

# Region 9 Perinatal Quality Collaborative

Maternal Infant Health Summit

June 22, 2023

Helen Joa, MSW



No disclosures to share



# Region 9 Leadership Team



Lisa Kane Low  
Co-Lead



Kamilah Davis Wilson  
Co-Lead



Julie Tumbarello  
Fiduciary Lead



Helen Joa  
Project Manager

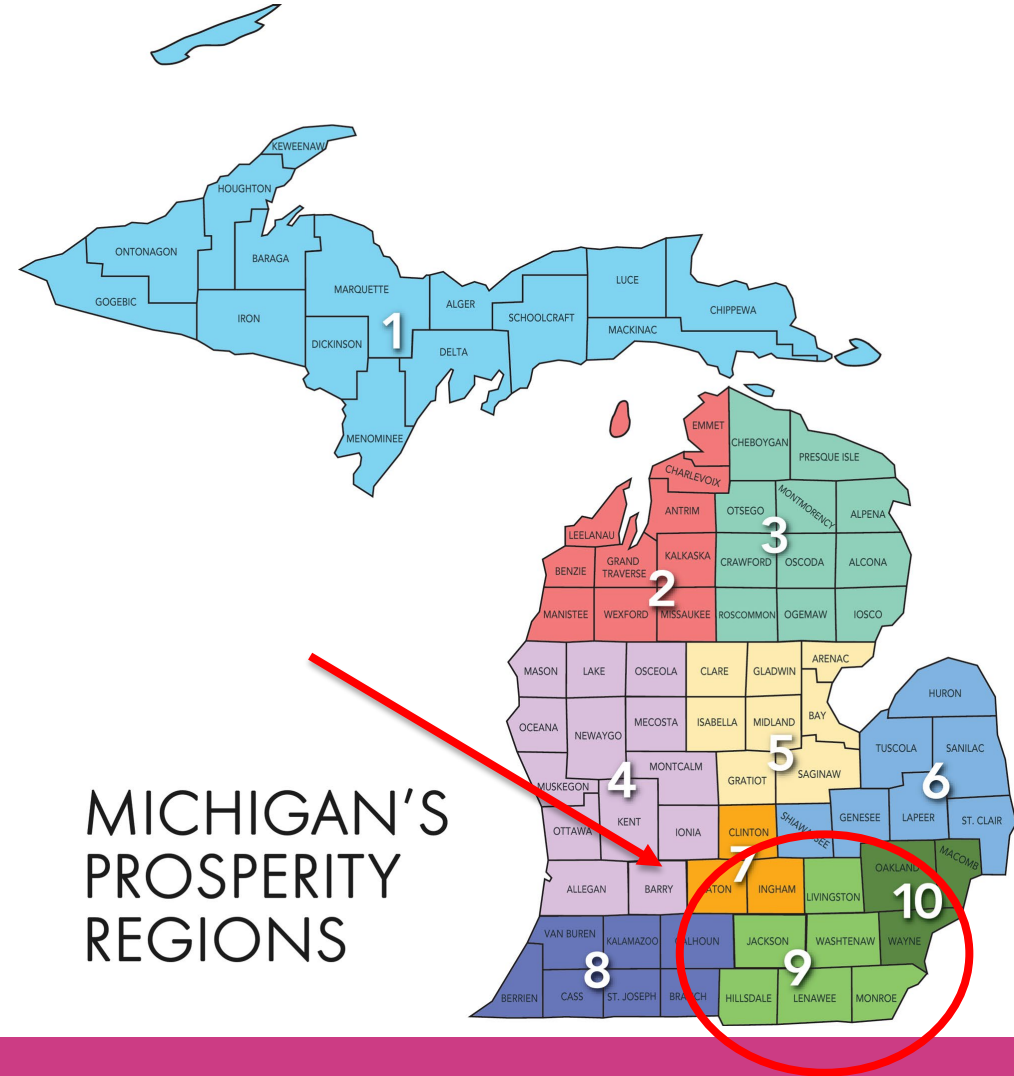


# Organization + Project Background



# Region 9 Perinatal Quality Collaborative

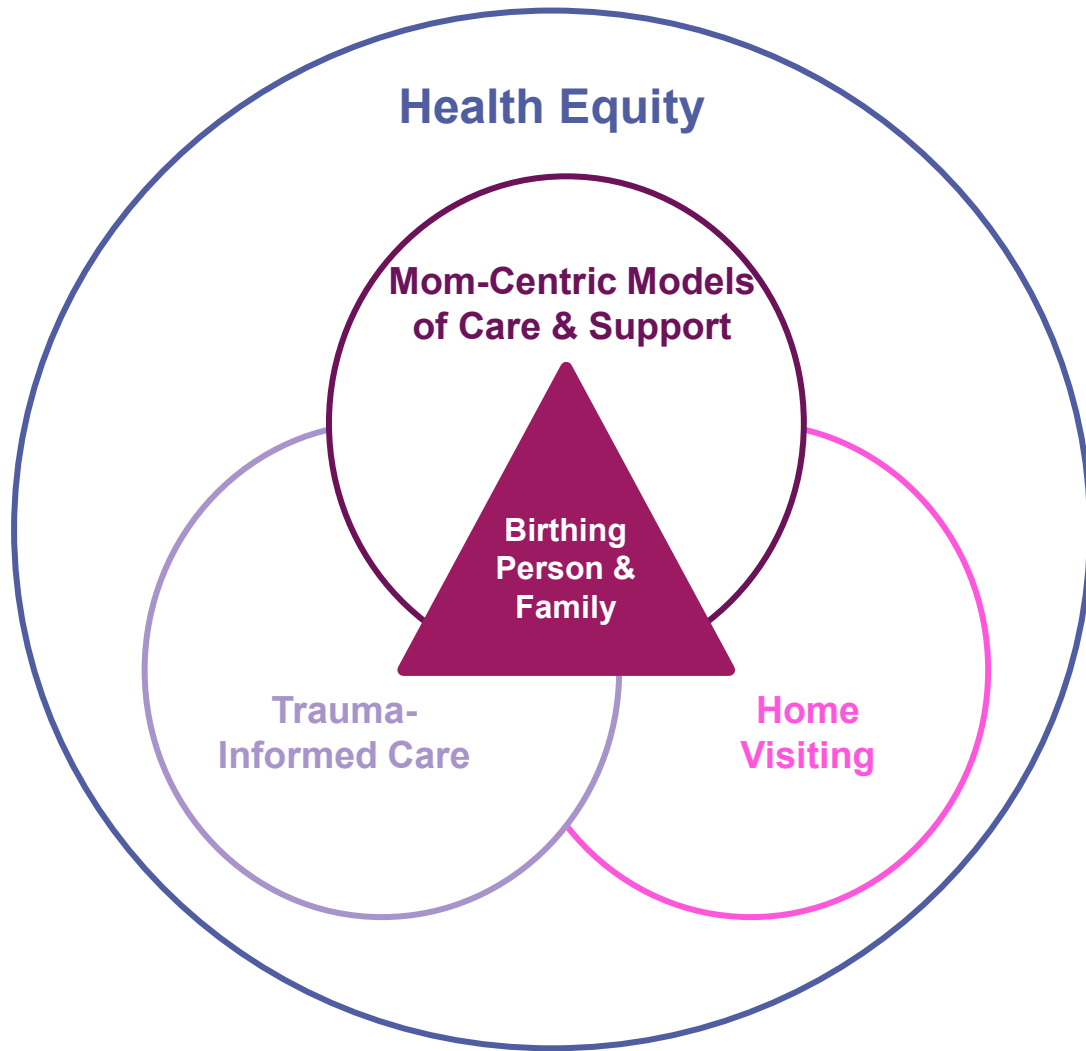
- RPQCs ensure local alignment with the Mother Infant Health & Equity Improvement Plan
- Engagement with diverse stakeholders to develop QI projects
- 224 total Collaborative members; 58% active engagement
- Doulas, community members, clinicians, local public health, midwives, WIC agencies, Medicaid Health Plans, community-based organizations



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# Region 9 Model: Person-centered approach grounded in health equity to create systems change



**Mom-Centric Models of Care & Support:**  
Birthing people know what they need to have a safe and healthy pregnancy. Our goal is to listen, empower, and advocate.

**Trauma-Informed Care:**  
We envision a future where all people have access to support, education, and treatment that helps them recover fully from the effects of trauma.

**Home Visiting:**  
We aim to support all home visitors through education, communication, and collaboration.



# Doula Project Leadership Team



Lisa Kane Low

Workgroup Lead



Melisa Scott

Workgroup Lead



Hanna Russo

Lead Doula

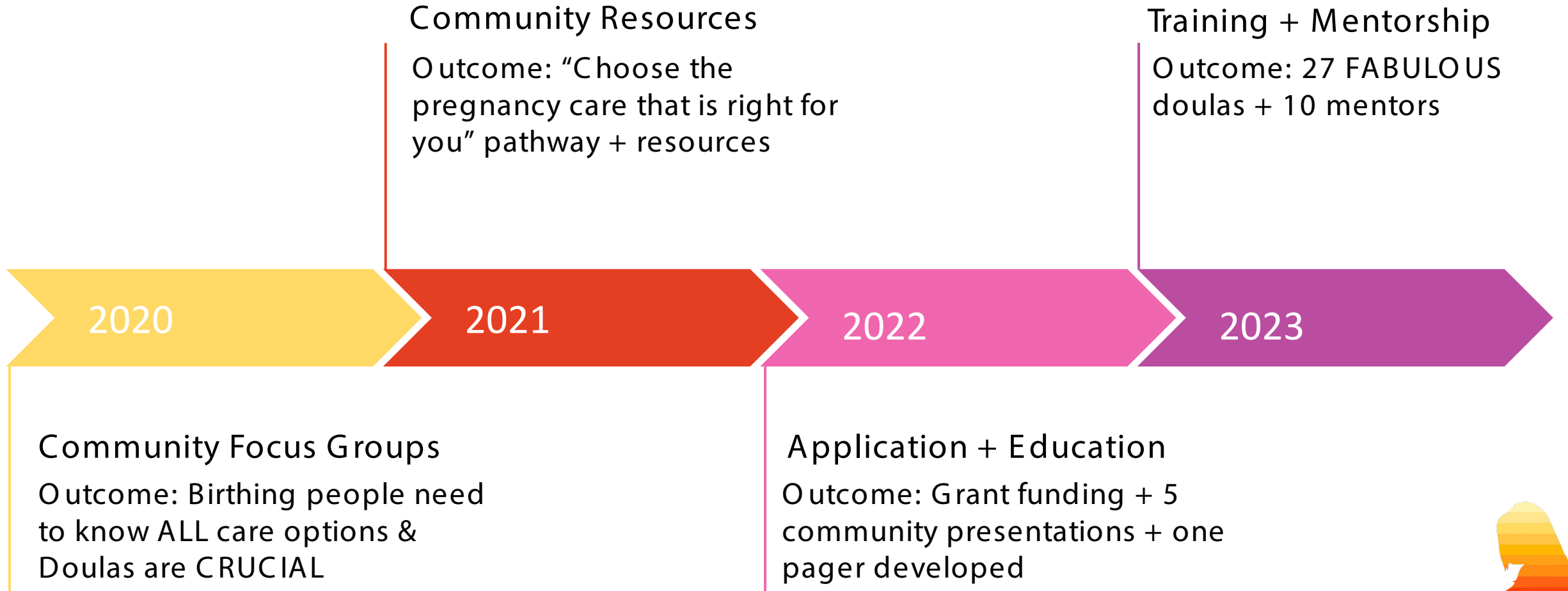


Helen Joa

Project Manager



# Doula Project Timeline





# Building a Diverse Doula Workforce in Southeast Michigan

AIM: Expand the doula workforce

GOAL: Expand the doula workforce to include more diverse representation to promote accessible, welcoming, culturally, and racially aligned labor support to address health disparities and improve birth outcomes



# Doula Landscape



# What does a doula do?

A doula is a non-clinical person who provides physical, emotional, and educational support services to pregnant people during the prenatal, labor and birth, and postpartum periods.



Offer different comfort measures and reassurance and support



Act as a point person for communication with hospital staff and family members



Offer childbirth education, lactation support, and other guidance



# What does a doula not do?

A doula is a non-clinical person who provides physical, emotional, and educational support services to pregnant people during the prenatal, labor and birth, and postpartum periods.



Provide medical care,  
advice, or interpretations



Diagnose symptoms,  
ailments, or injuries



Make decisions for the  
birthing person



# Benefits of Continuous Labor Support

Cochrane Review, 2017: 26 trials, 15,858 women



- Caesarean birth rate
- Labor with epidural or pain medications
- Negative childbirth experience
- Low five minute Apgar



- Shorter labor
- Spontaneous vaginal birth
- Increased breastfeeding
- Satisfaction with birthing experience



# Benefits of Doula Care

Doulas are trained to advocate for birthing individuals within healthcare systems with internalized biases and institutionalized structural racism.



# Benefits of Doula Care

“Evidence suggests that, in addition to regular nursing care, continuous one-to-one emotional support provided by support personnel, such as a doula, is associated with improved outcomes for women in labor.” -ACOG



# Benefits of Doula Care





# Access to Doulas

Before 2023 –

- Fee for service model
- Costs range up to \$4,000 (prenatal, birth, post partum)
- In Region 9, costs for doula care averages \$1,200-\$1,500



As of 1/1/23 -

- Doula care eligible for Medicaid reimbursement
- Reimbursement up to \$1,150 (prenatal, birth, post partum)
- Learn more: <https://michigan.gov/doula>



# Building a Diverse Doula Workforce in Southeast MI



# Region 9 Context

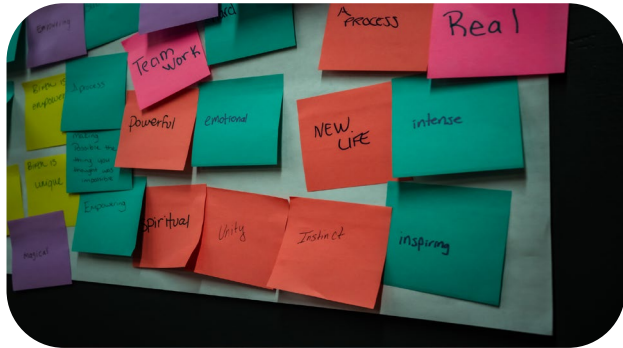
Community member  
focus groups:  
Need more Black  
doulas and doulas of  
color

Community-Based  
Doulas:  
Confusion about  
what a doula does  
from community and  
physicians

Aspiring Doulas:  
Barriers to training  
(cost, time, limited  
support)



# Building a Diverse Doula Workforce in Southeast Michigan



Educate providers and community members



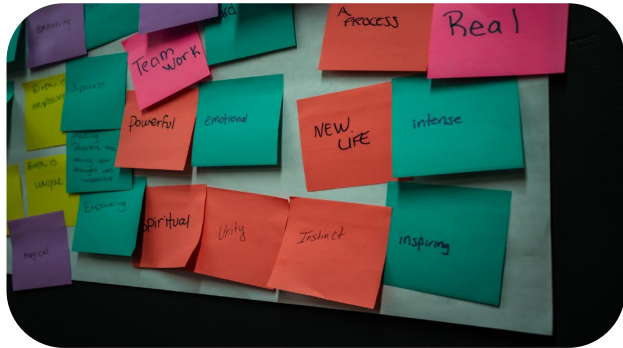
Train a diverse cohort to become doulas



Offer mentorship to newly trained doulas



# Building a Diverse Doula Workforce in Southeast Michigan



6 community presentations;  
2 physician presentations



27 doulas trained  
through DONA



1 Lead Doula +  
10 Mentor Doulas



# DONA Doula Training



County Breakdown:

Livingston: 1

Lenawee: 2

Hillsdale: 4

Jackson: 5

Washtenaw: 15



# DONA Doula Training



Racial Breakdown:

Asian: 1

Hispanic: 1

Middle Eastern: 1

Mixed Race: 1

White: 8

Black: 15



# Doula Mentorship



- 1 Lead Doula
- 10 Mentor Doulas
- Monthly Meet-Ups
  - Processing birth stories
  - Birth bags
  - Hospital tours
  - Trauma-informed care
  - Medicaid reimbursement
  - Certification





# Doula Data



- Mentor Evaluation
- Respectful Care Measures: MOR + MADM
- Birth Outcome Data:



# Strategies for Community Engagement



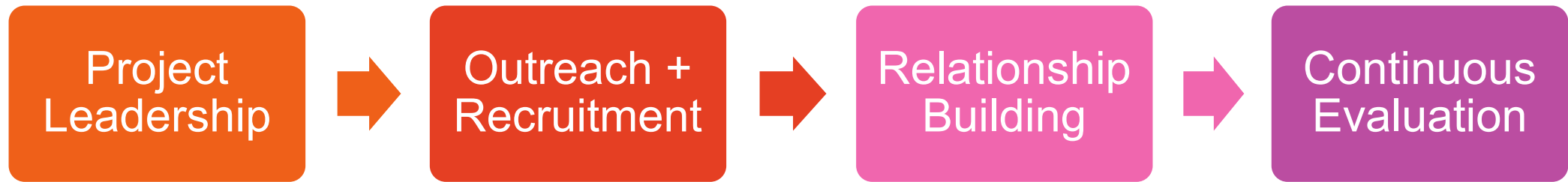
# Removing Financial Barriers

- \$4,500 over two year period

- \$200 stipend per mentee



# Community Engagement



# Community Engagement – Project Leadership

- Multidisciplinary workgroup that prioritized findings from focus group work
- Collaborative meeting announcing project + soliciting feedback + offering education on doula care
- Recognized lack of doulas involved in work → contracting with a lead doula + outreach to established doulas



# Community Engagement – Outreach + Recruitment

- Community listening sessions + education
- Including doulas in community presentations
- Option for written or verbal application to training
- Recorded Q&A video series on being a doula included in application; option to talk with a doula before applying



# Community Engagement – Relationship Building

- In-person training with drop-ins from mentors
- Facebook group
- Mentorship matches based on compatibility, location, and preference
- Complete transparency from project team + easy to connect with
- Monthly meetups



# Community Engagement – Continuous Evaluation

- Throughout all stages of the project
- Monthly meetup topics determined by cohort + mentors
- Next Spring: Client focus groups, doula final evaluations





# Thank you!

## Let's stay in touch.



[region9.org](http://region9.org)



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