



2026 Election

2026 CANDIDATES for BOARD of DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT (choose 1)



AMY GOH, PhD, CNM

Amy Goh (she/her) is Birth Center Equity's Program Manager for the Beloved Birth 50 By 50 initiative where her work supports birth centers led by Black, Indigenous and midwives of color and advances the midwifery model of care. For the past 15 years she has worked as a midwife in diverse settings, including at the Cambridge Birth Center where her two children were born. She is currently serving her second term on the AABC Board of Directors and is co-Chair of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee where she helped to launch the Community Agreements and Inclusive Language Guidelines.

Amy completed her PhD in 2024 where her doctoral dissertation examined respectful communication and digital health equity in pregnant people of color. Her prior research has explored perinatal health equity, birth center care and midwifery workforce attrition. Last year she published her research examining Asian birth outcomes from AABC's Perinatal Data Registry and is currently working on a study, funded by the AABC Foundation's Research Grant, to examine the barriers to birth center and midwifery utilization amongst Asian birthing people in the U.S. She is Adjunct Faculty at Thomas Jefferson University's Midwifery program and a Fellow of the American College of Nurse-Midwives. Prior to her midwifery career, Amy worked to improve and better understand the complexities of health and rights in global communities. After her stint as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Cape Verde, she completed her MPhil thesis in International Development on the socio-political aspects of maternal mortality in Brazil.

"Serving on the AABC Board of Directors has been an incredible experience, and I would be honored to serve as President to advance the birth center model of care while upholding AABC's commitment to anti-racism and perinatal health equity. I have seen firsthand the dedication of the AABC Executive Team, our members, and the organization's impact across the birth ecosystem. I am proud of AABC's extensive educational offerings and remain committed to listening to members' evolving needs. I have also witnessed AABC's strong partnerships with NACPM, ACNM, and BCE to advance initiatives and policies that strengthen birth centers, and I firmly believe in continued birth center advocacy. Attending the ICM Triennial Congress in Lisbon I saw AABC's global leadership and influence. As President, I will lead with integrity, collaboration, and a genuine commitment to listening. It would be an honor to help build on AABC's strong foundation and shape its future." – Amy Goh



SARAH ANNALISE SANDERS, PhD, MPH

Sarah Annalise Sanders is a community-based public health researcher with specialized expertise on the midwifery-led birth center care model, as well as advanced training in using qualitative and quantitative data tools to better investigate complex problems. Since embarking on her birth center journey over a decade ago, Sarah has been motivated to tell the story (and plead the plight) of community birth centers in the US. Founding her independent consultancy (Brassy Sage Consulting LLC) in 2024 has provided ample opportunity for continued birth center research and advocacy.

From 2013-2018, Sarah held positions at The Midwife Center in Pittsburgh, PA as the Client Service Manager, where she worked closely with staff midwives and nurses to coordinate monthly chart reviews and ensure proper safety protocols; and Administrative Coordinator, where she helped coordinate data collection for quality assurance purposes, contributed to programmatic planning with the center's expansion in 2017, and supervised undergraduate interns. Sarah used birth center

data for both her master's thesis (MPH '18) and doctoral dissertation (PhD '22), investigating factors associated with non-medical hospital transfers and the demographic make-up of birth center service areas.

Sarah has been a member of the AABC Research Committee since 2019; a member of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee since 2021; and a Board Director since 2023. In 2014, she had the sincere pleasure of being a volunteer CABC site visitor and facilitating the accreditation process with other birth centers.

"After 13 years of immersing myself in the birth center model, 10 years of researching access to and experience of birth center care, and 3 years of contributing to AABC governance as a Board Director, I am seeking election as your Board President.

I am a midwifery scholar. While I do not have the experience of catching a baby or giving birth to one, I have been listening and learning for long enough to know how I can leverage my skills to empower those who do.

I am ready to put in my stint of leadership for AABC. As Board President, I aim to:

- *Enhance the visibility of birth centers through partner-ships with academic research, legislators, and media institutions.*
- *Strengthen policy research to demonstrate the value of birth centers and achieve pay parity.*
- *Foster organizational awareness to better know our membership, their needs, and strategies for thoughtful growth."* –

Sarah Sanders

DIRECTORS (choose 4)



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

Michelle Gabriel-Caldwell is a maternal health leader, educator, advocate, and founder and CEO of Baby, Please Birth Services Agency LLC. For more than two decades, her work has focused on advancing low-intervention, evidence-based, family-centered maternity care through education, workforce development, community partnerships, and systems-level advocacy.

Michelle serves as director of doulas and education at The Birth Center of New Jersey, where she oversees doula integration, childbirth education, and community-based services within the birth center model. She is also board chair of the Perinatal Health Equity Initiative and program manager of its doula program, leading initiatives that strengthen the community doula workforce and improve access to high-quality perinatal care.

Nationally, Michelle serves as an elected alternate director on the American Association of Birth Centers Board of Directors, contributes to AABC's Programs and Research Committees, and is a licensed instructor and mentor with the National Black Doulas Association, training and mentoring doulas across the country. At the state and local levels, she serves on the New Jersey Maternal Care Quality Collaborative and the Ubuntu Birth Justice Coalition, advocating for policies and partnerships that expand access to midwifery-led care, freestanding birth centers, community doulas, and respectful maternity services.

Michelle's leadership is grounded in strategic governance, education, advocacy, and collaboration to strengthen sustainable maternity care systems and improve outcomes for families and communities.

"For more than two decades, my career has been dedicated to advancing low-intervention birth through education, community partnerships, and collaborative models of care. I hope to continue serving AABC as a Director by bringing a perspective that broadens the exceptional clinical expertise already represented on the Board through community-based leadership, workforce development, strategic partnerships, and systems thinking.

As an engineer, educator, and maternal health leader, I approach challenges through evidence-based decision-making, continuous improvement, and collaboration. My work has focused on strengthening the connection between birth centers, doulas, hospitals, and the communities they serve—expanding access to physiologic birth while advancing Black maternal health, building trust, and supporting informed decision-making.

I believe birth centers are uniquely positioned to transform maternity care, not only through excellent clinical outcomes, but by serving as trusted community institutions. It would be an honor to continue contributing to AABC's mission by helping strengthen sustainable birth center models, grow our workforce, and expand equitable access to high-quality, community-centered care. 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



CHARLINE MITCHELL, MEd, IBCLC

Charline Mitchell is a lactation consultant, full-spectrum doula, maternal health advocate, and founder and executive director of Birth by Queens Foundation, where she is leading the effort to establish the first freestanding birth center in Queens, New York. A former school counselor, Charline has dedicated her career to advancing equitable, community-based maternity care and improving maternal and infant health outcomes.

Since joining the American Association of Birth Centers (AABC) in 2024, Charline has actively engaged in the birth center movement at the national level through AABC's Birth Institute, Learning Collaborative, Congressional Briefing, How to Start a Birth Center program, on-demand educational sessions, and the Mobilize platform. She has visited more than 25 birth centers across the United States and internationally, learning from diverse models to bring best practices back to her community. Charline also advocates at the federal and state levels. She recently met with the offices of Senator Chuck Schumer, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, and Congressman Gregory Meeks to advance birth center priorities. In Albany, she has participated in advocacy days with the Mobilize Maternal Health Coalition, supporting policies that expand birth center access and advance certified professional midwife licensure in New York.

Locally, Charline provides lactation and doula services, mentors future birth workers, and leads community partner-ships throughout Queens, home to 2.4 million residents who speak more than 180 languages. She believes meaningful community engagement is essential to building a birth center that reflects and serves its community.

“I want to serve on the AABC Board of Directors because I believe birth centers are the most impactful solution for improving maternal health while expanding access to equitable, community-based care. As someone leading the effort to establish the first freestanding birth center in Queens, New York I understand both the opportunities and challenges of building and sustaining birth centers. I hope to bring the perspective of a community-based provider and advocate who is committed to expanding access to birth center care, but also to preserving the legacy of the birth center movement. We stand on the shoulders of pioneers who built this model of care, and it is our responsibility to ensure their work continues to thrive. By supporting the sustainability of existing birth centers while fostering the development of new ones, we can protect this movement and ensure future generations of families have access to birth centers.” – Charline Mitchell



TALITA WELLS OSEGUERA, DNP, CNM, IBCLC

Talita Wells Oseguera is a certified nurse midwife, international board-certified lactation consultant, and reproductive justice advocate called to full-scope midwifery. Originally from Los Angeles, California, she completed nurse midwifery training at the University of California, San Francisco, with a minor in Global Health. Her background in community-based health care has been centered on equity and the advancement of historically marginalized groups, empowerment of women, and partnership with families spanning over 15 years.

Talita's practice is clinically sharp, evidence-based, and un-wavering in its commitment to safety, honoring the dignity of all people. She has devoted her professional and academic career to both birth and research justice. Talita is grounded in partnership with families and holds a deepening belief that birth, and everything surrounding it, should always be held as sacred. Talita currently serves as secretary for the AABC Board and practices on the all-Black midwife team at CHOICES Center for Reproductive Health in Memphis, Tennessee.

“I would be honored to continue to serve on the AABC Board of Directors. I remain committed to supporting AABC's mission and looks forward to continuing this work alongside a community dedicated to accessible, safe, equitable community-based birth care.” Talita Wells Oseguera



SANKOFA RA, Doula, CLC, WSP, CHHP

Sankofa Ra is a spider midwife by spiritual calling. Weaving together the African and western sciences of birthing and healing. She is developing a self-transformative product. Mkunga Buibui Oracle Cosmogram is a self-transformative product that teaches the African diaspora community how to birth themselves in their earthly callings using African culture, numerology, Bantu Kongo Cosmogram, and mkunga buibui web of care.

Sankofa is a New Jersey licensed pediatric private duty nurse. It is her vision to build a one-of-a-kind birthing and family wellness center. Experienced holistic wellness practitioner, crochet fabric artist, doula, African science of midwifery educator, workshop facilitator, and numerologist.

“AABC and I drink from the sister pools of advocacy, education, standards, community, research, anti-racism and cultural humility. I thrive to be an educational and supportive force to elevate midwifery from the shadows to the frontlines. I am led by purpose, passion, legacy, and transformation. My calling as a midwife and vision to build an institution and community in birthing is our aligned societal mission.

By the end of 2026, I will reach my 50th solar return. I have an abundant cornucopia of business knowledge as a career administrative assistant and office/retail manager. I am a creative educator who has taken the initiative to teach multiple subjects tailor made to student's needs and style of learning. I am a connector of people, ideas, places, past, present, and future. I share and connect knowledge to support others to be their true selves for the highest good of humanity.” – Sankofa Ra



MARY SOMMERS, MPS, CPM, IBCLC

Mary Sommers is a current AABC board member. She is the director of the Birth Center at PCC Community Wellness Center, located within a Federal Quality Health Center (FQHC) in Chicago area. Mary is also a founder and academic affairs director of the Midwest Maternal Child Institute, a MEAC accredited school. She is a member of the Illinois Birth Center Strategic Committee and Illinois Midwifery Policy Group. She is a Certified Professional Midwife licensed in both Illinois and Wisconsin and Illinois; she holds a master's degree in public service from DePaul University.

Mary is constantly promoting birth center care at local, state and federal levels in various maternal health policy groups. She has presented on birth center care for the National Association of Community Health Centers and the Illinois Primary Health Care Association. Promoting and expanding access for birth center care is long time passion for Mary. Early in her career, she co-founded Chicago Community Midwives, a not-for-profit homebirth service and effectively achieved the coverage of Medicaid for out of hospital births. She also integrated home birth and birth centers into FQHC setting and directed the first birth center in Illinois.

Throughout her career, Mary was a World Health Organization fellow, studying maternal health in the Netherlands and England. She created a midwifery guidebook and APP with midwives from Malawi and Grand Valley State and was an advisory board member of CASA professional midwifery program in San Miguel de Allende, GTO, Mexico.

Mary has worked for more than thirty-five years in community health as an administrator and director of maternal child health programs and has supervised midwifery students and trained doulas. She is the author of *More Than a Midwife: Stories of Grace, Glory, Motherhood*. She is featured in the book, *Bright Lights of the Second City: 50 Prominent Chicagoans on Living with Passion and Purpose* by Betsy Storm. She has 5 home-birth children and 3 grand-children.

“As a candidate for AABC Board of Directors, my purpose is to champion midwifery, lead free standing birth centers, and to expand the access and availability of freestanding birth centers. I am also committed into the expanding birth centers and the integration of CPMs into the broader health system in order to improve maternal child health outcomes and reduce health disparities I also believe birth centers are part of the solution to address maternal care deserts.

As a birth center director at a FQHC and an academic director of a MEAC school, I support efforts to grow and diversify the midwifery workforce trained in out of hospital births. Birth Centers have a proven track record of improving maternal outcome and lowering intervention rates and I actively advocate and promote birth center care in my various advocacy roles and

committees in maternal health networks and at perinatal health conferences. I have been a midwifery and birth center advocate for several decades on local, state and federal levels where I support the goals and mission of AABC.” – Mary Sommers

DIRECTOR – Special Election (choose 1)



LAUREN MCCULLOUGH, BSN, RN

Lauren McCullough is a registered nurse and birth center consultant dedicated to the expansion and sustainability of birth centers and midwifery-led care across the United States. Her career has taken her across every birth setting, from the high-volume labor and delivery floors of Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City to intimate home births and the dynamic startup environment of a freestanding birth center, giving her a 360-degree view of maternal health care delivery.

As operations manager at BSD Birthing Center, Lauren led the center through New York State's Certificate of Need approval process, secured CABC accreditation and directed the center's full operational launch. She currently serves as founder and principal consultant of Birth Center Consulting LLC, where she provides end-to-end support to birth centers in the startup and operational phases. Her consulting work focuses on regulatory compliance, including CABC accreditation and state licensure, as well as operational design and the financial health and sustainability of birth centers.

At the state level, Lauren serves as vice president of the New York State Birth Center Association, where she advocates for policies that strengthen the birth center model and expand access to community-based care, and works to cultivate a sense of community and unity among birth centers across New York State.

Lauren holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a Bachelor of Science in Management, a combination that grounds her approach in both clinical excellence and business strategy. She is an AABC member and passionate advocate for midwifery-led care.

“I want to serve as a Director on the AABC Board because I believe the future of maternal health in this country depends on a thriving, sustainable birth center community, and I want to help build it.

I bring a perspective that bridges the clinical and the operational. As a labor and delivery nurse with experience in hospital, home and birth center settings, and as a consultant who guides birth centers through accreditation, licensure and financial sustainability, I understand the challenges birth centers face from the inside out.

My goal is to contribute meaningfully to AABC's work of growing the number of birth centers families can access nationwide, strengthening the standards that make birth centers trustworthy and safe and supporting the midwives who make it all possible. I am ready to get to work and serve this community with the same dedication I bring to my daily work.” – Lauren McCullough



REBECKAH ORTON, BS, RN

Rebeckah Orton is nurse, a scientist, a birth center owner, and a constant irritant to most insurance companies. Her professional life's work is to create a self-sustaining system in which midwives can thrive while providing accessible care, especially to those at the highest risk of poor outcomes. Rebeckah has advocated for six years, helped to create and teach a sustainability course, and continues to foment change in this industry.

To date, the team she has worked with has taught its sustainability course to the majority of accredited birth centers. Together, they and their students have negotiated meaningful changes with numerous insurance providers across multiple states. They continue to see appropriate contracts emerge, signaling what they hope is the beginning of a broader groundswell of lasting change.

“I submit my interest for candidacy because we have seen the beginnings of change and success, and I would like to see this through. I would like to continue to focus my efforts as director on securing enforcement of existing laws that call for sustainable reimbursement of birth centers and midwives, developing staffing systems that help preserve the heart of midwifery while preventing burnout, and securing sustainable reimbursement paradigms via both state and private payors.” – Rebeckah Orton

ALTERNATE DIRECTOR (choose 1)



LINDSAY LACHANT, DNP, APRN/CNM, IBCLC, PMH-C

Lindsay Lachant is a Certified Nurse-Midwife and birth center advocate dedicated to expanding access to community-based midwifery care. After eight years as a registered nurse, she became a Certified Nurse-Midwife to provide relationship-based, continuous care throughout pregnancy, birth, postpartum, lactation, and perinatal mental health. She serves as co-founding midwife, vice president, and co-executive director of Green Mountain Birth Center, where she is helping lead the development of Vermont's first li-censed freestanding birth center while expanding access to midwifery, lactation, and rural maternal health services.

Lindsay has practiced in hospitals, birth centers, and private practice throughout the Northeast and serves as a clinical preceptor for midwifery and other health professions students.

Nationally, Lindsay serves on the American Association of Birth Centers Membership/PR, Government Affairs, and Programs Committees and has been a Case Study Mentor for AABC's Birth Assistant Certification Program. She worked alongside colleagues to advance birth center licensure in Vermont and now helps lead the effort to establish the state's first licensed freestanding birth center. She also serves on the Vermont Chapter Board of Directors for Postpartum Support International and was selected as a 2025 State Policy Fellow with the Policy Center for Maternal Mental Health.

Her professional interests include expanding access to midwifery care, strengthening rural maternity care, quality improvement, perinatal mental health, policy advocacy, and advancing the birth center model through collaboration, mentorship, and innovation.

"My commitment to the birth center model is both personal and professional. As a midwifery student, I attended AABC's "How to Start a Birth Center" workshop in 2010, which sparked my dream of one day bringing a freestanding birth center to Vermont. Throughout my education and career, AABC has been a source of mentorship, education, and in-spiration. Since then, I have had the privilege of practicing in a birth center, experiencing birth center care as a parent, and working alongside colleagues to advocate for birth center licensure in Vermont. Serving as an Alternate Director would be an opportunity to give back to the organization that helped shape my career while bringing the perspective of someone actively developing Vermont's first licensed freestanding birth center. I would be honored to help advance AABC's mission, strengthen advocacy and legislative efforts, and support the continued growth of the organization and birth center movement." – Lindsay Lachant



ELIZABETH QUINKERT, MSN, CNM, FACNM

Elizabeth (Beth) Quinkert has been a Certified Nurse-Midwife (CNM) in Indiana for 29 years. Graduating from University of Kentucky School of Nursing in 1997, she start-ed the first nurse midwifery practice in southern Indiana, working with a solo OB/GYN, and providing full-scope women's health care to the women of southern Indiana and the Louisville, Kentucky area. Beth provided labor and delivery care for her clients at Clark Memorial Hospital as the first CNM credentialed there. After 22 years, Beth, along with two other CNMs in her practice, founded Tree of Life Family Birth Center, the first freestanding

birth center in the area, providing care for women of southern Indiana as well as Kentucky.

Beth has served as a preceptor to nurse midwifery and nurse practitioner students from a number of programs, as well as providing shadow opportunities for local high school and nursing students with an interest in midwifery and women's health. She is a member of the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM), Indiana Affiliate ACNM, AABC, and the Coalition of Advanced Practice Nurses in Indiana. She has served on several committees to include ACNM & AABC Program Committees, IN Affiliate ACNM Treasurer and Secretary, AABC Government Affairs committee, AABC Industry Relations Committee and subcommittees on Billing and Coding/Unbundling, and as CAPNI CNM representative to the board. In 2024 Beth was inducted into FACNM and currently serve as the Region IV FACNM Board of Governors representative. In 2025 she retired from full time practice, continuing her roles in professional organizations, as well as active ownership in Tree of Life Family Birth Center.

"I am committed to continuing my passion of ensuring the availability of compassionate, evidence-based care for women. I am also dedicated to the birth center model of care as the standard by which obstetrics should be judged. I would be honored to be elected to the AABC Board." – Beth Quinkert