



# Breastfeeding Exclusive

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## Carolina BEBES Student Group Makes Its Debut

Carolina BEBES made its debut early this year by hosting two successful events on UNC's campus. The first event, organized by Rebecca Costello, Pam Dardess, Elizabeth Jenson, and Hannah Pollet (founding members of BEBES), was a film-screening of "The Business of Being Born." Following the screening, a panel—consisting of a doula, Rebecca Costello; midwife, Kim Dau; childbirth educator, Ruthie Wiley; lactation consultant, Mary Rose Tully; and a new mother, Jamie Brie Murray—led an interesting discussion among attendees. The following week, BEBES held their inaugural organization meeting, in which the group generated numerous ideas regarding their involvement in campus and community activities. Also discussed was the development of a monthly brown bag education series for students and faculty. The first lecture in this series is scheduled for April 20 at 12pm and will be led by Pam Dardess. Pam will present her research findings examining attitudes towards breastfeeding among white and African American women. Further details will soon be available on the CBI website.

For more information, contact Hannah Pollet at pollet@email.unc.edu.

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## Welcoming New Faces to the Carolina Breastfeeding Institute

As CBI continues to grow, we are pleased to welcome several new faces:

**Thea Calhoun-Smith** has joined CBI as the Business Services Coordinator (Program Assistant). She comes to CBI with experience at UNC Medical School and years of work in the pharmaceutical industry and says that her current position allows her to blend what she learned in both environments. Thea notes the passion that everyone brings to the job at CBI. She notes the positive environment, "there are no big I's or little u's – it's just everyone working together to accomplish the goals of CBI."



**Barbara Cameron, MA, MSW**, has joined CBI as Project Director of the "Breastfeeding-friendly Childcare in Wake County." Barbara's passion for breastfeeding stems from her experience mothering her two small children. She states that "it's wonderful to be working with smart and thoughtful people who care about breastfeeding as much as I do."



**Nathan Nickel**, PhD candidate, has joined CBI as a Graduate Student Researcher, working on the Breastfeeding-friendly Health Care Initiative. Nathan was drawn to CBI's "focus on real-world application of public health theories and methods" and the chance to work on a project "that will ultimately change hospital practices to promote breastfeeding in NC." Nathan sums up the experience of working at CBI by saying, "We are all in this together. The camaraderie that exists here is spectacular."



“The goal of the symposium was to re-orient the paradigm in which breastfeeding is viewed as a “lifestyle choice” to a paradigm in which it is a civil right, a human right and a social justice issue.”

## Donor Milk Banking in North America

The Human Milk Banking Association of North America (HMBANA) currently has 11 HMBANA member milk banks. In 2008 the banks dispensed over a million ounces of donor milk from hundreds of mothers.

The March issue of *O Magazine* had a compelling article written by NC journalist Bonnie Rockman, featuring stories on donors and recipients associated with the Mothers’ Milk Bank at WakeMed in Raleigh and other HMBANA member milk banks. Although the featured donor is a mother who donated several thousand ounces of expressed milk after her preterm triplets

died, the more typical donor is a mother who is breastfeeding her healthy term infant. These mothers take time out of their busy days to express an extra 2-6 ounces to share with babies who need human milk when their own mothers cannot provide it. Each of these mothers is a hero to the families of the many babies whose lives were improved or saved by donor milk.

Research continues to support human milk as the standard of care for feeding all pre-term infants. To find out more about donor human milk banking, being a donor or ordering donor milk go to [www.HMBANA.org](http://www.HMBANA.org).

## 4th Annual Breastfeeding and Feminism Symposium: From Birthplace to Workplace

One hundred and twelve participants from 11 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico and from 4 countries gathered in North Carolina on March 26-27, 2009 to examine the issue of breastfeeding “From Birthplace to Workplace” from feminist and other perspectives. The purpose of the meeting was to work together in a transdisciplinary manner to create a policy agenda for action to promote breastfeeding. The goal was to re-orient the paradigm in which breastfeeding is viewed as a “lifestyle choice” to a paradigm in which it is a civil right, a human right and a social justice issue. This new paradigm ensures the social, economic and political considerations necessary to promote, protect and support breastfeeding by enabling the mother and child to succeed.

This group, including academics and service providers, civil servants and elected officials, mothers and babies, and business owners and community organizers and volunteers, found many areas of agreement and common concerns. Outcomes of the meeting included a consensus statement with specific suggestions for feasible and immediate actions in the United States that take into account current economic conditions, based on evidence-based ideas about the importance of breastfeeding and the environmental factors that make it possible.

In order to improve breastfeeding across all racial, ethnic and economic groupings for the health of the nation and in the context of recognition of women’s rights, the group stands ready to protect, promote and support all efforts to enhance and facilitate the advancement of breastfeeding and feminism. The consensus statement calls upon government and civil society decision-makers to take steps towards protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding. Specific recommendations are based in birthing, immediate postpartum, homecoming and workplace.

The symposium was held at the University of North Carolina Greensboro campus and was hosted by the UNCG Center for Women’s Health and Wellness and the UNC Carolina Breastfeeding Institute. In addition, the Office on Women’s Health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services sponsored this meeting along with Trader Joe’s in Chapel Hill, NC and Women’s and Gender Studies at UNCG.



Paige Hall Smith, mother of the symposium series, speaking to participants about women’s experience with breastfeeding and work

## Note from the Director: Thoughts on the Media Hype

Dear Friends:

2009 has been an exciting year to date, with ups and downs and sideways' for breastfeeding momentum. At CBI our work in North Carolina is taking off. The baseline data collection instrument for breastfeeding in health care settings and in child care settings are ready to go, and work is being planned for years to come. We co-hosted two important international meetings (see pages 2,4) and will be participating in the Lactation Consultant Comprehensive Update.

Also, during the last quarter, much *sturm und drang* surrounded an article in the Atlantic Monthly, "*The Case Against Breastfeeding*." The article written by Hanna Rosin, a writer who admittedly lacks experience and expertise in critiquing scientific literature, argues that the science behind the benefits of breastfeeding is not sound. She also purports that the popular media's promotion of breastfeeding gets in the way of women's achievements. Unfortunately, being presented as a case against breastfeeding, it only misinforms the public and creates ill-informed controversy and finger pointing. This article could have addressed the same issues more productively in the context of the need for health systems, social systems,

governments and families to enable women to breastfeed their children, reframing the question to address the true problem: lack of societal support.

CBI prepared a response noting the breadth and depth of evidence, the fact that US society does indeed make it difficult for women to succeed in breastfeeding, and that there are many important issues that deserve public discussion and support. To view the letter to the editor and co-signers, visit the CBI website.

We hope that someday soon the energy now being dedicated to creating conflict among mothers will be rather dedicated to helping women to have accurate information upon which to form decisions. Such headlining and "critique" of the health literature could undo the efforts of decades of public and private health education. It would be very sad indeed if this article results in even one mother choosing not to breastfeed.

On a happier note, the amount of information on the website continues to grow logarithmically. Please check out our website at [www.sph.unc.edu/breastfeeding](http://www.sph.unc.edu/breastfeeding). Feedback and suggestions are appreciated ([cbi@unc.edu](mailto:cbi@unc.edu)).

### CBI Supports the One Million Campaign: Enabling Women to Breastfeed



Initiated by the International Baby Food Action Network—Asia (IBFAN-Asia) and CBI associate Arun Gupta, the One Million Campaign brings together people from all over the world to take action in enabling women to breastfeed. Actions for this campaign range from signing petitions demanding support for breastfeeding women to individual acts such as pledging to support at least one breastfeeding woman.

To join the campaign visit: [www.onemillioncampaign.org](http://www.onemillioncampaign.org).



Miriam Labbok,  
Director of the  
Carolina  
Breastfeeding  
Institute

"It would be very sad indeed if this article [in the Atlantic Monthly] results in even one mother choosing not to breastfeed."

## Recent and Upcoming Events/Updates

### **World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action- North America (WABA-NA) Meeting, March 27-28**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of WABA-NA was held March 27-28 in Greensboro, NC. Twenty-four representatives of various breastfeeding organizations attended from Canada, the United States, and Mexico. The meeting was hosted by La Leche League International and the Carolina Breastfeeding Institute. In addition, CBI hosted a reception for attendees of both the Breastfeeding and Feminism Symposium (see page 2) and the WABA-NA meeting.

### **Childbirth Connection hosts their 90th Anniversary Symposium, April 3**

The theme of this year's symposium is "Transforming Maternity Care; A High Value Proposition." Miriam Labbok is a member of the Maternity Care Clinicians and Health Professions Educators Workgroup of the Symposium Stakeholders.

### **La Leche League of North Carolina 2009 Area Conference, April 3-5**

La Leche League of North Carolina will be hosting their annual breastfeeding and parenting conference in Raleigh, NC April 3-5. Miriam Labbok will speak to attendees on enabling breastfeeding locally and globally. In addition, Jan Tedder, a friend of CBI, will be speaking about ways to understand and respond to baby communication.

### **Lactation Consultant Comprehensive Update (LCCU), April 27-May 1**

The Lactation Consultant Comprehensive Update is an in-depth overview of human lactation and breastfeeding management. It is designed to prepare experienced clinicians to provide optimal breastfeeding care to mothers and babies, as well as prepare clinicians for the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE) Exam. Mary Rose Tully is one of the organizers and course directors for the LCCU and Miriam Labbok will be presenting one of the guest lectures.

### **Mother's Day, May 11**

CBI wishes mothers everywhere a very **Happy Mother's Day!**

### **The 7th Annual Triangle Breastfeeding Alliance Conference, May 13**

The theme of this year's conference is "Breastfeeding Support: Beyond the Basics for Special Populations." Mary Rose Tully will be presenting evidence-based care practices of late preterm infants at the meeting.

### **Charlotte AHEC Mother's Special Gifts Conference, May 18**

The purpose of this program is to promote breastfeeding initiation and maintenance by providing current, evidenced-based, clinically relevant concepts of breastfeeding and lactation management. Miriam Labbok and Mary Rose Tully will be presenting at this conference in Charlotte, NC.

### **Global Health Council Conference, May 26-30**

The Global Health Council's 36th Annual Conference, "New Technologies + Proven Strategies = Healthy Communities", will highlight the ways in which technologies in combination with best practices and evidence-based policies improve health around the world. Miriam Labbok will be leading the mid-year meeting of the APHA International Health Section on Thursday, May 28.



*"To create an enabling environment, at the community, state, national and global levels, in which every mother is supported to achieve optimal infant and young child feeding and care, and every child achieves its full potential through the best start on life."*

We welcome your feedback: please send your comments and suggestions to [cbi@unc.edu](mailto:cbi@unc.edu).