

Moms and babies in Michigan receive the gold-standard of care through Black Mothers' Breastfeeding Association's community-based doula program

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Simone Landrum introduces her new son, Kingston, to his big brothers, Caden (left) and Dillon. Her doula stayed by her side through the hospital birth, then fetched her older boys to visit their new brother. –

Photo: LaToya Ruby Frazier, New York Times

by Kiddada Green

Black PR Wire – Black Mothers' Breastfeeding Association (BMBFA) in Detroit, Mich., has successfully received national accreditation through HealthConnect One's (HC One) Community-Based Doula Accreditation Program. BMBFA underwent a rigorous process in which the HealthConnect One Accreditation Team reviewed the organization's existing Community-Based Doula Program to ensure high-quality implementation.

Community-based doulas play an important role in helping decrease maternal and infant mortality rates and increase breastfeeding rates. These women are trained to provide peer support to other women in their communities throughout pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding and early parenting.

BMBFA's accreditation from HealthConnect One comes at a time when maternal and infant mortality is skyrocketing in the African-American community due to racial disparities in the

healthcare system. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), “the risk of pregnancy-related deaths for black women is three to four times higher than those of white women.” This is impacting the health of African-American women at an alarming rate, causing a maternal health epidemic. The accreditation means that BMBFA is providing Detroit mothers with the highest quality care.

“The accreditation gives us a boost towards creating a sustainable program with the ability to build a labor market for community-based doulas. We continue to positively impact our community, providing respectable service and honorable care to Detroit families,” said Kiddada Green, BMBFA founding executive director. “We understand the level of intimacy involved in pregnancy and birth and we are honored each and every time that a family allows us to join in their birth experience.”

BMBFA’s Community-Based Doula Home Visiting Program has assisted in more than 100 births. Their data from 2015 to 2017 demonstrates the importance of their program in African-American communities. The program boasts over 1,100 prenatal and postpartum encounters, a 100 percent breastfeeding initiation rate, 100 percent regular prenatal care rate, 99 percent healthy birth weight, 99 percent full-term babies and zero infant deaths.

HC One’s Community-Based Doula Accreditation Program (CBDAP) is designed to help organizations implement a high-quality Community-Based Doula Program. “The goal of accreditation is to build greater fidelity to HC One’s evidence-based, community-based doula model, therefore improving quality of service and outcomes for program participants,” said Tikvah Wadley, HC One program manager.

HC One’s first accreditation was Open Arms Perinatal Services in Washington state. The transformative effect of doulas in communities was spotlighted in [a 2014 federally funded study](#), and recently HC One’s program model was profiled in the [2018 Home Visiting Yearbook](#).

This unique, innovative program model works because it provides extended, intensive support to families throughout pregnancy, during labor and childbirth and in the early months of parenting in communities that face high risks of negative birth and developmental outcomes.

BMBFA is focused on reducing racial inequities in breastfeeding support for Black families. Since its founding in 2007, BMBFA has carried out its mission by way of direct service, training, education and advocacy. Learn more at <http://blackmothersbreastfeeding.org/>.

HealthConnect One is the national leader in advancing respectful, community-based, peer-to-peer support for pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding and early parenting. Learn more at <http://www.healthconnectone.org/>.

Kiddada Green is the founding executive director of [Black Mothers’ Breastfeeding Association \(BMBFA\)](#), where this story first appeared.



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