



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 (dawnstar@largercircle.org, www.largercircle.org, 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.

By Your Side Birth (byyoursidebirth@gmail.com, www.byyoursidebirth.com, 301-725-3662)
P.O. Box 23, Fulton, MD 20759

We are a group of nine DONA-certified birth doulas serving the Washington, DC metro area. Our doulas are trained and experienced in childbirth, and provide continuous physical, emotional, and informational support to mothers before, during, and just after childbirth.

Tara Curtis (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, 301-580-0982), CD (DONA), Rockville, MD

I am a DONA-certified birth doula. I pride myself on being available to a woman as she prepares mentally, physically and emotionally for this phenomenal undertaking of becoming a mother – before, during and after the birth. My commitment is foremost to provide information to the parents-to-be and help them to determine what is most important to them about the upcoming birthing experience, and then to help them prepare for the birth and maintain perspective throughout. This is your birth and you call the shots; I am there to strengthen your resolve by providing real-time information on your status and options, gentle guidance, and compassionate care. I am intrigued by the physical-spiritual connection enabled by the birth experience and bring this spirit to my work assisting women and families to be empowered through the delivery of their child.



Cheryl L. Gilman (cgilman5@msn.com, www.discoverdoulas.com, 410-353-6834) CD (DONA)
Since 1998 I have had the opportunity to "doula" women and their families during childbirth. By serving the Baltimore Washington metropolitan area, Northern VA, Eastern Shore and Southern MD I have supported women giving birth at various birth centers, more than 11 different hospitals and at home. With experience in natural, medicated and cesarean birth I have enjoyed offering emotional and physical support to women and their husbands/partners during this intimate period of their lives. It is rewarding to educate them on their options for place of birth, prenatal care and patient rights. Breastfeeding support is a significant part of my role in the first hour following the birth and within 2 weeks postpartum. Over the years I have attended many VBACS with the desire to help women achieve their goal of a vaginal birth. I also have experience with miscarriage and stillbirth. Building a trusting relationship with women during pregnancy enhances their overall birth experience and life long memory of how they are respected and cared for during labor. This year I hope to complete my certification through Lamaze International in order to teach childbirth education. Every laboring mother deserves the opportunity to experience the joy of normal birth and make informed decisions regarding the care received by obstetricians and midwives.

Ann Griswold (anngriswold@gmail.com, 410-971-6028), Baltimore, MD
DONA-trained.

Jessica Groves (Jessica@TrustingOurBodies.com, 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, post-partum, 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 post-partum 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, <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.



Bobbie Humphrey, Special Moments Doula Services (specialdoula@aol.com, home 410-374-9565, cell 443-375-6829), CD (DONA), Central Maryland

I love supporting families as they welcome the new additions to their families. I believe in supporting my mom in what ever ways that they may need me in. I have a wide range of experience (home, hospital, unassisted and birth center births) I have worked beside Evelyn Muhlhan and Joey Pascarella as their birth assistants I have experience in labor & delivery (L&D), intensive care unit (ICU) and emergency room (ER) medicine as an RN. I am also a volunteer firefighter/emergency medical technician (EMT). I have experience working with moms that do Hypnobirthing, Hypnobabies, Bradley, Birthing From Within and the many other kinds of childbirth education that is available. I also work with DONA certifying new doulas. I provide 24/7 on call and questions for my clients along with unlimited breastfeeding support. I believe with the right support team every mom can have a great birth. I serve central Maryland and southern Pennsylvania.

Nichole Johns (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.

Elizabeth Kaufman (elizabethskaufman@gmail.com, 202-446-4400), Takoma Park, MD
Midwife birth assistant. ALACE and ICTC trained doula. La Leche League BPC. Aqua Doula (tub for water births) rentals.

Netsitsah Manela (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 post-partum". 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, 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, 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 DC 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 post-partum. 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, 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.

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, home 410-997-5852, cell 410-608-5097), 11744 Morningmist Lane, Columbia, MD

Dawn Single (douladawn@aol.com, BrighterBabies@ChesapeakeBirthCompanions.com, www.ChesapeakeBirthCompanions.com, 410-866-8454, 410-608-5991), CD, Baltimore, MD
Chesapeake Birth Companions has birth and post-partum 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, 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.

Devorah Joy Walder (info@healingspectrum.com, www.healingspectrum.com, 301-565-2700), L.A.c, CMT, The Spectrum Center for Natural Medicine, 8830 Cameron Ct., Suite 501, Silver Spring, MD

I love working with birthing mothers and their partners and families in the process of birth from pre-conception to prenatal visits to the birth itself to post-partum support and beyond. I have been a doula since 2000. I am DONA-trained at Birth & Bonding in Albany, CA. I have had the honor of being present at hospital, birth center and home births, and have provided post-partum support as well. I am a licensed acupuncturist by Tai Sophia Institute and a CranioSacral therapist with a pediatric focus. I am also a massage therapist with specialized training in pregnancy and infant massage, and have 14 years experience in this field. When I am not with my patients, I enjoy being in nature, yoga, art and time with friends and family. I live in Silver Spring, MD with my husband and our two home-birther daughters.

Ed Wilhelm (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.

Tamara Zuckerman (doulaebbitzen@yahoo.com, 336-682-1088) CD (DONA), 6619 Bonnie Ridge Drive, Baltimore, MD 21209

I am a birth and post-partum doula through DONA. My training is mainly focused on is midwifery model of care. I will support any family in their choice of birth experience.

Birth Doulas – Virginia

Tina Casey (poisongroupie26@hotmail.com, 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.

McKenzie Casad, Sage Birth (mcasadcyress@aol.com, www.sagebirthing.com, 757-553-2780) LCSW, CD (ALACE). Richmond, VA



Brenda Coulson and Tara Voigt (Brenda 703-945-2104, Tara 703-615-4571, tara@yourbody-yourbirth.com, 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,

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 post-partum 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.

Momease (customerservice@momease.com, www.momease.com, 703-739-2831, fax 703-831-8754) 500 Montgomery St., Suite 400 Alexandria, VA 22314

The birth doula assists a woman and her partner during labor to help them cope with the physical and emotional demands of birth. Numerous clinical studies have found that both mothers and babies benefit when a doula is present during birth. The doula complements your partner's efforts by providing emotional and physical support to both you and your partner. The doula works with you, your partner and the hospital staff to enhance your birth experience. She will explain and discuss childbirth procedures and practices with you, if you would like. The doula will answer your questions to help you make decisions, but does not make them for you. Our packages are designed to meet the needs and birth preferences of every pregnant woman.

María Mercedes Olivieri (mmolivieri@aol.com, 703-455-4828, cell 703-868-0659) CD (DONA), 7027 Veering Lane, Burke, VA 22015

My goal is to provide birthing families a warm and caring environment as well as the support and information they need in order to make informed decisions. I have experience with natural births, VBACs, and C-sections. I have been a birth doula for over two dozen births in 14 hospitals throughout the Washington, DC metropolitan area – ranging from Potomac to Holy Cross, Reston to Sibley and 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. Two of my three adult children were totally natural births, and all were breastfed. I helped teach Lamaze in the 1970s and presently teach a Comfort Measures for Birth class. In addition to my DONA training and certification, I have a Certificate in Massage Therapy and am in the process of getting my Virginia license. 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, 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 post-partum 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 post-partum doula services.

Alana Rose (alana@mindbodybirths.com, 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!

Laura Simpson (elyogaloca@yahoo.com, 703-864-1469) RN, Northern Virginia

I am a labor and post-partum doula, as well as an RN and nurse massage therapist. I offer packages for prenatal, birth and post-partum doula care that include massage. I have over 12 years experience and have attended births in both home and hospital settings. I offer overnight care during the first days post-partum as well as postoperative care if you have had a cesarean section. I can tailor a package to fit your specific needs. I am happy to help you bill your insurance.

Emily L. Smith (emilylousmith@yahoo.com, emmommydoula@gmail.com, 850-766-4031) Alexandria, VA

I became a DONA-trained doula after my daughter was born in 2007 at a freestanding birth center in Florida. Her birth was an unmedicated birth that left me very empowered at the choices I'd made. Now I am expecting our second baby in October 2009 for a planned homebirth. I will begin seeing clients again in January 2010. I have experience as a doula at DC Family Health and Birth Center through their volunteer doula program. As I am still completing my certification, all services are offered at a reduced rate. I believe in supporting a woman through this transitional time in her life through education, emotional and physical support, and advocating for her birth plan during labor. I hope to meet you for a free consultation and discover if we are a good match!

Mari Stutzman Smith (mari@celebratedbirth.com, www.celebratedbirth.com, 703-408-0911), Northern VA

It is our belief at Celebrated BIRTH, that a woman should be supported during her birth journey to embrace, endure, and trust the physical, emotional, and spiritual nature of labor, birth and beyond. Whether you are planning a hospital birth or a home birth our hope is that you allow yourself to be transformed by your birth. Mari is a member, Birth Resource, and Leadership Team Member for BirthMattersVA, a statewide organization focused on improving the culture of birth in Virginia by



promoting an evidence-based model of maternity care. She is also a La Leche League member and attends local LLL meetings supporting breastfeeding. In addition, she is a member of the Virginia Breastfeeding Task Force. Mari is also active in other local organizations offering natural, holistic care, and has been raised to respect and believe in the miracle of our bodies. Mari is ALACE-trained.

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

Birth Doulas – Washington, D.C

Magali Barbaran (magabar@aol.com, 202-675-8382, cell 202-415-2702), Washington, DC

I am a public Spanish high school teacher and also a certified Kundalini yoga instructor. I have been working as a volunteer doula at the DC Family Health and Birth Center since October 2008, and joining the Whitman Walker Clinic's Prenatal Patient Advocate Program.

Claudia Booker, Birthing Hands of DC, LLC (BirthingHandsDC@aol.com, www.BirthingHandsDC.com, 202-236-1764), CD (DONA & ICTC), CCCE, LLLI BPC and BPCPA, Washington, DC

For over six years, Claudia Booker has served approximately 250 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 numerous certifications and advanced level trainings so that she can augment her clients care with techniques beyond basic birth doula and midwife assistant skills including: 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 is committed to improving her skills and the services she and her company provides. She spends a portion of each year 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, LLC, 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; an Aqua Doula tub for laboring at home; and pre-natal, post partum and infant massage. A Board-certified lactation consultant is part of the team and available to help with any post partum breastfeeding issues. In addition, various workshops are offered on pregnancy, birth and post partum issues that are geared to expectant parents and the birth community.

Shayla Boyd-Gill, BirthDiva, LLC (info@birthdiva.com, www.birthdiva.com, 202-271-3240), AAHCC, CD (ICTC & DONA)

BirthDiva, LLC takes pride in guiding women and families through the sacred experience of pregnancy, labor/delivery and the postpartum days. Shayla Boyd-Gill, the founder, is a mother of four (soon to be five) beautiful children who has personally experienced birth in a hospital, birthing center and home environment. Each birth helped her to grow and share her knowledge with others that were willing to listen. She is a Bradley Method instructor, labor and postpartum doula, and prenatal belly dance instructor. BirthDiva provides a multitude of services ranging from natural childbirth classes (group and private), labor support, breast feeding consultations with our board certified lactation consultant, prenatal belly dance comfort classes, baby wearing and cloth diapering. We do not judge a woman for the choices that she makes, as it is her birth experience. We make sure that we provide a nurturing environment with physical and emotional support. Additionally, many families agree that we help them feel more confident by being a knowledge



base and having the ability to explain and prepare them for things as they occur. We offer a comprehensive package which includes two to three prenatal visits, labor and delivery support, two breastfeeding consultations, two postpartum visits, 24/7 phone and email support and much more.

Katie Daily (katiedailydoula@gmail.com, www.katiedaily.com, 202-360-2287), CD (DONA), Washington, DC

My role as a doula is to support laboring women, their partners and families in a client-centered approach. I am certified through DONA International, and am pursuing certification as a birth doula trainer and childbirth educator. I accompany women at home, in birth centers, and hospitals across the DC metro area. I am fluent in Spanish, and have experience supporting women and their families from different cultural backgrounds and family situations. I truly believe in the mission of DONA International of a doula for every woman who wants one. In order to achieve that goal I work as a birth doula at the DC Family Health and Birth Center, the only freestanding birth center in DC, to coordinate our volunteer birth doula program and provide doula services to women at risk for preterm labor.

Caitlin Givens (caitlingive@gmail.com, www.caitlindoula.com, 530-304-2543), Washington, DC

I am a student birth doula working towards my certification with DONA and am happy to offer my services for a very low fee. I have attended several births stateside as well as abroad while serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Senegal, West Africa from 2007 to 2009. I believe that birth is a natural physiological process and that every woman deserves to be supported and empowered through birth. I will attend hospital, home and birthing center births. I am comfortable with medicated and non-medicated births, because I believe very strongly that every woman's birth experience should be her experience and she should be encouraged to seek an atmosphere that suits her needs and wishes. I have also worked with the Morgan Hypnobirthing method. Additionally, I am a certified massage therapist in the state of California and find that those skills are integral to my work as a doula. I am ultimately on the track to becoming a Certified Nurse Midwife (am currently a full-time nursing student), and feel privileged and honored to begin my journey through the birthing world as a doula.

Stephanie Jones (vivasteph@starpower.net, 202-726-0762), Washington, DC

I am a birth doula working toward my certification with DONA and offer reduced rates. I am honored to support mothers-to-be through their incredible journey! My goal is to help a woman and her chosen birthing team witness her child's birth as a positive empowering experience. I am full committed to providing: (1) assistance in formulating what is important to the expectant mother before, during and after the child's birth, (2) emotional support through encouragement, reassurance and a continuous physical presence, (3) active physical comfort in the form of massage, breathing techniques and positioning, and (4) advocacy by relaying the birth mother's wishes. I work with compassion and respect for everyone included in the birthing process. I have 20 years of experience as a massage therapist. I am available throughout your pregnancy to provide prenatal massage care and Reiki. I have attended several hospital births and have experience in natural childbirth, inductions and with women who have chosen to have an epidural. I am also a mother with a 28-year-old daughter (whom I delivered naturally) and am looking forward to someday helping to bring my grandchild into this world.

Therese Robinson, Body's Way of Natural Healing, LLC (appointments@bwnh.org, www.bwnh.org, 202-271-8143), CMT specializing in prenatal/labor massage, CD (ALACE & ICTC), LLLI BPC & BPCPA, Washington, DC



Therese Robinson founder and owner of Body's Way of Natural Healing, LLC (BWNH) a certified massage therapist brings optimal care and the gift of healing through touch. Her passion and desire as a nurturing "Mother Spirit" serving in stress care management, have lead her in an exciting direction, which is to assist and educate women through their 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 were they birth be it a home, birth center or hospital birth. The Body's Way anti-stress methods includes Esalen™ Massage, LaStone™ Therapy, Reflexology, Reiki, Prenatal/Labor Massage and birth care services which includes birth companion support, breastfeeding peer counseling, Gentle Touch™ classes, belly portraits and pregnancy waist bracelets.

JoAnna Smith (joanna.jae.smith@gmail.com, 574-309-4715), Washington, DC

I am a DONA-trained doula currently working toward certification. I volunteer at the DC Family Health and Birth Center and am comfortable working with mothers from all backgrounds to achieve the birth they desire. I am also trained in working with survivors of sexual assault and am especially interested in helping women who have survived trauma have a positive birth experience.

Heather Wilson (heatherannwilson@gmail.com, 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.



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, home 301-920-0041, cell 202-251-4338), CPD (DONA), Takoma Park, MD

As a post-partum 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 assist in helping to assure that a post-partum 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 am certified through DONA International, and have studied pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding for several years. I volunteer with a breastfeeding support organization, have CPR training, 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 and a baby girl! I am located in Takoma Park, MD, and serve lower Montgomery County, and parts of DC and Prince George's County. At this time, due to the new addition to my family, I am primarily available on weekends only. Day shifts available on a limited basis- please contact me for scheduling. I am also happy to combine my services with another doula to cover the hours you need support. Most shifts take place in 2-4 hour intervals. I am willing to negotiate rates and/or barter for services in cases of financial hardship or for single mothers. I also offer placenta encapsulation services for new mothers in close-in DC areas (I will provide services to those living further out if placenta is delivered to me.) Please inquire for further details about this wonderful process, and pricing.

Tina Casey (poisongroupie26@hotmail.com, 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.

Love 'N Care (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 post-partum 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 post-partum 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, post-partum 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 post-partum professional, comprehensive in-home services offering full range of post-partum in-home services, and personalized post-partum 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 post-partum professionals (certified post-partum 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 post-partum depression/psychosis.

Momease (customerservice@momease.com, www.momease.com, 703-739-2831, fax 703-831-8754) 500 Montgomery St., Suite 400 Alexandria, VA 22314

The goal of the post-partum doula is to nurture the mother and her family into becoming parents. With professional support from the doula, the mother and the family experience success, gain knowledge and become more self-confident with their baby. The post-partum doula usually provides visits during the day. Momease has several services from 3-hour to 6-hour post-partum packages for new parents. A baby nurse is a childcare professional or certified post-partum doula who comes into your home for a few weeks following childbirth. The baby nurse helps with infant care and can educate parents on infant care skills such as feeding and bathing. She will do night feedings and/or help support the mother in breastfeeding and perform other baby-related tasks. A baby nurse will typically have extensive training in newborn care, nutrition, bottle and breastfeeding and child development. (A baby nurse hired through Momease may or may not be a Licensed Vocational Nurse.)

Gabriele Schilz (gschilz@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, BrighterBabies@ChesapeakeBirthCompanions.com, www.ChesapeakeBirthCompanions.com, 410-866-8454, 410-608-5991), CD, Annapolis, MD
Chesapeake Birth Companions has birth and post-partum doulas ready to support you before, during and after either an unmediated or medicated birth.

Devorah Joy Walder (info@healingspectrum.com, www.healingspectrum.com, 301-565-2700), L.A.c, CMT, The Spectrum Center for Natural Medicine, 8830 Cameron Ct., Suite 501, Silver Spring, MD

I love working with birthing mothers and their partners and families in the process of birth from pre-conception to prenatal visits to the birth itself to post-partum support and beyond. I have been a doula since 2000. I am DONA-trained at Birth & Bonding in Albany, CA. I have had the honor of being present at hospital, birth center and home births, and have provided post-partum support as well. I am a licensed acupuncturist by Tai Sophia Institute and a CranioSacral therapist with a pediatric focus. I am also a massage therapist with specialized training in pregnancy and infant massage, and have 14 years experience in this field. When I am not with my patients, I enjoy being in nature, yoga, art and time with friends and family. I live in Silver Spring, MD with my husband and our two home-birther daughters.

Post-Partum Doulas – Virginia

Virginia Fleischman (nursego20@hotmail.com, www.freewebs.com/tenderheartsandhandsdoulas, 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 post-partum 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, www.motheringthemom.com, 703-868-9466), CD (DONA), Herndon/Reston, VA

A certified post-partum 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 post-partum doula, I provide in-home post-partum support for the new mom. I offer breastfeeding support, instruction in newborn care, help with household tasks (such as meal preparation, laundry, errands, etc.), 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 per 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.

Laura Simpson (elyogaloca@yahoo.com, 703-864-1469) RN, Northern Virginia

I am a labor and post-partum doula, as well as an RN and nurse massage therapist. I offer packages for prenatal, birth and post-partum doula care that include massage. I have over 12 years experience and have attended births in both home and hospital settings. I offer overnight



care during the first days post-partum as well as postoperative care if you have had a cesarean section. I can tailor a package to fit your specific needs. I am happy to help you bill your insurance.

Beth Youmans, Momma Coach Post-partum Doula Services (lbyoumans@comcast.net, 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 post-partum 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 post-partum 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 post-partum counseling; twin experience; post-partum 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, www.BirthingHandsDC.com, 202-236-1764), CD (DONA & ICTC), CCCE, LLLI BPC and BPCPA, Washington, DC

For over six years, Claudia Booker has served approximately 250 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 numerous certifications and advanced level trainings so that she can augment her clients care with techniques beyond basic birth doula and midwife assistant skills including: 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 is committed to improving her skills and the services she and her company provides. She spends a portion of each year 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, LLC, 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; an Aqua Doula tub for laboring at home; and pre-natal, post partum and infant massage. A Board-certified lactation consultant is part of the team and available to help with any post partum breastfeeding issues. In addition, various workshops are offered on pregnancy, birth and post partum issues that are geared to expectant parents and the birth community.

Shayla Boyd-Gill, BirthDiva, LLC (info@birthdiva.com, www.birthdiva.com, 202-271-3240), AAHCC, CD (ICTC & DONA)

BirthDiva, LLC takes pride in guiding women and families through the sacred experience of pregnancy, labor/delivery and the postpartum days. Shayla Boyd-Gill, the founder, is a mother of four (soon to be five) beautiful children who has personally experienced birth in a hospital, birthing center and home environment. Each birth helped her to grow and share her knowledge with others that were willing to listen. She is a Bradley Method instructor, labor and postpartum doula, and prenatal belly dance instructor. BirthDiva provides a multitude of services ranging from natural childbirth classes (group and private), labor support, breast feeding consultations with our board certified lactation consultant, prenatal belly dance comfort classes, baby wearing and cloth



diapering. We do not judge a woman for the choices that she makes, as it is her birth experience. We make sure that we provide a nurturing environment with physical and emotional support. Additionally, many families agree that we help them feel more confident by being a knowledge base and having the ability to explain and prepare them for things as they occur. We offer a comprehensive package which includes two to three prenatal visits, labor and delivery support, two breastfeeding consultations, two postpartum visits, 24/7 phone and email support and much more.

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.



Glossary of Acronyms

AAHCC = American Academy of Husband Coached Childbirth (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)

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)

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

BPCPA = Breastfeeding Peer Counselors Program Administrator (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)

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

CCCE = CAPPA Certified Childbirth Educator (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)

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)

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.ictcmidwives.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.

L.Ac = Licensed Acupuncturist

A person who has received training in acupuncture and is licensed in his or her state. Licensed acupuncturists generally receive from 2,500 to 4,000 hours of training in Chinese medical theory, acupuncture and basic biosciences.

LCCE = Lamaze Certified Childbirth Educator (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)

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)

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).

Glossary sources: Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org) and websites referenced above