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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Moms and Babies in Michigan Receive the Gold-Standard of Care Through Black Mothers' Breastfeeding Association's Community-Based Doula Program

Black Mothers' Breastfeeding Association (BMBFA) in Detroit, MI 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 and has created a maternal health epidemic. The accreditation means that BMBFA is providing Detroit mothers 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 join in their birth experience.”

BMBFA’s Community-Based Doula Home Visiting Program has assisted in more than one hundred births. Their data from 2015 to 2017 demonstrates the importance of their program in African-American communities. The program boasts 1100+ prenatal and postpartum encounters, 100% breastfeeding initiation rate, 100% regular prenatal care, 99% healthy birth weight, 99% full-term babies and 0 infant deaths.

“I believe that any services offered in the community should be dedicated to the whole family, not just the individual. My Community-Based Doula from Black Mothers’ Breastfeeding Association not only assisted me, but she also supported my partner, my mother and even my sisters during my birth experience,” said Cherry Tolbert, Community-Based Doula program participant.

The transformative effect of doulas in communities has been spotlighted in [a federally funded study](#) in 2014. The study found that 87 percent of community-based doula clients were breastfeeding at six weeks, compared with 61 percent of a similar sample; 72 percent were still at it when their babies were three months old, compared with 48 percent of the broader sample.

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 with the goal to provide mothers with the quality care they deserve.

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. Recently, HC One’s program model was profiled in the [2018 Home Visiting Yearbook](#). The publication compiles early childhood home visiting key data and presents a comprehensive picture available at the national and state levels.

Upon accreditation with HC One, BMBFA’s Community-Based Doula program is recognized publicly as setting the standards for high-quality doula care. Accredited organizations are positioned to attract the attention of funding sources which are committed to high-quality implementation of Community-Based Doula Programs nationwide, and BMBFA will gain additional exposure as a leader in their field through training and collaborative opportunities with HC One.

About Black Mothers’ Breastfeeding Association

BMBFA is focused on reducing racial inequities in breastfeeding support for black families. Since 2007, BMBFA carries out its mission by way of direct service, training/education & advocacy. **Learn more...**<http://blackmothersbreastfeeding.org/>

About HealthConnect One

HealthConnect One is the national leader in advancing respectful, community-based, peer-to-peer support for pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding and early parenting. Organizations can contact us about our highly successful approach, replicating our program, or to collaborate in other ways to address birth equity. **Learn more...**<http://www.healthconnectone.org/>

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