THIS POWERFUL EMBRACE

Our work is intimate. Our work is powerful.

HealthConnect One programs respectfully surround families with support, holding each woman during pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding and early parenting.

With each embrace, we make change.

2015 YEAR IN REVIEW
SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS SAY WHAT THEY LIKE

“...being together and learning from all my birth working collective family...”

...the opportunities to sit/discuss frustrations with my peers...

...the company of other doulas/meeting other doulas...

...meeting others that share in my joys and struggles...

...sisterhood...

...thanks once again HC One for the great job each of you do for us to keep us motivated in what we do. It was a time to network & share something I couldn’t have done alone...”

— Margarita Celis,
Open Arms Perinatal Services

“I have been effective in helping families choose breastfeeding, and sticking with it. It is truly my passion to help restore the confidence in mothering, that was somehow lost in generations.”

— Tytina Sanders-Bey,
Healthcare Consortium of Illinois

HOLDING THE SPACE

HealthConnect One holds space for tough conversations surrounding birth and health equity. We hold space for change, for creativity, for innovation. We engage honestly, broadly, unapologetically, and we invite into the conversation those who are often unheard.

This year, our National Action Summit, “Shared Voices for Equity in Birth and Breastfeeding,” brought together over 100 women — community health workers from all over the country, including Hawaii, Illinois, Mississippi, Arizona, Oregon and Puerto Rico — for 3 days. They were community-based doulas, breastfeeding peer counselors, doctors, nurses, academics, and home visitors dedicated to advocating for healthy moms and healthy babies.

BUILDING THE FIELD

Because our work is founded on the principle that members of each community are experts on themselves, our role is often to ensure that community voices are heard in national conversations about pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding and early parenting.

For years, HealthConnect One has encouraged and supported leadership by underrepresented communities in breastfeeding and birth work. Our efforts consistently result in more people of color at the table with important national and local coalitions. This year, we brought Margarita and Tytina, two community health workers, into national breastfeeding conversations. See their statements to the right.

HealthConnect One is at the forefront of efforts to raise issues of equity and justice as we shape the maternal and child health workforce of the future; we are not alone in speaking about the value and effectiveness of hiring peer providers from within the community. With your help, we will continue forging partnerships, listening, and amplifying voices that must be heard.

WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER

Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs (AMCHP) • APHA Community Health Worker Section • Binational Breastfeeding Coalition • BirthMatters • Birthing Project USA • Black Mothers’ Breastfeeding Association (BMBFA) • Bloomington Area Birth Services (RABS) • California Breastfeeding Coalition • California WIC Association • The Center for Social Inclusion • CHASS Center • Chicago CHW Local Network • The Chicago Region Breastfeeding Task Force • Community Outreach and Patient Empowerment (COPE) • Esperanza Health Centers • Every Mother Counts • Focus: HOPE • Healthcare Consortium of Illinois • Heartland Alliance • Latina Breastfeeding Coalition • Latina Breastfeeding Leaders • Marilac House • Maternity Care Coalition • MHP Salud • MomsRising • More Than Milk • National Birth Equity Collaborative • National Head Start Association • Navajo Nations • North Carolina Global Breastfeeding Institute • Northeast Mississippi Birthing Project • NorthShore University Health System • Open Arms Perinatal Services • Oregon Inter-Tribal Breastfeeding Coalition • PASOs • Pretty Mama, LLC • National Association of Professional and Peer Lactation Supporters of Color (NAPPLSC) • Reaching Our Sisters Everywhere (ROSE) • StoryCorps • Tewa Women United • UCAN • United States Breastfeeding Committee (USBC) • Young Women United • and many others!
RELATIONSHIPS ARE CORE

We seek to reduce racial and ethnic disparities during pregnancy, birth, and early parenting by placing breastfeeding peer counselors and community-based doulas in communities around the country.

This past year, six sites supported by our collaboration with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation — working in the Delta region (Mississippi), the Southwest Border region (New Mexico and Texas) and Detroit, MI — served over 1,000 families, improving breastfeeding rates dramatically and exceeding the national average.

HOW DOES HEALTHCONNECT ONE’S MODEL WORK?

Here is an excerpt from a conversation between Teffanie Green, a community-based doula with Northeast Mississippi Birthing Project (NEMS) and her client, Braendace, recorded in cooperation with NEMS and StoryCorps Chicago in September 2015:

“I called her and she’s like, ‘I’m at the doctor. I can’t come.’ And I was like, ‘Well, [I’m going to] come to you.’ … As a doula, you have to have a bond with clients… If you don’t have a relationship, then it’s no way that you can be there when times get rough.”

—I, Teffanie, Community-Based Doula

“I didn’t get a lot of that touchy, feely, love, emotion type when I was growing up. … Now I’ve learned that kids need nurturing and love just like adults do and … Intimacy means showing affection … hugging, showing them love, playing with them, tickling, spending time and cooperating with them, just letting them know, ‘I’m here.’”

—I, Braendace, Client

“Being a doula to me is being a person that is gonna be there, gonna have empathy for the person that they’re with … not just your clients, but the family, too. … I think that’s what makes the best doula, when you can connect your feelings with someone else’s feelings … you’re willing to be there. You’re willing to give a little bit of your space for their space … putting your time on hold for them. … I try to always let my mothers know … it’s your voice that gots to be heard … It’s your voice.”

—I, Teffanie, Community-Based Doula
WHAT DOES IT TAKE?

Embracing community change requires time and commitment. We listen to what the community needs. We ask questions. We facilitate. We engage with respect. Whether we are working with new moms or with the leaders of national organizations, we hold the space so change can happen!

2014 FUNDING PARTNERS INCLUDE:

Foundations
Anonymous
The Chicago Community Trust (Unity Fund)
Crown Family Philanthropies
Irving Harris Foundation
Polk Bros Foundation
Pritzker Early Childhood Fund
Pritzker Children's Initiative
The Harry R. Halloran, Jr. Charitable Trust (The Philadelphia Foundation)
The Sophia Fund for Advocacy at Chicago Foundation for Women
VNA Foundation
W. Clement and Jessie V. Stone Foundation
W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Corporations
Anonymous
Careers In Nonprofits
Eileen Fisher
GCM Grosvenor
Navistar
SchiffHardin LLP

Individual donors like you!

For our full Annual Report and Financials for FY15, visit healthconnectone.org

Cover Photo and additional images by Leah Stern, Studio Juno