



Inside Breastfeeding USA

September 2020

Greetings from the Board of Directors

I want to start by saying that I hope all of our volunteers and families out west are safe from the devastating fires of the last few weeks and that those impacted by the recent hurricanes are also back home and safe. What a year this has been, and it feels strange to talk about finances while we all grapple with larger global concerns. That said, it's my job as Treasurer to keep you abreast of all that is happening under the financial umbrella. Our 2019-2020 fiscal year ended in June. We drafted the budget for this year in May and June, and our year-end reporting just wrapped up a couple of weeks ago, so now seems like a good time for a few updates.

Due largely to the pandemic and economic crisis, we ended the last fiscal year well below our budgeted spending. We also saw a decline in membership, but it seems to have leveled off. As a result, we ended fiscal year 2019-2020 about \$7,000 below budgeted net revenue. We are on solid financial footing, with one year's expenses held in a CD and a significant cushion beyond that. We anticipate that overall giving may be considerably lower in the 20-21 fiscal year, and we are planning for significantly lower income as a result. Because we are on solid footing and know that the needs in our communities are great right now, we are anticipating more spending than income in the coming year. It is important that we are wise with how we utilize organizational funds, particularly this year. This should be a temporary circumstance, and we are examining other avenues of support, such as grants, to potentially offset needed expenses. If you have experience in grant writing, please reach out to finance@breastfeedingusa.org, as your expertise is welcome!

Planned spending in 20-21 includes hiring an equity consultant to help address systemic racism and other discrimination within our organization, continued maintenance of and updates to our website, continuing education investments, a full course evaluation to confirm our BC training is up-to-date and meeting the needs of adult learners, and Chapter grants, along with general expenses like insurance and a bookkeeper. These are all much needed pieces for keeping our organization moving forward.

Additionally, the Board of Directors recently voted to make a one-time investment in organizations serving Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities. Breastfeeding USA is donating \$5,000 to 4 different organizations (\$1,250 each), a number chosen because it represents the usual budget for a board retreat, which was canceled in 2020. So far, we have made a donation to [BSTARS](#), [Fayetteville Breastfeeding Center](#), and [YOLO](#) on behalf of [Feed the Babes](#). They are doing the vital work in communities where Breastfeeding USA does not have a presence. We will share the final donation once a nonprofit is chosen.

Thank you for your continued support of breastfeeding families. Please don't hesitate to reach out with questions or concerns about our finances to Finance@breastfeedingusa.org.

Warmly,

Amie Rakosky Hood
Treasurer
Breastfeeding USA

CONGRATULATIONS!

Welcome to our newest BCs who were accredited in August:

Emily Zuck (ND)

Yuliia Gabrysch (TX)

Tawnie Maytas (OH)

Amy Schuiling (IL)

Carmen Valverde (KS)

COVID UPDATE

We've had a few folks asking when in-person meetings might resume, and we wanted to share an update. Many of us are missing our in-person connections right now and can't wait to resume meetings in our communities. In examining this question, we considered the best interest of our communities, turned to the CDC, and requested guidance from our insurance company.

As of this writing, 185,000 Americans have died from COVID-19, case rates are still high across most of the nation, and there is not yet a widely available vaccine or treatment. In the interest of

public health and protecting the families we serve, it is wise to continue offering our services in a remote fashion to protect against the spread of coronavirus.

Our insurance contact advised that we would be open to liability if someone were to get sick at one of our meetings and suggested we follow CDC guidance for reopening. The CDC still advises that the lowest risk activities should be prioritized:

“Lowest risk: Meetings and other activities are conducted virtually. Only essential activities (i.e., provision of essential services) occur in person.”

The CDC also lays out guidelines for sanitation, ventilation, and personal behavior like masks that we do not have the resources to manage.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/community-based.html>

Breastfeeding support is an essential service, but if a breastfeeding dyad needs hands-on support, odds are they need help that's out of scope for a Breastfeeding Counselor. As a volunteer peer-support organization, we should continue to prioritize community health and minimize the spread of COVID-19 while providing online help and referring to IBCLCs with appropriate PPE as necessary.

Meetings under the Breastfeeding USA banner should remain remote for the foreseeable future.

How to Provide Support

We are fortunate to have a motivated and engaged group of volunteers helping us to employ many different platforms to provide distance-only breastfeeding support.

Breastfeeding USA has always supported BCs in providing remote support via phone, email, and Facebook. Facebook engagement is up, both on the national page and in several closed Facebook groups. We are currently having the greatest impact with outreach on Facebook, as that is where the largest number of parents come for questions and support. **If you are interested in helping with outreach, engagement, or support, please email communityengagement@breastfeedingusa.org.**

We also have folks managing Instagram and sharing personal stories there. **If you have a personal story to share, please contact communityengagement@breastfeedingusa.org.**

Patty Jacobs is managing our Twitter account, which was recently recognized as a source of current scientific information about COVID-19 and breastfeeding.

You can still hold meetings via Zoom, WebEx, Google Meet, or other video conferencing platforms. For information about the Breastfeeding USA paid Zoom account, Google Meet, and guidelines for digital meetings, please read this document:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1E56YH_YGRh9Y9FZSote0o3rtRi3Z1ROcO312ihOWRBI/edit

You can still have one-on-one conversations. Previous methods of communication such as phone, text, e-mail, etc. continue to be appropriate. You can also use Zoom, Google Meet, etc., as noted above.

Your other birth- and breastfeeding-related work is different from Breastfeeding USA work and is not affected by Breastfeeding USA's suspension of in-person meetings. Some BCs also act as IBCLCs, doulas, midwives, physicians, nurses, therapists etc., and it's important to clarify that any in-person activities you engage in under these auspices are not Breastfeeding USA activities. We often talk about this as "wearing separate hats."

The Board will discuss this guideline regularly and keep abreast of the changing circumstances.

Thank you for your continued support of breastfeeding families. We are so thankful for all of our volunteers and wish you and your families safety and good health.

CELEBRATE Hispanic Heritage Month

Each year Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15. Did you know that we have a national FB group for Spanish-speaking families? Please spread the word. You can join the group, Lactancia Materna Breastfeeding USA at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1879936978907065>

From USBC: "Almost a quarter of all births in the US are to Latinx parents. While 80% of Latinx in the United States initiate breastfeeding indicating an intent to breastfeed, unfortunately, only 16% can meet the national guidelines of six months exclusive breastfeeding (recommended by APP and WHO) suggesting that systematic barriers exist and contribute to breastfeeding rates that fall below the national average and short of the Healthy People 2020 goals."

Additional resources for Latinx families can be found here:

<http://www.usbreastfeeding.org/page/hispanic>

CASE STUDY

You get a call from the mother of a 3 month old baby. She tells you that she is frequently engorged and uncomfortably full. This has led to several plugged ducts and one bout of mastitis. Baby is falling off her growth curve. Mom reports she gets several ounces in her Haakaa at each feed. She asks you what she can do. What suggestions would you make to her?

Send your suggestions to VolunteerSupport@BreastfeedingUSA.org and we will share them in next month's issue.

Learn with us! Submit an interesting case for next month's edition.

Committee Updates

Elections

We are pleased to inform you that the results of the 2020 Election have been finalized! We used a secure, official method of tracking votes and want to thank each and every volunteer who voted. I am excited to welcome **Kim Cierpik-Gold**, **Stefanie Anderson** and **Sharon Knorr** to the Breastfeeding USA Board of Directors! I would especially like to thank all of the candidates for running for the open board positions.

Thank you for participating in this year's election. I encourage you all to submit feedback regarding the election process to elections@breastfeedingusa.org.

Warmly,
Kirsten, Elise and Keyana
for Elections

Community Engagement

Breastfeeding USA's Redbubble Shop!

- Looking for some fabulous Breastfeeding USA swag? Shop our new Breastfeeding USA shop on RedBubble: <https://www.redbubble.com/people/breastfeedusa/shop>
- Profits from the shop go to support our work.

LAST CALL: Community Engagement is seeking a manager for a BreastfeedingUSA Warm Line

Warm Line Manager Position Description: The Warm Line Manager will be responsible for accepting incoming messages and redirecting them to BCs, tracking messages using a platform such as Google forms and/or Excel, and reporting to Community Engagement. The Manager can answer questions, but it is expected that all volunteers seeking to support the warm line will have equal opportunity to respond to inquiries.

Ideally, all incoming responses will be answered within 24 hours. Because of this, the voice message box must be checked at least once per day. We understand that this is a volunteer position, and we will make every effort to provide enough support to meet this goal. As Manager, being able to communicate effectively with the team on availability and schedules will be key to the success of this launch (targeted for late-September).

The process is still in development, and the Manager will be included in this development and testing efforts. All BCs participating in the Warm Line will be responsible for submitting their time answering the warm line messages in their personal monthly CCARs. Time managing the warm line should be reported as national volunteer time. The tracking information gathered by the Warm Line Manager messages will help fine-tune the program to make it more efficient and a more useful tool to families seeking BFUSA support. Contact kim.cierpik.gold@BreastfeedingUSA.org if you'd like to apply.

Finance

Financial reports are available upon request at finance@breastfeedingusa.org

Funding and Development/Membership

If you are interested in volunteering with Funding and Development (fundraising, grant writing, and more) please contact Aimee Teslaw at funding@breastfeedingusa.org.

Volunteer Support

We are seeking new volunteers in several areas, including Education, Community Engagement, Breastfeeding Counselor Support and Volunteer Support. Would you like to find a position that fits your interests and schedule? Contact VolunteerSupport@BreastfeedingUSA.org and we will help you!

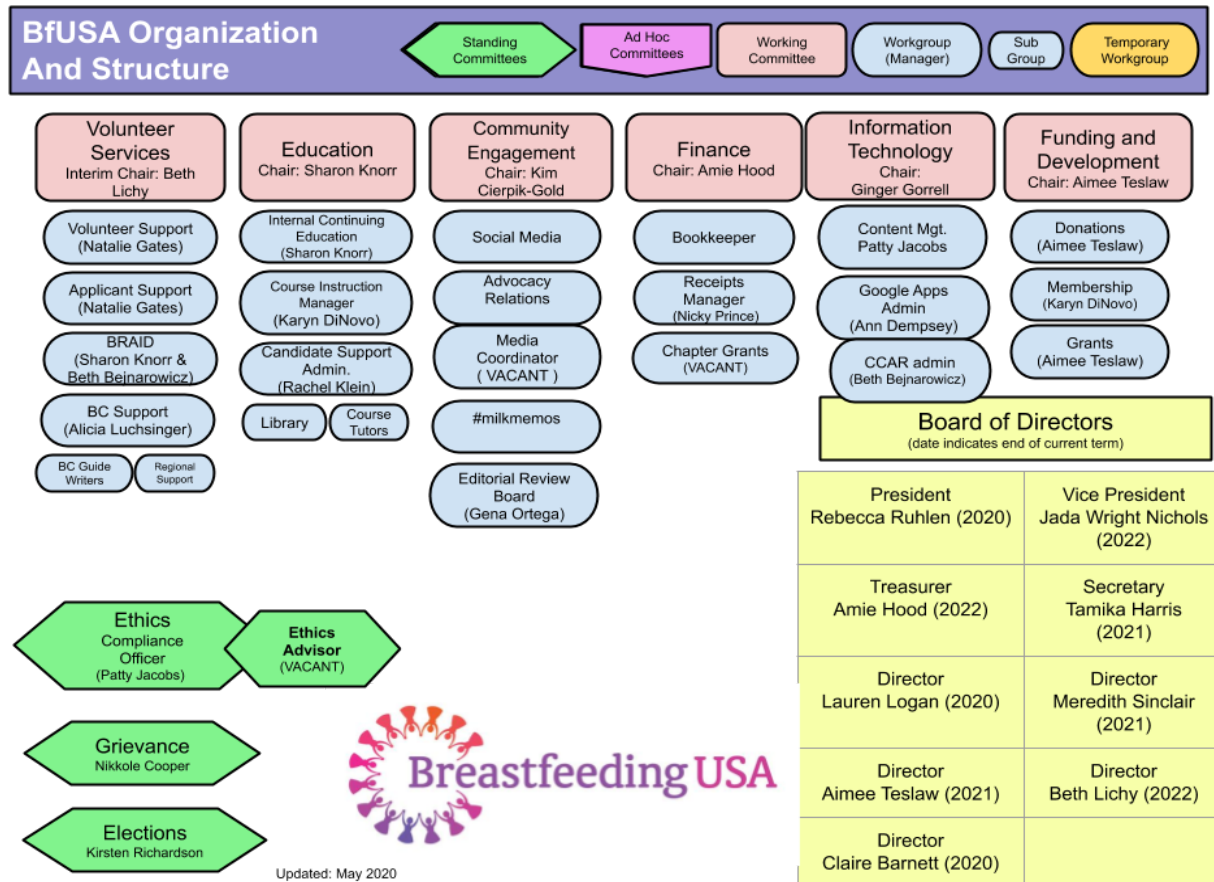
Focus on Our BCs

Melissa Becce, CT:

I have been a volunteer with Breastfeeding USA since becoming certified in 2017. I attended my first local BfUSA meeting the night before I went into labor with my first son in 2013, and have been involved since. At the local level, I have led and co-led support groups, led a Facebook auction, coordinated our annual Milk Picnic, administered our large and active Facebook group, volunteered for fundraising and community events, and managed our local chapter page. I am lucky to be one of many CT BCs past and present who have all worked together to support breastfeeding in our state. At the national level, I am part of the Applications team and help interview potential Breastfeeding USA candidates. Professionally, I am a program evaluator for education, youth policy, and health programs, which involves grant writing, surveys, interviews, observations, and data analysis and reporting. My spouse is a U.S. Postal Carrier, and our two boys, ages 7 and 3, will be distance learning for the coming year.

We'd like to focus on YOU! Please send us a few liners about yourself and your work with Breastfeeding USA for the next issue! Mail submissions to VolunteerSupport@BreastfeedingUSA.org.

Organization Contacts



Committee	Email	Current Chair*	Board Liaison**
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@		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.

Breastfeeding USA Board of Directors:

Rebecca Ruhlen, President

Jada Wright Nichols, Vice-President

Tamika Harris, Secretary

Amie Rakosky Hood, Treasurer

Aimee Teslaw

Meredith Sinclair

Lauren Logan

Beth Lichy

Claire Barnett