

THE GROWTH & BEAUTY  
OF BLACK SPACES



This was created to deliver a some insight of the on-going programing, relationships being built, and the curation of a Black space celebrating and supporting Black Birth.



## **LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

**“We would like to acknowledge the people whose land we are gathered on today. Present day King County is located on the traditional village sites of the Muckleshoot, Duwamish, Puyallup and many other tribes who made their homes on these lands and along these waters. Let us also acknowledge the robust Indigenous communities made up of tribal diversity that originate from around the country, and whose journeys have brought them here and to other locations by ways of forced displacement or seeking opportunities. Today the same communities celebrate their heritage, showing resilience and tenacity that would be greatly admired by their ancestors.”**

- Alphabet Alliance of Color

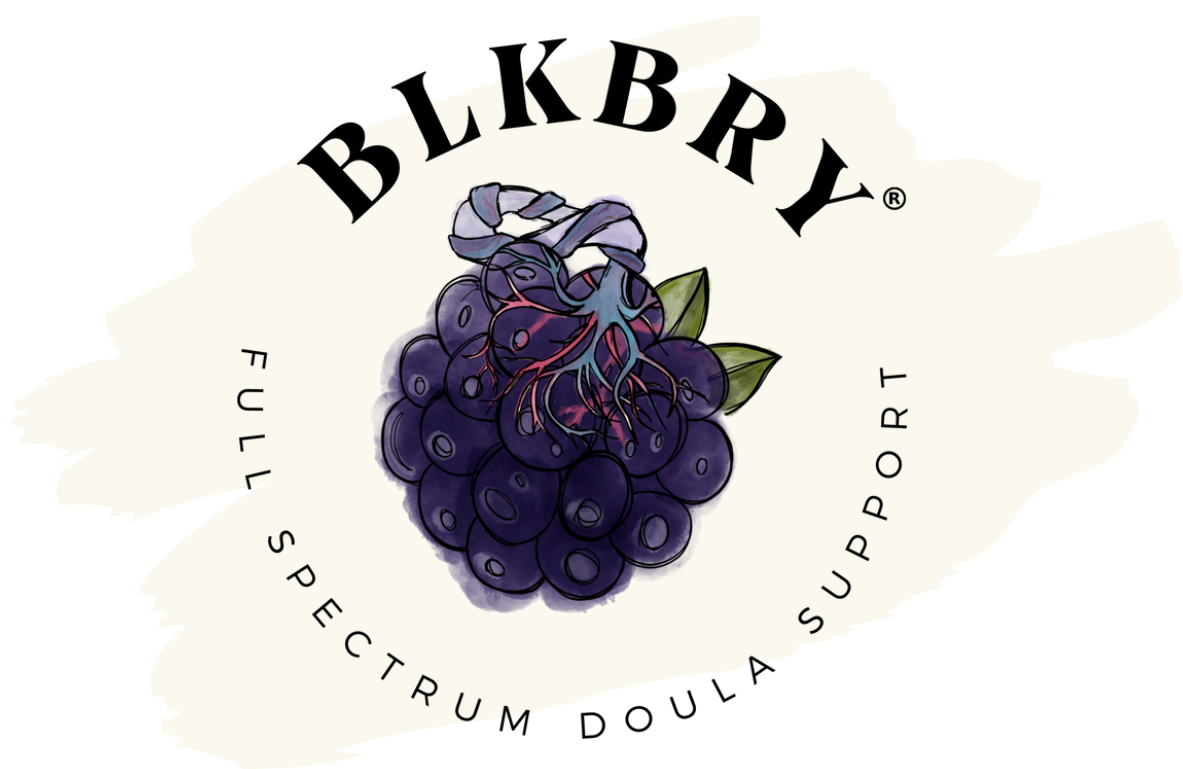


## **LABOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**"We must acknowledge that much of what we know of this country today including its culture, economic growth, and development throughout history and across time, has been made possible by the labor of enslaved Africans and their descendants who suffered the horror of the transatlantic trafficking of their people, chattel slavery, and Jim Crow. We are indebted to their labor and their sacrifice, and we must acknowledge the tremors of that violence throughout the generations and the resulting impact that can still be felt and witnessed today.”**

- Dr. Terah 'TJ' Stewart, On Labor Acknowledgements and Honoring the Sacrifice of Black Americans

# ABOUT



My birth experiences are like many Black birthing people. I was neglected, ignored, and disbelieved by my medical providers based on my race. I had a traumatic postpartum experience with MiniBoo and a traumatic birth experience with Tinkers. I made it my mission to make sure that other Black folks exploring their reproductive options would not experience the same. So, I developed a website to connect young Black, Indigenous, and People of the Global Majority (BIPGM) mothers to community based resources and organizations, but I was missing direct interactions and inclusive content. I wanted to do more. It wasn't until a great friend of mine stepped forward to support me as my postpartum doula that I discovered that this would be the path for me. So begins my journey as a Black Birth Worker and the founding of BLKBRY.

BLKBRY® is a Full Spectrum Doula, Lactation and Feeding Specialist Practice. It's also the first free-standing doula center with a community milk bank in Washington State founded and led by a Black person of enslaved Africans of U.S. descent.

BLKBRY takes a human-centered design approach by centering the experiences and needs of Black folks in reproductive, perinatal, and infant and toddler care. The curation of support programs and the physical space changes as community needs change.

Black refers to people of African descent across the diaspora (Black, Descendants of Enslaved Africans, African-American, Afro-Latinx, Afro-Caribbean, Black and Indigenous, and African Immigrant), and **BLKBRY is here for all BLACK folks!**



# JAZMIN WILLIAMS

Full Spectrum Doula • BLKBRY Lactation + Feeding Specialist™ • Certified Perinatal Nutrition Educator • Herbalist • Peristeam Hydrotherapy Student • Cannabis Doula Student • Womb Healer • Community Resource Mobilizer

I answered the calling after I experienced explicit racial bias, harm and trauma from medical providers during my perinatal period with both of my children. I wanted to make sure that no one else goes through what I went through.

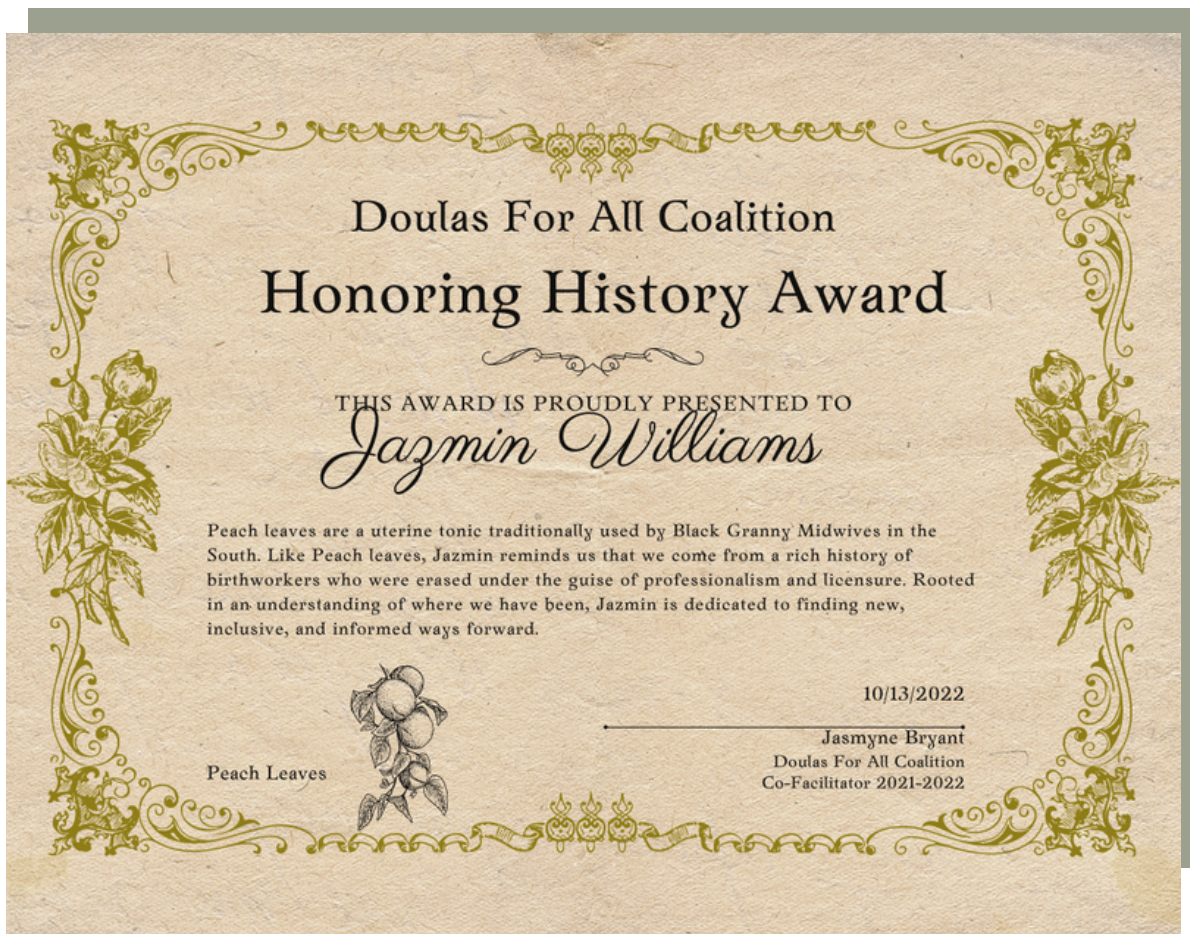
I have taken numerous trainings, learned how to amplify my voice, and to create spaces to organize community to make changes that improve Black perinatal and infant outcomes. I also focus heavily on Black families, and the invisible social work support and wrap around services needed to help our families thrive.



I am also one of the co-directors of the Black Perinatal Project (BPP). BPP is a peer-led collective that supports and sustains access and funding to perinatal support to improve the health and birthing outcomes and experiences of Black communities in Washington State.

# COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Governance Council, Odessa Brown Children's Clinic, Sep 2022 - Current
- Midwifery School Accountability Council, University of Washington, Jun 2022 - Current
- Guest Teacher of Lactation and Feeding, Whole Body Pregnancy, Sept 2022 - Current
- Highline Partners Group, August 2022 - Current
- Birth Equity Program Advisory Committee, WA State Dept of Health, Jan 2022 - Current
- Doula Mentor, NAPS Doulas, Oct 2021 - Current
- Co-Facilitator, Lactation Coalition of King County, Oct 2021 - Current
- Birth Equity Fund Advisory Committee, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Dept, Oct 2021
- NAPS Doulas Equity Consultant, Jul 2021 - Current
- Gender Program Advisory Team, Odessa Brown Children's Clinic, Jun 2021 - Dec 2021
- Guest Speaker for Childbearing Family Class, University of Washington Dept of Child, Family & Population Health Nursing, Apr 2021 - Current
- Birth Justice Organizer, Surge Reproductive Justice, Feb 2021 - Oct 2022
- Doulas For All Coalition, WA State Medicaid Reimbursement for Doula Support, Jun 2020 - Current
- Guest Lecture Speaker for Postpartum Doula Training, Simkin Center at Bastyr University, Seattle WA, Oct 2020 - Current
- Committee Lead, NAPS NASE (NAPS Alliance for Social Equity), Jul 2020 - Jan 2021





# FREESTANDING DOULA CENTER



## Perinatal Pantry

The Perinatal Pantry goes beyond supplying baby items to families. It is a resource where BIPGM folks (regardless of if I'm their doula or if they even have a doula) are able to get gender-inclusive clothes, lactation pumps and supplies, body care items, holistic remedies, and personal hygiene items. BLKBRY also supports in ordering items like car seats, strollers, and other items needed for families to thrive.



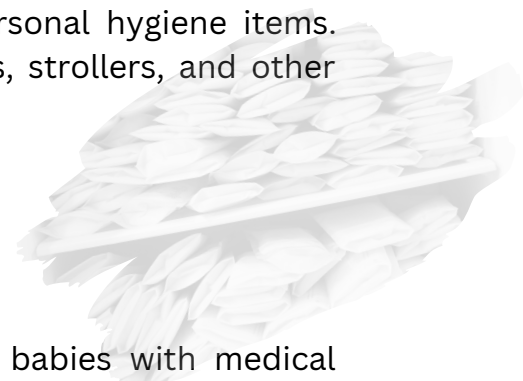
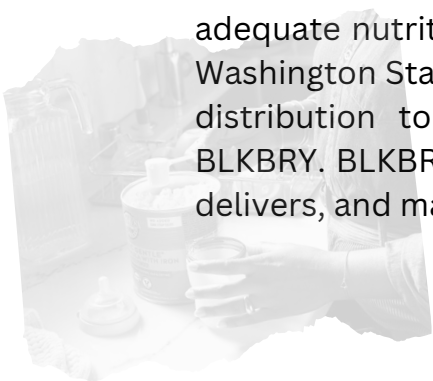
## Community Milk Bank

Donor human milk helps bridge nutritional gaps for babies with medical needs, such as preterm birth, or in cases of illness of birthing parent. When Black families started sharing their stories about inequities and racism that was experienced by white-led infrastructures and groups, BLKBRY developed **two** Community Milk Bank sites to make sure that Black families are adequately served in a judgment free environment that also provides wrap around services.



## Formula Distribution

Due to the national formula shortage, many infants are unable to receive adequate nutrition to support their physical development. In July 2022, the Washington State Department of Health released funding to support formula distribution to Black families in Washington State in partnership with BLKBRY. BLKBRY established **two** formula distribution sites for pick-ups and delivers, and mailed formula to other areas in the state.



# FULL SPECTRUM REPRODUCTIVE & PERINATAL SUPPORT

## What Does a Full Spectrum Doula Do?

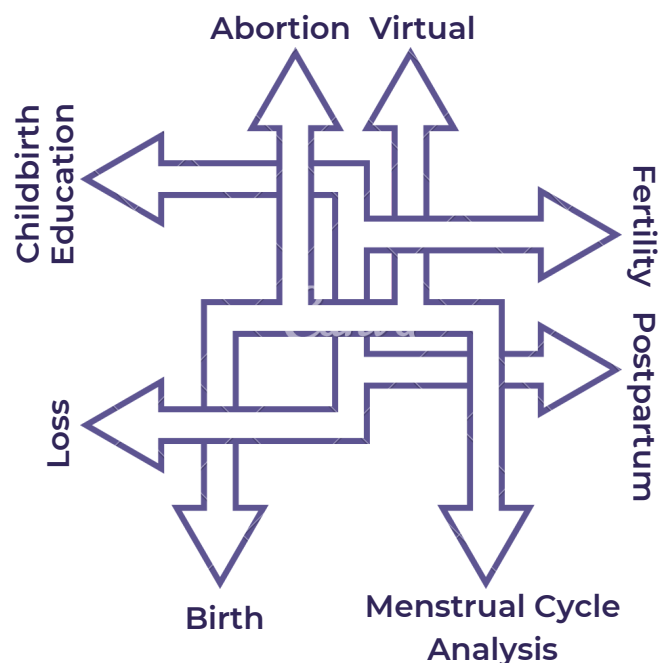
"A full spectrum doula is a non-medically trained community care worker who offers support to people during the full spectrum of pregnancy – from preconception, to birth, to abortion, to miscarriage, to adoption, to postpartum.

Full spectrum birth workers actively practice being open and aware of the diverse reproductive needs and experiences people have, in light of their identity, background, preferences, lived experiences, and so on.

While this doesn't mean full spectrum doulas will say "yes" to every client, it does mean that they prioritize being accessible, inclusive, and culturally appropriate. When (not if) there's a client that is not a good fit or the doula doesn't have the capacity or skills to serve the client, they do their best to make an appropriate and vetted referral.

The history of full-spectrum doula work precedes the more mainstream use of the term, as midwives, activists, and other community care workers have served in this role for friends, family, and folks in their community across history and across cultures. One of our favorite books "Revolutionary Mothering" honors this lineage.

Definition from:





# FULL SPECTRUM DOULA SUPPORT

## **ABORTION DOULA SUPPORT**

Abortion support and pregnancy release can be approached as a sacred act. I provide virtual or in-person care before, during, and/or after any procedure. I am available for abortions that take place both inside and outside the clinic and at home.

Support is focused towards emotional processing of your decision, de-mystifying the concerns or fears you may have to ensure that you feel confident and prepared, connection to community resources, and physical healing. Postpartum care (0-8 weeks and further on a case-by-case basis) is emphasized following your procedure to initiate and ensure full depth of care.

## **MENSTRUAL CYCLE ANALYSIS**

In-depth analysis of the menstrual cycle, 30 minute clarity call (after review of form). Appointment includes:

- Womb Cleanse Guidance
- Nutritional Guide
- Customized Pelvic Steam Plan with Pelvic Steam
- Herbs (mailed directly to you).

## **HOLISTIC FERTILITY DOULA SUPPORT**

After conducting a research on how to promote the product and applying some method, the result is still not reaching the goal. There are probably an even better way of promoting that could boost the sales both online and offline. That way, we expect the information regarding our products can reach more people. Support includes:

Three (3) Monthly Video Chats/Phone Coaching at two (2) hours each for:

- Fertility Awareness Method, Reconnecting to the Womb Space -Yoni Steaming, Processing Womb Trauma, and Processing Fertility Clinic Visits

Two (2) Menstrual Cycle Analysis' (MCA)

Nutritional Guidance and a copy of Nourishing Possibility

One Personalized Herbal Consultation

Monthly Wellness Kit mailed directly to client





# FULL SPECTRUM DOULA SUPPORT

## **BIRTH DOULA SUPPORT**

### **In-Person and Virtual Support Available**

The purpose of a birth doula is continuity of care during pregnancy/ antepartum, labor and delivery. BLKBRY works collaboratively with you, your partner(s) or support person(s), and your care team to provide parent-centered care that's culturally congruent, and to facilitate the birth you desire. I implement non-judgmental, compassionate support for expectant parents throughout pregnancy, birth, and into parenthood. Additionally, they will receive evidence practice-based information that will empower pregnant and birthing people in making informed decisions with confidence knowing the benefits and risk of their concerns.

## **POSTPARTUM DOULA SUPPORT**

It takes a community to support a baby and the people that care for them. I believe postpartum support can come in many different ways, but should always be done with love and flexibility. My goal as your postpartum doula is to support your family as you need. Providing individualized care to you, baby, and your family as a whole as you develop your new normal and explore which tools work best for you and your family.

## **ACCESSIBLE SUPPORT**

I deeply believe that every person has a right to emotional, physical and psychological support from a doula. A person or family's financial circumstances should not hinder this. If the cost of my support services is a barrier, I encourage folks to connect with me so we can discuss building a payment plan, creating a package that works with their budget, organizing gifted (aka pro bono) support for them, or finding other resources that are accessible to them.

\*Black clients seeking culturally congruent support can apply for the [Black Perinatal Equity Grant](#) through the Black Perinatal Project. I invoice directly to them, and they will cover the cost of my doula support.

# ADDITIONAL HOLISTIC SUPPORT



## **Peristeam Hydrotherapy**

Peristeam Facilitation & Hydrotherapy (yoni steaming, pelvic steaming, vaginal steaming, womb steaming. I know quite a few names there) is an ancient practice used across cultures around the world for natural healing using herbs and steam (or sometimes simply steam) to support the pelvic region, aiding in postpartum recovery.

Steaming is a gentle, relaxing, and rejuvenating therapy that involves sitting over a pot of steaming herbs, or water, using a stool or steam sauna. The healing steam softens and relaxes the cervix allowing the herbal properties to permeate the genitalia area, the uterus, healing and/or supporting the perineum. In addition, cannabis was often used in traditional and ancient practices of steaming, known as fumigation.

## **Cannabis Doula Support**

*New Programming for Winter 2022*

Cannabis Doula Care Consultations support families in making informed decisions on cannabis medicine using evidence-based information and holistic support.

The next goal is to become a Washington State Certified Medical Marijuana Consultant and intervene in the criminalization of holistic practices of medicinal cannabis use during the perinatal and lactation period.

*Shatter  
the stigma*

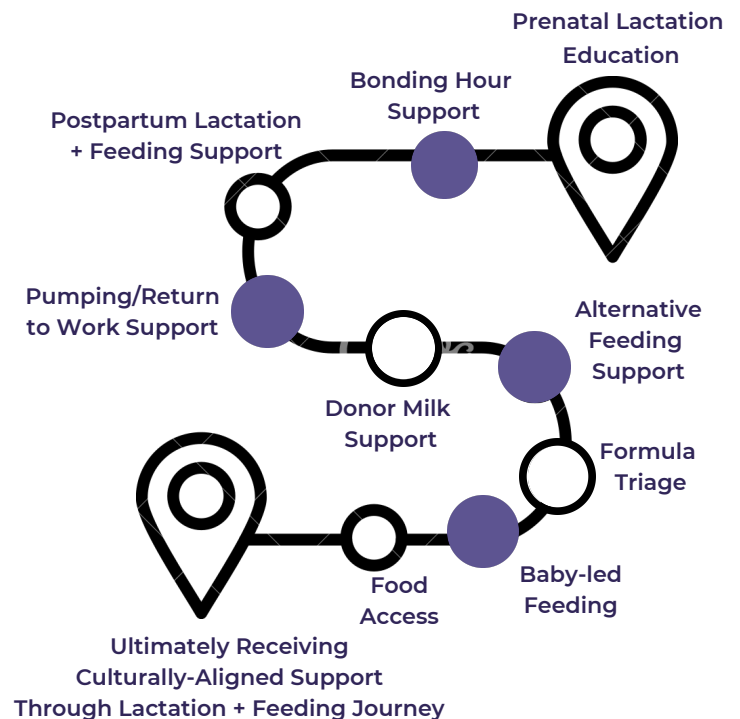
# BLKBRY LACTATION + FEEDING SPECIALIST™

## BLKBRY Lactation and Feeding Specialist™

In an effort to combat the disproportionate rates of human lactation and nursing, to divest from non-culturally congruent infrastructures that shame and cause us harm, and to provide a safe space for Black and other lactating parents of color, the BLKBRY Lactation and Feeding Specialist™ designation was created.

I was tired of seeing us being shamed, our practices being co-opted and erased from our culture, and then monetized by infrastructures that are not for us or by us. We also need to keep accessibility in mind when creating programming for Black and Brown folks to be able to access and complete in order to support and serve their communities.

Glaring disparities and disproportionate rates continue to widen the gap of nursing Black families and communities. Historically, marginalized populations do not have the privilege or access to food that is associated with their family's values, food culture, and identity. After years of politicalization, cultural food shaming, and gatekeeping for monetization, there is a resurgence of Black families reestablishing cultural infant and toddler feeding practices. Generational trauma, chronic stressors coupled with the effects of social determinants of health demonstrate the need for the Lactation and Feeding Specialist classification.





# LACTATION AND FEEDING SUPPORT

## **Prenatal Lactation + Feeding Education**

**In-Person and Virtual Support Available**

- Providing folks with information about the anatomy and physiology of nursing
- Demonstrating various positions and methods (hand expression, spoon or syringe feeding, etc.) parents/caregivers can use to feed their baby
- Sharing information on how to know if baby is getting enough milk
- Discussing the best ways to establish/maintain their milk supply
- Encouraging parents/caregivers to ask any questions they may have to ensure they are left feeling prepared to begin nursing their little one(s)!
- Provide education related to pumping and storage, formula and bottle feeding, milk sharing, donor milk, and forms of supplementation if it relates to your feeding plan.

## **POSTPARTUM LACTATION & FEEDING SUPPORT**

**In-Person and Virtual Support Available**

If a lactating parent finds themselves in need of any one-on-one meetings after lactation and feeding has begun, personalized postpartum lactation and feeding support is also available. Also, as their little one hits certain milestones, there may be times when they need a little support as it is a learning experience and each little one is different. During our one-on-one meeting I will be able to:

- Conduct a history review and processing their birth experience
- Conduct a comprehensive assessment which includes observing a feeding, latch, and positioning to provide detailed feedback.
- Answer any questions they may have related to latching, establishing/maintaining milk supply, how to determine if baby is getting enough, etc. This also includes common concerns including painful latch, sore nipples, slow weight gain of baby, tongue-tie assessment, nursing through teething stage, extended lactation and nursing, and weaning solutions.
- Develop an evidence and practiced based care plan specific to the needs identified through your assessment to help you meet your personal nursing goals.
- Provide education related to pumping and storage, formula and bottle feeding, milk sharing, donor milk, and forms of supplementation if needed.

# LACTATION AND FEEDING SUPPORT

## **BABY-LED FEEDING SUPPORT**

**In-Person and Virtual Support Available**

Just because a baby is interested in table food doesn't mean that they're ready to give up human milk. However, I can support that time too. I get numerous questions from parents regarding feeding their little one as they gain interest in table food. It can be a difficult moment to figure out what to feed them and how best to prepare the food as they explore their new options. This support also includes:

- Culturally-Aligned Infant and Toddler Feeding Practices
- Baby-led feeding support
- Baby-led weaning
- Infant Meal Prep and Allergen Introduction
- Teething Relief Strategies



# NUTRITION EDUCATION + FOOD ACCESS

## Individualized Culturally-Aligned Nutrition Support

*"As a Black [people], learning to nourish and respect our bodies means rejecting a system rooted in anti-blackness. Marginalized [and targeted] bodies deserve to be treated with respect and have equal access to culturally relevant and nutritious foods"*

*- Dr. Kera Nyemb-Diop, @black.nutritionist*

It is not just food deserts that are negatively impacting Black and other BIPGM families. It's also the absence of access to culturally-aligned foods and misinformation about the nutritional value of our foods. BLKBRY is partnering with Plant Based Food Share (a Black founded food bank) and Alimentando al Pueblo (the only Latinx food bank in the country) to provide BIPGM families with no-cost food boxes.



This partnership is why BLKBRY is able to base nutritional support around a person or family's budget and increase access to nutritious meals. Accessibility of programs and support are key to improve outcomes for families. BLKBRY's food packages are **Perinatal Nutrition Support** and **Baby-led Feeding Support**. These packages are offered for 3 or 6 month options.

# COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS & PARTNERSHIPS



**Plant Based Food Share**



**Alimentando al Pueblo**



**Tubman Health**



**Ivory Holistics**



**Odessa Brown Children's Clinic**



**Tacoma Urban League**

**Tacoma Urban League**

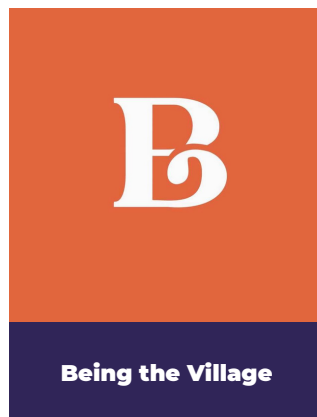
*"If you want to go fast, go alone, if you want to go far, go together".  
African Proverb – Martha Goedert.*

## ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Damarria Davis, Divine Doula Birthing Services
- Jasmyne Bryant, Jazzy Bean Doula
- LaTonia Bussell, Sweet Roots Midwife
- Maritza Cajiao, local Latinx Doula
- Kimberlie Caballero, Lengua Maternal Doula
- Highline Area Community Networking Group
- Dan Finkley, Pepsico
- Nurturing Expressions
- Highline School District, Teen Parent Social Work Department
- Pacific Islander Health Board



**The Perfect Push**



**Being the Village**

# FISCAL SPONSOR

## Soul Works Lifestyle Management

EIN: 83-3771345

BLKBRY is thrilled about another amazing community partnership. A partnership that will open BLKBRY up to funding opportunities to support the ability to positively impact Black families by not only shining light on the disparities in perinatal care, but also making sustained efforts in dismantling the systems that have created barriers for those families, all while growing and maintaining a sustainable infrastructure that is for us by us.

Soul Works has built capacity for fiscal sponsorship for BLKBRY, and other BIPGM doula and birth work collectives. Ensuring that the funding that is meant for BIPGM communities is going to recipients that reflect the community that the funding is intended for and are actively working towards change for their community.



### **Jessica Williams**

**Founder and Director of Soul Work Lifestyle Management**

Jessica has over 20 years of professional and personal experience in the nonprofit arena as a co-founder, executive director, board member, and consultant. She has extensive experience with community-based nonprofits in areas of organizational development, tax-exempt filing, executive coaching, strategic planning, board training, program development, curriculum design, meeting and workshop facilitation, grant writing and fund development, and conference/event planning. She is deeply committed to engaging communities and organizations to address institutional and structural barriers to social change and race equity. Leveraging her skills in human-centered design, Jessica co-creates curriculum, programs, and materials to advance equity, inclusion, and social justice initiatives.

### **LaTanya Alexander**

LaTanya is an Executive level Accounting Professional. She is skilled in Nonprofit Organizations, Internal Audit, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), Fundraising, and Management. She is a strong accounting professional with a Bachelor of Science (BS) focused in Accounting from the University of Washington.

For the past several years, she has held the position of Vice President of Administration and Finance at the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles, California. BLKBRY is thankful to Soul Work for recruiting LaTanya Alexander to provide bookkeeping services and financial guidance.





# 2023 GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

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## LACTATION POD

Mamava wants to work in partnership with BLKBRY to curate a lactation pod/room that is a representation of the beauty and strength of Black lactation and nursing.

BLKBRY will be work with Mamava's Account Executive that is over their donation and

philanthropy. BLKBRY would pay for the cost of an original pod, but the cost for shipping will be discounted and the customization will be free in order to make duplications for other Black birth worker spaces.



<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hFkkfEscMYInHlh-EWUwruAKQkxeVK8J/view?usp=sharing>

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## PLANS FOR GROWTH AND EXPANSION



BLKBRY is located in Suite A, which is a basement unit. In October 2022, the property manager completed the fence to help maintain a safe space for the Black and BIPGM families that come to BLKBRY for support.

Unit C is above my current space and is the ideal setting for a birth center. Previously used as a 2 room rental apartment, the unit can be easily converted into a Community Birth Center for and by the Black Community.

I will be partnering with the other directors of BPP to make space for our Black midwives to lead in the design of the birth center. Working with Black midwives and other Black birth workers, the goal is to create a blueprint and create other Black founded and led Community Birth Centers around the state.

This birth center will be unique in that Black midwives do not have to contract to be with a practice in order to have a space for their families to safely birth. The cost will also be reasonable because our families deserve access to safe birth locations. They should not have to financial choose between a safe birth location and a birth team that can provide culturally-congruent care.

# RESOURCES

The design of BLKBRY... its programs and physical space are all due to active involvement in the Black community of King County and surrounding areas. I took time to have organic conversations, build trust, and then move at the speed of the trust of community to develop programs and a spaces that is truly needed and wanted. Without the stories and trust of community, none of this would be possible. The Black community has been my greatest resource in making sure that BLKBRY is adequately serving them and holding me accountable.

I also made sure to use credible sources to support my research and development in what the Black birthing, family, and community needs and deserves. It also allowed me to see what is further missing and where BLKBRY can step in to help fill the gap.

All of the resources have also been crucial in supporting BLKBRY's budget development.

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