BirthWell Partners’ mission is to improve the health of low-resource mothers and infants in central Alabama. We do this by providing free and reduced-cost childbirth education, and by matching mothers with volunteer doulas who provide non-medical labor support and breastfeeding assistance.

Women from populations with the worst maternity health outcomes have the most limited access to evidence-based information and skilled birth support. By providing information and support, our program is a targeted intervention addressing maternal and child health disparities. We remove the barriers of cost and transportation by bringing free and reduced-cost, personalized care to the pregnant woman in the form of classes, support groups, and doula services.

Our geographic area is expanding as we begin to replicate our program in other cities in central Alabama. This past year we began providing birth doula services in the Anniston area. In the upcoming year we will be serving clients in the Tuscaloosa area.
We Train Doulas:
We increase the availability of doulas by hosting 2 trainings per year. Our scholarship program ensures that the cost of training is not a barrier, increasing the number and diversity of doulas serving families at all income levels.

This year we trained 31 doulas: 12 on scholarship and 19 non-scholarship. To date, we have held 6 doula training workshops, training 85 doulas--37 of whom received full or partial scholarships through our program.

Our Executive Director of Program Operations is the only DONA-Approved Birth Doula Trainer in Alabama. Our training provides the basic classroom education certification requirements for DONA International as well as specific preparation for work as a Community-Doula.

We Educate Women About the Normal Process of Childbirth and the Importance of Breastfeeding:
We work to prepare families with the information needed to make evidence-based health care decisions and advocate for themselves and their children prenatally, during childbirth, and while parenting.

We facilitate two monthly support groups and teach childbirth education classes at outreach locations such as JCCEO’s Early Head Start program and Aletheia House’s Mother’s Hope program. This year we provided childbirth education to 230 women.

Participants receive education about the role of proper nutrition in fetal growth and development, and are encouraged to avoid elective inductions before 39 weeks. We educate women about signs of preterm labor, and teach women effective communication with care providers, empowering them to advocate for themselves.

Q: What was the MOST helpful thing about having a doula?

A: Being able to have one-on-one support 24/7, and having such a committed resource for research and education.
We Provide Birth Doula Services:

We are committed to the idea that any pregnant woman or teen who wants the additional support of a doula can access one, regardless of her ability to pay. Our volunteer doulas are paired with clients and provide prenatal, labor, and postpartum support.

Doula services have a clinically meaningful impact on infant health. A recent Obstetric Care Consensus concluded: “Published data indicate that one of the most effective tools to improve labor and delivery outcomes is the continuous presence of support personnel, such as a doula.... Given that there are no associated measurable harms, this resource is probably underutilized.”

Our program is working to improve access to this valuable resource for all women, and this access is improving outcomes: Compared to 2013 Medicaid births in Jefferson County, the average gestational age of our clients’ babies is 39.3 weeks vs. 38 weeks, average birth weight is 7.20 lbs vs. 6.76 lbs., and 90% of our clients initiate breastfeeding vs. 52%.

References:
Many Thanks to the Organizations and Individuals Who Helped Make Our Work Possible Last Year:

Alabama Chapter of the March of Dimes  
BirthWell in Birmingham  
Brookwood Medical Center  
The Caring Foundation  
Cheaha Women’s Health and Wellness  
Faith and William Pautler Foundation  
Freshfully  
Homewood Friends and Family Chiropractic  
The Hugh Kaul Foundation  
Princeton Baptist Medical Center  
YWCA of Central Alabama  
Howard and Suzanne Bearman  
Emma Bertolaet  
Barbara Brande  
Jesanna Cooper  
Caryn Corenblum  
Truus Delfos-Broner  
Tanya Easterwood  
Natalie Ferguson  
Marion R. Fennell  
Judy & Mickey Gordon  
Michelle Keel  
Sheri Krell  
Emily Levine  
Ashley Lovell  
Audrey Oyama  
Angie Parmer  
Mary Petrus  
Mike and Judy Petrus  
Micky Rubenstein  
Rachel Schwartz  
Tina Simpson  
Beverly VonDer Pool  
Adrian Ward  
Sarah Whitver  
Martha Williams  
Seth Wolnek  
Holly Wotherspoon  
Melvin and Melissa Zivitz

“Thank you so much for being my doula and being there for me. I just wanted to make sure you knew what an amazing difference it made for me.”

Incoming Board of Directors  
2014-2015  
Beverly Brown  
Dr. Jesanna Cooper  
Truus Delfos-Broner  
Emily Hess Levine  
Audrey Oyama  
Dr. Tina Simpson  
Lydia Thurston  
Dr. Beverly VonDer Pool  
Martha R. Williams  
Jessica Casey Woods

Staff  
Dalia Abrams  
Executive Director of Program Operations  
Susan Petrus  
Executive Director of Business Operations

Financial Statement of Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>Total Revenue $30,238</th>
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<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>$5,876</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
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<td>Fundraisers/Events</td>
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<th>Expenses</th>
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Revenue Under Expenses ($6,421)

Net Assets Beginning of Year $12,810
Net Assets End of Year $6,389

www.BirthWellPartners.org