BIRTH CENTER EQUITY

Advancing Birth Center Equity:

Building Leadership & Expanding Access



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We Are the Network Engagement Team



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BIRTHING LOVE
BIRTHING POWER

Nondisclosure & Confidentiality

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What is Birth Center Equity?

Birth Center Equity (BCE) works to ensure that every community has access to safe, culturally reverent midwifery care by investing in birth centers led by Black, Indigenous, and people of color.

BCE is a national catalyst growing community birth infrastructure, resources, power, and innovation, grounded in a network of over 70 Black, Indigenous, and birth center leaders of color, spanning 28
states, Washington, DC, Puerto Rico, and Mexico.



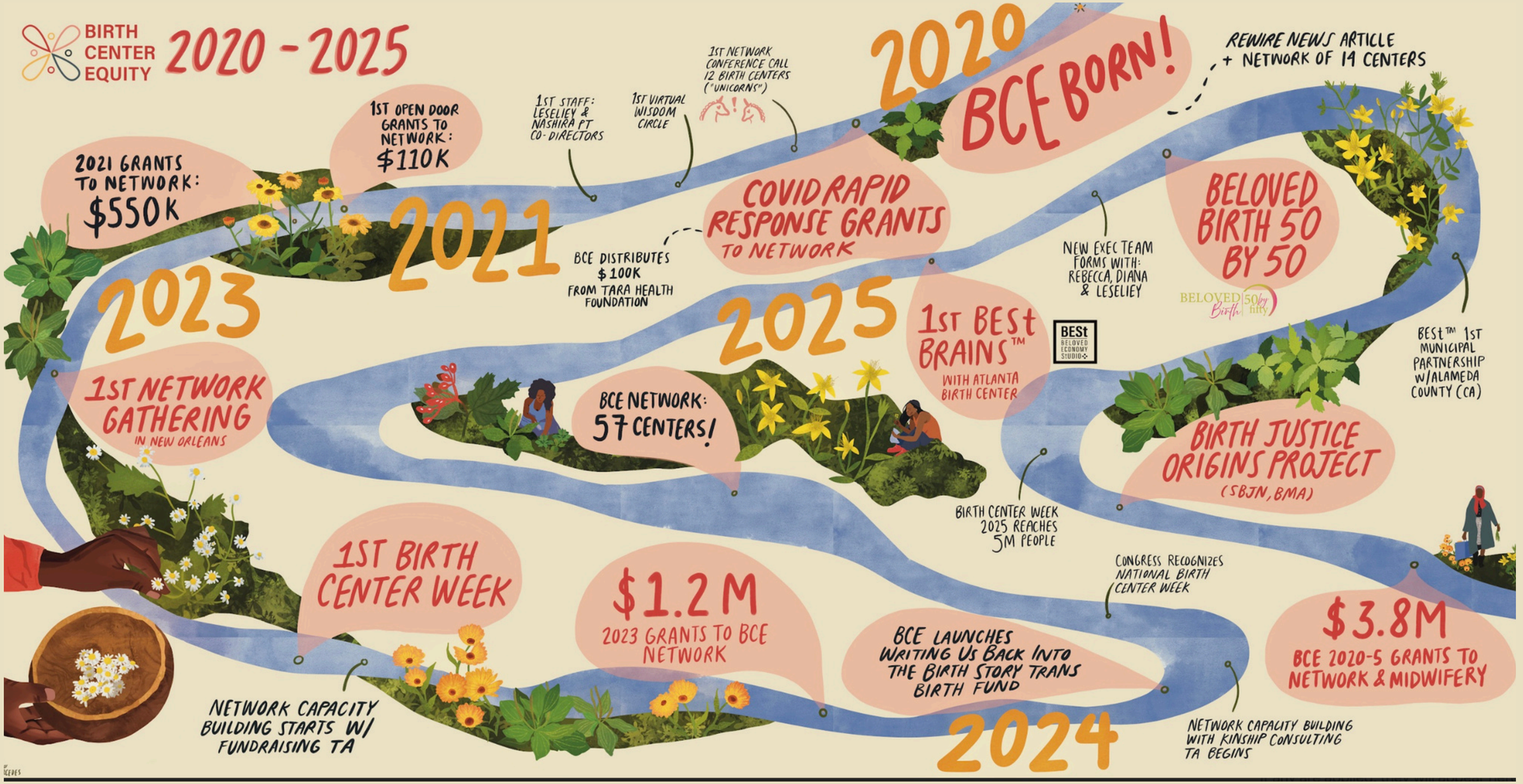
Vision

A world where all people birth safely with dignity and love.

Mission

Build with Black, Indigenous, people of color-led birth centers to grow and sustain community birth infrastructure for generations.

Our Shared History



Born in April, 2020, during the early weeks of the COVID-19 pandemic
Started with co-founders Nashira Baril, Leseliey , and 14 birth center leaders
Now we hold 16 full time staff members and over 70 birth center leaders

Who is Birth Center Equity?

- Relationship & Values-Based Network
  - *Abundance lies in the flow of trusted relationships & resources.*
- Catalyst for community birth center development
- Public Health & Movement-Building Origins
  - Community - Capital - Catalyst - Culture

> "What if how we **cared for birthing people** and how we brought our babies into the world were a true **moral**, **cultural**, and **economic priority**?"



Leseliey Welch, MPH, MBA
Birth Center Equity CEO & Co-Founder

Who is the network?

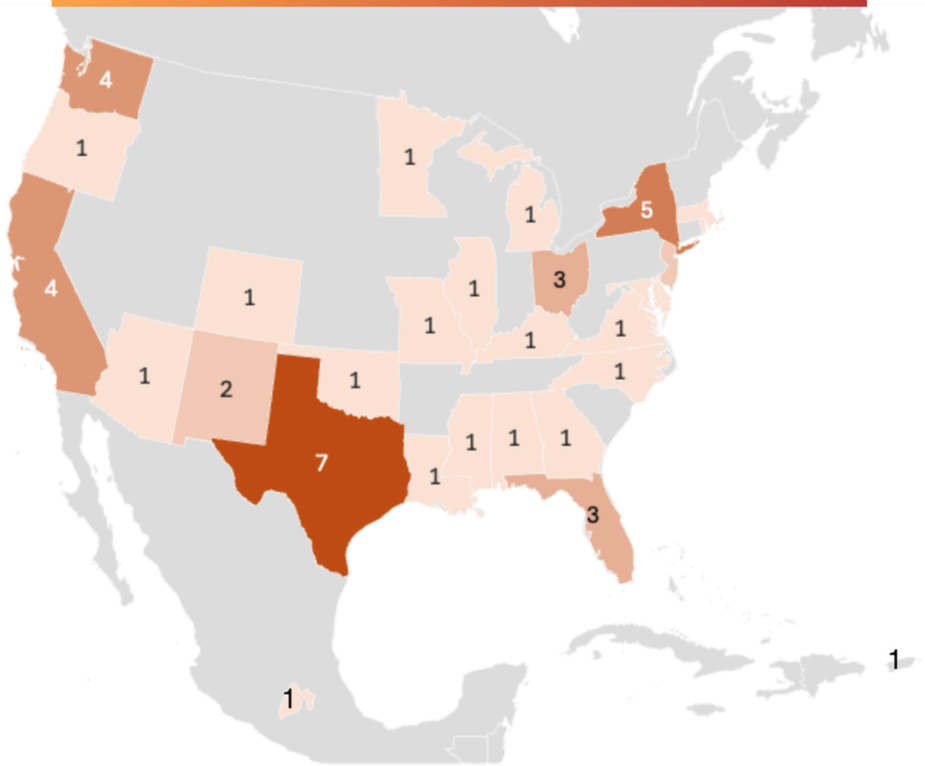
- The network is BCE — BCE is the network
- The network is the core of BCE
- It represents the feet on the ground and the source of wisdom
- The network provides real-time insight on:
  - Regulatory climates
  - Funding sources
  - Practice realities
  - Employment conditions
  - Diverse birthing cultures



Who is Birth Center Equity?

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Our Network:

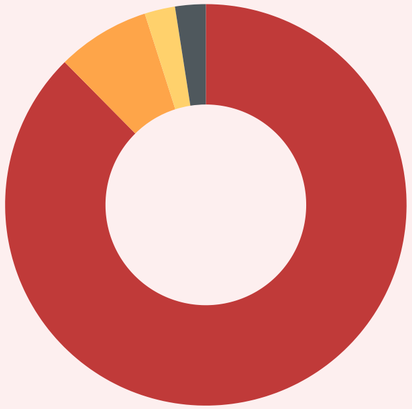


70 birth centers in various stages of development

26 States, DC, PR, & MX

2025 Self-Identified Racial and Ethnic Identity of Network Member Birth Center Leaders

- Black or African American
- Native American or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Hispanic



Who is Birth Center Equity?

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Community-Building and Knowledge Sharing

BCE fosters collective power and shared strategies by facilitating consistent connection and learning, including:

- Real-time, cross-network collaboration, allowing rapid response to emerging issues
- Hosting a biennial in-person Network Gathering to deepen relationships
- Providing receptions and gathering spaces at national conferences to **expand our network and create visibility for community birth centers**

Technical Assistance and Leadership Development

BCE provides **coaching and capacity building tailored to each birth center's growth and sustainability,** including:

- On-site expert strategy sessions through our BEStTM Brains program
- Fellowships and sabbatical support to support leadership sustainability
- Connection and funding for tailored expertise in areas like facility design, business planning, and clinical protocols.

Financial support and Investment

BCE provides direct grants to birth centers to help birth centers **build solid foundations for long-term success**. This includes:

- **Our Capital Circle**, which includes support for birth centers engaged in fundraising initiatives with both technical assistance and matching funds.
- **Our Catalyst Circle**, which provides funding for ecosystem-impact projects that benefit multiple birth centers and advance the field

National Leadership and Movement Building

BCE aims to embed birth centers and midwifery in the cultural fabric:

- Raising national awareness through **Birth Center Week** (September 14-20)
- **Birth Justice Origins Project**, which documents the birth justice movement's roots in Black midwifery with Southern Birth Justice Network and National Black Midwives Alliance
- **Beloved Birth 50 by 50** initiative aims to transform U.S. birth culture so that by 2050, 50% of babies will be born with midwifery care

How BCE supports leaders building capacity, leadership, & sustainability

- **Peer learning** through Power Hours, Wisdom Circles, and Capital Chats
- **Community building** through virtual programs, national gatherings, and conferences
- **Capacity building** through technical assistance, expert coaching, and BESt Brains strategy sessions with local and national experts
- **Growth and sustainability support** through grants, investment opportunities, leadership development, and fellowships
- **Additional resources** on the horizon, including a members-only online resource hub, practical guides, and toolkits

Black, Indigenous, People of Color-led Birth Centers: a unique role

- Reverse maternal health crisis by providing safe and culturally-relevant care in communities of color
- Strengthen healthcare systems and support BIPOC midwifery
- Build vital infrastructure for education, training, and practice in midwifery
- Heal communities through trusted, generational institutions



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Our North Star: Beloved Birth 50 by 50

BELOVED Birth | 50 by fifty

By 2050, 50% of babies in the U.S. will come into the world with the care of midwives.



Our North Star: Beloved Birth 50 by 50

Medicalized Birth	Beloved Birth
Physician Centric	Family Centered
Physician Led	Midwife Led (in collaboration with physicians)
Hospital Anchored	Community Held
Rooted in Hierarchy (families, providers)	All People Respected & Valued (families, providers)



Six Beloved Birth 50 by 50 Pathways

FINANCE MIDWIFERY
Make midwifery a top public & private financing priority

GROW BIRTH CENTERS
The only health care facilities that center the midwifery model of care

EXPAND MIDWIFERY WORKFORCE
as the backbone of birth care workforce

CENTER MIDWIFERY IN INTEGRATED CARE
as optimal birth care across birth settings

STRENGTHEN POLICIES & REGULATIONS
To support widespread access to midwifery care

MOVE MILLIONS OF HEARTS & MINDS
Harness the power of culture, narrative, and story to grow demand for change.



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Thank you!

