

Message from the Board of Directors

May 9, 2012

Dear Volunteers,

The following memo is from the Board of Directors. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to address the board on the Volunteer Yahoo group, or write to us directly at BOD@BreastfeedingUSA.org.

Funding and Development:

Our spring donation campaign got off to a good start with immediate response from founding members. Through the generosity of members and donors, the organization has been able to waive education fees for Applicants with financial need and provide a textbook for every Candidate who requested one. We extend sincere appreciation to **Gail Gesley** for taking the lead with the entire campaign from start to finish, and to the Finance Committee for their review and assistance. We hope you consider making a donation to Breastfeeding USA during our spring campaign. Thank you to our generous members who have already made their donation.

Grievance Committee:

The board is pleased to announce the formation of a standing Grievance Committee which includes volunteers from around the United States. From the Bylaws:

Article 2. Membership.

Section 7. Grievances

The Board shall at all times maintain a standing Grievance Committee. Any person whose voting membership has been terminated by the Board, or has had membership privileges revoked by the organization, can request that the Grievance Committee convene in order to initiate a review of the actions taken, according to the provisions outlined in the Policy Manual. The services of the committee must be requested within 60 days of the action taken. Exceptions may be made upon appeal to the Grievance Committee.

The committee includes **Michelle Hottya** of AZ, **Kathryn Kos** of NY, **Shannon Pawson** of MI, **Karen Prior** of OK, and **Ruth Tincoff** of PA; all are Breastfeeding Counselors, and some serve on other working committees as well. Please join us in thanking them for serving.

April Board Meeting:

The board met via a conference call on the evening of April 4. Several voting members listened in as guests. One of the presentations was on the accomplishments of the new Operating Committee, and the progress of the organization's strategic action items. We are looking forward to actually getting to meet one another during the June 2nd board meeting in Silver Spring MD. We will also provide a social opportunity for members and friends on Friday, June 1. Please look for further details in an invitation by May 11.

Organization Security and Protection:

Over the last few months, the organization, through the Operating Committee, has been working on securing and protecting all of the working committee Yahoo Groups. A great deal of organizational history as well as knowledge, policies and committee procedures are on these sites. An organizational email address was created, and that email address will be the owner of all our Yahoo Groups. Moderator's privileges have been set, so that they cannot delete the groups or change other moderator settings, which ensures against the accidental or deliberate deletion of these groups or the removal of a Yahoo Group in the event the owner loses their Yahoo account. We are also working on determining how to best secure our Facebook and Twitter pages as well, by transferring to an organization Facebook persona.

Pro Bono Legal Assistance:

The State of New York [Charity Corp](#), awarded Breastfeeding USA a grant of access to the firm of Hiscock & Barclay, LLP. The firm's assistance is for matters of corporate law, governance and non-profit status issues, and to help the Board of Directors meet its fiduciary responsibilities to comply with state and federal laws. We were one of only 50 charities chosen to participate in this pilot pro bono program. The organization applied for the program in December 2011, and received the grant in mid March.

The Elephant in the Room:

The Breastfeeding USA BOD has made every effort to operate the organization in a transparent manner and to provide numerous opportunities for voting members to participate in our operations. It was disheartening to see several volunteers and a member bring accusations of wrongdoing by the BOD to a forum intended for general discussion amongst the membership, versus our list for internal volunteers. Those accusations could damage the organization by raising concerns among the general membership. Had these individuals brought their concerns to the volunteer Yahoo Group, their voices could have been heard and the board

and other volunteers could have responded appropriately with an open discussion. This unfortunate experience has made us more determined to further instill and encourage a culture of openness amongst all volunteers.

Although there were only a few volunteer resignations, several of these individuals were serving on both the Social Networking and Publications-Web Articles committees. The board is considering how to best meet the organizational needs in these two mission-related areas while acknowledging that restructuring may be necessary. If you have an interest in either of these important areas, please contact volunteering@Breastfeedingusa.org. We welcome input and feedback as we continue to expand the breastfeeding information on our website and explore new ways to engage the public using social media.

Warm regards,

Patty Jacobs, President
Norma Ritter, Vice President
Sharon Knorr, Secretary
Carol Kelley, Treasurer
Beth Lichy, Director
Anne Hutton, Director
Nancy Mohrbacher, Director