



[www.IndianaBreastfeeding.org](http://www.IndianaBreastfeeding.org)

## THE TERRY JO CURTIS 'Every Ounce Counts' SCHOLARSHIP

Indiana Breastfeeding Coalition and Indiana Black Breastfeeding Coalition are raising money to award scholarships for minority breastfeeding champions to attend Leadership Conferences and Lactation Training courses. Since its inception in 2018, we have awarded 12 scholarships to deserving women in Indiana. Our goal is to award at least 5 more scholarships (\$750, each) in 2021.

The Terry Jo Curtis Scholarship recipients are using the inspiration, leadership skills and knowledge that they have gained to improve the support for breastfeeding in areas that are under-served and have high infant mortality rates and low breastfeeding rates.

This has given Indiana a more diverse field of lactation workers, but we have a long way to go before we truly have representation that we can be proud of. There are less than 10 IBCLCs in our state who are Black and no Latina IBCLCs that we know of.

Indiana's Infant Mortality Rate was 7.3 in 2017. This means that per 1000 live births, 7.3 infants died within the first year of life in Indiana which puts us in the bottom 7 states. While that alone is abysmal, sorting by race, Indiana's infant mortality rate for Black infants is 15.5 (up from 14.4 in 2016), more than 2.5 times the rate of non-Hispanic white infants. The rate for Hispanic infants is 7.6.

Black and hispanic mothers are also dying in far greater numbers than white mothers. Indiana's 6 month breastfeeding rate is 49% which ranks us in the bottom 9 states. IBC and IBBC are working hard to ensure that adequate education and support are provided to all of Indiana's mothers. Families report getting better care and retain information better when it comes from supporters who look like them and speak the same language. Breastfeeding is shown to improve the health of both mothers and babies.

Improving the diversity of breastfeeding and perinatal supporters is vital to improve the health of Hoosier mothers and babies.

Please consider helping us at whatever level you are capable of. Thank you for your interest.

You can contact us at [indianabreastfeedingcoalition@gmail.com](mailto:indianabreastfeedingcoalition@gmail.com) ,or donate on our website [Indianabreastfeeding.org](http://Indianabreastfeeding.org)

Indiana Breastfeeding Coalition partners with [The Milk Bank](http://TheMilkBank.org) , a 501c3 organization. Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed under law.

"I had the opportunity to sit among some of our top leaders in breastfeeding and learn from those fighting for policy as well as equity. I learned a great deal of information on policy and the many layers that we as a movement must continue to fight and build. Also, addressing the needs of equity is a cause very important to me. As it is widely known, black women are less likely to



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breastfeed their infants and in turn have one of the highest mortality rates....This sparked a fire in me to organize Indianapolis' first Black Breastfeeding Summit. This summit was to bring back some of the information learned and share with our community just how serious breastfeeding is for black women, children and families. The summit was well attended and received amazing feedback!" Aimbriel Lasley, 2018 Scholarship Winner

"The Terry Jo Curtis scholarship funds helped me attend the ROSE summit for reducing inequities in breastfeeding. Often times when I'm at work, as a labor and delivery nurse, I find myself explaining things I learned at the conference... I remember hearing a pediatrician speaker talk about how their resident program has everyone, medical students included, do rounds with the lactation consultant...Hopefully that's a change that can be made in our community! Thank you! I am truly humble to have received the funding to attend the conference and learn this among many other valuable breastfeeding facts." Cheyenne Starner, 2018 winner

"I am one of the 2020 recipients of the TJC Scholarship. The funds received were used to reimburse for the IBCLC exam I'll be taking this September. I'm currently a full-time WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor and a Certified Breastfeeding Specialist. This time 2 years ago I was 32, a solid year plus into my breastfeeding journey with my now 3yr who continues to latch at his leisure and had NO IDEA a career in lactation existed. My sister-in-law saw my passion for breastfeeding and encouraged me to look to see if there were opportunities to work in the space. This opportunity for a fulfilling career could have easily passed me by. I say that to say if you are someone who wants to learn more about, encourage, help promote the importance of breastfeeding there is SPACE and a NEED for you in this field. ..The way I have had numerous Black clients light up or exhale when they see I'm the one helping them reach their goals is incredibly rewarding..." Erika Dudley, 2020 winner