Get to Know Your USLCA Board of Directors Nominees

**Director of Marketing**

- Mary Kay Smith, RN, IBCLC, FILCA  
  Naperville, Illinois
- Christine Staricka, BS, IBCLC, RLC, CCE  
  Bakersfield, California

**Director of Professional Development**

- Cindy Carter, MSN, RN, IBCLC, ICCE  
  Nocona, TX
- Genae Strong, PhD, CNM, RNC-OB, IBCLC, RLC, CLC, CNE  
  Memphis, TN

**Voting Instructions**

**When:** Voting for USLCA Board of Directors positions will be open from Tuesday **February 10, 2015** through Tuesday **March 10, 2015**.

**How:** Please submit your vote online at https://uslca.wufoo.com/forms/2015-board-of-directors-ballot/.

**Who:** You must be an active USLCA member and an IBCLC to submit a vote. One vote per person.

**Questions or Problems:** You can contact the USLCA office with any questions or technical problems. info@uslca.org or 202-738-1125.
Mary Kay Smith, RN, IBCLC, FILCA
Naperville, Illinois

Biography
Mary Kay Smith has been assisting breastfeeding women for more than 25 years; as a La Leche League Leader since 1982 and as a board certified lactation consultant since 1988. She is also a Registered Nurse and Certified Childbirth Educator. She is one of the original members of MILC (Metro Illinois Lactation Consultant Association) and a founding member of NILCA (Northern Illinois Lactation Consultant Association.) She lived in Michigan from 2003 to 2013 and recently returned to her home state of Illinois. She was the President of MALC (Michigan Association of Lactation Consultants), a member of the Michigan Breastfeeding Network (A Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies chapter), a member of BirthNetwork, a local organization supportive of natural childbirth and attachment parenting, and continues to be a member of ILCA, USLCA and AHWONN. In 2008, she was awarded the honor of being named a Fellow of the International Lactation Consultant Association; an award instituted to recognize leaders and mentors in the field of lactation consulting.

Please describe what strengths you would bring to the board and how you feel you make a difference during your term:
I feel that I have the ability to listen and fairly evaluate situations and options for change regardless of my personal point of view. I can diplomatically address a heated situation. I think my fourteen years of experience as a Trustee on the Board of Directors of a Public Library System with a budget of several million dollars was helpful in all of those areas. I’ve also had experience administrating several different lactation programs in different cities and states, training and working with peer counselors. I’ve worked with families of many different cultures and ethnic backgrounds and have respect for those who are different from us. I value the input of USLCA members and will carefully consider the point of view of others when a decision about OUR organization needs to be made. One of my goals, if I should be elected, would be to promote the profession of Lactation Consultants as a respected clinical resource for parents and health care facilities. I would work toward more public recognition of the specialized talents of our profession. I have experience in marketing and outreach to communities and organizations and would look for venues and opportunities to do so.

Please explain what makes you want to serve on the USLCA Board:
I would like to give back some of the support, dedication, and education that I have received in my years of ILCA and USLCA membership and help others who are new to the field, as well as those who are established in this profession, to be respected and valued members of the health care team. There is value in the experience and point of view of all of our members and we need to band together to promote our mission to help mothers breastfeed their babies. There are many opportunities available to do this but we need to have the “woman power” to accomplish these goals. I would be willing to invest some of my personal time to support those efforts.
Director of Marketing

Christine Staricka, BS, IBCLC, RLC, CCE
Bakersfield, California

Biography

I am a hospital-based IBCLC in California with extensive experience in inpatient and outpatient consultation, as well as participation in the Baby-Friendly journey in 2 facilities. I am the lead IBCLC and facilitator of Baby Cafe Bakersfield and secretary of our local chapter of USLCA, Central Valley Lactation Association. In 2013, I co-founded Bakersfield Breastfeeds, a professional lactation education company which provides training to healthcare providers and potential IBCLC candidates. Bakersfield Breastfeeds is now known as California Advanced Lactation Institute. As a mother of three, I came to this profession through my personal breastfeeding experience as a mother attending a support group. I believe that mother-to-mother support paired with professional IBCLC care will increase the overall duration of breastfeeding in future generations.

Please describe what strengths you would bring to the board and how you feel you make a difference during your term:

As a US Navy veteran, I learned early in my life that attention to detail is crucial to achieving even the most complex objectives. Advocacy for our profession and our work toward licensure certainly qualify as complicated goals, but I believe that we have the ability and resources to accomplish them. I strongly believe we have an obligation to meet those objectives for the future of our young profession. I have always been a close follower of the global network of lactation professionals through LactNet and now through Facebook groups, and I have heard what member IBCLCs and non-member IBCLCs are saying all over the country. By paying attention to the concerns of IBCLCs in all types of practice settings throughout the US, I have formed a clear vision of what will help us to build the equity & diversity we need to sustain our profession. As a member of ILCA’s Medialert Team, I have gained experience in social media marketing, an important strategy for reaching IBCLCs who would benefit from membership and participation in our national professional organization. My work in the hospital system has provided a window into how to communicate and engage with healthcare administrators, opening doors for us to ensure the value of our credential becomes more recognized and accepted. IBCLCs are unique in that almost every one of us entered this profession with experience doing other, mostly unrelated jobs, careers, or volunteer work. That diverse background, coupled with the passion we bring to our love for breastfeeding, is what will move us closer to meeting our collective goals.

Please explain what makes you want to serve on the USLCA Board:

I would love to bring my organization skills & project management experience to the Board and contribute to enhancing our future as a profession. If elected, I will work to represent all IBCLCs equally. In the current marketing climate, there are marketing tasks to be done every day in order to maintain a collective voice which can be heard and understood. We will need a team to unify those tasks and speak with one voice, and I would love to be a strong leader and guiding hand for that team. Our work toward licensure is being performed by small, hard-working committees in each respective state. Those committees need manpower and outreach - USLCA marketing can help with that. I hear what members are asking of their organization, and, perhaps more importantly, I hear what non-members are saying. This organization will flourish if we can bring more voices to the table, so I would bring all of my organization and marketing skills to this position. Excellent marketing strategies which are carried through to success will broaden our influence in healthcare. I want to be a part of the Board because I believe in what we do as IBCLCs, I believe we are valuable to our country, and I believe our professional organization should reflect our passion and the diversity we bring to our work. I am willing to work for that as hard as I work for the mothers and babies who put their trust in my skills as an IBCLC.
Director of Professional Development

Cindy Carter, MSN, RN, IBCLC, ICCE
Nocona, Texas

Biography
Personally, we’ve been married for 40 years, blessed with four children, their four spouses, plus 12 precious grandchildren. Professionally, I have been honored to serve BF mothers/babies in community, hospital, and private practice in many roles.

Please describe what strengths you would bring to the board and how you feel you make a difference during your term:
Working as an advocate for mothers and babies since the early eighties, I have published a book (Preparing for Multiples: The Family Way), served as primary author of training modules for Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative for a major hospital system, and facilitated others’ professional growth as a nurse educator. I bring all that passion to USLCA.

Please explain what makes you want to serve on the USLCA Board:
What started for me by volunteering for American Red Cross three decades ago eventually lead to supporting professional development in lactation through committees for both the International Lactation Consultants Association (ILCA) and American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). I believe in volunteerism and desire to serve LCs through USLCA.
Genae Strong, PhD, CNM, RNC-OB, IBCLC, RLC, CLC, CNE
Memphis, Tennessee

Biography
Genae Strong is an Assistant Professor at the University of Memphis, Loewenberg School of Nursing and has 20+ years supporting breastfeeding dyads and their families through teaching, research, and service. Dr. Strong teaches both at the undergraduate and graduate levels of women’s health nursing and nursing research. She has several publications in her field and maintains a program of research on barriers created by health providers caring for breastfeeding women. As the recipient of the 2012 ILCA Research Grant, Dr. Strong is designing a breastfeeding education curriculum for pre-licensure nursing students that will provide a standardize curriculum including competency measures. As an affiliate for the University of Memphis, Center for Research on Women (CROW), a member of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), a member of the Research Committee for International Board Certified Lactation Examiners (IBCLE), and a member of the Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) Research Advisory Panel, Dr. Strong’s love for research couldn’t be more “evident.”

Serving on multiple boards and committees such as Memphis Area Lactation Consultant Association (MALCA), Shelby County Breastfeeding Coalition (SCBC), and IBLCE in pivotal leadership positions, Dr. Strong is passionate about promoting IBCLCs with the evidence that they make the difference in maternal and infant health outcomes.

Please describe what strengths you would bring to the board and how you feel you make a difference during your term:
The strengths I bring to USLCA are leadership, passion, vision, experience, and resources. I’m very familiar with working within groups to achieve strategic goals. Professional development is something I do daily so I’m very comfortable assessing needs, initiating targeted efforts to meet developmental needs, executing and following up with evaluation. I’m also pretty computer savvy which helps when it comes to delivering webinars, designing websites, and utilizing advanced technology. Finally, you will never find a person with a stronger work ethic. My entire career has focused on Women’s Health and particularly supporting breastfeeding women. I feel that I bring a “strong” career-long passion of promoting IBCLCs as the professional provider of lactation care and a unique understanding of the needs for exam preparation as well as certification maintenance for practice.

Please explain what makes you want to serve on the USLCA Board:
The reason I want to serve on the Board is because USLCA represents not only me as a professional but all IBCLCs in this country. The organization understands current struggles that the lactation profession faces and proactively advocates at all levels for IBCLCs. My personal and professional values align with the organization and I feel my voice is heard among leaders making the decisions. Ultimately, my desire is to serve this organization in whatever capacity necessary to promote the IBCLC profession. As the professional US association, USLCA is where I feel I could make a difference.