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Letter From The President

Alisa Sanders RN, IBCLC, RLC

I am writing this column as I travel home from our St. Louis conference. It was an exciting weekend with so many inspiring speakers and attendees. I cannot believe the passion that our attendees have for what they do every day. The stories that you told us were unbelievable, and you must read Regina's [here](#). I heard how a lady from Arizona drives for hours to attend a chapter meeting. I even met one lady who was so pumped up after attending that she started a chapter in one week! Our exhibitors were no less excited about their products and services. Some of them were entrepreneurs with new products that were developed with IBCLC input. They understand the expertise of the IBCLC. It was so much fun to hear how they moved from having a great idea to actual product development and marketing. Of course, visiting with some of our faithful supporters is always a blessing. Learning about their unexpected success and lessons learned is so valuable. There was a palpable air of excitement and friendship.

A common theme in St. Louis was that our members were not aware of exactly who USLCA is or what we do. It is gratifying to know that we were able to clear up that confusion. Understanding that ILCA promotes the IBCLC on a global platform and that USLCA promotes the IBCLC on a national level helps to direct our mission. It has been said, "Imitation is the most sincere form of flattery." While I am flattered that others want to become lactation consultants, it is important that the public is aware of the expertise that the IBCLC maintains. Our top priority as an organization is to educate and inform legislators, hospital administrators, parents and others of the value of the IBCLC. Your Board of Directors works to ensure that you have representation in national forums. We need your help in local and state level organizations to ensure that we are represented at all levels. As USLCA grows and improves our communication with members, outreach is one of our top priorities. When we send you breaking news that affects our professional practice, we need you to reach your fellow IBCLCs. Membership growth and directed activity will be the most effective tool we have to position the IBCLC as the professional in lactation care. Our conference in St. Louis had 437 attendees, which is one tenth of our membership. There are approximately 7,000 IBCLC in the United States. My question is why don't the other 3,000 IBCLCs belong to ILCA/USLCA? My guess is that they do not understand the importance of joining their professional association.

We must all take responsibility for the future of our profession.



USLCA encourages members to "grow something beautiful" and "nurture the next generation."

Focus On Marketing

[Debi Ferrarello](#), MSN, MS, IBCLC

Many of you just returned from USLCA's inaugural conference in St. Louis. Many more of you likely recently completed a webinar, course, or program. This is a great opportunity to put your name in front of your referral sources, clients, and employers. Send an article, letter, or press release highlighting your participation in the event and highlighting something you have recently learned that will help you better meet the needs of mothers and babies. If you work in a hospital, submit a brief article about your conference attendance and new knowledge to your hospital newsletter editor and the public relations department. Be sure to include a photo if you have one!

Take every opportunity to put your name in front of other professionals and the families in your community, highlighting your skills, experience, and education.

Remember, effective marketing is *relentless*.



Be on the lookout for advocacy updates from USLCA. Mothers and babies are depending on us!

Legislative Update

The good news: Medicaid now covers IBCLC services in the state of New York.

The bad news: The IBCLC must be a licensed health professional (RN, MD, PA, NP, etc.) in order to be paid as an IBCLC.

We are making progress in gaining recognition for the value of IBCLC services. This is a prime example of why we need licensure. In almost every state, Medicaid requires that health care professionals be licensed.

Why licensure? To increase access to our valuable, health-promoting services. For details, refer to the March 2013 Medicaid Update article on Fee-For-Service Medicaid: Breastfeeding Support Payment for Specially Trained Lactation Counselors [here](#).

Sowing Seeds for State Chapters using Facebook

-Cheryl Adams RN,BSN, IBCLC, ICCE and Lactation Services Coordinator for The Mother's Nook Retail Store, East Alabama Medical Center

When it comes to social marketing and networking, more is better! At the USLCA Conference, we were challenged to work toward having a State Chapter in each state. I'm sure everyone is as busy as I am and the idea of yet another meeting seems daunting. To "baby step" our way to State Chapters, let's network on Facebook. I think that if one USLCA member from each state without a chapter would start a Facebook page, "Alabama Lactation Consultants," for example, invite all of the IBCLC and breastfeeding professionals they know, and ask those to invite others, it would quickly grow. What an easy way for lactation supporters to start networking without having to spend time or money on meetings right away! If your state has a Chapter but not a Facebook page, this would still be a great way to stay in touch with others for networking, sharing, and supporting each other!

Other Social Media sites may also work. LinkedIn, Twitter, and Yahoo groups lend themselves to group efforts. I'm sure many of you out there are more networking savvy than I, but the concept of "each one, reach one" lends itself to grassroots development and building of a strong network. As our State pages grow, we may be able to link from the main USLCA website/Facebook page. Let's band together and go viral with support for USLCA and International Board Certified Lactation Consultants everywhere!

Supporting Working Moms Act Introduced

From the US Breastfeeding Committee comes the exciting news of more help on the way for employed breastfeeding mothers.

On Monday, the [Supporting Working Moms Act of 2013](#) (SWMA) was introduced in both houses of Congress! SWMA would protect and expand working moms' right to breastfeed by extending the [existing federal law](#) to ensure that an additional 11.5 million executive, administrative, and professional employees, including elementary and secondary school teachers, have break time and a private place to pump in the workplace.

A sincere thank you to co-sponsors Senator Jeff Merkley (OR), Senator Tom Harkin (IA), Senator Elizabeth Warren (MA), and Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney (NY) for championing this important bill! To let them know just how much we appreciate their efforts, we'd like to flood the Twittersphere with messages. Show your support by joining the conversation at hashtag #SWMA13 or simply copy and paste the sample tweets below.

Sample Tweets:

- Breaking News! The Supporting Working Moms Act has been introduced in the Senate and House: <http://ow.ly/I318d>
- Thanks to @SenJeffMerkley, @RepMaloney, @SenatorHarkin, and @SenWarren for leading the charge in support of #SWMA13 and #WorkingMoms
- Because teachers shouldn't have to choose between #breastfeeding and their students, I support #SWMA13: <http://ow.ly/I326K>
- The Supporting Working Moms Act is good for families, business, and the economy. Where do your legislators stand? #SWMA13
- The Supporting Working Moms Act would make #breastfeeding possible for an additional 11.5 million #WorkingMoms #SWMA13
- 60% don't reach their own #breastfeeding goal, but laws that guarantee #BFing breaks at work can change it <http://ow.ly/I33km> #SWMA13

Scheduled Webinars

Topic	Speaker	Date & Time	Cont Ed Credit	Cost	Registration Deadline
Birth Trauma: Risk Factors, Consequences, and Its Impact on Breastfeeding	Kathleen A. Kendall-Tackett, Ph.D., IBCLC, FAPA	June 11, 2013 1:00 pm - 2:15 pm ET	1.25 L CERPs	Members: \$20 Non-Members: \$30 Groups of 3-10: \$55 Groups of 11 or more: \$75 Join USLCA and save on all of our webinars!	Register by June 10, 2013 Register Now Webinar will be recorded
Working With Insurance Companies: What You Need to Know in Order to Contract, Code & Bill Successfully	Susanne Madden, MBA	June 24, 2013 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm ET	3 R CERPs	Members: \$40 Non-Members: \$55 Groups of 3-10: \$80 Groups of 11 or more: \$105	Register by June 21, 2013 Register Now Webinar will be recorded

USLCA is looking for speakers to donate their expertise and time. Submit your topics today by [email](#).

USLCA recorded webinars are available for [purchase](#).

Third *Listening to Mothers* Survey released

[Listening to Mothers III](#) survey results from the third national U.S survey of women's pregnancy and birth experiences has just been released. As with previous *Listening to Mothers* surveys, the latest data show that risky procedures are overused, many beneficial practices are underused, and all too often women lack the support and knowledge required to effectively navigate their maternity care. Some good news regarding breastfeeding care and services was seen in a comparison among the previous surveys. In-hospital formula supplementation rates fell from 47% in 2000-2002 to 29% in 2011-2012. Hospital provision of formula samples (discharge bags) fell from 80% in 2000-2002 to 49% in 2011-2012. However, breastfeeding exclusivity at 1 week fell from 58% in 2000-2002 to 50% in 2011-2012. This increase in formula use is disappointing. To view the entire report click [here](#).

Join our Facebook Fleet!

If you would like to help us stay in touch with all of our Facebook friends, let us know! We will invite you to join our Private Social Media Committee. Send off a quick request to join this [Facebook Group](#) and we will take it from there.

Thanks for helping to keep USLCA fresh on Facebook!



USLCA's Inaugural Conference a Stunning Success!

Your Board of Directors would like to take this opportunity to thank each conference attendee, speaker, exhibitor, and tireless volunteer for your enthusiastic participation and generous support.

The planning committee spent over a year putting together a world-class line up of presentations to meet every lactation professional's need. Speakers responded graciously to our invitations and requests for the necessary continuing education paperwork, and **439** of you dedicated your time and funds to be a part of this historic event.

If you have not yet taken the opportunity to download the [conference handouts](#), you have a bit of time to do so. The link will be open until June 15..

We would like to thank those who donated items for our silent auction, as well as ilactation.com and ILCA for donating our raffle prizes. A special thanks to Annette Leary and Mistel de Varona for organizing these exciting events. The auction and raffle together brought in over \$4000 to use toward our goal of advancing the IBCLC in the United States of America!

You will soon receive an [evaluation form](#). Completion of this form is necessary for all RNs receiving CEUs, and we ask that all of our participants fill it out. Your feedback will help us in planning any future events.

One take home from the conference is this: **USLCA is "U"!** How are "U" going to help us advance the IBCLC profession in the U.S. and ensure that the IBCLC is the recognized professional authority in lactation care? Your Board is eager to hear from you and invites you to participate in committees to get it done!

From Christina Pickle, RN, IBCLC:

I love that there is a conference just for the U.S. If International stayed international and U.S. stayed U.S., that would be so good for everyone. I think it would make our membership grow so much. There's so much going on right now here in the U.S. I worked my 12 hour shift and got into my car at 9 pm. There was a blizzard! I got here at 5 a.m. It was totally worth it!

CLINICAL AND RESEARCH POSTER SESSIONS AT USLCA CONFERENCE

Many thanks to Genae Strong, PhD, CNM, RNC- OB, IBCLC, her team of poster judges, and the authors of the thirty posters accepted for the poster sessions at USLCA's May conference.

The poster sessions highlighted USLCA's mission to advance the IBCLC through leadership, advocacy, professional development, and research. Dr. Strong created individual awards to recognize presentations reflecting the conference theme, disseminate professional work that is current and relevant to the IBCLC, and share exceptional presentations to colleagues for valuable insight and feedback.



Poster winners and USLCA president, Alisa Sanders.

I have never needed or wanted a breastfeeding conference more than I did this USLCA conference. You see, I was recently told by my doctors that I probably have lung cancer... Ours is a profession dedicated to caring for people, to caring for vulnerable women. This week at the USLCA conference I was one of those women, and my friends throughout our profession took me, literally and figuratively, into their arms... what I got out of attending this year's USLCA conference is priceless to me.....and in my opinion will make me more likely to be ABLE to attend the next one.....

Click [here](#) for Dr. Strong's PowerPoint presentation of individual awards and winners.

Poignant Conference Musings from Regina Roig-Romero

I always enjoy breastfeeding conferences; I have long been a conference-junkie. You probably know the type – the front-row geeks that show up in the main room promptly at 7am to save seats in the first row even before breakfast, that always go to conferences whether or not we even need the CERPs. I am one of those. And what's not to love about a good breastfeeding conference? Even if things aren't perfect, a good breastfeeding conference is always worth it to me. The sessions invigorate me, breastfeeding still fascinates me, and there is still a lot for me to learn. Then there's the whole idea of getting away from home, away from work, and enjoying a few days in a nice hotel. And I have always found the speakers in our profession to be accessible, down-to-earth and friendly, eager to stick around after their sessions to answer my questions.

But by far my favorite thing about breastfeeding conferences has always been the people – my colleagues. The colloquial term for this is “networking”, but I don't like it; it sounds self-serving to me, as if the main point of networking is to advance one's career. It isn't! I enjoy meeting other IBCLCs, making new friends, and reconnecting with old ones. I love the sharing that goes on – the sharing of opinions, perspectives, and experiences. I love the debates, the dreaming about the future of breastfeeding promotion or our profession, and the vision-building conversations that can occur. Over the years I have developed a special brand of friends that I call “conference buddies” – people that I usually only get to see at conferences. Once you've gone to enough conferences, you come to count on getting to see these special friends. These days, thanks to Facebook and other social media, it is easier to remain connected to friends from around the country between conferences. However, nothing beats getting to see them again after a year or sometimes more, sharing a nice dinner and a few good hugs together, and catching up with each other in a more personal way.

At this year's first-ever USLCA conference, that turned out to be more important to me than it usually is. In fact, I have never needed or wanted a breastfeeding conference more than I did this USLCA conference. **You see, I was recently told by my doctors that I probably have lung cancer.** The diagnosis really threw me for a loop, since neither I nor anyone in my family has ever smoked or had lung cancer. Nevertheless, the doctors say that the nodule in my right lung is 95% likely to be cancer, one that is unrelated to smoking. Surgery to remove and biopsy it will soon be taking place; only then will I know for sure. However, the diagnosis only made me more eager to attend the conference, not because of the sessions, as much as I wanted to see them, but because of my “conference buddies.”

Ours is a profession dedicated to caring for people, to caring for vulnerable women. This week at the USLCA conference I was one of those women, and my friends throughout our profession took me, literally and figuratively, into their arms. One after the other friends both old and new encouraged me, hugged me, consoled me, listened to me, affirmed me, and reminded me of why I want to beat this disease, should the biopsy turn out to be as serious as expected. Had I not gone to the conference, I would have entered into surgery next week without all of that. So don't ask me how much the conference cost me, whether the food was good or the hotel room nice, or how much vacation time I gave up for it, at a time when one could argue that I should have been saving both that money and those vacation hours for the cancer battle to come. Don't ask. Because what I got out of attending this year's USLCA conference is priceless to me.....and in my opinion will make me more likely to be ABLE to attend the next one.....

-Our very best to Regina as she walks this path. May she feel the love and support of her colleagues all along the way and we look forward to seeing her at the next conference!



**ILCA President, Liz Brooks, JD, IBCLC, FILCA and Marsha Walker, RN, IBCLC
USLCA ED RJ Weber in background at USLCA booth**



**USLCA Board
Members Sylvia
Edwards, MS, RN,
IBCLC and Michele
Bunker-Alberts, MSN,
APRN, IBCLC**

North American Code Training Workshop

INFANT Canada/IBFAN North America is pleased to announce a 3-day training/workshop together with the IBFAN International Code Documentation Centre (ICDC).

Goals for the three-day training:

- increase awareness of the importance of the International Code and relevant World Health Assembly resolutions on infant and young child nutrition as a critical tool to support breastfeeding as the norm for optimal health and development for infants and young children;
- increase capacity to monitor for Code violations and improve enforcement;
- increase political action for governments to regulate the marketing of products covered by the Code and resolutions.

This represents an important opportunity to learn more about the Code, your responsibilities under the Code, and interpreting guidance for those tricky or subtle situations.

More information can be found [here](#).

Book Review: [Breasts: A Natural and Unnatural History by Florence Williams](#)

An engaging narrative about an incredible, life-giving organ and its imperiled modern fate

Did you know that breast milk contains substances similar to cannabis? Or that it's sold on the Internet for 262 times the price of oil? Feted and fetishized, the breast is an evolutionary masterpiece. But in the modern world, the breast is changing. Breasts are getting bigger, arriving earlier, and attracting newfangled chemicals. Increasingly, the odds are stacked against us in the struggle with breast cancer, even among men. What makes breasts so mercurial—and so vulnerable?

In this informative and highly entertaining account, intrepid science reporter Florence Williams sets out to uncover the latest scientific findings from the fields of anthropology, biology, and medicine. Her investigation follows the life cycle of the breast from puberty to pregnancy to menopause, taking her from a plastic surgeon's office where she learns about the importance of cup size in Texas to the laboratory where she discovers the presence of environmental toxins in her own breast milk. The result is a fascinating exploration of where breasts came from, where they have ended up, and what we can do to save them.

A 2012 New York Times Notable Book

A 2013 Los Angeles Times Book Award Winner in the Science & Technology category

Credit: Amazon.com

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