

Speaker Packet: Bios and Pictures



 ICEA CONFERENCE
CIRCLE OF CARE



JACQUELINE ABBOTT, DrPH, RDN, LD, ICCE, ICBD, IAT

Jacqueline Abbott has had the privilege of walking alongside the loveliest patients, families, and medical providers for more than 35 years. Her work centers on implementation of health promotion programs in a variety of settings including maternal child health, diabetes, disordered eating—including the early detection and prevention of eating disorders—and more. In addition to her current work at Northwest Primary Care (Oregon), she has helped to develop several intensive treatment centers for eating disorders in her community and has spoken at many local and national conferences. She has served as a professor at Walla Walla School of Nursing and Lewis and Clark College, where she was also the coordinator of the IAEDP-based graduate program. She holds many certifications including being a licensed nutritionist, eating disorder specialist, childbirth educator, childbirth educator trainer and doula. Outside of work, Jacqueline enjoys long walks, cross country skiing, ice skating and good food with good friends. She enjoys all music (especially when her son plays) and reading good books recommended by family, friends and patients.



KYRA ADAMS, MSW, PMH-C, ICCE, ICBD

Kyra earned her Bachelor and Master's degrees in Social Work from Florida State University. Since graduating, she has become an Adjunct Professor and a mentor. Along with her studies, she has completed certifications in Leadership in Executive and Administrative Development, Lactation Counseling (ALPP), Perinatal Mental Health (PSI), Childbirth Education and Birth Doula (ICEA). Kyra has completed specialized trainings in perinatal depression. Throughout her career she has been a case manager, provided one-to-one breastfeeding education and support, taught group childbirth and newborn care classes, led peer support groups, provided support to moms experiencing grief or postpartum depression. In 2021, Kyra developing a program to provide no-cost services to mothers through her nonprofit Maternal and Perinatal Services, Inc. She hopes these services help to bridge the gaps she has seen over the years. Additionally, Kyra has been a trainer for the Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions for seven years. She was the keynote speaker on topics of Toxic Stress and Stress Management for All (2024) and also had the opportunity to speak at Healthy Families Florida Leadership Conference 2022 on "Grief and Loss in Home Visiting" and "Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders: A Training for Home Visitors."



CONNIE BACH-JECKELL, RN, IAT, ICCE, ICBD

Connie is a certified nurse, childbirth educator, doula and trainer. For over 30 years she has taught across the United States as well as internationally, primarily working in Guatemala and Romania. After nursing school, she worked for 15 years at the regional teaching hospital as a labor and delivery nurse and as Coordinator of Childbirth Education and the Joyful Beginnings Doula Program. Joyful Beginnings was the first hospital-based doula program in the state of Tennessee, serving families long before doulas became widely recognized. Her experience has enabled her to walk both sides of the fence - medical and non-medical, giving her an insight to better prepare doulas and childbirth educators. She has served on the ICEA board and now coordinates the ICEA trainers. In 2016, she received the Doris Haire Lifetime Achievement Award.



DENISE BOLDS, CD(DONA), CLC, CBE, MSW & Doctoral Researcher

Denise Bolds is a certified lactation counselor, doula and childbirth educator as well as the founder of Black Women Do VBAC, a leading organization dedicated to providing advanced doula training, focusing on surgical, induction, and VBAC doula training. In addition, she provides comprehensive doula support in pregnancy and childbirth, including lactation counseling and maternal health advocacy, serving NYC and surrounding areas. She is a certified Evidence Based Birth instructor and has served as Regional Director and President-Elect for DONA. She has a robust public speaking background having participated in notable panels at SXSW and the Black Health Summit. She is currently pursuing her doctorate in Executive Leadership focusing on Social Justice. She is a passionate advocate for addressing maternal health disparities and promoting birth justice, leveraging academic pursuits to deepen the impact and reach of advocacy efforts.



MARILYN BROOKS, MSN, RN, CBC

Marilyn Brooks is a compassionate leader who works to educate, advocate, and provide mentorship to others in her profession. She has a healthcare background in Women's and Children's and that has allowed her to bridge the gap between the community and healthcare settings. She is currently a Nurse Manager at Baylor Scott and White medical center and part of the Nurse Family Partnership Program. She was formerly a nurse home visitor for the program as well. She got her nursing bachelor's and master's degrees at the University of Texas at Arlington.



BONITA BROUGHTON, IBCLC, ICCE, ICB, IAT, LEC

Bonita is an experienced ICCE, ICB, IAT for ICBs and ICCEs, and certified lactation specialist. Bonita currently works at Eisenhower Health in Rancho Mirage, CA. Based on her experience working with postpartum families, Bonita decided to return to school to obtain her master's degree in psychology where she focused her course work on perinatal mental health. To support her work in mental health, she is a member of the American Psychological Association, Postpartum Support International, and is a trainer for Group Peer Support. She has a passion for supporting families and seeks out opportunities to build her knowledge and skills. The only thing she enjoys more than learning is sharing what she has learned with other birth professionals. Bonita has presented over sixty professional presentations ranging from local trainings to international presentations, with audiences ranging from community members to congressional committees.



TONJA CARPENTER, IBCLC, RLC, PCD(DONA), CIMI

Tonja is an International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant, Registered Lactation Consultant, Postpartum Certified Doula and a Certified Infant Massage Instructor. She has completed the Master IBCLC Class, has completed training in Orofacial Myofunctional Therapy with a focus on breastfeeding infants, and a course in infant massage with a focus on myofascial release. Tonja is trained to assess oral lingual function in the breastfeeding infant using the Hazelbaker and Martinelli assessments, the Tethered Oral Tissues Screening assessment, and the Murphy Sweep. She has been serving families and making moms happy in Waco, TX as a postpartum doula since 2015 and in lactation care since 2017. Tonja owns Postpartum Doula and Lactation Services of Waco which partners with the Waco Birth Center to provide skilled lactation care and support for patients using Superior Medicaid as well as several other major health insurance companies, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas, United, Tricare, and Cigna to name a few. Tonja has a team of doulas who work with her through, Community Doulas of Waco. She is a Baylor graduate and has been married for over 28 years to Vincent Carpenter, Sr. who has been serving in pastoral ministry for over 30 years. Tonja's passion is supporting the whole family, surrounding them with care, and making moms happy!



JANICE CLARKE, CLC, Certified Facilitator

Janice enjoys making people laugh and having a good time. She can find common ground with anyone. When it comes to breastfeeding, her beliefs are strongly tied to what nature intended for humans. But she wasn't always a lactation expert. After graduating from Stony Brook University with a bachelor's in health science, she spent nine years in the environmental health and safety field providing laboratory safety for New York City hospitals and institutions of higher ed. However, her true purpose in this world is that of mother, Black breastfeeding activist, and maternal health advocate. In 2020, Janice founded JC Lactation Counseling, a Bronx based practice offering breastfeeding education and lactation support. She is a certified facilitator with the Harlem/Bronx chapter of Chocolate Milk Café and a volunteer with Public Health Solutions' NYC Breastfeeding Warmline. She is training to become an IBCLC. She is an avid reader but nowadays, audiobooks are her jam. She loves historical romantic fiction, humor, and fantasy. Her experience as a Black breastfeeding mother in New York City and her passion for learning has made her an expert in this field of study. Previous speaking engagements include presenting the Unique Challenges of Black Breastfeeding to the New York Lactation Consultant Association, the Massachusetts Breastfeeding Coalition, the Tri-State Breastfeeding Association, and delivering workshops at events hosted by the Office of the New York City Public Advocate.



EMILIE CUNNINGHAM, PhD, MPH

Emilie Cunningham is an Associate Clinical Professor of Medical Humanities at Baylor University. She is the former Director of Programs for Women and Children at Waco Family Medicine. In that role, Dr. Cunningham worked to eliminate barriers for accessing care, as well as improve maternal and child health outcomes. Prior to joining Waco Family Medicine, Dr. Cunningham served as the Family Life Coordinator for Ascension Providence Hospital in Waco. She is also a Certified Childbirth Educator, Certified Lactation Counselor and Certified Doula. Her primary interests are the disruption of health inequities and the humanization of the birth experience. She lives in Waco with her husband, Wes, and their three teenage sons.



PATRICIA FISH, RN, IBCLC, ICCE

Patricia Fish is a registered nurse, an IBCLC, an ICEA certified childbirth educator, a wife and a mother of four grown sons. She has been teaching childbirth education classes for 30 years and has worked in the roles of birth doula, pediatric nurse, post-partum nurse and is currently employed by a major health care system as a lactation consultant in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She has served on the board of directors for the Mid Atlantic Mothers' Milk Bank and is currently serving in the role of treasurer on the ICEA board of directors. She loves hearing birth stories and has had a heart for new and expectant families for as long as she can remember. She has extensive speaking experience including educational sessions on breast pump basics for newly hired nurses who help educate patients on how to use them. She presented seminars on breastfeeding and breast pumps at a Babies and Bumps event in Cranberry, PA. She has been a guest speaker at a WIC educational event for staff members and has helped create educational videos for St. Clair Health which can be viewed on their website as well as on YouTube.



RIXA FREEZE, PhD

Dr. Rixa Freeze has a PhD in American Studies from the University of Iowa. Her doctoral studies focused on the history of healthcare and medicine with specialization in pregnancy, childbirth, and maternity care. Her dissertation examined why women in North America choose unassisted home births. Before founding Breech Without Borders, she worked as a visiting assistant professor for nine years at Wabash College. Her current research interests include human rights in childbirth, autonomy and informed consent, and vaginal breech birth.

Dr. Freeze is the founder and president of Breech Without Borders, a 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to breech training, education, and advocacy. She is the mother of four children and blogs at Stand and Deliver (rixarixa.blogspot.com).



PATRICIA SORIANO GUZMAN, BSBA, IBCLC, ICCE, PMH-C, PRaM

Patrícia Soriano Guzmán is an Allied Healthcare Professional specializing in perinatal support services. Since 2011, she has pursued advanced education in lactation, perinatal mental health, prepared childbirth and infant development. As of 2017, Patrícia oversees outpatient clinical lactation, prenatal education, postpartum social group support and perinatal-related events as an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® at a large multisite healthcare corporation. Patrícia has also been featured as a presenter and guest speaker for a variety of healthcare events. Most recently, she has created and delivered continuing education for professional development on behalf of leading organizations. This includes the role of sole-presenter for the 20-Hour Lactation Continuing Education Webinar sponsored by the NYS Department of Health Creating Breastfeeding-Friendly Communities initiative. Her accomplishments have been recognized by local and international organizations. She draws from extensive skills honed during her previous career as an Advertising Account Director in New York City. Patrícia is committed to advancing equitable perinatal care and empowering families as they grow.



JENN HALLIGAN, MA, ICCE, ICBBD, IAT-ICCE, IAT-ICBD

Jenn is currently employed at MercyOne Medical Center in Des Moines where she is the Manager of Childbirth Education and Volunteer Birth Doula Services. She has 10+ years' experience where she has been a birth doula and childbirth educator for hundreds of families, has taught thousands of expecting parents, and has provided doula certification training for more than 250 women! She is the owner of Doula What You Love, LLC, Doula Services Agency. Jenn has a bachelor's degree in Family and Consumer Sciences Education, Health Education and Coaching from Iowa State, Master's Degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from the University of Iowa. Her personal and professional philosophy has always been to "love the life you live, live the life you love" and as a doula, she carries on this passion! She couldn't imagine being a childbirth educator without being a doula! She is passionate about helping families have THE best birthing experience possible by educating them on their choices and options. Jenn spends free time volunteering at church in the nursery and with the local Elks Lodge fundraising. She also volunteers on the Count the Kicks Medical Advisory Board. If she's not in a birth, you will most likely see her supporting her four children at football, baseball, basketball, school plays, musicals, band, choir, Cub Scouts, swimming lessons, and more!



CHERYL SEW HOY, M.Eng, BS

Cheryl Sew Hoy is an accomplished founder of multiple companies including the non-profit #MovingForward as well as a successful consumer software startup that was acquired by Walmart Labs in 2013. In 2014, she was head-hunted by the White House to become CEO of MaGIC, a \$30M-funded agency to spur the innovation ecosystem in Malaysia and Southeast Asia. In 2020, Cheryl founded Tiny Health to take charge of her family's microbiome health after giving birth to her two children, when she realized that early life microbiome imbalances are linked to many chronic conditions later in life. Cheryl has extensive expertise in building consumer brands and has raised a total of \$34M. She is an angel investor and advisor to many startups. Cheryl earned her master's degree in Engineering Management and Data Mining and her bachelor's degree in Operations Research & Industrial Engineering from Cornell University, NY, both on full scholarships. Cheryl has extensive speaking experience. Most recently she has participated in numerous speaking engagements as Tiny Health's CEO and co-founder speaking at conferences like Probiota Americas (2023 Probiota Pioneer) and Data Science Salon Austin (2024).



KATHLEEN KENDALL TACKETT, PhD, IBCLC

Dr. Kendall-Tackett is a health psychologist and International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant, and the CEO of Praeclarus Press, a small press specializing in women's health. Dr. Kendall-Tackett is Editor-in-Chief of the journal, *Psychological Trauma* and was Founding Editor-in-Chief of *Clinical Lactation*. She is Fellow of the American Psychological Association in Health and Trauma Psychology, Past President of the APA Division of Trauma Psychology, and is chair of APA's Publications and Communications Board. Dr. Kendall-Tackett specializes in women's-health research including breastfeeding, depression, trauma, and health psychology, and has won many awards for her work including the 2019 President's Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Field of Trauma Psychology from the American Psychological Association. Dr. Kendall-Tackett has authored more than 490 articles or chapters and is author or editor of 41 books. Her most recent books include *Breastfeeding Doesn't Need to Suck* (2022, American Psychological Association), *Women's Mental Health Across the Lifespan* (2017, Routledge US, with Lesia Ruglass), and *The Phantom of the Opera: A Social History of the World's Most Popular Musical* (2018, Praeclarus). Her 41st book, *Depression in New Mothers, 4th Edition* (Routledge, UK) is in press.



ELIZABETH "LIZ" KIRTS, MPH, ICCE, IBCLC, RLC

Elizabeth Kirts has worked in maternal child health since 1998. Most of her career has been in prenatal education and lactation. She began teaching childbirth education classes in 2000 and completed her ICEA childbirth certification in 2002. That same year, she was invited to apply for the position of manager for the perinatal education program at the University of Utah Hospital. With over 20 years in that position, she is currently the manager of the education team, the inpatient lactation team, oversees the Baby Friendly Designation, coordinates the volunteer doula program and is a liaison for the outpatient lactation team. Elizabeth has held leadership roles including past President of ICEA, the Outgoing Board Chair for the Mountain West Mothers' Milk Bank, advisory committee for lactation support in the prisons in Utah, previously served on the boards of PSI Utah Chapter, March of Dimes, Utah Advisory Board, Utah Breastfeeding Coalition, and the Utah State Perinatal Task Force.



MADELINE LEBLANC, MHA, RN, ICBD

Madeline LeBlanc is a certified nurse and birth doula. She is the Founder and President of Mary's Hands Network, who are on a mission to empower women, promote birth excellence, and bridge the health equity gap in her Baton Rouge, LA community. She helps to provide top-notch training programs to those seeking to become doulas and she manages a network of dedicated volunteer community doulas who offer essential support services to the women in her community free of charge. Madeline has an appetite for learning and teaching. She has two bachelor's degrees, a master's degree and is currently pursuing her doctorate, focused on doulas as members of the hospital-based birth care team. She has endless energy and enthusiasm for birth work, healthcare equity and for life. She is currently on the Board of Directors for ICEA and has professional affiliations with ICEA, DONA, AWHONN and many nursing societies.



LUCINDA LUNDY-ZEINELABDIN, MSN, APRN, FNP-C

Lucinda is a Family Nurse Practitioner and Lead Clinician Ambassador with Metro Health's Access to Care Program. She has a passion for community health and advocacy and is involved with multiple initiatives and committees. She previously served on the SA Forward Core Team, Health Equity Advisory Committees, and currently serves on the San Antonio Fetal Infant Morbidity Review core team, the African American Health Disparities Council, and is a Trauma Informed Mentor. Her background encompasses retail health, preventative and family medicine, and public health. As an RN at the VA Hospital, she worked with veterans and served as a member of the Evidence-based Practice Committee, leading a project on alarm reduction and fall prevention. She collaborated with other team members on reducing heart failure readmissions. She served as a Quality Management RN at the San Antonio State Hospital, taking part in root cause analyses, and a sepsis prevention project, and served on the falls, and pharmacotherapeutics committees. Lucinda holds a BSN from the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, an MSN from the George Washington University in Washington, DC, and a post-master's certificate in Nursing Education from UT Tyler. She aspires to pursue further education in public health and to one day attend law school. Lucinda aims to integrate her healthcare, public health, and legal education to shape and implement equitable healthcare policies. When not working, she loves spending time with her family, and creating things in her craft room.



STACEY MARSHALL, IBCLC, ICBD

Stacey Marshall has worked in the perinatal field for the past 20+ years. She grew up as a military kid and traveled all over the country before settling in the Pacific Northwest/Portland, Oregon. Stacey works as a prenatal educator, a birth doula, a postpartum doula, and an IBCLC. She helped operationalize a full-scale, hospital-based doula program in one of the largest healthcare systems in Oregon. She also helped initiate a hospital-based Pathway 3 IBCLC clinical training program for community-based lactation students. She is passionate about supporting connections from a community lens to a hospital experience for all birthing families for more positive outcomes. In her spare time, she likes to make up Spotify playlists (all genres!) and spend time with her family, her grown children, and her pup Boru.



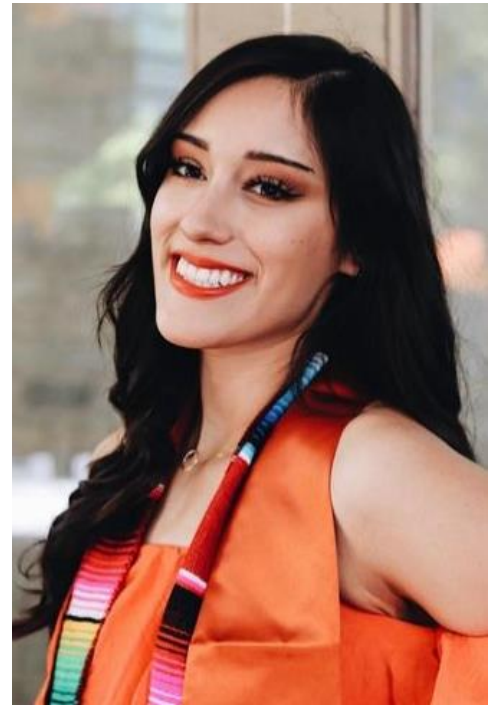
BRITTANY SHARPE MCCOLLUM, CCE(BWI), CPLD, CLC

Brittany Sharpe McCollum is a Perinatal Pelvic Biomechanics Educator and the owner of Blossoming Bellies Wholistic Birth Services based out of the greater Philadelphia PA area, providing childbirth education classes, birth doula services, and dynamic labor support and pelvic biomechanics training workshops for perinatal professionals and expectant parents. She has offered birth-related support for expectant parents since 2007 with an approach focusing on developing advocacy skills for effective communication, utilizing movement in all labors to support progress, and understanding the importance of an individualized person-centered approach to childbirth. Brittany also creates and facilitates continuing education workshops for clinical and non-clinical labor support providers on evidence-based fetal positioning, pelvic biomechanics, and labor physiology and is honored to be a sought after speaker at trainings and conferences, including the International Chiropractic Pediatric Association Summit in 2018, Evidence Based Birth Conference in 2019, NNEPQIN Winter 2022, the ACNM Midwifery Day conference, the New Jersey Midwifery Education Project, Somos Raices: Maternal and Child Well-Being Conference, and more. She is also a contributing author to the book “Baby Got VBAC: An Inspiring Collection of Wisdom for Better Births After Cesarean,” the creator of the anatomy and reproductive structure curriculum of the ICEA childbirth educator training, and the facilitator of pelvic biomechanics and labor positioning training of the labor and delivery staff orientation for Vermont Medical Center in Burlington VT. Brittany lives in South Jersey with her partner and their four children.



HILLARY MENKE, BS Early Childhood Ed, ICCE

Hillary Menke, ICCE, is an instructor with Women's Clinic of Northern Colorado. One of Hillary's greatest passions lies in the exquisite care of young children. She has worked in classrooms, serving infants to kindergarteners, for nearly a decade. She earned her BS in Early Childhood from the University of Northern Colorado and began her Waldorf Teacher Training to further hone her understanding of how to best support children in their learning—beyond just academics—moreover what it means to be deeply, joyfully human. It was with the birth of her own little one and coming to grips with the awe-filled, wild ride of motherhood that this passion extended to the care of new parents in their journey through pregnancy, birth, and postpartum. Hillary earned her Childbirth Educator Certification through ICEA and is honored to be serving expecting parents as they undergo this utterly transformative experience of welcoming a child into the world. Hillary strives to not only equip parents with evidence-based information, but to also give them the tools to apply that information in ways that align with their unique values, inner wisdom, and hopes for their blossoming families.



DIANA MORALES, BSN, RN

Diana Morales is a native San Antonian who obtained her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from UT Health San Antonio. She began her career as a Labor and Delivery RN amidst the height of COVID and transitioned into the field of public health with COSA. She has experience in a variety of nursing capacities within the City of San Antonio including outreach vaccinations, Immunizations, Rabies, COVID Provider Audits, STI Nursing, and in providing provider education as a Clinician Ambassador Nurse with the Access to Care Team. She has a passion for providing education and treatment as a service provider and building a strong bond of trust with the community she serves. Outside of her professional pursuits, Diana enjoys activities such as biking, cooking, staying active, and eating Indian food. She has a fluffy cat named Benito.



AMY NEVLAND, ICBBD, ICCE, CLC

Amy is a certified Lactation Counselor, Birth Doula and Childbirth Educator. An Austin native, Amy graduated from UT Austin, taught Literature, Writing and ESL until the birth of her three children. Since 2009, Amy has had the privilege of supporting new parents as an educator and doula for many different types of births for women of all ages in many different hospitals, homes and birthing centers. VBAC's, Inductions, Cesarean Births, Natural Births... Amy has seen it all and believes deeply that a woman's body was wonderfully created for the unique work of labor and delivery. When she's not acting as a tour guide through labor either through a childbirth class, or real time as a birth doula, Amy enjoys spending time camping and kayaking with her family, gardening, and eating chips and salsa in South Austin.



ELIZABETH O'DONNELL, Bereaved parent, BA Sociology & Psychology, M.ED Elem Ed, MPH Student

Elizabeth "Liz" O'Donnell is a steadfast, infant-loss advocate leading the charge in raising awareness and prevention of stillbirth and infant mortality. Her daughter, Aaliyah, was born still in 2020. Today, she runs a one-woman non-profit, Aaliyah in Action (AiA), keeping her daughter's spirit alive, supporting mothers and families across the country who experience the pain of losing a baby and advocating for legislation that could reduce the number of U.S. stillbirths. AiA supports with self-care packages and bereavement support books. Liz has partnered with 50+ hospitals around the country (and counting). More than 1,500 families have received AiA support packages in 40 states, Canada, Jamaica and the UK. Liz is also a Director of Awareness for PUSH for Empowered Pregnancy, a grassroots initiative that advocates for evidence-based, respectful, and equitable maternity care. Prior to her advocacy work, Liz was a dedicated D.C. public school elementary math and science teacher. A positive, energetic force who excels at community building, connection and empathy, Liz earned BAs in Sociology and Psychology and an M.Ed in Elementary Ed from The George Washington University. She lives in DC and is currently pursuing her Master's in Public Health.



JILLIAN SILVA, ICCE, ICBD, Certified Sleep Consultant

Jillian has been teaching prenatal classes for over 25 years. She truly loves what she does! Educating new parents about the process of birth and what to expect is her calling. During her first job as a childbirth educator at the YWCA educating pregnant teens, she discovered that she wanted to become a birth doula and support families during their birth journeys. She's always been fascinated by using non-invasive pain relief methods, such as breathing, massage, distraction and a wonderful little tool called a TENS unit that has become ever increasingly popular over the years. Jillian is originally from the UK where TENS units have been a staple in the maternity world since the 1970's. When she realized how a TENS unit could play an integral part in having a drug free pain management tool for labor, it became her passion to educate and promote the benefits of using a TENS for birth. She has been promoting and educating doulas and clients of the benefits of using a TENS for labor for many years and looks forward to sharing her knowledge.



TAYLOR SODERBORD, MD, PhD

Dr. Soderborg believes gut health is one of the most influential components of human health and the opportunity to reduce chronic illness lies within the microbiome. Dr. Soderborg is a licensed physician scientist and has a PhD in Integrative Physiology. She received her degrees from the University of Colorado Anschutz School of Medicine in the prestigious Medical Scientist Training Program. She then completed her internship in Pediatrics at Boston Children's Hospital/Harvard. Dr. Soderborg has published numerous high-impact papers, notably the highly cited article "The gut microbiota in infants of obese mothers increases inflammation and susceptibility to NAFLD" published in Nature Communications, 2018. In this work, she demonstrated a role for the infant microbiome in contributing to the risk of developing liver disease and obesity. Prior to becoming a physician, she got a BA from Oberlin College and taught middle school science. Inspired by her work as a middle school teacher, her knowledge of the microbiome, and her physician experience, she transitioned from academia to being Medical Director at Tiny Health. Dr. Soderborg has extensive experience speaking on science to a wide range of audiences. She has presented to fellow professionals and to non-scientific audiences as won awards for her ability to present to lay audiences.



STEPHANIE SOSNOWSKI, BS, IBCLC, RLC, ICCE

Stephanie has been an advocate for healthy birth and breastfeeding since the cesarean birth of her daughter, and subsequent VBAC of her second daughter. As a result of her desire for a VBAC, she became very interested in learning more about why hospital birth practices were so at odds with natural birth. This led her to become a certified childbirth educator through ICEA. Stephanie is also a certified perinatal fitness Instructor and group fitness instructor. Zumba, anyone? In 1991, Stephanie became the Perinatal Health Educator for Maternal-Infant Services Network (MISN) a local non-profit dedicated to improving birth outcomes. In 2010, MISN was awarded a contract allowing her to coordinate a breastfeeding peer counselor program. The program has successfully increased breastfeeding initiation rates. Stephanie received her CLC certificate in 2007 and is now an IBCLC. She has facilitated both in-person and virtual breastfeeding support groups for new moms and their babies. She currently works as a lactation consultant and childbirth educator. Stephanie is a mother to two beautiful daughters, as well as grandmother to three perfect grandchildren. She serves on the Board of Directors for the New York Statewide Breastfeeding Coalition and the International Childbirth Education Association.



MELISSA STEINER, ICCE, LEC, BS and trauma trained through the Simkin Center

Melissa is Childbirth Education Specialist at EvergreenHealth in Kirkland, WA a large community hospital just outside of Seattle. Melissa also owns Inspired Beginnings: Birth. Redefined. a childbirth education company that emphasizes holistic approaches for community and hospital births in the greater Snohomish, WA area. She has a Bachelor of Science in Speech and Hearing Science from the University of Washington. Additionally, she delivers talks at Bastyr on informed consent in the birthing environment, is featured in videos on the eDoula app, talks at local high schools about careers in the birthing world, and is trauma-informed through the Simkin Center in Seattle. On a personal note, Melissa is a proud mom of a 20-year-old son in college and a 17-year-old daughter in high school. Together with her husband, they are outdoor enthusiasts who enjoy hiking, snowshoeing, backpacking, and spending time by the lake. Melissa has a keen interest in the arts and has recently picked up playing the ukulele.



MORGAN THURMOND, Certified Doula

Morgan Thurmond is an experienced birth and postpartum doula and director of San Antonio Birth Doulas, who has dedicated her life to walking alongside women as they become mothers. After working with multiple pregnancy care centers and seeing firsthand the need of women – especially women experiencing unplanned and sometimes unwanted pregnancies, Morgan began her journey to take an active role in supporting families by offering doula services. It was quickly evident that she needed a professional and compassionate community to best serve families. She found this community in San Antonio Birth Doulas, a non-profit that provides all services at no cost to expecting parents and parent with children under the age of three. These services include birth and postpartum doula services, over 100 classes, lactation services, car seat installations, counseling, community connections, material assistance, job training, and more. Morgan has a bachelor's degree in Sociology with a concentration in Social Work.



CANDICE TRIULZI, PhD, RNC-NIC

Dr. Triulzi has a passion for the clinical setting, high-fidelity simulation and perinatal nursing. She is an alumna of Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth Houston, where she earned her BSN, MSN in Nursing Administration and Leadership, and PhD in Nursing. She holds a BS in Communication from U of Miami. Dr. Triulzi's clinical specialty is in Neonatal ICU. She has served as RN in the Neonatal ICU, as a clinical manager of Children's Services and as the Magnet Program Manager at a Magnet facility. Dr. Triulzi holds a specialty certification in Neonatal Intensive Care from the National Certification Corporation. Dr. Triulzi leads the Reproductive Healthcare clinical course as well as the OB Capstone program at UTHealth Houston, where she prepares future perinatal nurses to join the workforce in caring for women and neonates after graduation. She serves as a simulation expert in the Reproductive Healthcare Simulation course. She has received numerous awards, including the Healthcare and Nursing Education Foundation (HNEF) Scholarship, the Joyce Standish Scholarship and selection as a PARTNERS BSN and MSN Scholar. Dr. Triulzi was inducted into the Sigma Theta Tau Honor Society, where she received the Sigma Theta Tau Zeta Pi Chapter's Master's Student Award. Dr. Triulzi has been honored by her students for outstanding teaching with nominations for the McGovern Outstanding Teaching Award. Dr. Triulzi's research focuses on NICU-based postpartum depression screening.



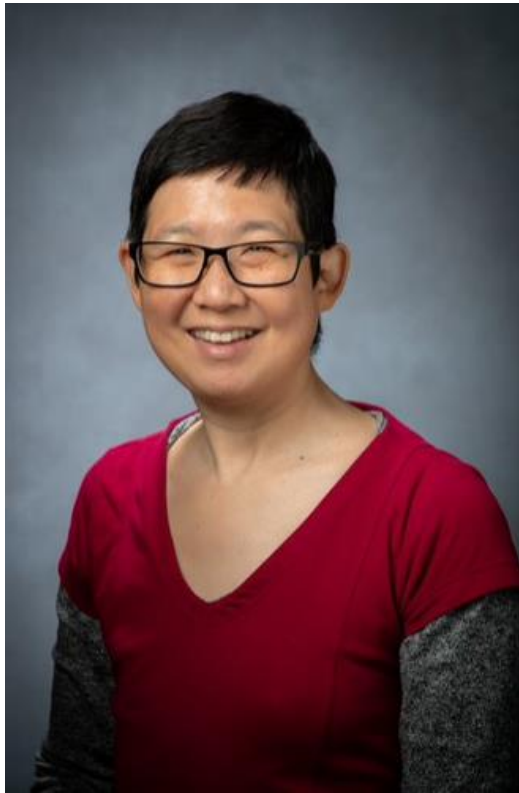
TARA VAN DYKE, ICBD, VBAC BD, BBH Ed.

Tara is a certified birth doula and Gottman Educator. She is the mother of four children who has attended over 400 births. She serves the families in her Illinois community in many ways including through the DuPage Doula Network which she founded. She loves educating herself to better help the families she serves. She has trained in bereavement, trauma informed care, childbirth education, rebozo, Spinning Babies, breastfeeding, and advanced coping skills. Listen to her and her husband on With U Podcast to learn about healthy relationships and why they are important for a fulfilled life. Tara served on the ICEA Board of Directors and speaks locally and internationally about relationships, birth, and parenting.



EMILY WANNENBURG, DN DM, CLC, HBCE, AdvCD(DONA), 4TFM

A Perinatal Fitness Professional and South African Trained Nurse and Midwife, Emily founded 4th Trimester Fitness® Method, a company devoted to the physical and educational preparation for labor, birth and postpartum. Combining her 30+ years of professional expertise to "Improve Birth through Movement and Education", she is a popular speaker known for her "hands-on-get-up-and-move" approach to sharing information and firmly believes that when you teach one, you reach many! Her expertise includes labor tools for birth, use of birth ball, postpartum fitness, pelvic floor recovery and core work. Since 2013, she has spoken at numerous birth conferences including ICEA, DONA, Lamaze and AWHONN.



JUNDA WOO, MD, MPH

Junda Woo is currently the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District medical director, but she didn't start her career in medicine. She gained her bachelor's degree in journalism from The University of Texas at Austin and then moved to New York to write for the Wall Street Journal. While in New York, Dr. Woo realized that she wanted to change her career and focus on public health. She enrolled in pre-med courses and applied for medical school, attending State University of New York and then completing her OBGYN residency at Baylor College of Medicine. She also has a Master's Degree in Public Health. Dr. Woo has been called a "tireless advocate for marginalized communities" and has worked on community collaborations around diabetes, HIV and COVID care. Dr. Woo has published many notable papers, given presentation at the state and national level and has served on countless committees that serve the community and her fight for positive public health outcomes.



DEBBIE YOUNG, MSL, ICCE, ICB, ICPD, IAT, LCCE, CLC

Debbie Young brings over 30 years of dedicated service to families in the "childbearing year." As a mother of five children and alongside her husband, she discovered her passion for supporting pregnant, birthing, and postpartum families. She has a bachelor's degree in Health Promotion: Women's Health and a Master of Science in Leadership. Throughout her career, Debbie has worked both in hospital and private settings, serving as a childbirth educator, doula, and lactation specialist. Her profound commitment to maternal and infant health led her to leadership roles, including Past President of DONA International and current President of ICEA. She speaks and writes on birth related subjects nationally and internationally. Continuing her mission to empower families, Debbie remains active as a birth and postpartum doula, as well as a doula trainer. She extends her reach through various platforms, including as the host, producer, and moderator of podcasts, webinars, and virtual summits for InJoy Health Education. Through her company, BabyMatters.org, Debbie amplifies her impact, ensuring that families receive the support, education, and resources they need during this transformative period.