

JANUARY 1, 2025 - APRIL 30, 2025

ISSUE 1, VOLUME 2

MCU IN REVIEW: A LOOK BACK AT WINTER 2025

Official Newsletter for the Midwives College of Utah Community



EST. 1980

MIDWIVES COLLEGE
OF UTAH

M I D W I F I N G M I D W I V E S

PUBLISHED MAY 2025

CONTENTS

MIDWIVES OF EXCELLENCE

- 01** **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**
Our new president introduces herself and looks forward to the future of MCU
- 02** **UPCOMING EVENTS**
Get the dates for assessments, commencement, and more
- 04** **COLLEGE NEWS**
Find out what the various college departments achieved this winter
- 06** **NEW RESOURCES**
Learn about the new registrar and electronic logging system for clinicals
- 08** **STAFF & FACULTY**
An overview of some of the changes and updates in our faculty & staff
- 09** **A FINAL FAREWELL**
Our former president gives a final farewell and a note of thanks
- 14** **DEPARTMENT FEATURE**
Get to know our Clinical Department and find out why they chose midwifery

MIDWIVES OF TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

- 19** **AWESOME ALUMNI**
From pursuing PhDs to training future generations, our alumni are making waves
- 21** **CENTERING JOY**
Learn how one MCU student is working to bring about systemic change in Missouri

MIDWIVES OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

- 23** **MOMENTS OF EXCELLENCE**
Our alumni, faculty, staff, and students achieved wonderful things this winter
- 27** **GRADUATES**
Highlighting the students that graduated between January 1st and April 30th

MIDWIVES OF PERSONAL GREATNESS

- 39** **MOMENTS OF GREATNESS**
Take a peak at moments of personal greatness in our community this winter
- 40** **CONTINUING GREATNESS**
Help us ensure that EVERYONE has the opportunity to pursue greatness



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MIDWIFING MIDWIVES

MCU provides an educational structure and an integrated learning environment for individuals to become midwives of technical expertise, professional excellence, and personal greatness—namely Midwives of Excellence



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MIDWIFING MIDWIVES

Dear Students, Faculty, and Staff,

It is with great honor and enthusiasm that I step into the role of President at our beloved college. Over the past ten years, I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the transformative power of education in midwifery. From teaching my first class in Childbirth Education to supporting our learning systems as the Canvas Administrator, to serving as Dean, I have been inspired by the dedication and passion of everyone who makes our school a vibrant and impactful institution.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge and thank Whitney Mesyef for her remarkable leadership over the past two years. Her unwavering commitment to our mission and her thoughtful guidance have left a lasting impact on our community. As Whitney steps away to focus on her family, we wish her nothing but happiness and fulfillment in the next chapter of her life.

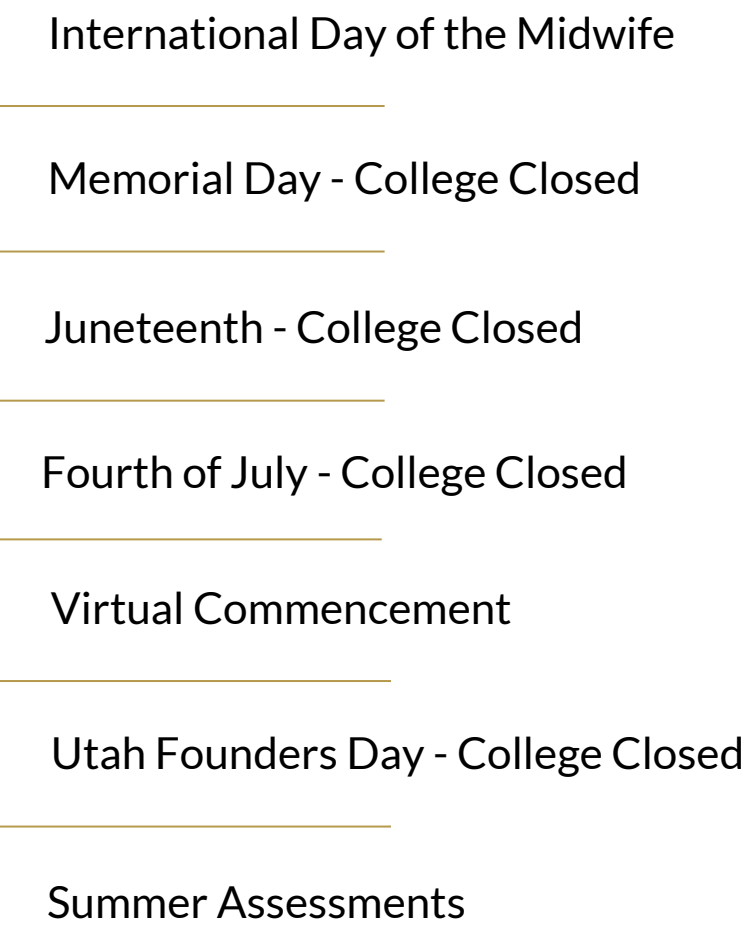
Looking ahead, I am excited about the opportunities and challenges that await us. Together, we will continue to foster an environment where you feel supported and empowered to achieve your dreams of becoming skilled, compassionate midwives. I am committed to maintaining the strong sense of community that defines our school while also exploring new ways to innovate and grow.

This term, I encourage us all to reflect on the profound purpose that unites us. As midwives educated at MCU, you will hold the privilege and responsibility of supporting families, championing wellness, and welcoming new life. The unwavering dedication of our faculty and staff in teaching, mentoring, and providing essential support is the bedrock of the nurturing and rigorous learning environment where you will flourish and develop the expertise to excel in your calling.

Thank you for entrusting me with this responsibility. I am thrilled to begin this journey with all of you and look forward to the joys and successes we will share together.

Warm regards,
Megan Koontz
President

UPCOMING EVENTS



05.05	International Day of the Midwife
05.26	Memorial Day - College Closed
06.19	Juneteenth - College Closed
07.04	Fourth of July - College Closed
07.12	Virtual Commencement
07.24	Utah Founders Day - College Closed
08.18	Summer Assessments

Midwives of Excellence

Declaring a vision for "Midwives of Excellence" is just the beginning--transforming that vision into a thriving community of excellence is our mission in action. What you'll discover in the pages ahead is only a glimpse of what's possible. Our dedicated community is actively transforming the landscape of childbirth, championing change, and saving lives, one birth at a time.

ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS

Gina Gerboth,

Midwifery Department Chair

On March 3rd Carol Tonge Mack joined faculty and staff for the monthly Lunch and Learn program to discuss Communication and Culture. The Assistant Dean of Retention in the College of Arts and Science (A&S) at the University of Cincinnati, Carol primarily focuses on providing creative and innovative strategies while collaborating with campus stakeholders to retain and graduate students.

Mack's presentation aimed to provide MCU faculty and staff with a better understanding of how culture, more than merely race and color, can impact how students hear and respond when interacting with faculty, staff, and each other. Students from the East Coast versus those from the South or Midwest, for example, may differ in how they respond. Mack's discussion explored how this cultural response, that students may consider normal and expected, at the same time can be received as aggressive and inappropriate. Through questions and discussion, Mack guided the faculty and staff in an exploration of the best practices to bridge communication.

A recording of this session is available for those staff and faculty members who were not able to attend. Check your emails for more information.





NEW TUITION STRUCTURE & COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Darliegh Webb, VP of Finance

Reminder: Our new Tiered Tuition schedule for 2026 was announced on April 9th. This change is designed to offer greater flexibility for students in every phase of their journey to become a midwife. Visit <https://www.midwifery.edu/tuition-schedule/> for full information on the upcoming changes and reach out through the [My Student Finance](#) form with any questions.

The Title IV Department has completed and submitted all required materials for the 2024 compliance audit to the reviewing auditors. This important process ensures our school maintains eligibility for federal financial aid while upholding the highest standards of equity, safety, and accountability.

While we await the auditors' feedback, we want to thank all of the departments who contributed, this is truly a team effort. Your attention to detail and commitment to compliance helps secure vital resources for our community and we appreciate you all so much. We'll share any updates as we receive them.

Questions? Contact our VP of Finance, Darliegh Webb finance@midwifery.edu.

Welcoming MCU's New Registrar

Join us in welcoming our new Registrar Cynthia Dortch. A former MCU student, Cynthia will be a familiar face to many and joins the Registrar department with a solid understanding of the program and the unique circumstances our students face in their day-to-day lives. Cynthia describes herself as “a passionate birth worker with a background in virtual assistance and nonprofit leadership.”

Cynthia's journey in birth work began a decade ago, with a deep-rooted passion for supporting military families as a labor & postpartum doula. In 2018, she began studying at MCU. Her path has evolved since then, but her focus remains on empowering birthing communities through education & advocacy.

Cynthia is a ray of sunshine who lifts the spirits of each person she encounters. She is learning her new role quickly and is already a wonderful contribution to our community. Welcome Cynthia!



Service Week

Thank you to everyone who participated during Service Week. Whether you cleaned your community or uplifted a peer, your service made a difference. We are inspired by this community's continued dedication to being Midwives of Excellence both locally and nationally.



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SERVICE WEEK

February 11th - 14th

New Clinical Resource

Typhon (an electronic logging system for clinical experiences and hours) is coming to MCU Fall 2025! This innovative tool will streamline the documentation process for our students, allowing them to focus more on their hands-on learning experiences rather than paperwork. With Typhon, students will be able to easily log their clinical hours, track their progress, and receive valuable feedback from their mentors in real-time. We believe that this system will enhance the overall educational journey, providing a more efficient and organized way to support our future midwives as they prepare to serve communities in need. We're excited to see how Typhon will empower our students and further our mission of midwifing student midwives. See announcements for rollout details and further information.



We are thrilled to announce our virtual commencement on Saturday, July 12, at 2 pm MT!

This year's carefully crafted ceremony will be more than a celebration — it's a tribute to the "why" that drives each graduate and an opportunity to ensure future midwives can follow their calling. Join us as we honor our graduates' resilience, passion, and unwavering dedication, who have answered the call to serve, especially in times of crisis. We will celebrate their journey, hear their stories, and support the future of midwifery. Let's make this moment unforgettable — together.

Bookshop.org

In addition to providing links to purchase books at Amazon, students will now notice that the Textbook List includes options for purchasing books through Bookshop.org. This change not only supports independent booksellers but also aligns with our commitment to fostering a more sustainable and community-driven approach to education. By choosing Bookshop.org, students contribute to a network that values ethical business practices and the promotion of local economies.

If students visit our bookshop at <https://bookshop.org/shop/mcu>, they will find books categorized according to topic and frequency of use throughout their education. From time to time, there will also be lists that highlight staff picks and timely resources. All affiliate proceeds go directly to the Briana Blackwelder Equal Access Scholarship Fund for student midwives.



STAFF & FACULTY

CHANGES AND UPDATES



As MCU continues to grow and evolve, so too does our Staff and Faculty. We are excited to share the latest updates on our team members and the significant transitions happening within our organization. The following page provides a glimpse into the dynamic shifts and new additions to our workforce that occurred between January 1st and April 30th, 2025.

CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR
THE MOST RECENT INFO



STAFF & FACULTY LISTING

A FINAL FAREWELL



As I sit here, preparing my farewell to MCU, my heart is filled with deep gratitude. Reflecting on the past nearly thirteen years, I am thankful for the growth, the challenges, and the countless opportunities this incredible college has provided me.

MCU is a place of transformation, largely because of the remarkable faculty and staff who make it what it is. The people I've had the honor of working with have been constant sources of support and wisdom. Together, we've nurtured the future of midwifery, and I've been privileged to witness the profound impact of our collective work.

At MCU, when we graduate just one midwife of technical expertise, professional excellence and personal greatness - we save thousands of lives. This is indeed sacred work.

The passion, resilience, and dedication of our students have been truly inspiring. It is through their stories and their journeys that I leave MCU confident in the positive impact they will have on individuals, families, and the communities they serve.

I have been honored to accompany so many of you on your personal and professional journeys, and my deepest hope is that I, too, have played a role in guiding you along the way.

Thank you to the entire MCU community for the honor of serving alongside you all these years. I have no doubt that MCU's future is incredibly bright.

Under the leadership of Megan Koontz, I am confident that this institution will continue to grow and thrive.

My deepest thanks,
Whitney Mesyef
Former President

Warmest Welcomes to...



Cynthia Dortch
Associate Registrar



Lisa Desmarais, CNM
Adjunct Faculty

We are excited to invite Cynthia and Lisa to our staff and faculty. Cynthia began working as the Associate Registrar and is now in the role of Registrar. Lisa has joined our team as adjunct faculty and will be the instructor of OB Pharmacology beginning in Summer 2025.

welcome!



Delphine Silvermoon
Core Faculty

Delphine has been a light for our students, faculty, and staff at MCU since 2014. Her kindness for all and passion for serving birthing families shine through every interaction. The impact she has had on the MCU community for these 11 years will have a lasting and profound impact for generations to come.

Thank you, Delphine, for your commitment to educating Midwives of Excellence. We are sad to see you go, but excited for you as you embark on this next chapter of your life.

thank you!

Fondest Farewells to...



Sarah Carter
Adjunct Faculty



Alexandra Kisitu
Faculty



Emily McGregor
TA



Laura Park
Registrar

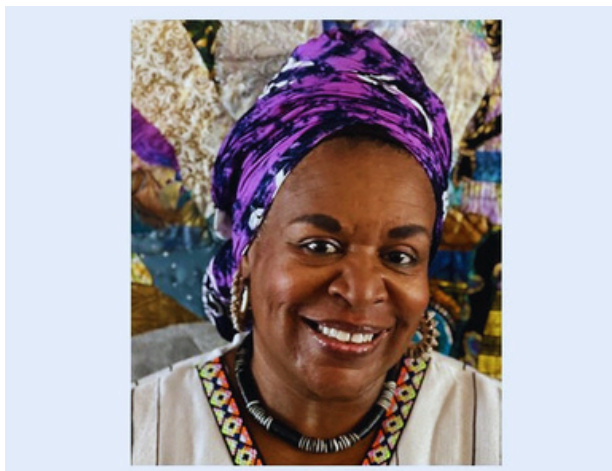


Talia Ross
TA

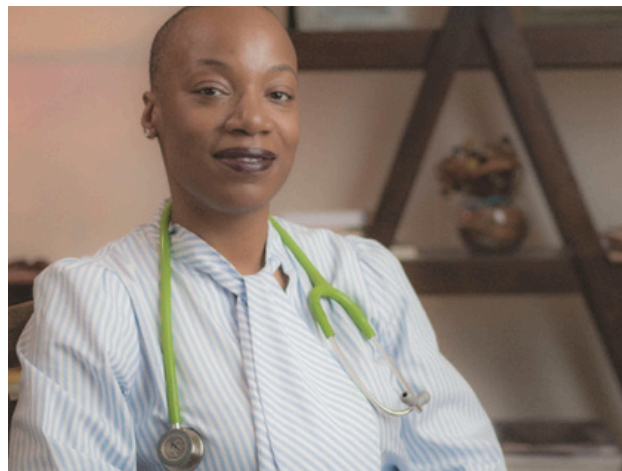
Each of these people has left a mark on the culture and spirit of MCU that will be felt for years to come. Thank you for working to develop the next generation of Midwives of Excellence.

thank you!

Transitions Within MCU



Angela Franklin
Dean of Retention and Belonging



Barbara Verneus
No longer a House Mentor -
Still with MCU as Adjunct Faculty Member



Tigist Ejeta
New - MDWF 2050
Cont. - MDWF 2100
MDWF 3050



Audra Post
New - BIOL 1050
Cont. - BIOL 2050,
HLTH 1010, SOSC 3050



Sarah Swanson
New - MDWF 1050
Cont. - BIOL 2030



After spending 10 years with MCU as a core faculty member, technical support liaison, and VP of Academic Affairs and Dean of Students, Megan Koontz will be transitioning into the role of President as of May 1st. Already a vital member of both the faculty and staff, Megan is a natural fit for the position and we are confident she will bring her usual level of excellence to this new role.

Congrats!

RETIREMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

I would like to announce my retirement from MCU at the end of the Winter 2025 term. I have worked here for 11 years this month, and I have worn many hats in those years. Being a Core Faculty member at MCU has been one of my career's most rewarding and impactful parts. I am so grateful to everyone who made this possible, supported me, and cared about me. I leave you with these words:

What is it to sit vigil at the gate of birth? It is powerful. There is a gradual suspension of time. Cover the clocks and allow this expansion. It is a rising of electric, consciousness-altering energy, surging to peak at the end. It is a funneling of focus to a pinpoint place, a hushed space where there is a singing in my head. It is the collective community village rush of energy with that new soul's first cry. It can be magical, intuitive, ecstatic, tragic, heart-lifting, and heart-breaking. To be a midwife is to live at your most courageous and your most vulnerable. I am grateful to have served students and the families they will serve. I am grateful for their newborn songs.

With love,
Delphine Silvermoon
Retired April 2025

My history with the Midwives College of Utah began as a student in 1995. Twenty-five+ years ago, in the middle of my clinical training I admitted to myself that being a practicing midwife wasn't the right fit for me. (My deep secret was that I didn't actually like attending births.) At the time, I felt so conflicted and confused as the path of my life-labyrinth began moving away from what I thought was the center.

Though I thought I'd given up midwifery for good, the labyrinth eventually wound me back to my heart-home. I was never a midwife that caught babies, but the last 30 years has given me the privilege of midwifing midwives—catching life transformations and standing at the crossroads of the birth of new lives, new ideas, new ways of being, and best of all, new midwives. This work has transformed me. I'm so excited to continue the work of midwifery in a new context—life coaching! It's the perfect life refresh and pivot for my own growth, and allows me to continue contributing to what matters to me—helping make the world a better, more beautiful and safer place for all.

My practice is hopping, so if you could use some pivoting and refresh as well reach out to me at jodiepalmercoaching@gmail.com.

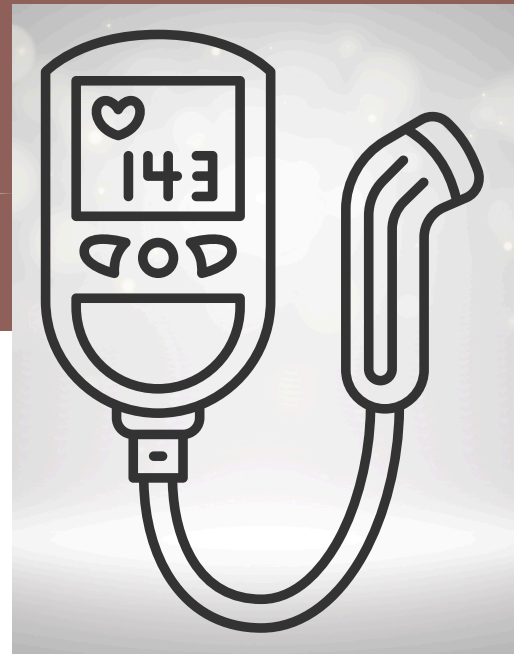
♥♥♥ (((HUG))) ♥♥♥
Jodie Palmer

Department Feature

Clinical Department

At MCU - the Clinical Department supports students and clinical faculty to establish collaborative clinical placements, understand clinical communication and skills, and to ensure integration of didactic understanding and professional requirements to best serve preceptor's and student's needs. Responsible for all the requirements of the CLNC courses, this department also coordinates assessments and plays a vital role in the planning and execution of our midwifery conferences.

*Lynette Elizalde-Robinson and Stephanie Sibert are faculty members of the clinical department, their bios will be included in a future issue of MCU in Review.



Members

Kaylee Ridd

Bryanna Hazelwood

Jenny Schultz

Lynette Elizalde-Robinson*

Stephanie Sibert *



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Preceptor Spotlight

Preceptors play a crucial role in our midwifery college, often serving as the hidden champions of education. By generously dedicating their time and resources to mentor student midwives, they are an essential component of the midwifery training process. This is just one example of the many wonderful care providers who serve as preceptors.

Dr. Jessie Fauntleroy

“Dr. Jessie has been incredibly amazing, not only as a (doctor), not only as a black woman, but as a human being overall. She has helped me grow medically, personally, spiritually and in ALL the areas. She has never been afraid to tell me about myself. It was always in a pulling me up way. You have high standards and you need to hold yourself to those. Professionally- she is an amazing, amazing person. I have never seen this from an OB. Now I expect people to exemplify this- for everybody. She is the midwife doctor. She does not operate as an MD- she is a midwife with MD credentials. In all aspects- she is an amazing woman, (doctor), wife, mother. It has been truly amazing to work with her.” - MCU Student

A five-year-olds dream turned into reality when I entered the field of obstetrics and gynecology in June 2012. I trained at the University of Buffalo in Buffalo, New York. A good portion of my training was with certified nurse midwives. As a first-year resident, I worked solely with certified nurse midwives on labor and delivery for several months out of the year. During that time, I was able to learn the techniques and gain much respect for the specialty of midwifery. I still use this training in my current practice in Minot, North Dakota. I am currently faculty for the University of North Dakota and affiliated with other programs to train medical students, resident physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and midwives. Teaching provides me an opportunity to cultivate the next generation of Women's Health providers.



Kaylee Ridd

Clinical Department Chair

Kaylee grew up in Alpine, UT, as part of a large, blended family. She graduated from the University of Utah with a BS in Sociology in 2013. During college, Kaylee began her journey as the MCU Librarian, initially working just a few hours a week. Over the years, her various roles at MCU have blossomed into a full-blown career!

Recently, Kaylee made a life-changing move to North Carolina with her partner, dog, and cat to work on her sister's farmstead. She's been embracing the transition from city life to "slow living" and is loving every moment.

In her spare time, Kaylee can be found baking, crafting, growing things, being outdoors, reading and creating or listening to music. Kaylee loves spending time with her many nieces and nephews and cherishes the role of "auntie".



Fun Fact: The midwife that delivered me as a baby was Laurine Kingston. There's an awesome biography about her called "The Midwife" that's a very interesting read!

Although I'm not a midwife myself, I have been steeped in the world of birth work my whole life. I was born at home in 1990, back when that was less common than it is today, and one of my first "jobs" as a child was helping my mother prepare packets for her doula trainings. I consider myself a champion of midwives and an advocate for the midwifery profession -- if you catch me at a birth, I'm usually the helper in the background quietly restocking snacks and fetching supplies rather than being in the midst of it all, and that is how I see my role in the midwifery world. I stand in awe of midwives and our students at MCU and the special kind of heart it takes to do this work, and I'm more than happy to be involved and keep the wheels turning smoothly!

Bryanna Hazelwood

Clinical Assessment Coordinator

I am a single mom to two girls who I love to ride roller coasters with and we can play a mean game of SuperSmash Bros. together. I completed my Bachelor in Midwifery studies at the Midwives College of Utah in 2019 and passed the NARM exam in May 2020. I own Tooele Midwifery and am a practicing CPM, LDEM in Utah. Additionally, I volunteer as the Utah Midwives Organization President, AI/AN advocate for Utah's Maternal and Infant Mortality Review Committees, and as community midwife representative with the Utah Women's Newborn Quality Collaborative. In my free time, I enjoy reading, disc golfing, being outdoors, and spending time with my loved ones.



Fun Fact: I used to be the office manager of a diesel mechanic shop and I know a generous amount of information about cars.

I witnessed the birth of my brother (in-hospital) at age 14 and knew then that I wanted to be an OBGYN. Fast forward to college and pursuing pre-med/Anthropology degree, my medical anthropology professor spent the entire semester teaching about the MMOC vs. medical model and we watched homebirth videos. This changed my entire outlook on birth, I left the program and sought out MCU. Now, 12 years later, I am back at MCU as an instructor because this institution helped raise me, not only into the midwife I am, but the woman that I identify as. I appreciate the rigorous course load and know that without the education that I received, I wouldn't have safely managed many situations with clients and their babies.

Jenny Schultz

Preceptor Liaison

Jenny was raised in Phoenix, AZ, and earned undergraduate degrees in History and Spanish in Kansas. After two years with AmeriCorps, she pursued a Master's in Public Administration and spent seven years in the nonprofit sector before transitioning to midwifery. Driven by a passion for advocacy, empowerment, and self-confidence for families, she completed her midwifery degree at MCU in 2013, including a high-volume clinical placement. Since then, Jenny has provided midwifery and well-person care in the greater Phoenix area and obtained certification as an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant. In 2016, she joined the MCU Clinical Department as the Preceptor Liaison, strengthening relationships between the college and clinical preceptors while ensuring compliance with MEAC and NARM standards. Jenny is a mother to three boys, has a highly needy dog, and enjoys running and reading when she's not at births, supporting lactation, or chauffeuring her kids.



Fun Fact: I have three middle names.....my mom had so many people she wanted to honor with my birth. And now there are only male grandchildren- so good thing she got all those names out.

My journey to midwifery was shaped by a desire for advocacy, empowerment, and supporting families from the very beginning. My background in history, Spanish, public administration, and nonprofit work helped to solidify my commitment to social justice and community well-being. Midwifery felt like a natural extension of that commitment—offering a way to provide direct care, education, and advocacy for birthing people and their families.

Midwives of Technical Expertise

Our community is actively engaged in transformative practices that challenge the status quo in pregnancy care. We are committed to enhancing the skills and knowledge of midwives, ensuring they are equipped to provide the highest standard of care. Take a look at some of the ways we are doing this at MCU and for the wider community.

Sarah Hinton graduated from Midwives College of Utah with a Bachelor of Science in Midwifery in August of 2020. After graduation, she immediately began the pursuit of her Master of Science in Midwifery and graduated from MCU with her MSM in September of 2022. In further pursuit of her effort to improve health outcomes for birthing people, Sarah has decided to pursue a PhD.

We are excited to announce that Sarah Hinton has been accepted to the prestigious Johns Hopkins School of Public Health doctoral program with a specialization in Women's and Reproductive Health.

We applaud Sarah for her continued dedication to being a midwife of technical expertise. Her impact on the world of reproductive health is an inspiration to us all.



MCU alumna and founder of AMANI Birth, Aisha Al Hajjar has traveled 14 countries since November 2024 as part of her "Where on Earth will you Empower Births?" tour. Locations of workshops and presentations include: 1) Sarajevo, Bosnia 2) Kuwait City, Kuwait 3) Jakarta, Indonesia 4) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 5) Bangalore, India 6) Mumbai, India -- still to come in the next 1 1/2 months 7) Karachi, Pakistan 8) Lahore, Pakistan 9) Islamabad, Pakistan 10) Muscat, Oman 11) Riyadh, Saudi Arabia 12) Cairo, Egypt 13) Alexandria, Egypt. Throughout this tour, she has provided training for AMANI Birth CBEs and doulas and given lectures to OBs, Midwives, and nurses on ICI and Saving Lives at Birth PPH skills.

To learn more about this incredible tour and find information on future lecture dates, visit <https://amanibirth.com/medical-workshops/>



FREE VIRTUAL PROGRAM



Sign Up Now for Doula Education

Come Hear from SciHonor Devotion

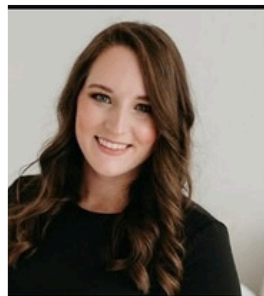
Delivering Change: THE VITAL ROLE OF DOULAS IN BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH

Join us for an engaging and educational session on the life-saving power of doulas in maternal health care. This event will explore how doulas provide critical support during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum—especially for Black birthing people who face disproportionate risks of maternal morbidity and mortality.

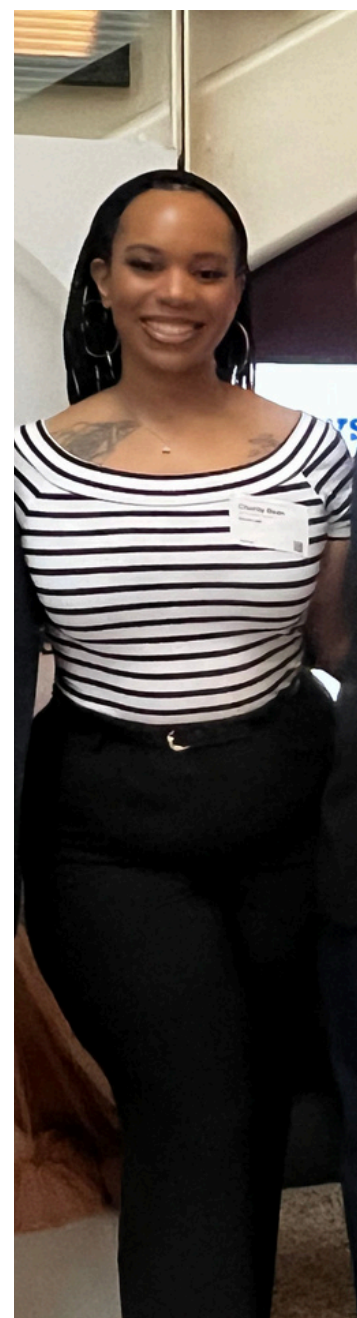
- ✓ What doulas are and what they do
- ✓ The evidence behind doula care and improved birth outcomes
- ✓ How doulas help reduce health disparities
- ✓ Why investing in community-based doulas is a step toward health equity

Recent MCU alumna, SciHonor Bey, hosted an online session titled "Delivering Change: The Vital Role of Doulas in Black Maternal Health". This free program provided community education on the role of doulas and the ways in which doulas can improve pregnancy outcomes.

MCU alumna and current preceptor, Missi Burgess, was a featured panelist at The Peach State Birth Expo. This panel of birth professionals, advocates, and experts came together to educate, empower, and inspire families as they continue the fight for birth freedom in Georgia. Missi has been very involved in the efforts to legalize midwifery in the state of Georgia and we applaud her continued dedication to this effort.



Meet the
Experts:
Our Peach
State Birth
Expo
Panelists!



MCU Student Charity Bean successfully hosted the 2nd Annual Centering Joy in the Black Birthing Experience Conference through The Doula Lab Pregnancy Resource Center in St. Louis, Missouri. This full-day event, held on April 11, 2025, brought together over 200 attendees from healthcare, community advocacy, and birth work to explore the intersection of Black maternal health, joy, and systemic change.

With more than 20 dynamic speakers, breakout sessions, and a powerful keynote by Dr. Lucinda Canty, the conference spotlighted pressing topics such as NICU advocacy, Black fathers in birth, breastfeeding equity, Medicaid reimbursement for doulas, and culturally grounded maternal care.

This event fostered community connection, inspired solution-focused dialogue, and reinforced our commitment to equity and healing in the Black birthing experience. The conference was powered through Whova with 83% attendee app engagement, over 500 profile views, and nearly 100 private peer-to-peer connections made. I'm proud to have led and organized this transformational experience for the second year in a row.

Midwives of Professional Excellence

The MCU community is a dynamic network of individuals who are passionate about transforming the landscape of pregnancy care. They are innovating practices, advocating for better health policies, and providing compassionate care that places the needs of birthing people and infants at the forefront. They are not just midwives; they are leaders in their field, shaping the future of birth practices and improving outcomes for families. These next pages celebrate the achievements of our community.

MCU student, Adonica Shaw, won the FemTech of the Year award from MedTech World in Dubai this February for her reimagined designs of the vaginal speculum. Encouraged by this win, Adonica resubmit her designs with the FDA two years after their original rejection and received an FDA exemption on 4 of her 8 designs.

Learn more about the history of these designs and her company, Wingwomen, in [this press release](#).



MCU alumna, Sarah Hinton, accepted a job as the Director of the Maternal Child Health Consultant Unit for the State of Kansas. With her extensive background in public health and her dedication to community-driven solutions, she is poised to lead transformative changes that will benefit families across Kansas.



MCU Faculty member Ruth Ann Colby Martin had the fantastically fun opportunity to speak on the Skillist Podcast with her former-students-now-experts (and fathers) running their own earth-based skills school. In the episode, titled "Making Babies with Ruth Ann Colby Martin", the three have a blast talking about childbirth in general and specifically about birthing in a limited-resource environment.

You can watch the entire podcast at [watch the entire podcast on YouTube](#) or listen to it wherever you get your podcasts.

A retrospective cohort study was conducted comparing 50 births attended by doulas that were trained through MCU alumna and faculty member, Aisha Al Hajjar, to 100 births that had no doula in attendance. The abstract of this study states that, "The current study showed more advantageous delivery and postpartum outcomes among doula care women and their infants compared to standard care, mainly for increasing the rate of initiated breastfeeding within the golden hour, exclusive breastfeeding, and reducing postpartum depression."



Cureus
Publishing Beyond Open Access



► Cureus. 2024 Jul 24;16(7):e65235. doi: [10.7759/cureus.65235](https://doi.org/10.7759/cureus.65235) [↗](#)

Effects of Doula Care on Mother and Infant Health Outcomes in Al-Ahsa Region, Saudi Arabia: A Retrospective Cohort Study

[Sakinah S Al-Zahir](#)^{1,✉}, [Rahma AlGadeeb](#)², [Sumaya AlGadeeb](#)³, [Shaimaa S Al-Zahir](#)⁴, [Bayan S Al-Zahir](#)⁵, [Zahra J Alfaraj](#)⁶, [Salman A Alalshaikh](#)⁷

Editors: Alexander Muacevic, John R Adler

MCU alumna, Marley Walters, made the decision to step into solo practice and opened Swell Midwifery. Marley will be practicing at both the Bellingham Birth Center and Mount Vernon Birth Center, as well as offering home births. Congratulations Marley on this exciting next step in your journey!



MCU alumna and faculty member, Sarah Swanson, was recognized as the runner-up for Best Midwife in her town! This recognition is a testament to her dedication, skill, and the compassionate care she provides to countless families. Sarah's commitment to her community has been unwavering, and this recognition highlights the profound impact she has made.



MCU alumna Leila Poland Whatt is committed to increasing the number of midwives in Louisiana and Mississippi. In her own words, “Over the last year, my purpose has become abundantly clear: Leave a legacy of midwives to continue the honor when I’m gone, offer their own unique and diverse practices so women and birthing folks have choices when they consider home birth, and exponentially sound the bellows for regulatory change and better outcomes in Louisiana & Mississippi!” Pictured here is the most recent gathering of midwives and student midwives.

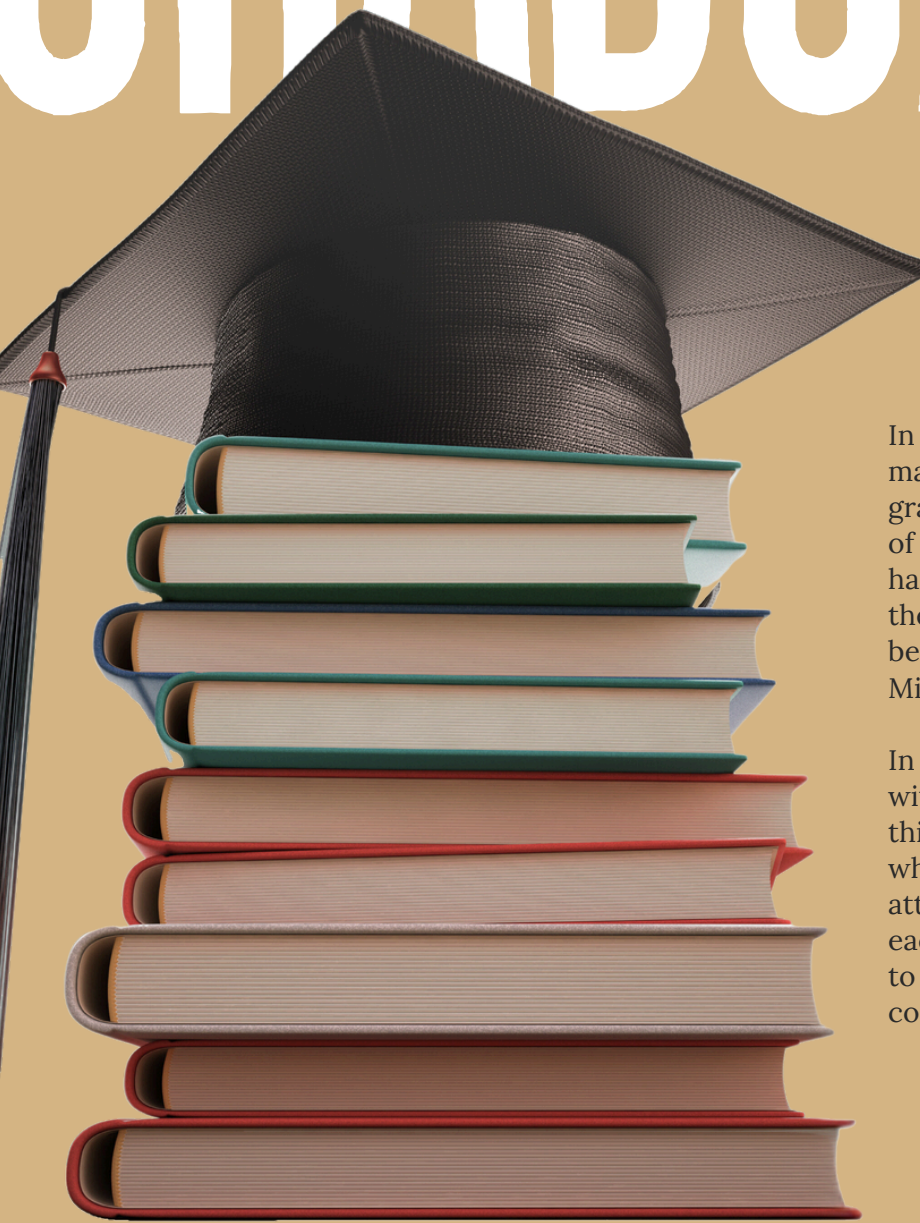


The Doula Lab, founded by MCU student Charity Bean, is the recipient of a new Birth Equity grant program. This funding allows the organization to continue to expand doula services and training, helping to reduce disparities in maternal health outcomes in Illinois.



IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE

GRADUATES



In the Winter 2025 term, we saw so many amazing student midwives graduate and move into the next phase of their journey. Each of these midwives has made incredible sacrifices and given their all towards reaching their dream of becoming a Certified Professional Midwife.

In total, we had 10 students graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Midwifery this winter. Once again, every student who took the NARM passed on their first attempt. We are so excited to highlight each of these midwives and look forward to seeing the impact they have in their communities as Midwives of Excellence.



Bachelor of Science in Midwifery

**Ciara
Lee**

**Ohio
Kentucky
Jan 2025**



Bachelor of Science in Midwifery

**Francis
Wildheart**

**Oregon
Washington
Jan 2025**



Bachelor of Science in Midwifery

**Talia
Ross**

Washington
Feb 2025



Bachelor of Science in Midwifery

**Caitlin
Balding**

Oklahoma
Feb 2025



Bachelor of Science in Midwifery

**Jordyn
Wagner**

Washington
Feb 2025



Bachelor of Science in Midwifery

**Hilary
Nichols**

**Alaska
Feb 2025**



Bachelor of Science in Midwifery

**Jenna
Montgomery**

**Oregon
Washington
Feb 2025**



Bachelor of Science in Midwifery

**Kelsey
Bains**

California
April 2025



Bachelor of Science in Midwifery

**Brenna
Neri**

California
April 2025



Bachelor of Science in Midwifery

**Taylor
Digby**

California
April 2025

Midwives of Personal Greatness

We are dedicated to midwifing midwives. In the true spirit of midwifery care, we believe this means caring for the whole individual and encouraging growth and development in all areas of life. So while we want to recognize and celebrate professional achievements, we also hold space for moments of personal growth, success, and rest.



I had the pleasure of participating in my 3rd Grader's Elementary School Career Day. I loved every moment of it! It was an honor introducing midwifery as a possible career field for these bright young minds.

Meagan Flaherty (Alumna)



ROOTED IN LOVE AND GUIDED BY GOOD FRUIT

Celebrating the joining of our lives would not be the same without you
Please join us for an evening of surprise and delight!

CHRISTY WATKINS

and

JODIE PALMER

MAY 29, 2025

Wedding Ceremony

Please be seated by
5:15 pm

Reception

6:30-9:00 PM



In Person

Bountiful Davis Arts Center
90 N Main St Bountiful, UT

Virtual Seating

<http://bit.ly/ChristyJodie>

In lieu of gifts please donate to our favorite local charity-The Wellness Farm Foundation

I'm getting married to my best friend, Christy Watkins! Thank you for allowing me to share this deeply personal and important announcement. I can't think of a community that I'd like to share it with more.

Most of you are in far-flung corners of the universe and won't be able to attend, but if you'd like to join us for an evening of surprise and delight, we are inviting you to join our virtual seating--the link is in the invitation.

Message me if you'd like a printed version to display—a keepsake of our love, rooted in strength and intention—for your fridge. And if you plan to join us in person, please do let me know.

Thank you for sharing in my joy!

Jodie Palmer (House Mentor)

MOMENTS OF PERSONAL GREATNESS

Faculty, Staff & Alumni

Annual Goal: \$12,000+

Briana Blackwelder Equal Access Scholarship Fund



Providing tuition relief for midwives serving medically underserved communities

YOU can play a role in developing
Midwives of Excellence.

YOU can save lives one birth at a time.

YOU can make a difference.

MAKE YOUR GIFT TODAY AT
midwifery.edu/donate

MCU IN REVIEW IS FOR YOU!

Share your stories, your updates, and your ideas with marketing@midwifery.edu to include in the next edition of our newsletter. The newsletter is designed to inform and inspire our community. Are you a seasoned student or recent grad with thoughts about your experiences? Are you working on a project, internship, or speaking engagement we can pat you on the back for? MCU is interested in what's going on with you. Send your updates to marketing@midwifery.edu or use this form:

<https://forms.gle/gc8KjF293rnkrMt89>



EST. 1980

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OF UTAH**

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