



AABC
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF
BIRTH CENTERS

2025 Election

2025 CANDIDATES for BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DIRECTORS (choose 4)



CHERYL BRADSHAW
BSN, RN, IBCLC

Cheryl Bradshaw graduated from the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing in 1991 and worked in several pediatric and neonatal intensive care units before joining The Midwife Center in 2003. She became an International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) in 2009 and was named the center's Nurse Coordinator in 2012. Since 2020, she has served as Client Care Services Director, managing nurses, front office staff, and medical assistants. Cheryl frequently presents on breastfeeding and midwifery-led care at conferences, colleges, and community events.

Her passion for birth center care began in 2000 through her breast pump business. She strongly believes in the safety and superiority of birth center births for healthy birthing people and is proud to practice nursing in this setting. Cheryl became active with AABC in 2016, volunteering for the Birth Institute and joining the program committee. She has served on the AABC Board since 2022, co-chairs the program committee, and is a member of the standards committee. She is also a member of the new AABC Pennsylvania chapter.

Cheryl lives in Pittsburgh with her husband, three children, and many pets. She enjoys sewing, hiking, cooking, disco roller skating, and community volunteering. Having gained enough weight post-menopause to meet donation requirements, she's proud to now donate blood and encourages others to do the same.

"I would like to continue to serve on the AABC board to further my passion for birth center care. After attending my first conference in Washington D.C. and

hosting when Birth Institute came to Pittsburgh, I began volunteering. I have served, and now co-chair, the AABC Program Committee, and serve as a Vice President. I have served on other boards and committees for other volunteer organizations. I think my leadership, skills and 20-year birth center experience will serve the AABC organization well." Cheryl Bradshaw



CLAUDIA JENNINGS
BA

Claudia Jennings brings over a decade of diverse experience with birth centers, with a focus on birth center operations and sustainability. She spent seven years in direct administrative and operational roles at a freestanding birth center and midwifery practice, followed by four years as a consultant with Primary Maternity Care where she continues to serve clients. Claudia is a recognized expert in birth center operations management, billing and coding for midwifery, and doula services integration, and is known for her collaborative, team-based approach to solving complex problems.

Her work spans a range of stakeholders – from freestanding birth centers and hospitals to payers and state agencies – always with an eye toward community centered birth centers and the midwifery model of care. Claudia has led initiatives that include advising on birth center integration, analyzing value-based payment models in Medicaid and commercial markets for birth center services, and helping to enact legislative or procedural changes to improve birth center operating conditions and financial performance.

She has also restructured revenue cycle workflows for birth centers and enhanced clinical outcome reporting within electronic health records. Passionate about driving systemic change, Claudia currently

serves on, and has previously chaired, the AABC Industry Relations Committee and is also a member of the Government Affairs Committee. Her cross-sector experience and strategic mindset make her a powerful advocate for innovative, community-based maternity care.

"I am eager to serve on the AABC Board of Directors to bring my extensive experience with birth center operations to bear in advancing birth centers. With over 10 years of work across the birth center landscape – including with freestanding birth centers, FQHCs, health systems, insurance companies, state Medicaid agencies, legislative bodies, and philanthropic organizations – I understand the unique challenges and opportunities from diverse stakeholder perspectives. I am passionate about strengthening the sustainability and impact of birth centers through strategic collaboration, innovative policy, and systems-level thinking. I believe my experience would provide a unique perspective on the Board and help AABC continue to lead the movement for accessible, equitable, high-quality birth care that is sustainable and rewarding for the dedicated people working in our industry." Claudia Jennings



ASHLEY JONES
MSM, LM, CPM

Ashley Jones graduated Summa Cum Laude with her Bachelor's degree from Midwives' College of Utah in 2017, and earned her

Master's degree, also from Midwives' College of Utah in 2019, graduating Magna Cum Laude. Since then, she has been deeply committed to advancing birth center care through both clinical practice and advocacy.

In 2021, Ashley became the sole owner of True North Birth Center (Poulsbo, WA), where she has led significant growth, nearly doubling both our birth volume and staff, and building the foundation of a sustainable midwifery business model. Our team's expansion has enabled us to provide holistic, community-centered care to more families than ever before.

In 2024, Ashley proudly co-founded the Washington Association of Birth Centers, an official AABC chapter, and is now the acting President. Through this platform, she has championed state-level advocacy, where they have recently accomplished the elimination of duplicative birth center inspections for

existing birth centers that are CABC-accredited. Moving forward, she is working to improve reimbursement rates and secure sustainable financial support for birth centers across Washington.

At the federal level, Ashley has been honored to contribute to the development of the MIDWIVES for Service Members Act, a groundbreaking bill to expand access to midwifery care for military families. In March 2025, she traveled to Washington, DC, where she met with key legislative leaders to advocate for this and other critical midwifery initiatives.

"If elected to the AABC Board of Directors, I will continue to be a strong voice for federal advocacy focused on expanding birth center utilization nationwide. Birth centers play a critical role in improving maternal and neonatal outcomes while offering a cost-effective, personalized model of care. I am committed to working with policymakers to ensure birth centers are recognized and funded as essential components of the maternity care system. My recent involvement in the creation of the MIDWIVES for Service Members Act has deepened my understanding of the legislative process and strengthened my relationships with federal stakeholders. I will use this experience to further push for policy reforms that increase access, reimbursement, and integration of birth centers into the broader healthcare system. Through continued presence in Washington, DC and collaboration with AABC's legislative team, I will help shape a future where birth centers are accessible, respected, and equitably supported across the country." Ashley Jones



MARY SOMMERS
MPS, CPM, IBCLC

Mary Sommers is the Director of Birth Center Operations and Perinatal Education Programs for the Birth Center at PCC

(Berwyn, IL), a Federally Qualified Health Center located in Chicagoland, the first birth center in Illinois. She is also the Academic Affairs Director of the Midwest Maternal Child Institute, where she trains CPMs and doulas. She is a Certified Professional Midwife licensed in both Illinois and Wisconsin, and holds a Master's degree in Public Service from DePaul University. Mary has many years of experience and the

wisdom that comes from witnessing more than 2,000 deliveries over the past 42 years. She is a board member of the American Association of Birth Centers. She is a former board member of NACPM. She is a member of the Illinois Birth Justice Strategic Committee.

Early in her career, she co-founded Chicago Community Midwives, a not-for-profit homebirth service. Mary has since worked as a midwife, doula, and lactation consultant for various private practices in the Chicago area, and has co-directed several nurse-midwifery practices. Mary was a World Health Organization fellow, studying maternal health and breastfeeding programs in Netherlands and England. She has worked with midwives from Malawi and Grand Valley State to create a midwifery guidebook and APP, and was an advisory board member of CASA professional midwifery program in San Miguel de Allende, GTO, Mexico. Mary has worked for more than 40 years in community health as an administrator and director of maternal child health programs and has supervised more than numerous midwifery students and trained more than 100 doulas in her various administrative roles.

"I am running for office because I believe in the work of AABC. The promotion of birth centers is a high value and concern for me. Likewise, so is access to this model of care. I have spent my career working towards both birth options and access to these options for both birth centers, homebirths and access to midwifery education and training to staff these centers. Birth equity and birth centers are crucial for improving maternal and child health outcomes, particularly for underserved communities. Birth equity ensures everyone has access to quality prenatal, labor, and postpartum care, regardless of socioeconomic status, race, or ethnicity. I believe in these ideals and hope to continue to support both these efforts as a board member of AABC. I would be honored to continue to serve as a board member. I am hard-working and enjoy learning from my fellow members." Mary Sommers



SUZAN ULRICH

DrPH, CNM, FACNM

Suzan Ulrich has been a midwife since 1983 and an educator for over 40 years. She is the Director of Midwifery Education at The

George Washington University where she launched a new distance nurse-midwifery MSN program that enrolled its first class in fall of 2024. Suzan is dedicated to midwifery education. She was at Frontier Nursing University for 13 years as a faculty member teaching the birth center capstone course and as the Associate Dean for Midwifery and Women's Health. She served 9 years as a member of the Board of Review for Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (BOR/ACME) and is currently a senior site visitor. She was active in ACNM serving as Region One Representative to the ACNM Board of Directors and as a member and chair of the nominating committee. Currently, she is chair of the ACNM Division for the Advancement of Midwifery.

She was the Director of the North Shore Birth Center (Beverly, MA) from 1991 until 2000 presiding over an expansion of the facility and an increase in the number of births. Suzan also served in leadership positions in AABC, including as a board member from 1999-2001 and as vice-president and chair of the program committee from 2009-2011. She was a faculty member for the How to Start a Birth Center Workshop from 2001-2003. She was inducted into the Fellowship of the ACNM in 2008. Suzan is an Alumna of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Executive Nurse Fellows Cohort 2012

"I want to serve on the AABC board to grow birth centers as the place for the practice of midwifery. In order to grow birth centers, we need to educate more midwives. I want to serve as a connection between AABC and student midwives promoting the midwifery model of care which is consistently practiced in birth centers, and educate birth center midwives in best practices for precepting. Students from GW will be immersed in birth center care as a way to improve perinatal outcomes in their course work and attend the How to Start a Birth Center Workshop. Hopefully all will have out of hospital birth experiences. This exposure to the midwifery model of care is the way we can reclaim birth and grow more midwives who will join the birth center movement placing families at the center of care and honoring physiologic birth and the wisdom of midwives." Suzan Ulrich

ALTERNATE DIRECTOR (choose 1)



**MICHELE GABRIEL-
CALDWELL**
PhD, CD, CBE, PPD, CLE

Michelle Gabriel-Caldwell is a nationally recognized birth advocate, doula, and educator with over 20 years of experience supporting families through physiologic, culturally centered, and evidence-based maternity care. She is the Owner of Baby, Please Birth Services Agency LLC, a multistate doula agency, and currently serves as the Director of Doulas & Education at The Birth Center of New Jersey, where she leads clinical integration, training, and community engagement.

A DONA-certified doula, NBDA Instructor, and certified childbirth educator, Michelle has supported over 500 births and taught more than 2,500 families. Her approach blends community wisdom with research-based strategy – grounded in her academic background as a PhD-level chemical engineer.

Michelle also serves as the Chairperson for New Jersey's Perinatal Health Equity Initiative, spearheading statewide efforts to eliminate racial disparities in maternal care. In 2024, she was appointed by the Governor to the New Jersey Maternal Care Quality Collaborative (NJMCQC), where she helps inform public policy and quality improvement initiatives focused on maternal health outcomes.

With a passion for midwifery-led care and systemic change, Michelle is a fierce advocate for the free-standing birth center model. Her leadership bridges the clinical, community, and policy spaces, ensuring that every birthing person – regardless of race, income, or geography – has access to safe, respectful, and empowering care.

Michelle's work centers on one mission: to restore dignity and autonomy to the birth experience while building a maternal health system that works for all.

"As a birth advocate, educator, and Director of Doulas & Education at The Birth Center of New Jersey, I believe deeply in the power of freestanding birth centers to improve outcomes and advance birth equity. I've attended over 500 births, educated thousands of families, and bring both scientific and community-

rooted expertise as a PhD chemical engineer and NBDA Instructor. I also serve as Chairperson for New Jersey's Perinatal Health Equity Initiative and was appointed by the Governor to the New Jersey Maternal Care Quality Collaborative (NJMCQC), where I help shape statewide maternal health strategy.

I seek to serve on the AABC Board to uplift physiologic birth, expand access to midwifery-led care, and ensure doulas are fully integrated within birth center models. I will bring strategic insight, equity-driven leadership, and a deep commitment to community-based, collaborative care to help AABC thrive in a critical moment for maternal health." Michele Gabriel-Caldwell



ROBIN PRICE
MHA, MBA, CD

Robin Price is a seasoned birth advocate, doula, and healthcare strategist with 20 years of experience in healthcare leadership,

compliance, government relations, and regulatory strategy. She is the owner of Robin's Cradle Doula Services, providing birth and postpartum support and mentoring the next generation of doulas and childbirth professionals. Robin is a proud graduate from Winston-Salem State University. She also holds degrees in Business Administration (MBA) and Healthcare Administration (MHA) along with multiple certifications.

An active contributor to the birth center movement, Robin serves as a committee member for the AABC, Member-at-Large for NC Perinatal Support International (NC PSI), and board member for NC HealthConnect One. She participates in local and regional panels, helping frame birth and maternity care as a vital component of broader community and health equity conversations.

Robin works closely with local midwives (members of NC Council of Certified Professional Midwives), hospitals, neighboring birth centers, and academic institutions to advance the NC Perinatal Strategic Plan – supporting legislative efforts to expand access to midwifery care and birth centers while improving maternal outcomes. Currently, she is leading efforts to establish a birth center in Charlotte, with collaborative support from Congresswoman Alma Adams and Charlotte Council leaders.

Through her combined expertise in direct care, policy, and systems change, Robin is committed to advancing sustainable, community-based maternity care – ensuring families have access to safe, supportive birth options. One finger cannot lift a pebble.

“I am deeply committed to expanding access to birth centers and midwifery-led care, a passion rooted in both my personal experiences and professional work. Through my involvement in birth advocacy, community organizing, and healthcare strategy, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative impact of birth centers on families and communities.

As an Alternate Director, I would bring a grassroots perspective shaped by lived experience and legislative advocacy, along with a strategic understanding gained from navigating complex managed care systems. I firmly believe that by working together, we can strengthen the birth center movement, promote equitable care, and ensure that every family, regardless of their background, has the option for a safe and respectful birth within their community. It would be an honor to serve and contribute to this vital work alongside the dedicated members of AABC.” Robin Price



JILL WODNICK
MA, LCCE, IMH(2)

Jill Wodnick serves as the assistant director of maternal policy & early relational health at Montclair State University

funded through grants for midwifery projects, maternal health policy and high value maternity care projects in NJ.

Jill was a consumer at a birth center for her first birth in 2001 which changed the trajectory of her career. She continues to focus on statewide advocacy and policy for birth centers. She is currently a member of AABC Government Affairs Committee.

Before DOGE elimination, she was a member of the Center for Medicare & Medicaid’s Person and Family Engagement Network which focuses on developing quality measures.

Jill serves on Institute for Medicaid Innovation’s National Advisory Council on doula services and has previously done curriculum work for Every Mother Counts and federal advocacy outreach with Lamaze

International, March of Dimes and the United States Breastfeeding Coalition.

Jill is a certified Lamaze childbirth educator and HCO doula facilitator and has been practicing as a birth doula for more than two decades. She was the expert doula for Pregnancy Magazine focusing on public and community services. She was the community doula coordinator for Hudson Perinatal Consortium doing innovative linkages with Early Head Start and other Title V initiatives.

Jill is also deeply involved in ecological and environmental stewardship – centering on healthy soil and medicinal plants. She is a mom of three and can be found hiking, saving seeds, composting and digging in the dirt when not speaking of birth.

“AABC has been a champion for making maps, tools and projects about birth centers visible and accessible. These tools and resources have helped me frame specific pillars to reduce regulatory burdens and focus on payment equity and midwifery workforce topics in NJ. I can’t imagine my work without AABC for consumer and family engagement in my state. I continue to see the value of building community and wisdom of sharing knowledge at the AABC legislative actions and national conferences. The last two years on AABC Government Affairs Committee, I have been mentored by tremendous leaders. Being on the AABC Government Affairs committee has demonstrated the attention to detail and collaboration and research that highlights collaboration and shared learning. I am pursuing an Alternate Director position to deepen the focus on consumer and family engagement for birth center access and sustainability.” Jill Wodnick