

# SMS Bulletin

## Spring 2003

### Jo Anne Myers-Ciecko: 20 Years of Service

by Beth Coyote, LM, CPM

Jo Anne Myers-Ciecko, volunteer and long-term director of the Seattle Midwifery School, is stepping down in July. For the last 25 years, Jo Anne and SMS have led parallel lives of struggle and success within the larger context of evolving health care policy and practice.

As a former client of the Fremont Birth Collective, Jo Anne attended a meeting called by the collective in 1977 to discuss the formation of a midwifery school. A school would legitimize the infant profession and, as Jo Anne recalls:



Suzy Myers and Jo Anne Myers-Ciecko, 1984

I was one of those people who really thought, yeah, this was a good idea, this was something that we could *do* (laughs) that could make a difference, that midwifery could be legally recognized and that by creating an institution . . . it would immediately make midwifery legal . . . but it also had the possibility . . . to create more midwives and make midwifery accessible to more women.  
(continued on next page)

### from the SMS Board Chair . . .

After 20 years as SMS's leader, Jo Anne Myers-Ciecko is setting her sights on new ways to use her talents in national midwifery advocacy work.

We are deeply proud and thankful for the time and energy Jo Anne has given to SMS and our community. We feel fortunate that she will continue to focus her talents on work that is central to the profession and to the school. We are thrilled to have her continue as lead faculty for the Midwifery Program's Professional Issues Course.

The Board believes that Jo Anne's resignation represents both a challenge and an opportunity for the school's future. SMS is at a crossroads. In order to embark on our next 25 years of service, we must make significant changes in our business plan and operations to become sustainable. The loss we will feel with Jo Anne's departure will be balanced by the opportunity to bring new perspectives, skills and energy to the School at this critical juncture.

We are pleased to announce that we have hired Barbara Green as Interim Director, starting July 1. A professional Interim Director helps organizations with transition planning, developing strong strategic and business plans, and setting clear goals for hiring a permanent Executive Director. Ms Green is an experienced Interim Director, having worked at a wide range of non-profit organizations and most recently at Seattle Tilth. She has also been a midwifery client!

For updated information on our transition and strategic planning efforts throughout the next year, please visit our website at [www.seattlemidwifery.org](http://www.seattlemidwifery.org). If you have any questions or comments about this process, please contact me at [joannabarger@hotmail.com](mailto:joannabarger@hotmail.com).

Joanna Barger, Chair  
for the Board of Directors



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### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- ◆ Highlights of our first 25 years
- ◆ Midwifery research
- ◆ Review of *Medical Choices, Medical Chances*
- ◆ Winter/Spring photojournal
- ◆ Update on the 100 for \$1000 Campaign
- ◆ New England classroom report
- ◆ Program news

## Jo Anne Myers-Ciecko

(continued from front)

Midwives from the Collective were the first students of the school. They passed the state exam and became officially recognized as licensed professionals. Jo Anne supported their efforts in countless ways including volunteering as an advisory board member and forming a Friends of Midwifery organization. By 1983, she found herself employed by the school. Today the school is the oldest direct-entry school in the country with hundreds of doula, childbirth educator and midwifery graduates. Jo Anne says of the experience:

I really want to emphasize how much the school is a network of people . . . the instructors, the students, the staff, the board, other volunteers. If you add it up, it is hundreds and hundreds of people over 25 years. I get a certain amount of credit because of my position . . . None of it is just about me. It's what we've all done. I'm spoiled. I can't imagine going to work anywhere else that could be the treasure chest that this is.

Jo Anne grew up in a family that placed great value on volunteering and community service. Her role at SMS perfectly dovetailed with her natural inclination to nurture, encourage and foster a movement she felt passionate about. Though she wasn't a midwife, Jo Anne was invited to the inner circles of midwives who were "shaping the profession" across the country. She was the newsletter editor for the Midwives Alliance of North America for several years. She was a founding member of Midwifery Education



Jo Anne Myers-Ciecko, Ina May Gaskin and Alice Sammon (left to right)

Alice devoted countless hours to developing the first regional classroom. As the NE Site Director, Alice traveled between her home in Maine and the classroom in New Hampshire each month. She also visited midwives and attended state midwifery meetings throughout the region to talk about the importance of midwifery education and the opportunity to work with SMS to train more midwives. She was passionate in her commitment to the students and faculty – and her contributions are deeply appreciated.

## Alice Sammon

New England Site Director Alice Sammon has also moved on to new endeavors. We extend a heartfelt thank you to Alice, who worked tirelessly to expand midwifery education in New England. When she joined the SMS staff in February 2000, Alice had been a midwife, visionary and activist of nearly 20 years. Never one to back off from a challenge,

Accreditation Council (MEAC) and participated in the task force that set standards for certification of midwives nationally (CPM). She was invited to the Carnegie Foundation's meetings on midwifery education and the Pew Commission's task force on the future of midwifery. She wrote a chapter for Sheila Kitzinger's book *The Midwife Challenge*. She has been published in the *Journal of Nurse-Midwifery*. She has been a speaker in many venues, including state legislatures, midwifery conferences, and consumer advocacy groups. She earned her MPH at the University of Washington. She has taught the Professional Issues Course at SMS for over a decade and plans to continue teaching after she takes off her director's hat.

Why is Jo Anne leaving? She sees others of her generation, "retiring, stepping back....we're asking how do we mentor folks, how do we get out of the way so that they can do what they need to do." But Jo Anne is not done. She is still on the MEAC

board. She is passionate about creating a sustainable financial base for the school. She has ideas about eldercare, international relief work and women's health advocacy and a road trip with Suzy Myers to visit every SMS graduate, "each a little gem," to see what they are doing now. Then there are kayak trips, her family and Whidbey Island campouts. Of her time with SMS, she says:

I had a daughter a year old and I could imagine the time when her generation would come of age and be having babies. I thought that by creating a school we could ensure that there would be midwives long into the future and (laughs) we've done that. Out of nothing, we've created an institution and . . . midwives are in the yellow pages, midwives are part of our healthcare system . . . it's not for the privileged few but . . . for all women. It's just a huge accomplishment.



## Seattle Midwifery School -- the first 25 years!



# Doula Education News

## March of Dimes Grant Awarded to Train Birth Doulas

We are pleased to announce that the Infant Mortality Prevention Network (IMPAN), Pacific Foundation for Childbirth Support, and Pacific Association for Labor Support (PALS) were recently awarded a grant from the March of Dimes to train IMPAN outreach workers as birth doulas. The grant includes sending the outreach workers to our Labor Support Course and providing additional support and funding to assist with certification. The project will begin this summer.

## DONA Certifies Postpartum Doulas

Doulas of North America (DONA) has certified birth doulas since 1992. Last year, DONA began to certify postpartum doulas. In order to become certified as a postpartum doula, an applicant must first complete a DONA-approved training. Our experienced faculty are taking the additional step of becoming DONA-approved trainers, and we will start offering DONA-approved trainings this July.

## Upcoming Doula Education Classes at SMS

- Labor Support Course - August 8-9 and 15-16
- Postpartum Doula Training - July 30, 31 and Aug 1
- NEW! Postpartum Doula Trainer Course - July 30, 31 and Aug 1, 2

For more information and to register, contact us at [info@seattlemidwifery.org](mailto:info@seattlemidwifery.org) or 800.747.9433.

## Midwifery Research

Need help refuting the August 2002 article in the journal *Obstetrics & Gynecology* by Pang et al that purported to demonstrate a higher neonatal mortality rate with homebirth? The most recent issue of the journal *Birth* includes an article that analyzes the Pang study and concludes, "When the findings of a new study disagree with copious evidence from high-quality trials, the study methodology and interpretation must be examined

closely....The study by Pang et al on home birth clearly does not meet criteria for 'best evidence.' Why, then was it published at all, and why was it publicized in such an inflammatory manner?" (Vedam S. Home Birth versus Hospital Birth: Questioning the Quality of Evidence on Safety. *Birth* 2003; 30(1):57-63.) Visit [www.seattlemidwifery.org/news\\_Pang.htm](http://www.seattlemidwifery.org/news_Pang.htm) for more resources.

## Book Review by Beth Stebbins, CNM

### **Medical Choices, Medical Chances: How Patients, Families, and Physicians Can Cope with Uncertainty**

by Harold J. Bursztajn, Richard I. Feinbloom, Robert M. Hamm, and Archie Brodsky

*Medical Choices, Medical Chances* barely mentions midwives, but the book has a lot to say to us. The authors get inside the health care decision-making process and try to figure out what makes it work or not work. Their analysis can help us to improve our communication with patients, develop optimal plans of care, and acknowledge and accept risk and uncertainty.

In the traditional, mechanistic model of medicine, uncertainty is denied. You go to the doctor, he tells you what is wrong and he fixes it. If the doctor is or does wrong it is his fault and you have the right to sue him. The traditional model has made some small steps towards including the patient in decision-making by mandating "informed consent." But this model still tries to deny that every choice entails some risks, claiming that there is no grey, but only black (dangerous) and white (safe). The general public (and juries) believe in the mechanistic model, so any bad outcome is the doctor's (or midwife's) fault. In this model, homebirth itself is unsafe because doctors can do more at the hospital. A doctor doing things is never a risk, according to this model, whereas doing nothing is always a risk.

In what the authors call the "probabilistic paradigm" of medicine, uncertainty is acknowledged and discussed. Doctor (or midwife) and patient "gamble" together by choosing at each step of the way which risks are the most acceptable to each of them. Both parties accept responsibility and recognize the lack of any guarantee in the outcome. The practitioner contributes expertise in the context of his/her own values, while the patient brings her own values, unique characteristics that are not accounted for by statistical studies of groups, and her risk-taking preferences.

The book includes several interesting case studies, including one involving a home birth. It also discusses the importance of relationships, trust and caring in good decision-making.

Most midwives and their patients may implicitly accept the probabilistic paradigm. Our decision-making process may already have benefited from recognition of the importance of non-medical issues to medical decision-making. But reading this book, which makes our paradigm explicit, may allow us to more effectively discuss important issues of life and death with patients. This will help us survive and thrive in a larger society that still clings to the mechanistic model.

**Beth Stebbins** is a former SMS student and a nurse midwife. She is currently in private practice in Milwaukie, Oregon.

A total of 50 midwives have graduated from SMS!

Washington legislature unanimously passes revised midwifery statute  
North American Registry of Midwives (NARM) founded; SMS founder Marge Mansfield elected to the Board of Directors  
SMS co-hosts "Birth & Public Policy Conference" with UW and Seattle-King County Public Health

1987

Penny Simkin teaches the first Labor Support Course  
SMS hosts "Getting in Touch with Women and Birth: A Global Perspective"  
SMS celebrates 10th anniversary!

1988

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching invites SMS to participate in a national seminar on midwifery education

1989

WA legislature creates Midwife Scholarship Fund

1990

Midwifery Education Accreditation Council (MEAC) founded; Jo Anne Myers-Ciecko and Therese Charvet elected as board members

1991

# SMS Graduation Celebrations 2003

## First SMS New England Graduates!



SMS New England Classroom celebrated the first group of graduates on March 1, 2003. Pictured in photo on left are (left to right) Joni Rogers (Stone), Audra Karp, Jasmine Bay, and Elizabeth Randall. They were joined by faculty and preceptors for the candlelighting ceremony. In center photo, the four are joined by (from left) Mary Lawlor, SMS Board member; Laurie Foster, faculty member and preceptor; and Peggy Garland, faculty member.

Ina May Gaskin joined with us to celebrate Seattle Midwifery School's 25th Anniversary by serving as the keynote speaker at SMS graduation ceremonies, both New England and Seattle.

## SMS Northwest Graduates Enjoy a Lovely Winter Celebration



Gathered here during the reception in their honor were (left to right) Teri Chalfant, Traci Palagi, Shannon Norberg, Tia Pollard, Marissa Ridgway, Melissa Denmark, Lissa Fjeldsted, and Laura Ovette. Northwest graduation was celebrated on February 15, 2003.

The graduates were joined on stage by a large group of midwives for the candlelighting and Midwives' Oath.

Doulas of North America (DONA) founded; SMS doula graduate Annie Kennedy elected president

SMS faculty present several papers at International Confederation of Midwives Congress in Vancouver, BC  
WA legislature creates Joint Underwriting Association to provide malpractice insurance for midwives and birth centers

A total of 100 midwives have graduated from SMS!  
SMS achieves national accreditation by the Accrediting Council for Continuing Education and Training (ACCET)  
SMS representatives participate in Certification Task Force meetings to develop a national midwifery certification process

First Postpartum Doula Training offered with 13 students  
North American Registry of Midwives (NARM) starts awarding the Certified Professional Midwife (CPM) credential

1992

1993

1994

1995

# SMS raises funds and public consciousness: Ina May Gaskin tour

A suggestion by a Seattle senior student to invite Ina May Gaskin to be their keynote speaker at graduation snowballed into eight days with Ina May on both coasts, offering public lectures (“Your Body Still Works”), workshops for birth professionals (“Lowering the Primary Cesarean Section Rate”), a fundraising dinner, and a fundraising dessert reception, as well as her SMS graduation keynote speeches. These SMS-sponsored events took place in Seattle, Montpelier VT, Manchester NH, Boston MA and Northampton MA.



Pictured with Ina May are NE board member, Mary Lawlor, Executive Director, Jo Anne Myers-Ciecko, Ina May Gaskin, and New England Site Director, Alice Sammon.



The Boston University Center for Maternity Nursing Leadership Education generously co-sponsored “Your Body Still Works” with SMS.



This group of women enjoyed a scrumptious dinner (prepared by SMS staff members) and conversation with Ina May. SMS midwifery program clinical director, Mary Yglesia (right) took the lead on this event, which raised \$1,400!



## Spring Fling a Success

A great deal of fun was had by all who participated in this year’s fundraising phone-a-thon. Terri Turner-Carney, MEP Clinical Assistant, organized food, fun and prizes, helping to keep our phone callers on task. (See “Good News” on page 7.)



Terri Turner-Carney keeps track of donations.



SMS Board Chair, Joanna Barger, raised \$2,700!

SMS implements the California Challenge Process with 33 midwives qualifying for licensure in California in the first year

SMS accredited by MEAC  
SMS co-sponsors MANA ‘97 in Seattle

First Childbirth Educator Training offered at SMS with 15 students  
Labor Support Course exceeds 1000 graduates  
SMS celebrates 20th anniversary, sponsoring a forum on Informed Choice and a gala party

SMS hosts “Charting Our Future: A Maternity Care Summit” for over 100 local and national birth activists and professionals~SMS 2020 Vision Statement is adopted  
PEW Health Professions Commission issues “The Future of Midwifery,” highlighting SMS as a model for direct-entry midwifery education  
Federal financial aid available to SMS midwifery students  
NOW adopts resolution in support of midwifery care

1996

1997

1998

1999

## Join the 100 for \$1,000 Campaign!

The response to the 100 for \$1,000 Campaign has been overwhelming. Already, more than 20 people have committed to raise \$1,000 each for SMS.

If you would like to sign up, either individually, or with a group of friends, please contact us at 100campaign@seattlemidwifery.org. We will provide you with all the materials and support you need to raise money effectively. You are passionate about midwifery and doula care, so take your donation to the next level and spread the word!

*It's an amazing thing to ask people to support the experience of birthing mothers and families by supporting SMS—I have not had a single person turn me down. Some are able to give more than others, but each person I have talked with during this campaign has seemed to understand, at some basic emotional level, the importance of supporting mothers during this precious time.*

*It's been a wonderful opportunity for me to talk about something that I really believe in and to give insight into why their financial support is so critical. More and more I am amazed by the people I know are financially struggling themselves, who I expect to offer only \$5, who have stepped up with \$50.*

*I thought I would feel awkward asking friends and family and especially colleagues for support. I found just the opposite to be the case—I can't wait to ask. Even when it does not result in a donation, I know I have taken one step in educating the broader*

*public about the work of doulas and midwives in our community.*

*I think today, with so many stresses in the world, and so many needs in the community, one of the sentences that people are wanting most to respond to is: Can you help?*

*Ask them. In doing so you are giving them a tremendous opportunity to make a difference here and in the broader world.*

--Cheryl Murfin-Bond, fundraiser  
100 for \$1,000 Campaign

### Thanks to Our Volunteers

We extend our thanks to the many friends who give so generously of their time. There are always more tasks to be done than time allows, so when a volunteer takes the time to help, the effect is immeasurable. Thank you!

Here are just a few highlights:

- Alexandra Sarason and Elizabeth Hood for the myriad tasks they handle so capably
- Sarah Kaye for nursing ailing computers back to health
- Buckley Guderian for his database expertise
- All the members of the Board of Directors, for all they do! (with a special nod to our newest board members Molly Eitzen – Student Rep, Tera Schreiber– Vice Chair, Ashley Andrew, Scott Fasser – Treasurer, and Silje Sodal)

If you would like to find out more about volunteer opportunities at SMS, please contact us at info@seattlemidwifery.org or 800.747.9433.

## Winding Up the California Challenge Process

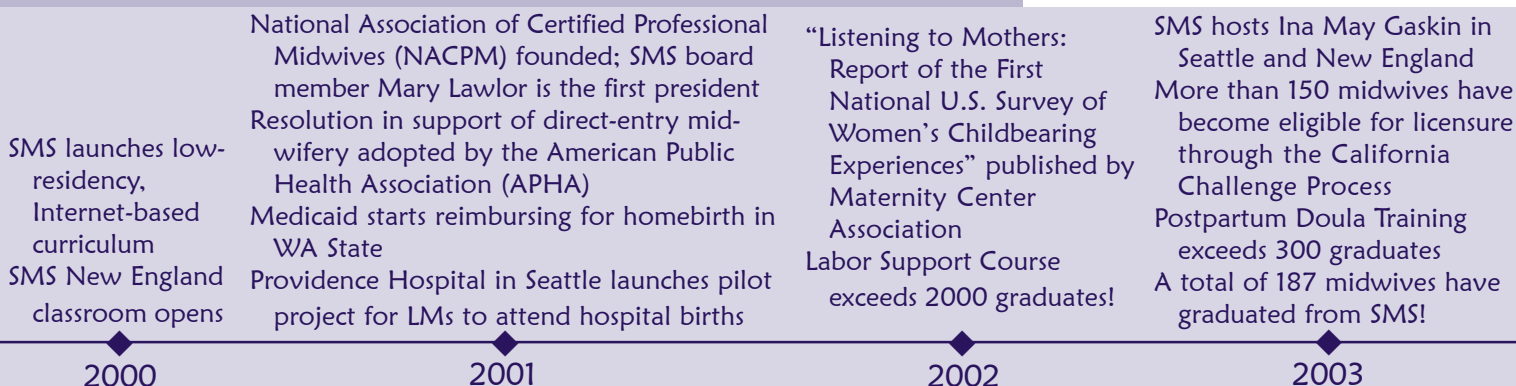
by Bridget Albright, CCP Manager

As this hits your mailbox, we will have just administered the very last exams of the California Challenge Process (CCP) so we will soon be adding more names to our list of midwives eligible for licensure in California.

As it turns out, discontinuing the CCP will actually increase opportunities for California midwives to get trained and licensed.

- Aspiring midwives have always been eligible for our midwifery education program and this fall we will have several women from California in our incoming class.
- After many years of not recognizing any other schools, California this year recognized all the MEAC-accredited schools. Graduates from all MEAC three-year programs will finally be able to apply for California licensure. This change probably wouldn't have happened so quickly if SMS hadn't discontinued the CCP, and it's a big step forward!
- No other school has yet sought California's approval to offer a challenge process, though we hear that some schools may decide to do so.

As I have administered this process, I have been inspired by the many excellent midwives and aspiring midwives I have met in California. I am very proud of SMS' role in licensing many of these midwives, and ensuring the viability of direct entry midwifery in California. I look forward to seeing how the profession will grow and develop in the state.



# Midwifery Education Program News

## New England Classroom Report

SMS honored the first graduates of the New England Classroom on March 1<sup>st</sup> in Manchester, New Hampshire in a lovely celebration that included remarks by special guest Ina May Gaskin. It was a bittersweet moment for those who had worked so diligently and given generously to support the creation of this classroom, as it was later announced that there would be no new students enrolled this year in New England and we could not maintain NE staff in 2003.

While there appears to be growing interest in midwifery education in the region, including the SMS option, we did not receive enough applications this year to make a full class. Students currently enrolled are expected to complete their studies in early 2004. Evaluation of the pilot project is underway and the Board of Directors will make a decision about the future of the regional classroom in the coming months.

SMS established the New England Classroom in September 2000 after a three-year planning process, initiated by midwives and midwifery advocates in the region who felt that a school like SMS was needed to expand the educational options then available to aspiring midwives. Penfield Chester and BJ Mackinnon worked closely with SMS faculty and staff to develop the proposed classroom and SMS hired Alice Sammon in February 2000 as NE Site Director.

Here are a few of the many accomplishments associated with opening the New England classroom:

- The SMS Board of Directors now includes New England members.
- Instructors on both coasts share teaching strategies and have learned about state and regional differences in midwifery practice and regulation.
- Alice and the students in New England worked with midwives and other practitioners to develop new clinical sites in five different states.
- SMS staff identified and worked through many of the challenges of supporting a regional classroom.
- Students, faculty and volunteers dedicated many hours to student recruitment and public education about the benefits of midwifery. They visited college campuses, made presentations at professional conferences and state midwifery meetings, and distributed information at community fairs.
- SMS sponsored five events featuring Ina May Gaskin during the first week of March 2003 that drew over four hundred attendees in three states.

Congratulations to the students, faculty, preceptors, volunteers and donors who made the New England Classroom possible – and best wishes to the first graduates!

## Thank you to Laurie Foster

We want to express our appreciation to Laurie Foster, CNM, (pictured here at the podium at NE graduation) for her efforts in New England. Laurie continues as a preceptor and Clinical Seminar faculty for our New England students.



## SMS welcomes two additions to midwifery faculty

SMS alumna, Kathy Luch has joined Beth Coyote for Clinical Seminar with our current Junior class. The low-residency program makes it possible for Kathy, who's been busy practicing on the Olympic Peninsula all these years, to come to Seattle each month to share her vast experience.

Adimika Meadows has joined us for Perinatal Epidemiology. Adimika is a graduate student in Public Health at UW. She brings with her an extensive background in Maternal/Child HIV work.

## New professional organization for midwives

Suzy Myers, an SMS founder, recently joined the Board of Directors of the newly formed National Association of Certified Professional Midwives (NACPM), an exciting organization that is committed to advancing the CPM credential, including participation in national health policy. The board held their first in-person meeting in Vermont in March and Suzy spent two full days with five other dynamic and committed women from around the country with a breadth of midwifery and organizational experience. Due to her many other commitments, Suzy's board position is for one year only, during which time she hopes to learn more and contribute to building NACPM membership, including among our midwifery program alumnae!

## Good News!

The goal for our spring fundraising drive is \$20,000 and, thanks to our fabulous donors, we're nearly there. Our thanks if you've already donated, and if you haven't, it's not too late! Just send in the enclosed donation envelope, or donate online by clicking on the Network for Good icon at the bottom of our home page ([www.seattlemidwifery.org](http://www.seattlemidwifery.org)). Donating through Network for Good is secure and convenient, and all proceeds go directly to SMS.

In celebration of Mother's Day, some of our recent donors made gifts in honor of their mothers. Our thanks to the following women for raising such wonderful daughters!

- ◆ Elizabeth Mahony
- ◆ Barbara Myers
- ◆ Leona Sandvand
- ◆ Jofrid Sodal



## Donate while you shop!

**Amazon Associates** When you books from Amazon.com, shop for them through our web site. When you click through to Amazon from our site, Amazon will give a portion of the purchase price back to SMS. So buy all your birth-related books through our web site and help raise money for the school.

**iGive.com** Shop at your favorite on-line stores, and a percentage of your purchase will automatically go to SMS. Just sign up at [www.iGive.com/SMS](http://www.iGive.com/SMS).

## Donate while you recycle!

SMS is collecting **used printer toner cartridges and cell phones**. We return these for recycling, and get paid for them. If you would like to put out collection boxes at your workplace, we can provide you with promotional signs.

Do you have a good quality **VHS video camera** you're not using? Donate it to SMS! We often tape classes and special events, and our old camera is not doing a very good job anymore. For more ideas about in-kind donations to SMS, visit our web site at [www.seattlemidwifery.org/in-kind.htm](http://www.seattlemidwifery.org/in-kind.htm).

## Global Midwifery Support

As you order supplies for your own practice, how about ordering a couple of extras for Global Midwifery Support? Can you share a few infant hats? A stethoscope? Suture? Scissors? What seems small to us can make a big difference to our sister midwives. We are sending packages with each student going to foreign sites. Let's reach out and show our support! To get involved, call Terri Turner-Carney at x114 or e-mail [territ@seattlemidwifery.org](mailto:territ@seattlemidwifery.org).

## Board Positions Available

Seattle Midwifery School is now recruiting for Board of Director positions. Your passion, skills, and commitment to women's health can help to change the face of maternity care. Contact Joanna Barger at 206.784.8594 for more information.

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**SAVE THE DATE! PLAN NOW TO ATTEND THE  
SMS 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION &  
HOMECOMING ON SEPTEMBER 18, 2003!**