

# THE TREE OF LIFE



## BLACK MOTHERS' BREASTFEEDING ASSOCIATION

2016 ANNUAL REPORT



## **COMPANY OVERVIEW**

BMBFA is a non-profit 501c3 organization.

### **GOAL**

BMBFA's goal is to have a national impact on the reduction of racial disparities in breastfeeding success for black families.

### **MISSION**

BMBFA's mission is to reduce racial inequities in breastfeeding support for black families.

### **VALUE PROPOSITION**

BMBFA's value proposition is to optimize the first food experience for black families through direct service, education, and advocacy.

### **VISION**

BMBFA envisions positive cultural sentiments about breastfeeding, multi-generational breastfeeding support and encouragement within black families and neighborhoods.

### **AIM**

BMBFA aims to build foundational networks of support, and strengthen systems to overcome historical, societal, and social barriers to breastfeeding success.

### **OBJECTIVES**

BMBFA's objective is to provide education, valuable resources, and ongoing support to black families and public/private agencies that service these families.





## *The Genesis of a Breastfeeding Revival*

Black Mothers' Breastfeeding Association's co-founder, Kiddada Green understands what it feels like for a new mother to crave peer adult interaction. During Kiddada's maternity leave, she, like many other mothers relied on social media for peer interaction. Café Mom became her network of choice. Throughout the day, Kiddada would nurse her darling daughter, Anaiah, while connecting with other moms online at [cafemom.com](http://cafemom.com). It became such a regular part of her day that her child's father began to affectionately refer to she and her Internet friends as the "Internet Moms".

Meanwhile, as Kiddada continued to breastfeed Anaiah, she quickly realized that there was a need for a targeted approach to improve breastfeeding rates for black families. Through her own personal relationships, social encounters and self-studies, Kiddada became aware of a complex set of dynamics that affect breastfeeding initiation and duration rates for black families. Interestingly, Kiddada was not breastfed as a child. Furthermore, within her own family there were few people who could through personal experience, connect with her breastfeeding stories, celebrate her breastfeeding triumphs or offer suggestions for her breastfeeding troubles. Luckily for Kiddada, she did have close friends who could relate to her breastfeeding experience. It was through those social experiences and further research that she confirmed that the lack of breastfeeding role models and multi-generational support were commonplace for many black women. Similar to other leaders who fight for social justice, Kiddada assumed her role as a thought leader in the breastfeeding field, and through grassroots efforts began changing the narrative of infant feeding practices for black families. In 2007, together with her mother, Doris Jordan and aunt, Debbie Clark, Black Mothers' Breastfeeding Association (BMBFA) was founded.

Online socializing had become very familiar to Kiddada, so what better place to intentionally connect with black expectant and breastfeeding mothers, than online! It would be easy to network with other mothers online and very fitting for Kiddada while on maternity leave. Clearly, Café Mom had many 'Internet Moms' just a click away. As the online group developed, the work behind the scenes also moved forward. BMBFA's co-founders met several times per week at Kiddada's kitchen table. The meetings were so frequent that Anaiah became affectionately labeled the "Business Baby". Meanwhile, the team launched the BMBFA website and hosted weekly scheduled live discussions on the website's chat room. The interactions within the chat room and the online groups were both, amazing and revealing, all at that same time. The online networks, served its purpose for interaction, yet there still remained a desire for a more intimate social setting. Consequently, the online interactions became the impetus for the launch of Black Mothers' Breastfeeding Club® (BMBFC).

BMBFC was birthed organically as mothers yearned for traditional mother-to-mother socialization, human connectedness and the resurgence of a village experience. BMBFC has run without interruption since 2008. Originally launched in Detroit, MI, BMBFC has spread its wings and now includes a replication site in Shreveport, LA. While BMBFA continues to use online platforms to engage in discourse, dialogue, education and advocacy, the organization understands the power of traditional fellowship and engagement; and is committed to creating experiences and opportunities for black families to reclaim optimal and traditional feeding practices in village-like environments.

# LEADERSHIP



*Anjanette Davenport  
Hatter, LMSW*

*President, BMBFA*

The year of 2016 yielded a number of accomplishments for Black Mothers' Breastfeeding Association (BMBFA). We have been diligent in our efforts to address racial inequities in breastfeeding as it relates to the families and professionals locally and nationally. It is critical that a comprehensive and conscientious approach is used to make such a wide reaching impact in programs and services to the community. We continue our earnestness in furthering this impact on the programs and services to the community by way of our flagship Black Mothers' Breastfeeding Club, which supports the breastfeeding experience for women and their families.

In 2016, we were proud to have offered breastfeeding community support including BMBFA's 7<sup>th</sup> National Seminar, "Beyond The Mom: Reframing the Approach to Maternal Care" and The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Summit, a free event open to the community which celebrated Black Breastfeeding Week's 2016 theme "Oh, What A Joy!" The summit met its goal of spotlighting the sweet joy of family bonds and perseverance. It presented an open interactive community conversation with support from the Health Disparities Reduction and Minority Health Section of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

I am excited to highlight other significant and much appreciated support from notable contributors, namely the Michigan Health Endowment Fund and W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The funds received from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund were allocated to develop, implement, and support the pre-application process for Health Connect One's (HC One) Community-based Doula Accreditation Program (CBDAP). BMBFA also received a \$450,000 grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The funds will be used to support the overall mission of BMBFA to reduce racial inequities in breastfeeding support for African Americans over a 3-year period.

We ended 2016 by receiving the distinguished "Best of HealthNet Award" by Authority Health. I am overjoyed about the work BMBFA has done which has kept us true to our mission and solidifying us as thought leaders in this breastfeeding space. We are looking forward to driving our momentum into 2017. Thank you for your commitment and steadfast trust in BMBFA.





# ADDRESS



*Kiddada Green, MAT*

*Executive Director, BMBFA*

Early last year, I received one of life's greatest compliments from my husband, "You are now officially a freedom fighter." I paused. My eyes got big. Then, I blushed, kissed him and said, "Thank you!" In the same moment, I thought, "Wait! What? Me? Whoa!!! Really?!" That was a huge statement and I wondered if my work was truly worthy of such gratitude. In fact, it would be months before I could come close to taking it all in. Even then, I did so with great humility. My husband's admiration of my accomplishments was given in response to my leadership in a collaborative public accountability campaign that was successfully forged to stop a for-profit human milk bank company from exploiting low-income African American Detroit women for their breast milk.

Throughout 2016, I continued working, understanding that there is still much work to be done to affect change on all social ecological levels. The BMBFA team remained steadfast in its mission-driven work to reduce racial inequities in breastfeeding success for African American families. Our team continued to positively impact the lives of families both locally and nationally. We did so through direct service, education and advocacy.

We provided direct service to more than 200 families, attended over 800 home visits and held 50 Black Mothers' Breastfeeding Club® meetings. Nationally, we provided training and professional development to more than 500 providers. The level of satisfaction reported by our participants is astonishing.

"I love coming to this breastfeeding club and talking to others about what they went through while breastfeeding. Great club!"  
Joselyn R.

A seminar attendee reports, "Loved the fatherhood piece! The positive energy in the room and the sense of unity was powerful. Great balance in the group of speakers & topics."

We led national efforts for community involvement in recognition of the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Black Breastfeeding Week. Organized and coordinated events across the nation were well received and attended. More than 40 communities nationwide held events to celebrate, empower and uplift the black breastfeeding experience.

The Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County sent gratitude stating, "The (Black Breastfeeding Week) event was a success and your gifts were given to participants at this national celebration."

The fight continues and our commitment to successfully servicing the community is unwavering. We look forward to the challenges and successes of 2017. Please join us in this journey towards racial equity in health.



## *A Mother Speaks of Empowerment*

*By Jennifer Maxwell*

I was pregnant with my third child and had no plans of breastfeeding. My two other children were not breastfed. However while attending parenting classes, the breastfeeding lessons began to pique my interest. The instructor discussed the many ways that breast milk would benefit my child from infancy into adulthood. I also found it very interesting that breastfed children do better with so many things in life – especially in school. The class had me on the hook but I'd need help to be successful.

After my son, Micarri was born I was unsure of how to breastfeed him. The nurses on the staff at that hospital didn't provide very much help. I was troubled but refused to give up. During a visit with the pediatrician, I explained my situation. Lucky for me, they gave me a number to call for help. I realized that it was the same contact that I had previously received; so I called immediately to schedule a home visit.

When the day finally arrived, I heard a knock on the door. To my surprise there was a familiar face entering. Juanisha!!! She was the same speaker at the pregnancy classes from Black Mothers' Breastfeeding Association! It was her passion, enthusiasm and teaching that



convinced me to make the decision to breastfeed.

Juanisha began the visit by asking me, "What do you need the most help with?" I explained that I was completely lost. Juanisha could sense my tension and asked me to relax. I tried, but it was harder than I thought.

Juanisha rested her hands on me and said, "You are still not relaxed." She was right. So, I tried again and began to show her what I had been doing to feed him. She told me to bring my baby in towards me. That was my first mistake – I had been leaning over. The second problem was my fear. She advised me to stop pulling Micarri close and snatching him out of fear.

I was extremely nervous and kept my eyes closed as Juanisha facilitated a successful latch for Micarri. It was very exciting to see Micarri nursing well. After he nursed on the left breast, Juanisha guided me as I latched him onto my right breast. To my surprise, Micarri and I had caught on!

Juanisha continued to visit and support me for months. When other concerns arose, Juanisha was right there to give helpful tips and resources. Juanisha is an amazing breastfeeding peer counselor and works diligently to make things easier for me to achieve my breastfeeding goals. I am so happy with Micarri's growth and development. He is smart and healthy. I couldn't ask for anything more.



# THE COMMUNITY

## Advocacy

BMBFA continues to amplify the voices of black mothers and families by assuming a leadership role and engaging in advocacy and public/institutional policy issues that affect the families that we service and represent.

Committees include:

### National

- Black Breastfeeding Caucus
- United States Breastfeeding Committee

### Statewide

- Mothering Justice
- Michigan Community Health Worker Alliance
- Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Breastfeeding Forum
- Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan: Health Family and Childcare Services Policy Action Team

### Local

- Hope Starts Here
- Mommy-Friendly Detroit™
- Detroit Perinatal Wellness Coalition
- First Food Friendly Community Initiative
- Detroit Institute for Equity in Birth Outcomes
- Wayne County Home Visiting Local Leadership Group
- Southeast Michigan Perinatal Quality Improvement Coalition



**The 3rd District Supports Breastfeeding for Healthy Communities!**  
Call **800 313 6141** for **FREE** breastfeeding support  
Learn what communities can do at **BeFirstFoodFriendly.org**

Local billboard posted within several neighborhoods of Detroit's 3<sup>rd</sup> District.

# COMMUNITY

**Black Mothers' Breastfeeding Club®** is a community-based, mother-led breastfeeding group. Pregnant and breastfeeding mothers come together for fellowship, sisterhood, parenting and breastfeeding support. Clubs are located in Detroit, MI and Shreveport, LA.

*137 families served*

*97% report the experience to be valuable*



**Community-based Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program** is a home-visiting service that provides necessary and direct services to expectant and breastfeeding mothers on issues such as latch, milk supply, storage, handling, return to work/school, social barriers and lifestyle management for breastfeeding.



*493 home visits*

*116 families served*



# CARE

**Community-based Doula Program** is a home-visiting service that connects pregnant mothers of Detroit with peer doula (birth worker) support throughout their pregnancy, during birth, and after the birth to improve infant and maternal health.

**24** births

**345** home visits

**0** preterm single births

**100%** breastfeeding initiation

*“Coming from a family with no breastfeeding history an outside resource was necessary... I am forever grateful for the Black Mothers Breastfeeding Association. They have given my daughter the best start possible. This resource is priceless and an asset to the greater Detroit community.” – Naomi, Community-based Doula Participant*

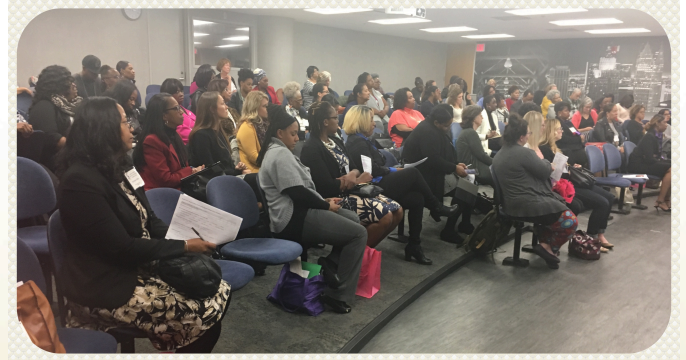


# PROVIDER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

**Mobile and Web-based Learning** are national trainings designed to provide culturally appropriate and relevant strategies, information, applicable skills and action steps to agency employees that have an interest in breastfeeding support and maternal-child-health. Clients include government health departments, WIC agencies, hospitals, childcare centers, conference planners, and for- and non-profit agencies.

**584 attendees**

*"Thank you for the informative and refreshing webinar on Making the Case for a Targeted Approach to Racial Equity in Breastfeeding Support."* -Toncé Jackson, RDN, CLE, Nutrition Education Nutritionist, PHFE WIC, Webinar Attendee



## The 7th National Seminar

is an annual conference that assembles a diverse group of professionals that have an interest in maternal-child-health. The seminar provides attendees with leading information on the most current practices, studies and models in public health that address the specific socio-cultural needs of breastfeeding support for African American families.

**107 attendees**

*"Group discussions with panels, very inspiring. Honestly, this is the best conference I've attended in years (and I go to many). Something magical happened in the discussion. I feel inspired to make change in my community."* – Seminar attendee



# NATIONAL LEADERSHIP

## Oh, What a Joy! 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Black Breastfeeding Week

BMBFA led the way for more than 40 communities nationwide to celebrate the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Black Breastfeeding Week. In fact, the Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County expressed their gratitude by stating, “The (Black Breastfeeding Week) event was a success and your gifts were given to participants at this national celebration.” The Charles H. Wright Museum of African



American History acted as the host site for BMBFA’s Detroit celebration during the Annual Black Mothers’ Breastfeeding Summit. Families from throughout the city attended and participated in the nationally coordinated baby lift acknowledging the greatness of black babies. Other remarkable Black Breastfeeding Week leaders include Kimberly Seals Allers and Anayah Sangodele-Ayoka.

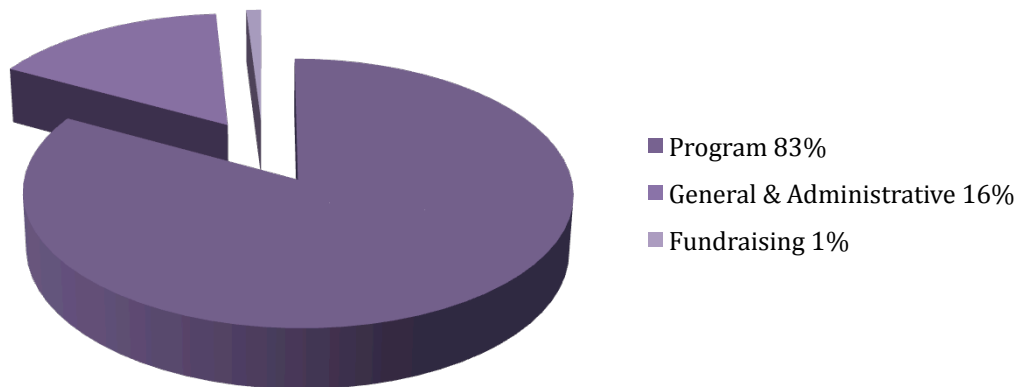
## Black Mothers’ Breastfeeding Club® Replication Model– Shreveport-Bossier, Louisiana



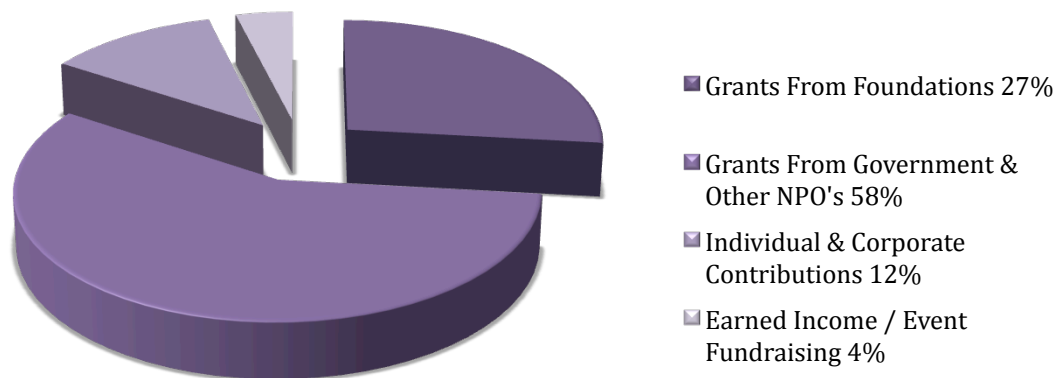
Thanks to the local leadership of mothers in Shreveport, Louisiana, Black Mothers’ Breastfeeding Club is in its second year of success. Their efforts have been supported by the National Association of County and City Health Officials, Community Foundation and the United Way Grant Fund at the Community Foundation, and Louisiana Department of Health-Bureau of Family Health.

# TOTAL REVENUE & EXPENSES

## Total Expenses \$443,597.44



## Total Revenue \$446,207.35





# LOOKING AHEAD

## Opportunities

- Launch Community Breastfeeding Education Program.
- Expand the reach of Black Mothers Breastfeeding Club®.
- Uplift Mommy, Daddy and Celebrity Ambassadors for BMBFA.
- Achieve national accreditation of Community-based Doula Program.
- Engage Black Breastfeeding Caucus in local, regional and national advocacy.

## Call to Action

- Become a “Friend of BMBFA”.
- Link maternal infant/child health services with fatherhood initiatives.
- Include a racial equity perspective into public and institutional policies that impact babies, mothers and families.



## Funders

- W.K. Kellogg Foundation  
*"We're proud to support BMBFA's important work," shares Ali Webb, director of Michigan programs at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. "We know that a mother's breast milk is the optimal first food to give children the best start to good health. Increasing support for breastfeeding will help ensure that families and their children are healthy and thriving."*
- Michigan Health Endowment Fund  
*"We're excited to support the Black Mothers' Breastfeeding Association's efforts to reduce racial disparities in breastfeeding success," said Laurie Solotorow, senior program officer for the Michigan Health Endowment Fund. "The Community-based Doula Accreditation Program will help ensure proper pre- and post-natal care for pregnant women, mothers, and babies in Detroit. For these families, the benefits will last a lifetime."*
- Sojourner Foundation
- HealthConnect One
- Health Disparities Reduction and Minority Health Section of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

## Friends of BMBFA

| <u>Corporate Benefactor</u>                         | <u>Contributor</u>  | <u>Other Donors / Supporters</u> |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Procerus Skin Care                                  | Sheila Davis        | Young Adult Steering Committee   |
|                                                     | Carolyn Dayton      | Absopure Water Company           |
|                                                     | Amanda Edmonds      | Blue Cross Complete              |
|                                                     | Dion Fricsher       | Whole Foods                      |
|                                                     | Viola Hubbard       | Gwendolyn Yarbough Gordon        |
|                                                     | Delores Jackson     | Leading Lady                     |
|                                                     | Barbara Jean Patton | Medela                           |
|                                                     | Angela Johnson      | Mom & Baby Shop                  |
|                                                     | Judy Staples        | Barbara Stauton                  |
|                                                     | Beverly Tolliver    | Henry Ford Health System         |
|                                                     | Toni S. Walters     | Fatimah Wells                    |
|                                                     | Jada Wright         |                                  |
| <u>Benefactor</u>                                   |                     |                                  |
| Ben Washington & Sons<br>Plumbing and Heating, Inc. |                     |                                  |
| Detroit MOTTEP Foundation                           |                     |                                  |
| Nicole T. Fields-Gibson                             |                     |                                  |
| Lynette Smith                                       |                     |                                  |
| <u>Supporter</u>                                    |                     |                                  |
| Delores A. Brown                                    |                     |                                  |
| Anjanette Davenport Hatter                          |                     |                                  |
| Karen Koss                                          |                     |                                  |
| Textures by Nefertiti, Inc                          |                     |                                  |
| Dennis West                                         |                     |                                  |



# THANKS

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# Thank You



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