



Inside Breastfeeding USA

November 2019

I. Greetings from the Board of Directors

From the Board

Director Claire Barnett writes this month....

Since being asked to write the message from the Board this month—after an entire month serving!—I’ve been reflecting on what community means in a geographically dispersed, all-volunteer organization like Breastfeeding USA. As Breastfeeding Counselors and volunteers, we don’t necessarily know or interact regularly with others in the organization, and yet we have joined together, with intention and with a shared commitment and passion, to support breastfeeding families and further the mission of promoting breastfeeding as a norm in our society. We are all here because we recognize a need and an opportunity to meet that need in our own physical communities. But if you’re anything like me, you might wonder how you fit into the less tangible, but still very real community that forms our national organization.

In my day job, I’ve spent many years designing online education and training experiences for audiences in disparate physical locations, so I’ve grown accustomed to inhabiting spaces where computer screens and geographic distance separate individuals, but where shared knowledge and mission bring them together all the same. And in my own local community, both through my work as a Breastfeeding Counselor and in other community-building activities, I’ve seen the challenges many of us, especially parents with young children, face in venturing beyond our homes, our daily routines, and the physical and emotional demands of our most present community—our children and spouses. We are busy, and it can be easy to fall into our social media personas as our primary means of engaging in broader community, even as we search for meaningful connection and purpose outside those homes and routines and online spaces.

So as I find my place working with other Board members whom I've not yet met in person and serving an organization where I know (some) names but no faces, I feel energized by the simple question one person asked me—will you serve? And I feel inspired to know the work being done and community being built every day on the Board, on our work committees, and in our local chapters. Still looking for your place, or have ideas about ways to help our community grow? Let us know!

Items of Interest & Upcoming Events

2019 Annual Meeting: Monday, November 18 @ 8:30pm EST (5:30 PST)

- The Board welcomes you to submit your questions for the 2019 Annual Meeting [here](#).
- Meeting will be conducted via Zoom and is open to all Breastfeeding USA members. Click [here to join](#) (or see your Breastfeeding USA email for the invite).
- We hope you can join the live call. However, for those who can't, the meeting will be recorded and made available to the membership at a later date.

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.

Editor's Note

We are looking for a volunteer to take over (or co-produce) Inside Breastfeeding USA.

This is a great way to learn more about what all of our committees are doing throughout the month and can easily be done around your schedule. If you have interest in taking this on (or helping out), please email meredith.sinclair@breastfeedingusa.org.

II. From Committees

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

Community Engagement

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

USBC Actions

Did you know that Breastfeeding USA is a member of the [United States Breastfeeding Committee](#)? We are! USBC lobbies for breastfeeding friendly policies (among other things). In recent months, Breastfeeding USA has signed on to the following USBC action letters:

- Friendly Airports for Mothers (FAM) Improvement Act
- FY20 Appropriations for CDC Breastfeeding Support Programs
- FY20 Appropriations & Fairness for Breastfeeding Mothers Act
- Welcome Congress Letter

Follow Us on Social Media

If your chapter has a presence on Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter, we hope that you'll help broaden our reach by sharing posts made by our national organization accounts ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#)). And we'll keep an eye out for your chapter's post and share those too!

Want to help our social media efforts? Let us know (communications@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). We are also always interested in hearing your stories about your work as a BC or Breastfeeding USA volunteer. And of course breastfeeding photos are always welcome.

Finance

Chair: Amie Hood (Finance@BreastfeedingUSA.org)

Internal Audit Report

Thanks to **Aimee Teslaw** for her leadership on this audit! Here's her report:

Internal Financial Audit Completed!

I owe a huge debt of gratitude to **Meredith Sinclair**, **Patty Jacobs**, and **Beth Laughlin** for helping me with this year's internal audit. Without Beth's and Patty's guidance, I would never have known where to start. Meredith, as new to the audit process as I was, took a deep dive into her assignment and came up with some wonderful suggestions.

Working together, we found a few minor record-keeping inconsistencies and areas for improvement. We recommended process improvements, and the Finance Committee and Board of Directors are already thoughtfully considering and implementing our suggestions. Aside from these minor things, we also found a financially stable nonprofit organization with well-tended finances, and for that we can all be grateful.

I have additional gratitude for the friendly cooperation of our Treasurer, **Amie Hood**, and our bookkeeper, **Ginger Gorrell**, who each fielded our requests for documentation in a timely manner. Overall it was a positive experience, and we can be assured of the financial integrity of Breastfeeding USA.

Funding & Development

Chair: Aimee Teslaw (funding@breastfeedingusa.org)

I'd like to welcome **Rachel Price** to the Funding and Development team! Rachel has experience fundraising for an organization in her town in Georgia, and has already begun to use her creativity and connections to help build some meaningful end-of-year funding campaigns. Look for our #GivingTuesday information coming out soon, and save the date—December 3, 2019—for this year's event.

III. Volunteer News & Tips

CCAR Tracking

The new CCAR tracking form is up and running! [Please log your volunteer activities here.](#)

New BCs

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

Esther Bowen (IL)
Sarah Casady (CA)
Cortney Voorhees (NY)

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

Volunteer Spotlight

Rebecca Ruhlen writes:

It is such a pleasure to recognize Patty Jacobs here this month ... but it's honestly daunting to try to describe all the ways Patty has contributed to Breastfeeding USA. Suffice to say that this organization probably would not exist without her. Patty has given SO generously of her expertise, gifts, leadership, and above all else her time. Just in my own experiences as a national volunteer and board member over the years, I have gone to her frequently for guidance or encouragement and have never once gone away empty-handed or down-hearted. We are fortunate indeed that even as her roles have changed within the organization, she has continued to serve where needed. Patty is a model of dedication and an inspiration to me personally.

Here's what Patty shared about herself:

Hello! I'm proud to be a Founder of Breastfeeding USA and to have served as Treasurer and President during my term on the board. I've worked within many committees over the years, and currently with Website Workgroup, Social Media Workgroup, as the voice behind Bf_USA Twitter, and the Finance Committee. As Compliance Officer, I served the board as a policy advisor, and was happy to work closely with our Ethics Advisors, (currently the compassionate Tricia Kuehn) who answered questions from BCs and moderated disputes.

I'm a very proud parent to two adult daughters, Amy a preschool teacher, and Sarah, a clinical psychologist. I know I give away my age when I say I've been married to my high school sweetheart for 42 years. We love to go car camping with our dog Bailey, travel when we can, and spend time with our extended family. I found my passion for helping breastfeeding mothers when my girls were little, and still believe that breastfeeding can change people's lives for the better. I know it did mine!

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 Volunteer Services (VolunteerSupport@BreastfeedingUSA.org) or complete [this interest form](#).

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.

Community Engagement:

The newly formed Community Engagement Committee is 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 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.

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

We are 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

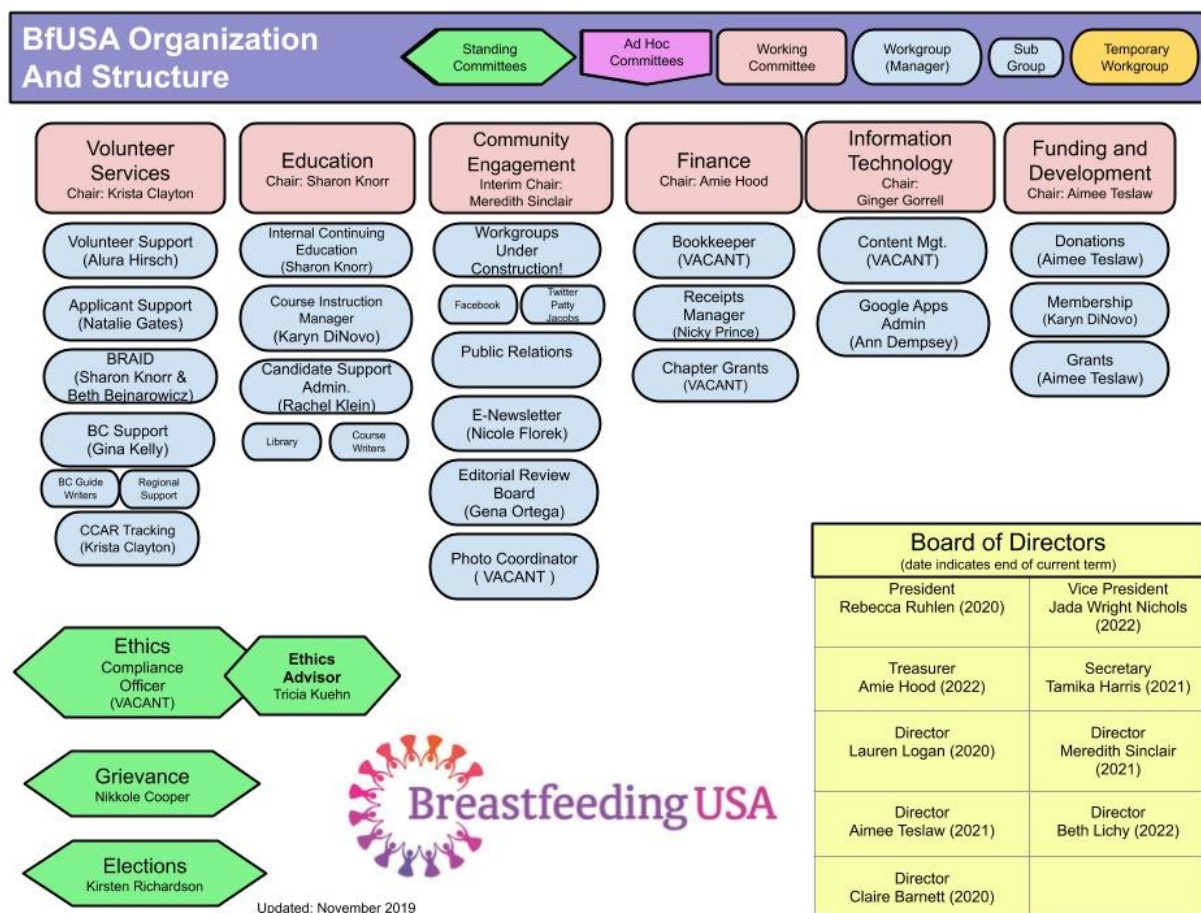
development and implementation of a grant writing strategy. If you have skills and experience in this arena, come join us in Funding and Development.

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**
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Community Engagement	communications@	Meredith Sinclair	Beth Lichy
Education	education@	Sharon Knorr	Claire Barnett
Elections	elections@	Kirsten Richardson	Tamika Harris (S)
Ethics	ethics@	Tricia Kuehn	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@	Krista Clayton	Jada Wright Nichols (VP)

*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

Beth Lichy

Claire Barnett