

**BIRTHING THE FUTURE®**  
a Colorado Non-Profit Corporation

**MISSION STATEMENT**

**The mission of Birthing The Future®, the non-profit, is to gather, synthesize, and disseminate the finest world wisdom about birthing and the care of mothers and babies from pre-conception to the first birthday.**

**We inform and inspire people about the significance of birthing in each of our lives.**

**We focus upon what is ideal for mothers and babies to promote their physical, psychological and spiritual well-being and the development of their full potential.**

**We do this by blending ancient feminine wisdom with modern scientific and clinical knowledge about the mother and baby in the context of their family, community and society.**

**IN THE U.S. WE WILL TARGET TWO AUDIENCES:**

**1. high school and college age men and women in the United States and Canada, an audience that is largely ignored and misinformed.** This vast audience is best reached through the visual arts, multi-media and theatrical events, music and television. We will seek to change attitudes that will change their behaviors and decisions about birthing. We will bring entertaining and informative multi-media events to college campuses and also hold mini-camps for those who interested in learning more about birthing for their personal lives and future professions. While on college campuses we will also go into the classroom and involve professors and the local community.

**2. community-based professionals and agents of change (both professionals and lay women and men) from other cultures (including our own indigenous people) who are actively working in birthing in their communities/societies.** We will identify those who have a grasp of the current issues, knowledge of ancient as well as modern wisdom, and a passion for creating social change. We will seek out those who have created unique models that ought to be replicated. We will then gather together, bringing people who want to learn from each other and who have diverse wisdom to offer each other. These gatherings will create a worldwide web of relationship and we will disseminate what we learn through our website and publications.

**INTERNATIONALLY WE WILL LOOK FOR THE VERY BEST IN EACH SOCIETY AND CREATE AN INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT FOR CROSS-CULTURAL SHARING**

It is our intention that this be a unique board that *truly* reflects the diverse audience for our mission, including broad ethnic and cultural diversity, age and expertise. We are creating an intentionally diverse group of eclectic individuals who, together, have the ability to reach the broadest audience. These are people who want to work in the area of mind-body-*and*-spirit, who prefer to work in a feminine way, gathering in the form of circles, and who want to create inspired projects that will engage various members of our active and diverse advisory council, as well as interested members.

**We are a membership organization** and there will be a yearly membership gathering that will include a conference with board members in dialogue. We have a contracted business consultant, Ken Farmer. Besides teaching business and marketing in colleges for 15 years, Ken for 12 years ran one of the Colorado Small Business Development Centers, directly helping artists, small businesses and non-profits grow and work effectively. We also have a bookkeeper, a non-profit attorney and CPA assistance.

**NOTE:** Birthing The Future® will build upon, and make wise use of, the fine work of many existing birthing-related organizations. These include a multitude of birth education groups, doula training programs and organizations (such as DONA), the Coalition to Improve Maternity Services (CIMS), the Alliance for Transforming the Lives of Children (aTLC), the Association for Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health (APPPAH), The World Breastfeeding Alliance (WABA), the Baby Friendly Initiative, and Safe Motherhood.

BTF will *NOT* initiate formal research. We *will*, however, often make reference to evidence-based practices and significant research.

BTF will *NOT* set up ongoing programs outside the U.S. However, we *will* identify and highlight various positive practices and models from around the world, traditional as well as modern and often record them visually in order to better share them with the rest of the world.

Some of our projects, such as our college multi-media events and camps for would-be community agents of change, will be ongoing “traveling road shows”. Others will be one-time gatherings. Our work is intended to open hearts as well as minds and to place birthing as a major social, ecological, public health, spiritual, political *and* personal issue.

## **ABOUT OUR FOUNDING BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Our board of Directors** will have approximately 15 members, one of whom is the founder Suzanne Arms, who will act as the initial Director. We have selected a fine non-profit coordinator and assistant to Suzanne, named Caroline Savory. Caroline began work this month. Caroline has years of multi-cultural and international experience living in Nepal and several southeast Asian cultures, having been a women’s studies major in college (Colby, in Maine). Caroline is passionate about our mission and comes with years of working in a law firm as an office administrator and an executive recruiter.

Five or more members of the board live outside the continental U.S. A core group of the board, approximately 5-7 in number, will oversee the month-by-month workings of the organization. To insure the proper balance on the board, the following criteria is being used for board selection, with each person meeting one or more of the following criteria:

#### **OUR INITIAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

**Michael Schwab PhD (England/U.S.)** father of two (the first cesarean born, the second a home birth in England), trained as an attorney, a doctor of Public Health who has worked in Africa and Southeast Asia in maternal-infant nutrition and breastfeeding

**Elizabeth Gilmore (U.S.)** mother, midwife and founder of both the Taos Birth Center and the National College of Midwives, active since the inception of Midwives of North America (MANA) and Midwives Educational Accreditation Council (MEAC) of North America

**Ken Johnson PhD (Canada)** father and epidemiologist with a focus on birthing practices and midwifery care

**Tina Garzero (U.S.)** mother of 9 children and foster parent of several, grandmother and midwife who has been attending births in Maui, Hawaii for three decades and is familiar with indigenous Hawaiian practices and wisdom

**Sherry Dress (U.S.)** mother of two, rural midwife in Eastern Oregon, trained in Europe in classical homeopathy with a special interest in reaching Christian families and in working internationally

**Sobonfu Some (Burkina Faso/U.S.)** author and teacher, whose name means “keeper of the rituals” in Dagara language, who continues to live part of each year in her African village, and has a focus on healing, grief-work and creating significant rites of passage

**Suzanne Arms (U.S.)** mother and grandmother, author of 7 books, photojournalist and co-producer/director of the PBS series “100 Years of Birth”, birth center founder (The Birth Place, Palo Alto, CA), speaker, teacher and consultant in birthing, breastfeeding, bonding and early parenting and board member of CIMS and aTLC

**Heather Baker (U.S.)** pursuing a Masters Program for herbalism, a doula, birth activist, and licensed massage therapist

**Francoise Freedman PhD (France/England)** anthropologist and professor at Cambridge University in England, who studies with Brazilian shaman