



Dominique with her two-month-old daughter Nikita and Cheryl Orengo, Program Advisor

Volunteer Doulas Empowering Women

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Nonprofit organizations throughout Asheville and the surrounding area nourish the people within our communities, caring for those in need, protecting our historic heritage, educating young and old, and nurturing our cultural soul. Each month, The Laurel is bringing to our readers some of the stories behind these agencies. This month, the “spotlight” is on Start from Seed.

It takes a village to raise a child. Yet for some women in Buncombe County, that village can be absent, disinterested, unavailable, or even abusive. Helping to fill that void is Start from Seed, a local nonprofit birth service provider that empowers women to not only raise a healthy child, but to build a better community.

Start from Seed (SFS) provides doula services for low-income, high-risk women—those experiencing challenges from teen pregnancy, a history of trauma and abuse, poverty or other mental, environmental and social challenges.

“While there might be a doula on every block of Asheville,” says Chelsea Kouns, the volunteer Program Director of SFS who has been nurturing the organization since April 2012, “this kind of care is still a luxury for many of the women who need it most.”

Doulas are often called labor coaches, yet they provide a host of nonmedical services before, during, and after birth. They provide information about the changes in a woman’s body,



START FROM SEED
volunteer doula program