



Year in Review

2024

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MISSION



The Maternal Outcomes for Translational Health Equity Research (MOTHER) Lab is a unit of the Center for Black Maternal Health and Reproductive Justice in the Tufts School of Medicine. This unit is comprised of students, public health practitioners, and others who are passionate about equitable maternal health. Together, they support the research development, policy, community engagement, education, and training efforts of the Center.

The MOTHER Lab's mission is to address and eradicate **inequities** Black women face, through **research**, **advocacy**, and **mentorship** by confronting and **dismantling the system** that enables and perpetuates racism for Black women who give birth.

2024 PUBLICATIONS

2024 Publications

- Abouhala, S., Ashford, N., Menta, A., Saintilien, S., Bolarinwa, E., Snape, L., Nieto, A., Villar, F., & Amutah-Onukagha, N. (2024). **Advancing Parent and Newborn Health Outcomes Through Community-Based Collaboration: A Somerville-Tufts University Partnership.** The Journal of Participatory Research Methods, July 2024
- Kheyfets A, Dhaurali S, Feyock P, Khan F, Lockley A, Miller B, Cohen L, Anwar E, Amutah-Onukagha N. **The impact of hostile abortion legislation on the United States maternal mortality crisis: a call for increased abortion education.** Frontiers in Public Health, February 2024
- Abouhala, S., Ashford, N., Amutah-Onukagha, N. **A Community-Based Policy Approach to Advance Maternal & Reproductive Health Research among Minoritized Birthing Populations in the United States.** Harvard Undergraduate Health Policy Review, February 2024



- Gebel, C., Larson, E., Olden, H. A., Safon, C. B., Rhone, T. J., & Amutah-Onukagha, N. **A Qualitative Study of Hospitals and Payers Implementing Community Doula Support** The Journey of Midwifery & Women's Health, January 2024
- **The Practical Playbook III: Working Together to Improve Maternal Health.** Oxford University Press, 2024
- **The Color Line of Infertility Reproductive Disparities in Black Women.** From the book Black Women and Resilience Suny Press, 2024



2024 PRESENTATIONS

2024 Academic Presentations

- Yakubu, R. A., Enard, K. R., Ajantuiyoe, I., & Patrick, A. S. (2024). **Is there Strength in Unity? Assessing the Effectiveness of Multi-Sector Collaborations Aiming to Address Birth Outcome Inequities.** APHA 2024 Annual Meeting & Expo. Atlanta, GA. November 12-15, 2024. [Oral].
- Yada, F. N., Kiani, M., Ali, I., Dhaurali, S., Snape, L., Ourdyl, N., Gravesande, T., Palle, M., & Amutah-Onukagha, N. (2024). **Impact of Food Insecurity on Maternal Health Outcomes during the Perinatal Period Among Black Women: A Scoping Review.** APHA 2024 Annual Meeting & Expo. Atlanta, GA. November 12-15, 2024. [Oral].



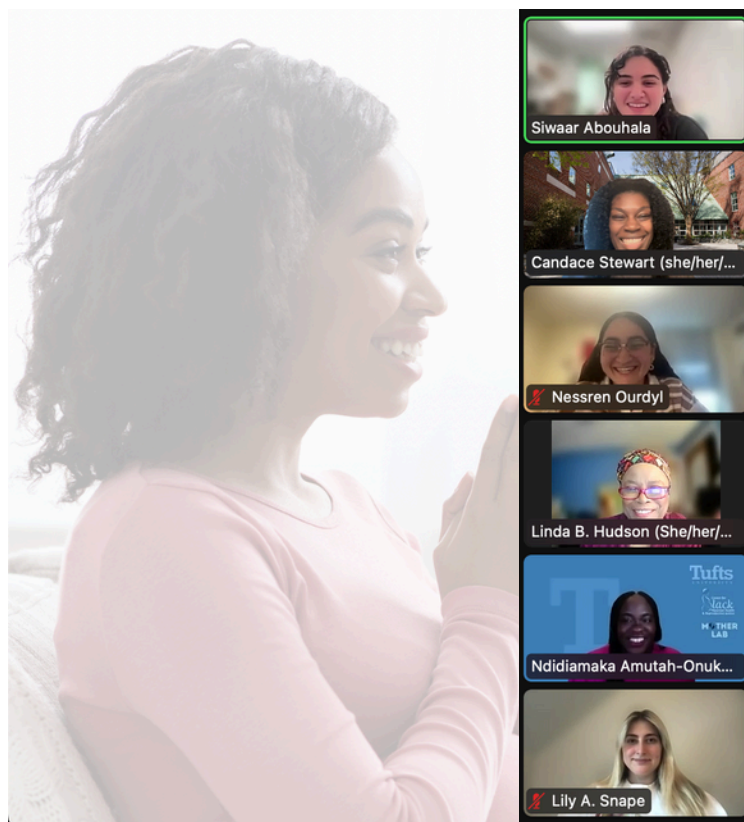
- Yada, F. N., Brunner Huber, L. R., Brown, C. S., Olorunsaiye, C. Z., Glass, T. S., & Amutah-Onukagha, N. (2024). **Labor & Delivery Characteristics by Detailed Maternal Nativity Across the US Black Diaspora.** APHA 2024 Annual Meeting & Expo. Atlanta, GA. November 12-15, 2024. [Oral].
- Snape, L., Severin, H., Teixeira, E., Saintilien, & S., Rahman, G.(2024). **Digital Advocacy for Change: Exploring Black Maternal Health Innovations, Social Media Impact, and Technology at the MOTHER Lab.** Black Maternal Health Conference. [Oral].

- Yada, F. N., Olorunsaiye, C. Z., Brown, C. S., et al. (2024). **Factors Associated with Access, Utilization, and Living Experiences of Labor and Delivery Care among Black Women in the US: A Scoping Review.** Curr Obstet Gynecol Rep, 13, 246-267. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13669-024-00402-0>



MIRAH Fellowship

The MIRAH Fellowship, launched by the Center for Black Maternal Health and Reproductive Justice, increases representation of Black and Brown students in maternal health research and advocacy. Through structured training and mentorship, this fellowship develops future leaders in public health, nursing, medicine, midwifery, and policy. The inaugural cohort of three MOTHER Lab students completed an eight-session training program covering maternal health equity, research methodologies, and advocacy.



Led by core faculty, sessions focused on biostatistics, publication writing, and community-based participatory research. Fellows completed capstone projects and presented their findings at the Black Maternal Health Conference on topics like Project INSPIRE, Communication and Language, and Neighborhood Birth Centers. A rigorous evaluation tracked fellows' progress through assessments, project dissemination, and interviews. The fellowship serves as a replicable model for fostering diversity and equity in maternal health fields. Fellows praised the program's mentorship, skill-building, and impact on their contributions to maternal health equity.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS



MARKETING, COMMUNICATION, AND EVENTS COMMITTEE

- Supported the center's success at the annual Black Maternal Health Conference, with our co-chair serving as a panelist.
- Expanded the lab's podcast, increasing its reach and impact.
- Continued support for the Nurture Kit initiative to raise awareness.
- Highlighted the lab's work and built anticipation for future initiatives.
- Committee member achievements:
 - Emily went to a midwifery internship in Peru.
 - Hadiya started her DrPH program.
 - Lily will be graduating in spring 2025 and transitioning to a new role.



RESEARCH AND GRANTS COMMITTEE

- Celebrated Brian's BS and Aver's Ph.D. graduations.
- Brian started grad school; Marwah began medical school; Manasi was accepted to Tulane Medical School.
- Kemiah assumed the role of Administrative Assistant II at the Louisiana Center for Health Innovation.
- Aver, Siwaar, Tyra, and Farida represented our work at APHA.
- Project Inspire resulted in published works.
- Contributed a chapter to Navigating Black Maternal Mental Health and Well-Being on addressing trauma in Black and Brown communities.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, ADVOCACY, AND POLICY COMMITTEE

- Welcomed four new CEAP Committee members, strengthening our commitment to maternal health.
- Hosted Somerville Family Day with SomerBaby, providing resources and support to families with newborns and infants.
- Distributed the first set of Nurture Kits to 13 families.
- Contributed to the Project INSPIRE JPRM publication, highlighting our impact.
- Expanded advocacy efforts through podcast episodes on maternity care deserts, birth centers, pregnancy loss, and environmental health.
 - Achieved 662 listeners and downloads across the U.S., Germany, and Japan.
- Submitted 11 letters of support for key maternal health initiatives.
- Published our first policy newsletter to inform and engage the community.
- Grateful for the collective effort driving our mission forward.

INITIATIVES



The Nurture Kits initiative provides postpartum items to support the physical recovery and emotional well-being for low-income expectant birthers.

- Nearly one in two (47%) U.S. families have trouble affording enough diapers to keep their children clean, dry, and healthy.
- The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that between January 2023 and January 2024, the cost of baby food and formula increased by 8.7%.
- A 2022 analysis by the Brookings Institution estimated that middle-class families with two children would spend approximately **\$310,605** to raise a child born in 2015 through age 17.



Nurture Kits help provide essential childcare items to families in need.



Project INSPIRE: Improving New Somerville Parent & Infant Resiliency & Engagement, funded by a Tisch College Community Research Center (TCRC) grant at Tufts University, is a mixed-method parental health needs assessment. This community-based study is a cross-institutional collaboration between MARCH: Maternal Advocacy & Research for Community Health (the largest undergraduate-run student organization in the country), SomerBaby (an early childhood support program through Somerville Public Schools), and the MCH Policy Unit at the CBMHRJ.

LEADERSHIP AND CHAIRS



Candace Stewart, MPH
MOTHER Lab Unit Lead



Leigha Mills, MPH
Program Administrator

Research & Grants



Farida Yada,
PhD, MPH



Vickie Dugat,
PhD, MPH

Community, Engagement, Advocacy, and Policy



Stephanie
Saintilien, MPH

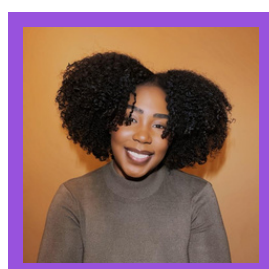


Elizabeth
Bolarinwa, BS



Lena Sharara,
BS, MD-S

Marketing, Communications, and Events



Hadiya Seveirn,
MPH, DrPH-S



Lily Snape, BS

2024 LAB MEMBERS



Aver Yakubu



Brian Kwarteng



Chelsea Liu



Daliah
Ouedraogo



Elizabeth
Joseph-Williams



Emily Teixeira



Grace Rahman



Hilary Adeleke



Kaego NDIweka



Kemiah Owoh



Kimberly
Pothemont



Manasi Palle



Mira Kaskas



Nessren Ourdyl



Ruth Appiah
Kubi



Siwaar
Abouhala



Tayler Whittler



Tyra Gravesdale



Kene Orakwue

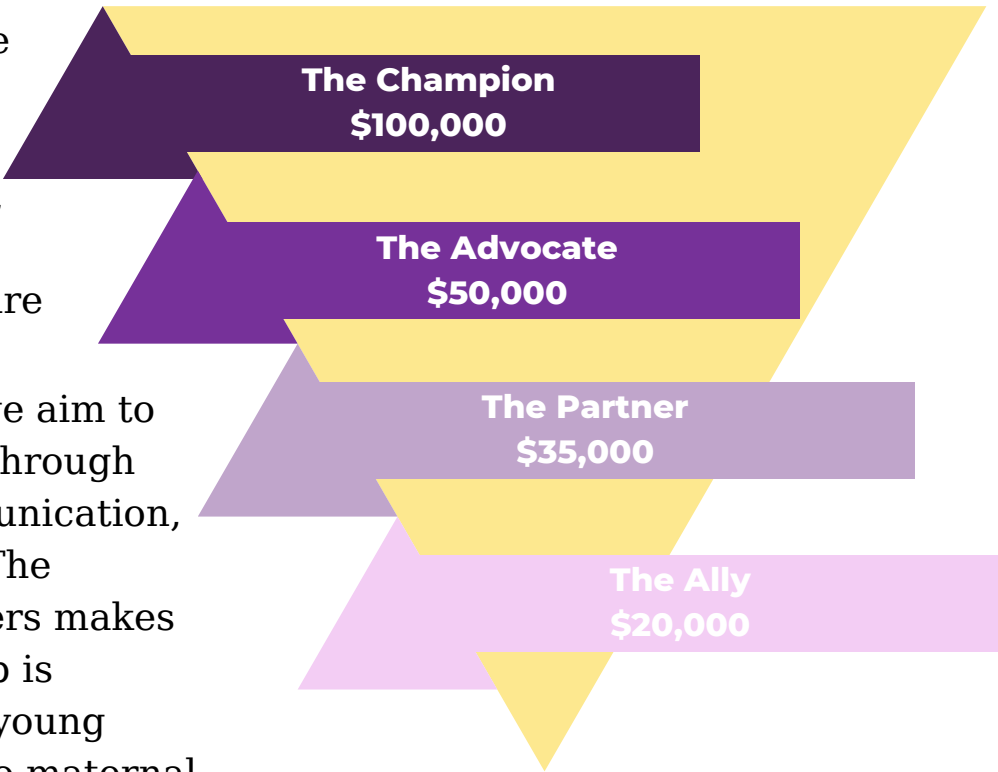
SPONSORSHIP



Every donation directly fuels the mission of MOTHER Lab, enabling us to sustain and expand our impact. Contributions help provide stipends for our dedicated members, fund critical research and publications, and support travel to conferences where we share our findings.

As we continue to grow, we aim to reach broader audiences through advocacy, strategic communication, and innovative research. The generosity of our supporters makes this work possible. Our lab is powered by students and young professionals committed to maternal health equity—your support ensures they have the resources needed to keep driving change.

Thank you for investing in our mission and the future of maternal health.



Sponsorship Levels:

- The Champion:** Provides stipends for all lab members for 2 semesters
- The Advocate:** Provides stipends for all lab members for 1 semester
- The Partner:** ML publications and conference support
- The Ally:** Sends ML members to state and local conferences



A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER

Dear MotherLab Community,

As we reflect on the past year, I am continually inspired by the dedication and curiosity that define this community. Your commitment to deepening our collective understanding of maternal health has helped shape meaningful conversations, innovative research, and collaborative learning experiences.

At MotherLab, we value the power of inquiry, the importance of diverse perspectives, and the impact of thoughtful engagement. This year, we explored pressing issues in maternal health, fostered interdisciplinary discussions, and contributed to work that bridges research and practice. Each of you plays a vital role in advancing knowledge that informs and strengthens the field.

As we look ahead, I encourage you to stay engaged, ask new questions, and continue building connections that enrich your learning and impact. Maternal health is an ever-evolving space, and the work you do—whether in research, policy, or practice—helps to shape its future.

Thank you for your dedication, insight, and collaboration. I look forward to another year of learning, growth, and shared progress.

With appreciation,



Director, MotherLab



STAY CONNECTED

We thank **you** for your continued support in our efforts to lessen and research the Maternal Health Crisis in the USA. Learn more on how to **support us and connect with us** below!

Follow Us!!!

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[MOTHERLAB.ORG](https://www.motherlab.org)



motherlab20@gmail.com



@MOTHER_LAB



@MOTHERLAB20



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Support



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"Trustees of Tufts College" with "MOTHER Lab"
Tufts University School of Medicine
Office of Development
136 Harrison Ave
Boston, MA 02111

