



## ***Directory of Birth Doulas in the Washington, DC Area***

Although doulas are sorted by those offering birth and post-partum support, a few provide both services. Those that provide both services note this in their personal statements and are listed in both categories.

Although doulas are sorted by state (DC, Maryland and Virginia), many serve the entire metropolitan area.

### **Birth Doulas – Maryland**

**Dawn Star Borchelt** ([largercircle@verizon.net](mailto:largercircle@verizon.net), [www.largercircle.blogspot.com](http://www.largercircle.blogspot.com), 301-283-4545), Indian Head, MD

I believe birth is a profound rite of passage for everyone involved, and my role as a doula is to be fully present to and aware of what is happening in the moment. There is no one right way to give birth; only your right way to give birth. I work with mothers and couples planning home, birth center, and hospital births to empower them to make decisions for themselves, cope with the intensity and pain of birth, and get to know their new baby. I am enrolled in the Birthing From Within doula certification program and expect to complete it circa Spring 2009.

**Tara Curtis** ([thebestdays@gmail.com](mailto:thebestdays@gmail.com), 410-236-8021), CD (DONA), Baltimore, MD

I believe that every woman deserves to have the birth of her choice. Barring medical emergencies, I believe that birth is a natural and normal part of life that is beautiful and very fulfilling. I believe that as women are different in many ways, their desires for birth can also vary. I work hard to help expectant mothers have the birth that they desire. I am a DONA trained birth Doula with over 10 years of experience. I have assisted mothers in a wide variety of situations, including but not limited to natural, epidural, cesarean, medicated, and hypno-births, breech presentation, and twin births. I have also been honored to assist married, single and lesbian parents. Nearest Hospital: Franklin Square Hospital.

**Stephanie K. Firestone** ([firekrone@yahoo.com](mailto:firekrone@yahoo.com), cell 301-580-0982), Rockville, MD

I am completing certification as a DONA birth doula. I am intrigued by the physical-spiritual connection enabled by the birth experience. I bring this spirit to my work assisting women and families to be empowered through the delivery of their child.

**Ann Griswold** ([anngriswold@gmail.com](mailto:anngriswold@gmail.com), 410-971-6028), Baltimore, MD  
DONA-trained.

**Jessica Groves** ([Jessica@TrustingOurBodies.com](mailto:Jessica@TrustingOurBodies.com), [www.TrustingOurBodies.com](http://www.TrustingOurBodies.com), 443-507-0571), AAHCC, CD (DONA), Central MD

I'm a certified childbirth educator and birth doula teaching the Bradley Method of natural childbirth. I assist couples seeking childbirth classes and doula services to aid them in achieving a natural, normal birth. I focus on providing my couples with comprehensive education, information and resources to birth at home, in a birth center or in a hospital using midwifery or obstetrician's care. Bradley focuses on relaxation, being very informed about birth options including how to avoid unnecessary obstetrical interventions, drugs and procedures, practicing with labor rehearsals, watching DVDs of various types of births, providing birth stats and facts to help you towards making your decisions of where and with whom to birth, breastfeeding and parenting information



and much more! My couples have access to a class yahoo group filled with hundreds of files on 50+ topics on pregnancy, labor, birth, postpartum, breastfeeding and baby care. As a doula, I provide 24/7 support via cell phone and email to my clients and help them through the last weeks of pregnancy as well as providing labor support and postpartum support. To date, my low-risk clients have a 100% unmedicated birth rate and enjoy the empowering experiences they've achieved. I have experience at homebirths, waterbirths, hospital births, birth center births and with VBACs. I don't look at my services as a job but instead am filled with passion about educating others about their options and assisting couples determined to have the birth they want on their terms! I serve the Central Maryland and Southern Pennsylvania areas.

**Kat Haines** ([diamou@earthlink.net](mailto:diamou@earthlink.net), <http://empoweredbirth.typepad.com>, 202-257-8007), Takoma Park, MD

Certified ALACE doula and certified prenatal yoga instructor. I am certified to teach prenatal yoga and have been teaching yoga for four years. I have three beautiful children. My first child Khady, birthed by cesarean, pushed me to understand our culture of birth and its impact on birthing moms. Fenimore, born at home, a vaginal birth after cesarean, solidified my desire to become a homebirth midwife. Nettie, also born at home, renewed my goal to help women birth with power and passion. My goal is to help moms/couples be the decision-makers throughout their pregnancy/birth and to birth with empowerment.

**Nichole Johns** ([star87girl@yahoo.com](mailto:star87girl@yahoo.com), 443-801-6513), Maryland

I believe birth is an experience that a woman should walk away from feeling as if she could climb Mt. Everest. I believe the female body was well designed to give birth and that every woman holds within her the strength to do it. As a doula, my primary duty is assist a woman in getting the birth experience that she feels is best for her. I have experience with unassisted, hospital, breech, and VBAC births and am willing to work with families in need at a reduced cost.

**Lorrie Leigh** (443-545-5303), 9337 Cornshock Ct., Columbia, MD

Mother of six and Bradley certified educator and experienced birth assistant in home, birth center and hospital settings.

**Netsitsah Manela** ([netsitsah@hotmail.com](mailto:netsitsah@hotmail.com), 240-997-5319), Reisterstown, MD

I am honored to support my sisters through the incredible journey of labor and birth. I work with respect and compassion for mothers and families and trust women's bodies to know how to give birth. I have attended births in hospitals and birth centers and am a homebirth mom, myself. I speak Mandarin Chinese, am comfortable working in Jewish communities, with women of color, families of any faith background, and am open to all. My relevant training includes: ALACE labor assistant training 2005, MANA conference 2006, neonatal resuscitation training 2006, Midwifery Today conference 2008 and a Birthing Hands DC workshop on massage for third trimester and labor: "Closing the body, opening the heart – Mexican traditional techniques for postpartum". I was a student midwife at the Ancient Art Midwifery Institute and have attended 13 births as of October 2008.

**Kelsey Marcionette** ([allyn8917@yahoo.com](mailto:allyn8917@yahoo.com), cell 443-386-7968), Frederick, MD

I am a birth doula working towards certification with DONA. I believe that every woman can benefit from having a doula, no matter what type of birth she chooses to have. During my certification process I am working as a low-cost doula. I will attend hospital, birth center, and home births.



**Maria Mayzel** ([mariamayzel@yahoo.com](mailto:mariamayzel@yahoo.com), 703-447-5841), Baltimore MD  
DONA certification in progress with plans for completion by Summer 2009. All certification requirements met except for childbirth education. I will serve clients throughout the DC Metropolitan area and some rural areas in Maryland. Prefer not to travel more than one hour from Baltimore for multiples (second or subsequent baby) delivering naturally since these moms can deliver within the hour. I have assisted primips (first baby), multiples (second or subsequent baby), vaginal deliveries with and without anesthesia and caesarian-sections for a number of moms of various races and cultures. I am fluent Spanish/English for patients who prefer labor support in their native language. Since I am reaching my official certification, I am charging based on a sliding scale (\$250-\$500 depending upon income). I am a full-time student and my biggest limitation is my clinical hospital schedule since I am unable to leave the hospital to attend a birth. I always work with other back-up doulas of equal experience level so that my clients are fully covered in the event of my absence. In addition, I am a nursing student at University of Maryland with expected graduation December 2009. In summer 2009, I will participate in the Summer Nurse Residency Program in Labor and Delivery at University of Maryland Medical Center. I have been a volunteer birth doula with the Family Health and Birth Center since 2007 and a volunteer prenatal patient advocate and labor support volunteer with the Whitman Walker Clinic's Washington Free Clinic Prenatal Program since 2005. I have other seven years experience with non-governmental organizations and government agencies in maternal, child and reproductive health. As Ina May Gaskin says, "your body is not a lemon". I fully believe that birth is a natural process and every woman is capable of having the birth experience she and her partner desires. I hope to be a part of your experience, both helping you achieve your desired birth outcome as well as establish immediate breastfeeding postpartum. I honor and respect what my client wants while always working to achieve a delicate balance with her medical team to ensure that her desired birth outcome is achieved. References available upon request.

**Betsy Merbitz** ([sacredjourneyschildbirth@gmail.com](mailto:sacredjourneyschildbirth@gmail.com), [www.alace.org/md](http://www.alace.org/md), 708-567-1944), Baltimore, MD

On the sacred journey of childbirth, bring along a friend! As a certified doula, I can offer my experience and support. I am happy to work with many types of women: younger and older mothers, straight and queer families, home and hospital births. Certified doula through ALACE.

**Ashton Nesmith** (240-625-8572), Hagerstown, MD

Certified doula through Childbirth International. After a terrifying birth experience of my own, and no one there to support me with the right outlook I felt the need to research doulas for my next birth. I realized after seeing how positive their role is in a birth, I decided I could do nothing better than become one, and have a positive impact on other expectant mothers and their families. I believe doulas provide great support before, during, and after for a successful, enjoyable birth experience.

**Sheila Patton** (202-423-1682), AAHCC, CD (DONA), Bethesda, MD

Experience with single mothers, VBACs, and others. As a labor support doula, I support mothers in whatever decisions they make. I try to help them realize their ideal birth experience. I believe that birth is safest and most rewarding for those who choose not to use medication during labor and delivery.

**Karen Phelps** ([doulakare@gmail.com](mailto:doulakare@gmail.com), home 410-997-5852, cell 410-608-5097), 11744 Morningmist Lane, Columbia, MD



**Jennifer Rowe** ([jnnrw@yahoo.com](mailto:jnnrw@yahoo.com), 443-312-2111), Baltimore, MD

I am a DONA International certification candidate. I am also a candidate for ICEA childbirth educator certification, and I have a Bachelor's degree in psychology. I believe that pregnancy, labor, and birth are normal and healthy processes for the majority of women. I attend births in homes, birth centers, and hospitals. My goal is to help each woman have the best possible experience as she defines it.

**Dawn Single** ([douladawn@aol.com](mailto:douladawn@aol.com), [BrighterBabies@ChesapeakeBirthCompanions.com](http://BrighterBabies@ChesapeakeBirthCompanions.com), [www.ChesapeakeBirthCompanions.com](http://www.ChesapeakeBirthCompanions.com), 410-866-8454, 410-608-5991), CD, Baltimore, MD  
Chesapeake Birth Companions has birth and postpartum doulas ready to support you before, during and after either an unmediated or medicated birth with relaxation, breathing, position changes and information to help you have a satisfying enjoyable birth.

**Ursula Sabia Sukinik** ([Usukinik@verizon.net](mailto:Usukinik@verizon.net), [www.BirthYouDesire.com](http://www.BirthYouDesire.com), 301-231-5122), AAHCC, MD

My goal as a doula is to help the birthing mother by assuming her goals as my own. I can do this in many different ways that the parents choose. Some of those ways are to physically support the mother with massage, labor positions, aromatherapy, a hand to hold and an ear to listen to. I offer continuous support and reassurance to the partner and family. Supporting and encouraging the coach in his/her style rather than replace it. I can provide explanations of medical procedures and interventions when needed and attend the family before, during and after the birth. When children are present I can support and calm siblings who are attending the birth. I also offer breastfeeding support and I can supply the family with birth notes and birth pictures. These choices can help a mother to look back at her birth with a sense of pride, empowerment and identity. I have been attending births for over nine years have attended over 140 births. I am a childbirth educator in Maryland and birth doula. I serve Maryland and DC.

**Ed Wilhelm** ([lewilhelm@aol.com](mailto:lewilhelm@aol.com), home 301-585-4925, cell 301-233-9841), Silver Spring, MD  
I've been fortunate to help at 16 births, most of them home births. My role has varied from being the only attendant to a midwife/doula helper. Though I am personally biased towards home birth, my role as a doula is to help the woman/family experience birth the way they want and to welcome their new family member. The primary roles of a doula are, first, a teacher. This involves the pregnant lady and the rest of her family. This occurs before, during, and following labor and birth. Second, a doula provides physical and emotional support to the woman to help her experience the birth of her baby. For philosophical reasons, I do not accept payment. I work strictly as a volunteer doula. I've entered the DONA training program and will complete the preliminary training with the workshop in December 2008.

### **Birth Doulas – Virginia**

**Tina Casey** ([poisongroupie26@hotmail.com](mailto:poisongroupie26@hotmail.com), [www.a-mothers-love.com](http://www.a-mothers-love.com)), Northern Virginia  
Tina Casey takes clients from the whole Northern Virginia area. She is careful to schedule her clients, so as there will not be any possibility of her not being available for your birth. Her promise to you is to be there for you at any time and every step of the way. She wants her clients to walk away with a satisfying and more relaxing experience of their labor and delivery. Tina is a 33-year-old mother of three children. She has a background in the medical field and has been a nurse for the last five years. She has experience in family medicine, pediatrics, dermatology and obstetrics and gynecology. Her work is her passion and she has a long-term goal of continuing her education and becoming a certified midwife. Tina is DONA-trained.



**Brenda Coulson and Tara Voigt** (Brenda 703-945-2104, Tara 703-615-4571, [www.yourbody-yourbirth.com](http://www.yourbody-yourbirth.com)), Northern VA

We serve women in Northern VA, DC and Bethesda Navy in MD. We believe that all women deserve knowledgeable, compassionate support with their birth. As a doula, our role is to provide continuous physical, emotional and informational support to the mother before, during and just after childbirth. No matter what your ideal birth involves, we will help you make truly informed decisions about your birth preferences. We work with couples who seek an unmediated birth to those that want pain medication. Brenda is DONA-trained. Tara is ALACE-trained.

**Virginia Fleischman** ([nursego20@hotmail.com](mailto:nursego20@hotmail.com),

[www.freewebs.com/tenderheartsandhandsdoulas/index.htm](http://www.freewebs.com/tenderheartsandhandsdoulas/index.htm), 804-643-7606), Richmond, VA

I believe that birth should be as natural and non interventional as possible. Noting that I believe that a doula can assist in achieving that but the bottom line is that the doula is there to support the mother and father in their choices even if it is not that end or is contrary to the doula's desires. It is their birth. I believe that since I am a mother of four and an RN that the right environment would be a hospital setting but I would be interested and would likely fit in a home birth with a seasoned midwife present if this is legally acceptable option. I trained with DONA through a workshop for birth doula. I also am certified as a postpartum doula through Full Circle Childbirth and did a post-partum depression workshop through Maternitywise. I am currently training through Childbirth International as a birth doula and childbirth educator. I also did a childbirth education workshop through Charis Childbirth Services. I have been as RN since 1990 and currently do pediatric home health with special needs children.

**Maria Mercedes Olivieri** ([mmolivieri@aol.com](mailto:mmolivieri@aol.com), 703-455-4828, cell 703-868-0659) CD (DONA), 7027 Veering Lane, Burke, VA 22015

My goal is to help families have the kind of birth they want by providing a warm and caring environment, as well as the support and information they need to make informed decisions. I have had experience with a VBAC and have been a doula for over two dozen births in hospitals throughout the DC metropolitan area – ranging from Potomac to Holy Cross, Reston to George Washington University. I am a retired Federal official doing what I'd wanted to do when I grew up: being involved in the miracle of birth. I am the mother of three adult children – two of them were totally natural – and breastfed all of them. I helped teach Lamaze in the 1970s and presently teach Comfort Measures for Birth class at George Washington University Hospital. I am trained as a Childbirth Educator and as a Massage Therapist. Because I firmly believe that any woman who wants a doula should have one, I can offer extended payment plans or barter for services. Further, I will provide discounted services to low income families and pro-bono services to military families where the father is deployed.

**Loralee Pendergast**, Birthing From the Heart Maternity Services ([KLAERJ@Verizon.net](mailto:KLAERJ@Verizon.net), [www.birthingfromtheheart.com](http://www.birthingfromtheheart.com), 703-779-2945), CCE, Leesburg, VA

I have a passion for birth and helping families have better birth experiences as well as better postpartum experiences. Women instinctively already know how to give birth, so I offer guidance and allow women to discover their own abilities and support them in whatever birth choices they make. The result is a relaxed, confident and empowered mom who will always remember her birth as the joyful experience that it is meant to be. I have experience with natural births, as well as births requiring medical intervention and cesarean births. I am a certified childbirth educator with Birth Works International. I have birth doula training through DONA and am in the process of getting my birth doula certification through Childbirth International. I am also certified in infant, child, and adult CPR/AED and first aid through the Red Cross. I am a member of DONA,



BirthMattersVA, and International Cesarean Awareness Network (ICAN) and several online birth communities. I offer Birth Works childbirth preparation classes, birth and postpartum doula services.

**Alana Rose** ([alana@mindbodybirths.com](mailto:alana@mindbodybirths.com), [www.MindBodyBirths.com](http://www.MindBodyBirths.com), 703-850-7952), Arlington, VA

My philosophy on birth is that the more confidence and trust a woman and her supporters have in herself and her body, the more healthy and joyful the birth experience will be. I am a great match for couples who are seeking natural birth, and who take responsibility for their care by attending independent childbirth ed. I'm also a HypnoBirthing practitioner, so I am a strong believer that the mind and body are one, and cannot be considered separately. Check out my website and call me anytime to see if we might be a match!

**Katy Vega** (home 540-338-6563, 703-431-2844), 19262 Shelburne Glebe Rd., Leesburg, VA

### **Birth Doulas – Washington, D.C**

**Heidi Bachman** ([hbachman@aol.com](mailto:hbachman@aol.com), 202-832-6923), CD (DONA), LCCE, Washington, DC  
Labor and Birth are normal. Each woman is capable and unique in how she experiences birth and all women deserve a supportive, nonjudgmental environment in which to give birth. As a doula, I support the woman and her partner, or other birth support person, physically and emotionally. I will come to your home, after labor has started, and to the birthing venue you have chosen at any hour of the day or night. My role is to help women and their support person understand what normal birth looks like so they can think through questions they should ask their practitioner and make informed decisions as the process unfolds. I am familiar with a range of pain coping techniques both pharmacological and non-pharmacological. I use position change, hot and cold packs, massage, aromatherapy and other techniques to aid the process of labor and ease physical and emotional discomfort. I have worked in hospitals, birth centers and homes and have experience with multiples, breach presentation and VBAC. I am a DONA certified birth doula and a Lamaze certified childbirth educator.

**Magali Barbaran** (cell 202-415-2702), Washington, DC  
DONA in-training doula. Volunteer doula at the Family Health and Birth Center. Bilingual in Spanish and English. Yoga teacher.

**Kirsten Bean**, Birthpath Doula Services ([kirsten316@gmail.com](mailto:kirsten316@gmail.com)), Washington, DC  
I believe in the innate capacity of every woman to create and accompany new life into this world. My role as a doula is to be a steady support and comfort to you and your partner throughout labor. I will draw upon my DONA training to offer you suggestions that may ease your labor, make you more comfortable and thus fully allow you to be empowered by the birthing process. In birth as in life, we all must find the path that is right for us. I am a DONA-trained doula working towards full certification, therefore I offer my services (a pre-natal visit, labor and delivery and a postpartum visit) at a reduced rate.

**Claudia Booker**, Birthing Hands of DC, L.L.C. ([BirthingHandsDC@aol.com](mailto:BirthingHandsDC@aol.com), [www.BirthingHandsDC.com](http://www.BirthingHandsDC.com), 202-236-1764), CD (DONA & ICTC), CCCE, LLLI BPC and BPCPA, Washington, DC

For over five years, Claudia Booker has served approximately 200 women in the Washington DC, Maryland and northern Virginia areas as a birth doula in hospital, birth center, and home birth



settings and as a midwife birth assistant in birth center and home birth settings in achieving the pregnancy and birth they envisioned. Claudia has extensive experience serving as a birth doula and midwife birth assistant for women who have chosen an unmedicated birth, and for those whose pregnancies are considered high risk or whose deliveries require interventions. In addition, she has extensive experience supporting women who have chosen to deliver by VBAC and women who have chosen vaginal delivery of twins. She has served with compassion as a birth doula for several clients who were experiencing fetal demise. She has the following certifications and credentials: DONA and ICTC certified birth doula; CAPPa certified childbirth educator and Centering Pregnancy education; La Leche League certified breastfeeding peer counselor and peer counselor program manager; and certifications in neonatal resuscitation, BLS health care provider's first aid and CPR, IV venipuncture, and phlebotomy. In addition, Claudia is an experienced practitioner of Reiki, acupressure, homeopathy and herbalogy for pregnancy and labor, as well as the spinning babies technique and rebozo techniques for correcting mal-positioned babies. She has spent a portion of the last four summers being trained by Ina May Gaskin and the midwives at The Farm in advanced midwife assistant skills, and basic and advanced midwifery skills. Claudia is President of Birthing Hands of DC, which offers a full range of doula, birthing care and related services including individualized childbirth and pregnancy classes; breastfeeding instruction and support and other supplemental pre-natal and post-partum services; and pre-natal, post partum and infant massage. In addition, various workshops are offered on pregnancy, birth and post partum issues that are geared to expectant parents and the birth community.

**Katie Daily** ([katie.d.daily@gmail.com](mailto:katie.d.daily@gmail.com), home 202-518-2367, cell 202-360-2287), CD (DONA), Washington, DC

My role as a doula is to support women, their partners and families, where they are at, in pregnancy and labor. I accompany women at home, in birth centers, and hospitals. I back both medicated and unmedicated births. I am fluent in Spanish, and have experience supporting women from different cultural backgrounds and family situations. I have worked with vaginal birth twins. I also believe in the mission of a doula for every woman who wants one, and can negotiate fees.

**Amy Desautels-Stein** ([amides@gmail.com](mailto:amides@gmail.com), cell 919-923-3048), Washington, DC

I am an ALACE-trained labor assistant/doula currently working toward certification. I am very passionate about natural childbirth. I believe in the strength, grace and determination of a birthing mother. I see myself as someone who supports, empowers, educates, and advocates for a mother and her family during pregnancy, birth and the postpartum period. I am available for home, birth center, and hospital births. Until I am certified, I am working for a reduced fee.

**Elizabeth Kaufman** ([elizabethkaufman@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethkaufman@gmail.com), 202-446-4400), Washington, DC

Midwife birth assistant. ALACE and ICTC trained doula. La Leche League BPC. Aquadoula (tub for water births) rentals.

**Miri Levi** ([doulaforlife@gmail.com](mailto:doulaforlife@gmail.com), 917-572-9719), Washington, DC

I am a DONA trained doula serving the DC, Virginia, and Maryland area. As a doula, it is my responsibility to support the mother and her family through this incredibly exciting and sometimes nerve racking time. I am available throughout the entire pregnancy, birth, and early postpartum time as a source of information, support, confidant, and advocate. I am there for whatever you need from coping techniques to a calming force in the midst of the storm. Whether you choose to give birth at home, at the hospital, or a birthing center, I will be with you.



**Anna Park-Sargent** ([annaparksargent@yahoo.com](mailto:annaparksargent@yahoo.com), 917-361-2159), Washington, DC  
Thoughtful, calm, knowledgeable postpartum doula, longtime childcare provider and certified holistic health and nutrition counselor offering postpartum care for the whole family. I am available for low cost labor support doula services. I received my training as a postpartum doula at Seattle Midwifery in 2002 and as a labor support doula with Alana Stein in New York City in 2005. I am not certified. I am a Holistic health and nutrition counselor certified by the Institute for Integrative Nutrition in New York City, NY in 2008. I have also worked as an apprentice in western herbalism.

**Therese Robinson**, Body's Way of Natural Healing, Inc. ([Appointments@bwnh.org](mailto:Appointments@bwnh.org), [www.bwnh.org](http://www.bwnh.org), 202-271-8143), CMT specializing in prenatal/labor massage, CD (ALACE & ICTC), LLLI BPC & BPCPA, Washington, DC  
I bring optimal care and the gift of healing through touch, renewing a woman's spirit through her rights of passage to motherhood; offering birthing support and anti stress care for mothers-to-be preparing for birth. My goal is to help women and their partners achieve the birth they desire and empower them with laboring skill before, during and after labor. My objective is to assist expectant parents to formulate what is important to them during labor, birth and working cooperatively within the birth team to help realize these goals. As a birth care companion, I am trained to support women and their families with their choice to where they birth be it a home, birth center or hospital birth. Body's Way of Natural Healing (BWNH, Inc.) provides services of stress care management and birth care assistance. My anti-stress methods include Esalen™ Massage, LaStone™ Therapy, Reflexology, Reiki, Prenatal/Labor Massage and birth care services which includes birth companion support, breastfeeding peer counseling, Gentle Touch™ classes and Belly Casting.

**Heather Wilson** ([heatherannwilson@gmail.com](mailto:heatherannwilson@gmail.com), [www.heatherwilsondoula.com](http://www.heatherwilsondoula.com), 202-360-1138), Washington, DC  
Certified doula, DONA International and apprentice, certified nurse-midwife. I believe that most laboring women thrive in an environment that supports the normalcy of birth and is as low-intervention as the mother desires. I see doulas as upholding and/or helping to create such an environment, respecting the intimacy of birth, and serving as reassuring guides. My role varies from very active physical support (i.e., massage, counter pressure, positioning) to quiet coaching and emotional encouragement. I support women desiring the full spectrum of birth experiences and, in partnership with the care team, work to enable a woman to have her ideal birth. I have about 1½ years of experience as a midwife's apprentice. This clinical knowledge allows me to better inform my clients about evidence-based practice and communicate effectively with medical staff.

**Bridget Wood** ([bridget@verabirth.com](mailto:bridget@verabirth.com), [verabirth.com](http://verabirth.com), 202-249-0959), Washington, DC  
In birth, a woman realizes her true capacity and thus frees deep ripples of lasting love within herself and within those close to her. I want to support, comfort, and empower women so that they can overflow with love during and after birth. I am a Takoma, DC-based birth doula pursuing DONA certification, seeking clients, and offering reduced rates. I was a public school Spanish teacher for five years, so I'm excited to incorporate my bilingualism into my service. I survive by love, endurance, and humor, and I am eager to join birthing mothers in welcoming our newborn friends!



## ***Directory of Post-Partum Doulas in the Washington, DC Area***

Although doulas are sorted by those offering birth and post-partum support, a few provide both services. Those that provide both services note this in their personal statements and are listed in both categories.

Although doulas are sorted by state (DC, Maryland and Virginia), many serve the entire metropolitan area.

### **Post-Partum Doulas – Maryland**

**Mary Bailey** ([maryebailey@gmail.com](mailto:maryebailey@gmail.com), home 301-920-0041, cell 202-251-4338), Takoma Park, MD

As a postpartum doula, I assist new parents in developing their own parenting instincts, to become the experts on their own baby, and help them find the resources that help them with the transition to parenthood. I focus on the concept of the fourth trimester in my practice. I assist in helping to assure that a postpartum network is in place and to care for practical needs, so the mother or couple feels mentally free to concentrate on bonding with the newborn and the mother's physical recovery. I provide emotional support, aid with comfort measures for the mother, help with breastfeeding, meal preparation, light housework, errands, assistance with babywearing and cloth diapering, and hands-on help with infant and sibling care. I am also available for prenatal consultation and assistance with preparing for welcoming the baby into the family and stocking the freezer with meals. I have experience with a variety of family situations, including twins and single mothers. I have completed the DONA postpartum training, and am in the final stages of completing the certification. I have studied pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding for several years, am a La Leche League leader, am CPR certified, serve on the board of Birth Options Alliance, and have been a registered dietitian in a variety of health care settings since 1997. Most importantly I am the mother of two young boys! I am located in Takoma Park, MD, and serve lower Montgomery County, and parts of DC and Prince George's County. Day, evening, and weekend shifts are available. I am happy to do shorter, "check-in" visits or longer shifts. I am willing to negotiate rates and/or barter for services in cases of financial hardship or for single mothers.

**Tina Casey** ([poisongroupie26@hotmail.com](mailto:poisongroupie26@hotmail.com), [www.a-mothers-love.com](http://www.a-mothers-love.com)), Northern Virginia  
Tina Casey takes clients from the whole Northern Virginia area. She is careful to schedule her clients, so as there will not be any possibility of her not being available for your birth. Her promise to you is to be there for you at any time and every step of the way. She wants her clients to walk away with a satisfying and more relaxing experience of their labor and delivery. Tina is a 33-year-old mother of three children. She has a background in the medical field and has been a nurse for the last five years. She has experience in family medicine, pediatrics, dermatology and obstetrics and gynecology. Her work is her passion and she has a long-term goal of continuing her education and becoming a certified midwife. Tina is DONA-trained.

**Lois Ecker**, Love 'N Care ([www.lovincaredoula.com](http://www.lovincaredoula.com), 410-284-8355), CPD, CLC, Baltimore, MD  
Love 'N Care is a placement agency for doulas, baby nurses and nannies. Our certified postpartum doulas, lactation consultants, baby nurses/newborn specialists and nannies have the education, experience and background necessary to ensure a positive and comforting experience for your loved ones. Our Postpartum Services are tailored to meet each family's specific needs and may include any of the following: mother care, newborn and sibling care, adoptive and/or surrogate



situations, multiple births, preemies, breast and bottle-feeding support, postpartum women's health and nutrition, light meal preparation, baby and children's laundry, pre- and post-natal education and consulting, layette shopping and nursery organization, infant massage, avoiding colic, traveling with a newborn specialist. What makes Love 'N Care unique: continuity of care with services provided by one postpartum professional, comprehensive in-home services offering full range of postpartum in-home services, and personalized postpartum family plan. We individually tailor my services to meet the unique needs of each family member, focusing on family's wants and needs. We offer the education and expertise of postpartum professionals (certified postpartum doulas, certified lactation counselors, with over 40 years of hands-on baby nurse/newborn specialist and infant nanny experience. We have newborn nursery experience in a hospital setting. We offer extensive emotional support and are experienced with children with special needs (medical special needs, prematurely, developmental delays, etc.). We have had training in infant and child CPR and first aid. We take pride in our high standards and supreme quality of service. Our newborn expert will educate the family on evidence-based techniques and updated information that have been proven by the medical profession. Our newborn expert is trained in childbirth recovery, early infant care, breast bottle-feeding support, and postpartum depression/psychosis.

**Gabriele Schilz** ([gshilz@mindspring.com](mailto:gshilz@mindspring.com), cell 415-200-8850), Takoma Park, MD

While also trained and experienced as a birth assistant, I currently provide post-partum services to Maryland and DC families. The immediate period after birth is delightful and can be quite demanding. My emphasis in post-partum care is on helping the family find its rhythm with baby, breastfeeding consultation, baby care, nutrition advice, and providing support for the bonding process. I typically have one to two pre-birth meetings with the family to discuss wishes and needs and get to know each other, as well as arrange for post-partum care, which is then provided on an hourly basis. I received my doula training through "Natural Resources", San Francisco, CA in 2001 and worked as homebirth midwife assistant in San Francisco, CA 2005-2007.

**Dawn Single** ([douladawn@aol.com](mailto:douladawn@aol.com), [BrighterBabies@ChesapeakeBirthCompanions.com](mailto:BrighterBabies@ChesapeakeBirthCompanions.com), [www.ChesapeakeBirthCompanions.com](http://www.ChesapeakeBirthCompanions.com), 410-866-8454, 410-608-5991), CD, Annapolis, MD  
Chesapeake Birth Companions has birth and postpartum doulas ready to support you before, during and after either an unmediated or medicated birth.

### **Post-Partum Doulas – Virginia**

**Virginia Fleischman** ([nursego20@hotmail.com](mailto:nursego20@hotmail.com), [www.freewebs.com/tenderheartsandhandsdoulas/index.htm](http://www.freewebs.com/tenderheartsandhandsdoulas/index.htm), 804-643-7606), Richmond, VA  
I believe that birth should be as natural and non interventional as possible. Noting that I believe that a doula can assist in achieving that but the bottom line is that the doula is there to support the mother and father in their choices even if it is not that end or is contrary to the doula's desires. It is their birth. I believe that since I am a mother of four and a RN that the right environment would be a hospital setting but I would be interested and would likely fit in a home birth with a seasoned midwife present if this is legally acceptable option. I trained with DONA through a workshop for birth doula. I also am certified as a postpartum doula through Full Circle Childbirth and did a post partum depression workshop through Maternitywise. I am currently training through Childbirth International as a birth doula and childbirth educator. I also did a childbirth education workshop through Charis Childbirth Services. I have been a RN since 1990 and currently do pediatric home health with special needs children.



**Amber Nielsen** ([amber@motheringthemom.com](mailto:amber@motheringthemom.com), [www.motheringthemom.com](http://www.motheringthemom.com), 703-868-9466), CD (DONA), Herndon/Reston, VA

A certified postpartum doula (through DONA), La Leche League leader, and certified Happiest Baby on the Block instructor. Also a former childbirth educator and mother of four. As a postpartum doula, I provide in-home postpartum support for the new mom. I offer breastfeeding support, instruction in newborn care, help with household tasks (meal preparation/laundry/errands), newborn and sibling care, and emotional support so that the new mom can rest, recover, and transition smoothly into her new role. I typically spend four hours/day with a mom, more frequently immediately following birth, and tapering off as she recovers physically, breastfeeding becomes well established and she gains confidence in her new role.

**Beth Youmans**, Momma Coach Postpartum Doula Services ([Lbyoumans@comcast.net](mailto:Lbyoumans@comcast.net), [www.MommaCoach.com](http://www.MommaCoach.com), 703-522-3117), DONA Trained, Northern VA

Whether introducing a new baby to an existing family system or first time parents, I am committed to making that adjustment easier through my postpartum doula services and gentle "coach" -- like approach! As I "coach" a family during the newborn season, it is my hope to encourage, nurture, educate, and empower that family to a place of steady confidence. My qualifications include: DONA trained postpartum doula; more than 15 years as a certified Bradley Method instructor; more than three years as an independent childbirth educator, CPR certification (infant, child, and adult); neonatal resuscitation training; breastfeeding and postpartum counseling; twin experience; postpartum depression training. I am a member of both DONA and La Leche League International.

### **Post-Partum Doulas – Washington, DC**

**Claudia Booker**, Birthing Hands of DC, L.L.C. ([BirthingHandsDC@aol.com](mailto:BirthingHandsDC@aol.com), [www.BirthingHandsDC.com](http://www.BirthingHandsDC.com), 202-236-1764), CD (DONA & ICTC), CCCE, LLLI BPC and BPCPA, Washington, DC

For over five years, Claudia Booker has served approximately 200 women in the Washington DC, Maryland and northern Virginia areas as a birth doula in hospital, birth center, and home birth settings and as a midwife birth assistant in birth center and home birth settings in achieving the pregnancy and birth they envisioned. Claudia has extensive experience serving as a birth doula and midwife birth assistant for women who have chosen an unmedicated birth, and for those whose pregnancies are considered high risk or whose deliveries require interventions. In addition, she has extensive experience supporting women who have chosen to deliver by VBAC and women who have chosen vaginal delivery of twins. She has served with compassion as a birth doula for several clients who were experiencing fetal demise. She has the following certifications and credentials: DONA and ICTC certified birth doula; CAPPa certified childbirth educator and Centering Pregnancy education; La Leche League certified breastfeeding peer counselor and peer counselor program manager; and certifications in neonatal resuscitation, BLS health care provider's first aid and CPR, IV venipuncture, and phlebotomy. In addition, Claudia is an experienced practitioner of Reiki, acupressure, homeopathy and herbalology for pregnancy and labor, as well as the spinning babies technique and rebozo techniques for correcting mal-positioned babies. She has spent a portion of the last four summers being trained by Ina May Gaskin and the midwives at The Farm in advanced midwife assistant skills, and basic and advanced midwifery skills. Claudia is President of Birthing Hands of DC, which offers a full range of doula, birthing care and related services including individualized childbirth and pregnancy classes; breastfeeding instruction and support and other supplemental pre-natal and post-partum services; and pre-natal, post partum and infant massage. In addition, various workshops are offered on pregnancy, birth and post partum issues that are geared to expectant parents and the birth community.



**Miri Levi** ([doulaforlife@gmail.com](mailto:doulaforlife@gmail.com), 917-572-9719), Washington, DC

I am a doula in training. I just took my birth doula course a couple weeks ago and will be taking the postpartum doula training the first weekend of December 2008. I believe in offering families the information they need to make educated decisions about their birth. I am an advocate of natural birth but respect any choice made by the mother. As a doula, it is my responsibility to support the mother and her family through this incredibly exciting and sometimes nerve racking time. I am available throughout the entire pregnancy, birth, and early postpartum time as a source of information, support, confidant, and advocate. Whether you choose to give birth at home, at the hospital, or a birthing center, I will be with you.

**Margie Lidoff** (202-270-6893), Washington, DC

I am in private practice and am also affiliated with the Breastfeeding Center. I've been a doula for about 3½ years, following a long career as a therapist and tutor/teacher. I have an 11-year-old and still do some teaching. I serve the DC metro area, and have worked with families from various cultures and different family constellations. Some are first-time parents, some single, some adoptive, some with twins, some with older siblings. I enjoy the variety and learn something from each client. While I typically work in the home or a family member's home, I have also worked in a hospital and am open to alternative settings. My commitment is that I should complement the current family setting, never compete with it or try to displace a family member. My job is to support the new mother, baby, and anyone else in the household as decided by each client. I provide direct newborn care, sibling care, breastfeeding assistance, cooking, running errands, accompanying to doctor's appointments and the like. My fee is \$35 an hour for one child, \$45 for twins, with some discounts available.

**Anna Park-Sargent** ([annaparksargent@yahoo.com](mailto:annaparksargent@yahoo.com), 917-361-2159), Washington, DC

Thoughtful, calm, knowledgeable postpartum doula, longtime childcare provider and certified holistic health and nutrition counselor offering postpartum care for the whole family. As a postpartum doula I provide: emotional and physical support to the new mom and family; new baby basics; sleep, bathing, baby wearing etc.; breast feeding support; light cooking and nutrition consultations; light house keeping and errands; sibling care; accompaniment to doctors' visits; and when necessary, referrals to other practitioners. My style is supportive, open minded, creative and relaxed. I am in your home to hear your birth story, help you find your groove with your new babe, to play with your older child or make food for you or your family. I am always pleased to answer any questions and make sure you have the care, support and love you need in this amazing and life changing time. My job is to support you in becoming the parent you want to be. I offer my services to all families and welcome adoptive, two mom/dad and single parents as well as moms of older babies struggling with postpartum depression. I greatly enjoy but am not limited to working with families interested in attachment parenting. My rate is \$25 hour and locations must be metro/bus accessible. I received my training as a postpartum doula at Seattle Midwifery in 2002 and as a labor support doula with Alana Stein in New York City in 2005. I am not certified. I am a Holistic health and nutrition counselor certified by The Institute for Integrative Nutrition in New York City, NY in 2008. I have also worked as an apprentice in western herbalism.



### **Glossary of Acronyms**

**AAHCC = American Academy of Husband Coached Childbirth** ([www.bradleybirth.com](http://www.bradleybirth.com))

An instructor in the Bradley Method of childbirth education who has been certified by the Academy of Husband Coached Childbirth.

**AED = Automated External Defibrillator** ("defibrillator")

A portable electronic device that automatically diagnoses the potentially life threatening cardiac arrhythmias (uneven or no heartbeat) and is able to treat them through defibrillation, i.e., the application of electrical current that stops the arrhythmia and allows the heart to reestablish an effective rhythm. A person certified in AED has taken training classes on the use of a defibrillator.

**ALACE = Association of Labor Assistants and Childbirth Educators** ([www.alace.org](http://www.alace.org))

A professional association that sets certification requirements for doulas and childbirth educators.

**BLS = Basic Life Support**

A level of medical care that is used for patients with life-threatening illness or injury until the patient can be given full medical care. A person certified in BLS has taken training in basic life support techniques, including treatment for drowning, hypothermia and choking.

**BPC = Breastfeeding Peer Counselor** ([www.llli.org](http://www.llli.org))

A person who has completed La Leche League's training course on breastfeeding promotion.

**BPCPA = Breastfeeding Peer Counselors Program Administrator** ([www.llli.org](http://www.llli.org))

A person who has completed La Leche League's train-the-trainer program on breastfeeding promotion. A certified BPCPA can then offer La Leche League's training course to enable others become certified breastfeeding peer counselors (BPCs).

**CAPPA = Childbirth and Post Partum Professional Association** ([www.cappa.net](http://www.cappa.net))

An organization that offers education, certification, professional membership and training to childbirth educators, lactation educators, and birth and postpartum doulas.

**CCCE = CAPPA Certified Childbirth Educator** ([www.cappa.net](http://www.cappa.net))

A person who has completed the Childbirth and Post Partum Professional Association's (CAPPA's) childbirth educator certification requirements.

**CCE = Certified Childbirth Educator**

A person who has met the requirements set by one or more organizations that certify childbirth educators such as Childbirth International, Lamaze, CAPPA, etc.

**CD = Certified Doula**

A person who has met the requirements set by one or more organizations that certify doulas.

**CLC = Certified Lactation Consultant**

A person who has met the requirements set by one or more organizations that certify lactation consultants, such as the United States Lactation Consultant Association (USLCA) and the International Lactation Consultant Association (ILCA).



**CMT = Certified Massage Therapist**

A person who has completed educational requirements at an accredited massage school.

**CPD = Certified Post-Partum Doula**

A person who has met the requirements set by one or more organizations that certifies post-partum doulas.

**CPR = Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation**

An emergency medical procedure for a victim of cardiac arrest (heart stops beating) or, in some circumstances, respiratory arrest (lungs stop breathing). A person certified in CPR has taken training classes on this technique. The training and certification requirements are different for CPR performed on infants, children and adults.

**DONA = DONA International** (formerly called "Doulas of North America") ([www.dona.org](http://www.dona.org))

A professional organization that sets certification requirements, standards of practice and a code of ethics for doulas.

**ICEA = International Childbirth Educator Certification** ([www.icea.org](http://www.icea.org))

A professional organization that sets certification requirements for childbirth educators. ICEA has three levels of childbirth educator certification: traditional, experienced and certified.

**ICTC = International Center for Traditional Childbearing** ([www.blackmidwives.org](http://www.blackmidwives.org))

A culturally diverse organization that offers prenatal and parenting classes, doula services and trainings, breastfeeding promotion and other aspects of comprehensive pregnancy support. Among ICTC's goals are increasing positive birth outcomes and decreasing infant mortality in African-American communities.

**IV Venipuncture = Intravenous venipuncture**

Drawing blood from a vein using a needle and syringe, often for the purpose of testing the blood sample.

**LCCE = Lamaze Certified Childbirth Educator** ([www.lamaze.org](http://www.lamaze.org))

An instructor in the Lamaze school of childbirth education who has been certified by Lamaze International.

**LLLI = La Leche League** ([www.llli.org](http://www.llli.org))

An international organization that encourages breastfeeding through peer support and information, and promotes a better understanding of the importance of breastfeeding in overall public health.

**MANA = Midwives Alliance of North America** ([www.mana.org](http://www.mana.org))

A professional association comprised of all types of midwives, including certified nurse midwives (CNMs), certified professional midwives (CPMs) and licensed midwives (LMs).

**RN = Registered Nurse**

A health care professional responsible for implementing the practice of nursing. RNs are licensed by the Board of Nursing in the state(s) in which they practice.



**VBAC = Vaginal Birth After Caesarian**

The practice of delivering a baby vaginally (naturally) after a previous baby has been delivered through caesarean section (surgically). There is much controversy over VBACs, as some healthcare providers are reluctant to attempt them due to increased risks. However, many advocates maintain that the risks of VBACs are overstated and that explicit and implicit bans against VBACs are responsible for the epidemic rise in caesarian births in the U.S. For more information, contact the International Caesarian Awareness Network (ICAN, [www.ican-online.org](http://www.ican-online.org)).

Glossary sources: Wikipedia ([www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)) and websites referenced above