

Birthingways

Winter 2020
Volume 24, Issue 4

The Newsletter of Birthingway College of Midwifery

Inside This Issue

Calendar	2
Letter from the President	3-4
Good Luck, Natalie!	5
Photos from Core Completion	6-7
Farewell to Foster	8-10
OMC Updates	11
Letter from OMC President	12
Message from the OMC	13
Birthingway Moving Sale	14
Good Luck, Nora!	15
Message from Natalie	16
Good luck, Alek!	17



Congratulations, Core Completers!

On January 6, our community celebrated the extraordinary achievement of Birthingway's final group of midwifery students who successfully completed the rigorous core curriculum in record time, taking classes through the summer. We gathered at the Foster House building for one final time to celebrate their accomplishments and share a trademark potluck meal. Friends and family joined our community for this celebration as well!

Congratulations to Lauren Hake, Mandy Edwards, Laura Norton, and Christina Baldisseri! We are so proud of you!

This is a special issue.

Birthingway College may be moving its operations away from Foster House, but we are continuing to offer pathways to certification for students who have completed a Birthingway doula workshop and continuing to serve our current midwifery students.

Please read a letter from our President, Holly Scholles, on page 3.

Letters from the Oregon Midwifery Council may be found on pages 12-13.



Calendar

3/9	Spring 2020 Term Registration Begins – Enrolled Students
3/16	Spring 2020 Term Registration Begins – Community Students
3/23	Spring 2020 Term Registration Deadline
3/29	Winter 2020 Term Ends
3/30-4/12	Spring Break
4/13	Spring 2020 Term Begins
4/20	Spring 2020 Term Enrollment Confirmation Deadline
5/25	Memorial Day Closure
7/5	Spring Term Ends



Letter from Birthingway College President, Holly Scholles

Welcome to 2020!

I am embracing the new year with my arms and heart open wide! This will be a year of big changes for Birthingway, and thus for me too. I'm looking forward to the personal and professional transformations that will result as the year unfolds.

As you probably already know, Birthingway has been through many changes already. We continue to put on hold admissions to our Midwifery Program, while we support our current midwifery students in meeting their educational goals of becoming practicing midwives.

The last of our Lactation Consultant Program students graduated early in 2019, and we will not be admitting new students to that program.

Additionally, we have no plans to offer new Labor Doula or Postpartum Doula workshops moving forward. Our emphasis is on assisting those doula students who have completed the workshops and who decide to enter the practicum to become certified. That means we will continue to provide student doula referrals to families who need support during childbirth and in the postpartum period. And we will continue to certify and recertify doulas who have met Birthingway's criteria.

Another change is the decentralization of our administrative functions. Staff now work from home rather than from the Foster building. This saves time and reduces our environmental impact, both crucial at a time when staff hours are being reduced and climate change is a pressing concern.

Similarly, the handful of remaining midwifery courses are being taught in teachers' homes. With small class sizes (three students per course), this creates an intimate and nurturing learning space.

Thank you to everyone who came to our Farewell to Foster House event in December. It was so meaningful for me to be able to celebrate and grieve with you all the current iteration of our programs and the building that has housed us for the past 20 years. I hope those of you who were there went home with full bellies, rekindled connections, and perhaps a piece of artwork or other memento.

Everyone at Birthingway remains strongly committed to providing the best possible experience to our students and community, and to supporting each other as these transitions occur. We are blessed with staff who are willing to work flexible and greatly reduced hours, with teachers who've adjusted their syllabi and teaching styles to accommodate fewer students, and to unshakable integrity in our interactions and relationships. It's been both moving and inspirational to witness.

Here are some updates you should be aware of:

The Foster building, which has been for sale since May, is increasingly empty. You can no longer assume that you can drop by and find someone working there. Please be sure to email info@birthingway.edu or call ahead if you need access to Foster. Or email the individual staff person you want to meet with and make arrangements with them directly. And spread the word – we want a great new owner for our lovely building.

Our mailing address has changed. Please send all written correspondence to Birthingway College, 4997 SW Normandy Place, Beaverton, OR 97005.

Letter from the President, Continued.

Our telephone number remains 503-760-3131. However, we no longer have a fax line.

Our library holdings have been greatly reduced. We still subscribe to numerous databases, including Science Direct and Ebsco, and we have a small library of essential texts and books at our Beaverton office.

Important tax documents are being sent out this month, both to students and to employees. If you changed your address at any time in 2019, please email elizabeth@birthingway.edu and make sure that we have your correct mailing address.

Starting in spring term 2020, the total fee for registration will drop from \$100 to \$75. This change will be reflected on future registration materials.

One of our early 2020 projects is to update the Birthingway website. However, this has not yet occurred. If you're confused about something on our website, please contact a staff member and we will provide you with the latest info.

A couple of people have asked me if T-shirts, hoodies, and other Birthingway swag is still available – YES! Just go to the link on our website and shop away!

If you graduated from the Midwifery Program, Nichole has created certificates to document the training you have in herbalism at Birthingway. Please let her know if you would like a copy of the certificate: nichole@birthingway.edu

And some requests:

* We are having a BIG moving sale on Saturday, January 25. Doors open at 8am for our community, and at 9am for the public. At 2pm everything is half price, and the sale closes at 4pm. Come for coffee and to look over the many treasures you most certainly need – sheets and towels, furniture, books, DVDs, kitchen items, tools, health care items, office supplies, and so much more – priced to sell! Please stop by and support Birthingway.

* We are looking for the perfect person or family to move into our building and be caretaker while it is for sale. We anticipate a minimum of six months and possibly longer, although it could be less. The position is unpaid, but there is no rent charged – the caretaker will only pay utilities. We are looking for someone super responsible who will keep our building occupied and cared for. Please contact Holly for more information (holly@birthingway.edu).

* This spring, we will be exploring options for rebooting the Midwifery Program, looking at possible changes in format, cost, administration, and other aspects of the program. If you are interested in being involved in that process, please let me know (holly@birthingway.edu).

As I look forward and embrace the fact that our future is not totally predictable, I'm using David Bowie's lyrics (from the song "Changes") as my motto for 2020: "Turn and face the strange." As we fall forward into the future, let's remain connected and continue to cultivate compassion and goodness in our often sad and hurting world.

Warmly,

Holly



Good luck, Natalie!

Our wonderful Faculty Coordinator, Natalie Hutchison Duff, has moved on to her next professional destination.

Natalie played a critical role in the organization of our term schedules and was instrumental in ensuring our midwifery preceptors were properly on-boarded. She brought a balanced perspective to our meetings, a continued kindness to our community, and elegant solutions to challenges that rose along the way.

We are so thankful for the nearly six years she spent serving this community and our mission, her tireless effort at Birthingway's hectic time of transition, and wish her continued career success and happiness! .

Thank you to Natalie's husband, Ryan, as well for often volunteering his time to play guitar at our commencement ceremonies.

Photos from the Core Completion Ceremony!



Core Completion Photos, Continued!



Farewell to Foster House: A Celebration of Birthingway College

Birthingway has been extraordinarily lucky in the wonderful community we have built over the years.

In December, we gathered to celebrate our community and its far-reaching impact: we saw old friends, shared a glass of wine, and were able to purchase some of the art that has adorned our halls and classrooms. We finished the evening with an inspirational speech by our President, Holly Scholles, and a beautiful story about the resilience of midwifery by our Board President, Jackie Zapp-Albin. Please enjoy the photos of our wonderful community below. To see all the photos, please click [HERE](#).



Farewell to Foster, Continued



Farewell to Foster, Continued Still...



OMC UPDATES

OMC is sponsoring the workshop "Developing an Anti-Racism Approach to Midwifery Care". This is a full day workshop for midwives and students on Friday 1/31 from 9-4:30 at McMenamins Kennedy School. Arika Bridgeman-Bunyoli and Wendy Gordon will be the presenters. You can register with Eventbrite or contact omcrepportland@gmail.com. Space is limited.

The Portland Spring Conference is March 6th with an additional day of learning on March 7th with Jen Kamel of VBAC Facts. The presenters for March 6th will be Jen Kamel with Prenatal Diagnosis of Accreta and Plus Size VBAC, Jaqzun Darlin with Prevention and Management of Pre-eclampsia for the Community Midwife, Melissa Cheyney on Complex Care Planning in the Community Setting, and Jesse Remer and Astrid Castro on Trauma Informed Care. For more information go to www.oregonmidwiferyeducation.com

Please contact Maura Jansen at omcrepportland@gmail.com for information regarding the next Portland regional meeting and peer review.

Letter from the President of the Oregon Midwifery Council, Celeste Kersey

December 2019

Written for the Foster Farewell

I'm glad to be in the circle of Birthingway staff, students, alumni, faculty, and friends! I am so grateful for all who showed up to both celebrate Birthingway and to make meaning for what our time with this place and her people has meant to us individually and collectively.

This ending stage of the life of Birthingway has such great impact. There is a continuum of experiences that each of us have at this loss. There is and will be sadness at a dissolving of community, grief at the goodbye and finality of an institution; a place, an energy, an oasis. There might be relief when bureaucracy with state and federal institutions fade away, when there is no refrigerator to clean out, when there are no syllabi to write or faculty to remind to create syllabi, or when piles of paperwork and uncorrected homework disappear. Perhaps there is an emptiness for those whose days have been filled with Birthingway—their cars know the way here, their chairs are well worn with the impression of their body's being, their feet find the coffee pot without thinking, their culture of being seen, having a voice, creating community, and mattering slips slowly into something new or different. There will be pride at what has been created and sustained for the past 27 years. This place and her people have helped shape midwives, lactation consultants, doulas, humans who, perhaps, see themselves and one another with more insight, depth, and compassion, and who have found their paths toward healing and serving in this world.

Birthingway has been a place of beginnings. Some of us began our midwifery or lactation or doula path here, some of us began our teaching careers, or love affairs with herbs (or other students!). Some of us had no idea what biodynamic learning (or Biodynamic anything!) was and were awakened to a new way of seeing Birth and ourselves and our clients. Some of us were hired for one job and ended up doing or teaching something totally different or filled many roles at Once!

Community and our sense of self have been shaped by this place and by the people who have chosen to work and teach and clean and answer the phone and make time for us in our confusion or requests or celebrations. Being or teaching or guiding students has been the root of our time at Birthingway. As students there were those in our cohorts that challenged us, annoyed us, supported us, became our partners in homework and projects and prepping for tests, and those that have become life long friends. We can remember being excited about telling the story of our first catch, or getting a "complete" on a shoulder dystocia protocol, or successfully finding a cervix, making a client chart, or skillfully placing an IV. We might recall finding parts of ourselves that had before been unknown-- these are the exchanges and relationships that have brought us to our knees or jumping for joy, or have opened our heart with the beauty of connection to life.

We were let down or buoyed up at times within the perfectly imperfect life that is and has been, Birthingway.

We are here to celebrate how we have contributed to this giantess of a place that has created more compassionate people, more skilled birth workers, a culture of respect and individualization for learners, and the validation of wonder and mystery and normalcy surrounding birth and bodies and being. I wish for all of us in this circle to be where ever we are on the continuum of celebrating and grieving and to let ourselves be moved by the people who have chosen to show up today. I am grateful for any vulnerability and truth-telling that brings deep meaning and transformation to our lives. I hope this time together has been and will be a balm, a reminder of how much this place has mattered, how much we matter in bringing this place alive these past 27 years.

Celeste Kersey

A Message from the Oregon Midwifery Council

We want to express our genuine and deep gratitude for all that Birthingway has done for the statewide professional organization of midwives. As individuals and as a collective you have created a program these past 25 plus years that has educated students into midwives through high standards of skill and knowledge and compassion for the self and those served. You have prepared students for the task of becoming apprentices by training them in skill, understanding, love of learning, and giving them a realistic understanding of the what it means to live the life of midwifery. You have provided the midwifery community throughout the state with a pool of high quality students who have been integral to the practices of so many midwives and birth centers. You have enhanced the experience of countless birthing families by giving students the gift of a biodynamic education—filled with opportunity for learning, growth, curiosity, compassion, and connection to the true heart of midwifery. You have taught so very many people how to accompany pregnant and birthing women.

You have supported OMC in creating midwife- members of the highest caliber; open-hearted, critical decision-makers, who are able to be independent, and capable of being in community. Many of the students who have found their calling into midwifery have shown up as our leaders, as brave and humble people willing to enter into the political world of birth. These now-midwives have been willing to admit their mistakes, make changes to improve the health and well-being of pregnant people and babies. They have become the face of community birth and have carried on the art of midwifery as members of a long line of healers and midwives. For many Birthingway was the beginning, the LIGHT, the path forward in transformation and becoming what we have been called to do.

Birthingway has led the way in creating laws and licensing this past quarter century ensuring that community birth is an option for all pregnant women and families and charging midwives to be independent guardians of low-risk, natural, empowered birth.

Birthingway has valued the involvement of students in OMC by informing them of our historical importance, announcing meetings and workshops and legislative needs. You even paid for every student to be a member when finances allowed. You have been a physical, financial and professional support to the strength, scope, and presence of midwifery through the Oregon Midwifery Council.

Our partnership has been a rock in times of uncertainty and in times of moving midwifery forward. Our hearts are full of gratitude and grief as we close this chapter of our partnership.

May all who have walked the halls of Birthingway be blessed in their journeys and may we continue to see and acknowledge the rippling effects of the presence of Birthingway in our lives and in our world!

With Respect,

The Oregon Midwifery Council



Birthingway Moving Sale

Books, DVDs, furniture, kitchen and household items, bookshelves, medical equipment, office supplies, and much more!

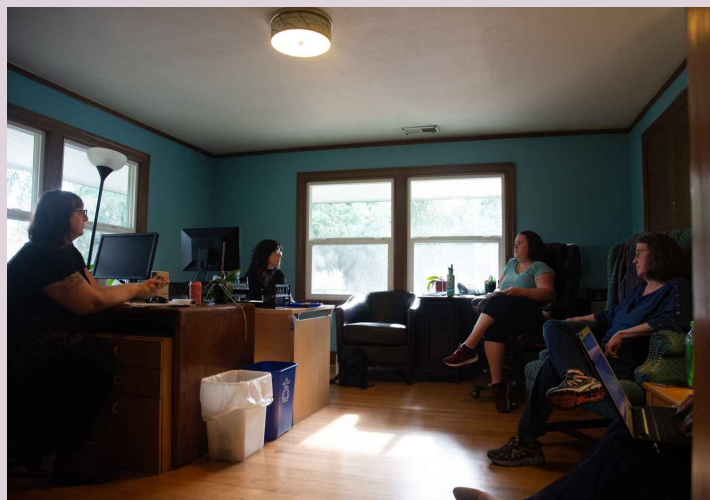
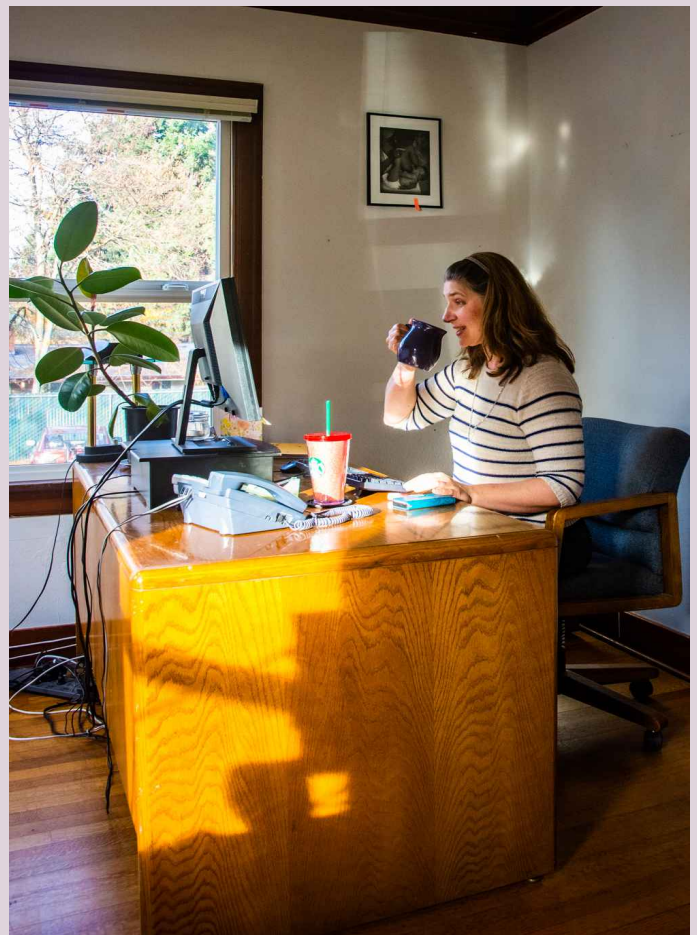
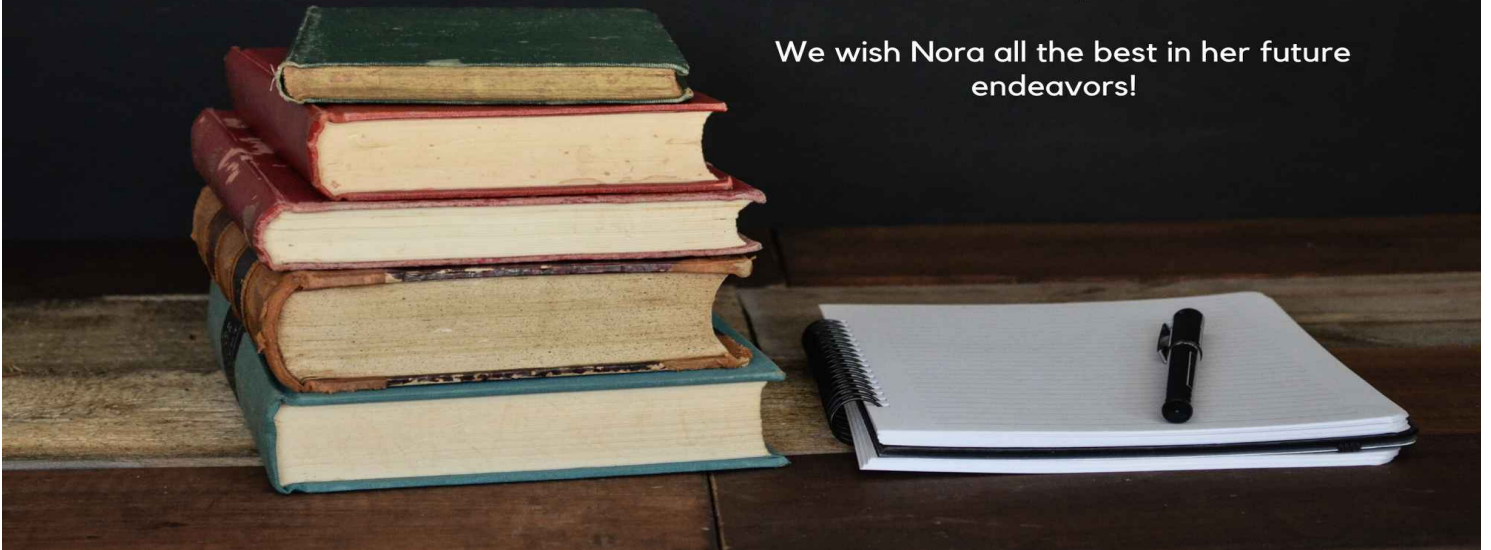
January 25, 2020 | 8am-4pm friends | 9am-4 pm public
Items Half Price at 2 pm | 12113 SE Foster Rd

Questions? Email info@birthingway.edu

Good Luck, Nora!

Thank you to our librarian, Nora, for bringing a continued warmth to our complex, uniquely focused, library role. Nora's unyielding sense of empathy and incredible capability to encourage students to think critically about all aspects of their research made her an ideal presence in the library role.

We wish Nora all the best in her future endeavors!



A Note from Natalie to all of you:

I so enjoyed working in Foster House and connecting with our little, big community each day. There's nothing quite like hearing the excitement of a cohort lunch from my nearby office or being delivered a tasty treat that I'd been smelling bake in the oven. The sharing and spirit of generosity in the community was never lost on me.

These days you can find me serving in a new role as Congregational Administrator at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Vancouver. It's a new job but so much is the same. I am still serving a community of great folks and I am still working in a job that lets me explore so many different types of skills. Plus, there's still a cool garden outside and I can still see the occasional hummingbird from my desk. What can I say... I'm a sucker for a nice view at work!

Who knows what life will hold in the future but I do hope that I'll run into a few of you out and about in town someday. If you're up for not leaving it up to chance, you can reach me at natalie.hutchison.duff@gmail.com. I'd love to hear from any of you.

Be well,
Natalie



Good luck, Alek!

All our best wishes to Alek, who transitioned out of the Operations Coordinator role at the end of December.

In her time at Birthingway, Alek picked up a few additional job titles, including Creative Content Coordinator. We will miss all the brightness she brought to Birthingway with her sunny personality, cheerful organization of Birthingway recruitment events, social media communications, and thoughtful poetry around the building.

Our memory keeping and communications also benefited greatly from Alek's photography and editing skills. We are grateful that she will continue to document our events and prepare our newsletters as a contractor for the foreseeable future.

Alek started a job as a senior admin for Hot Diggity! Dog Walking and Pet Sitting in August and was gracious enough to keep working for Birthingway part time in order to finish out the duration of the Operations Coordinator position. We wish her lots of good luck as she starts working full time in her new role this month!

