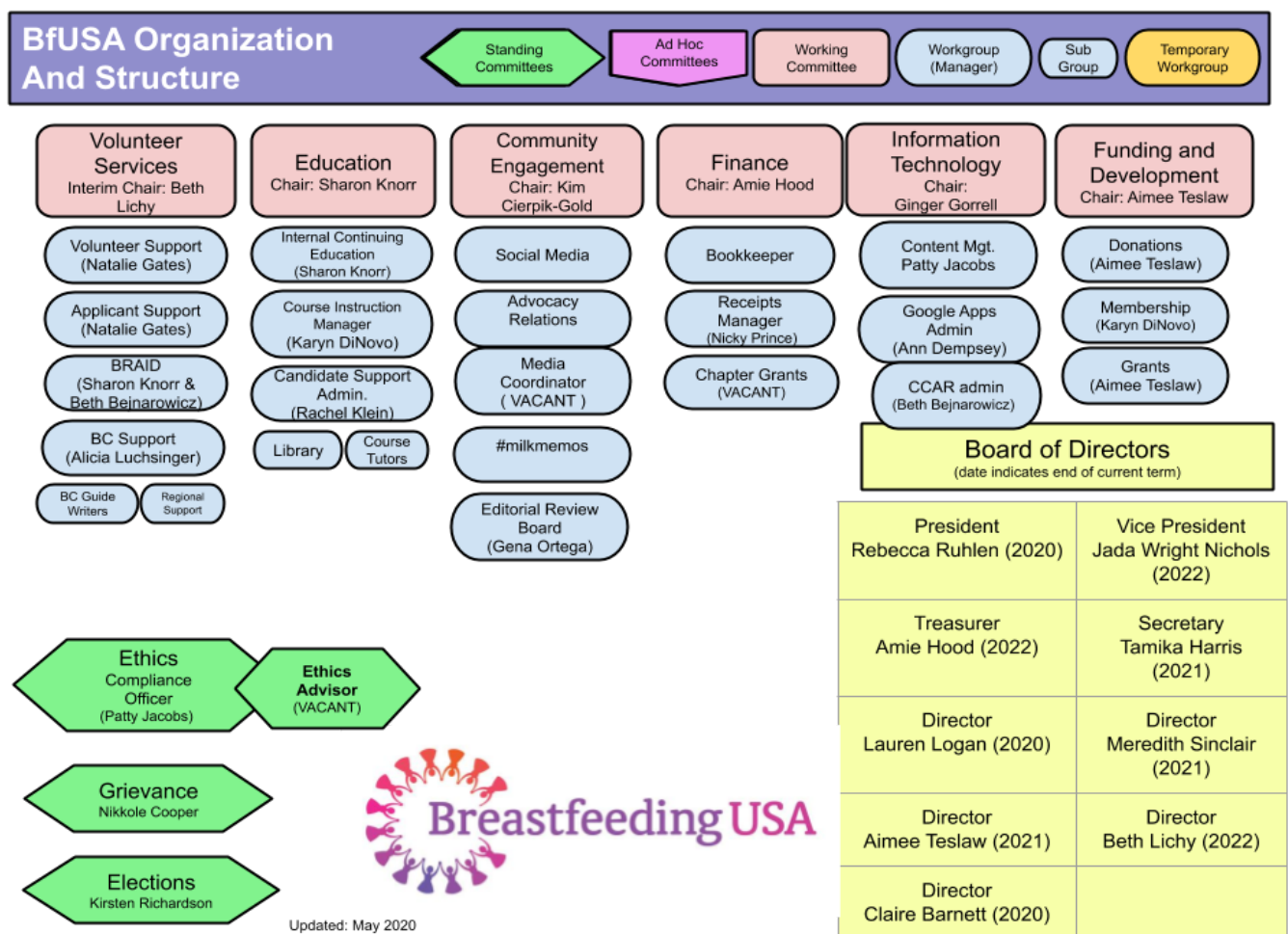
We are also looking for:

- Volunteers with Spanish language skills to work on translation of existing materials and/or creation of new Spanish language content
- Volunteers with writing and/or editing experience to join the #milkmemos team to take it to a monthly publication.

If you have questions or are interested in any of the above tasks, please contact [communications@breastfeedingusa.org](mailto: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](mailto:gena.ortega@breastfeedingusa.org)).

## Organization Contacts





<b>Committee</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Current Chair*</b>	<b>Board Liaison**</b>
Community Engagement	communications@	Kim Cierpik-Gold	Meredith Sinclair
Education	education@	Sharon Knorr	Claire Barnett
Elections	elections@	Kirsten Richardson	Tamika Harris (S)
Ethics	ethics@	Patty Jacobs	Rebecca Ruhlen (P)
Finance	finance@	Amie Hood (T)	Amie Hood (T)
Funding & Development	funding@	Aimee Teslaw	Aimee Teslaw
Grievances	grievance@	Nikkole Cooper	Rebecca Ruhlen (P)
Information Technology	website@	Ginger Gorrell	Lauren Logan
Volunteer Services	volunteersupport@	Beth Lichy	Rebecca Ruhlen (P)

\*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](mailto: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

Beth Lichy

Claire Barnett