



Black Maternal Health & Health Equity Programs

Solano HEALs (Health Equity for African American/Black Lives)



Solano HEALs' Mission Statement

- To promote equity in healthy births for Black babies and their families in Solano County.



Solano HEALs



Who We Are

Founded in 2017, Solano HEALs focuses on combating health inequities by engaging residents, health care providers, community organizations, and faith-based leaders. We do this by rooting our efforts in the community and creating collaborative spaces for a variety of sectors. Solano HEALs hopes to eliminate health inequities for African American/Black births.



Our Team

Executive Director
Dr. Shandi Fuller,
M.D.



**Solano Heals
Program Director**
Nailah Souder, M.S.



**Centering the Doula
Program Director**
Davon Crawford



**Director of
Community Outreach**
Azalea Menefee



Director of Finance
Cristian Aquino



Race Equity Trainers
Exclusively Black
Prenatal Group
Facilitators



**Executive
Committee**





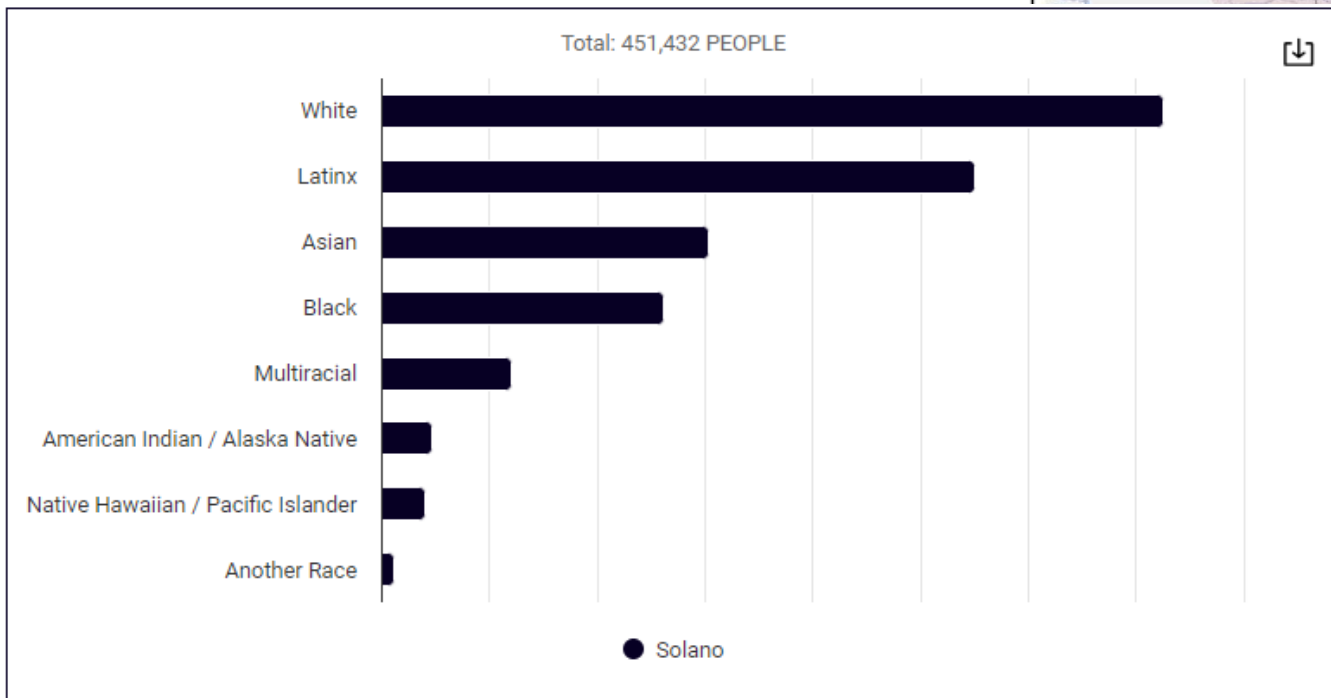
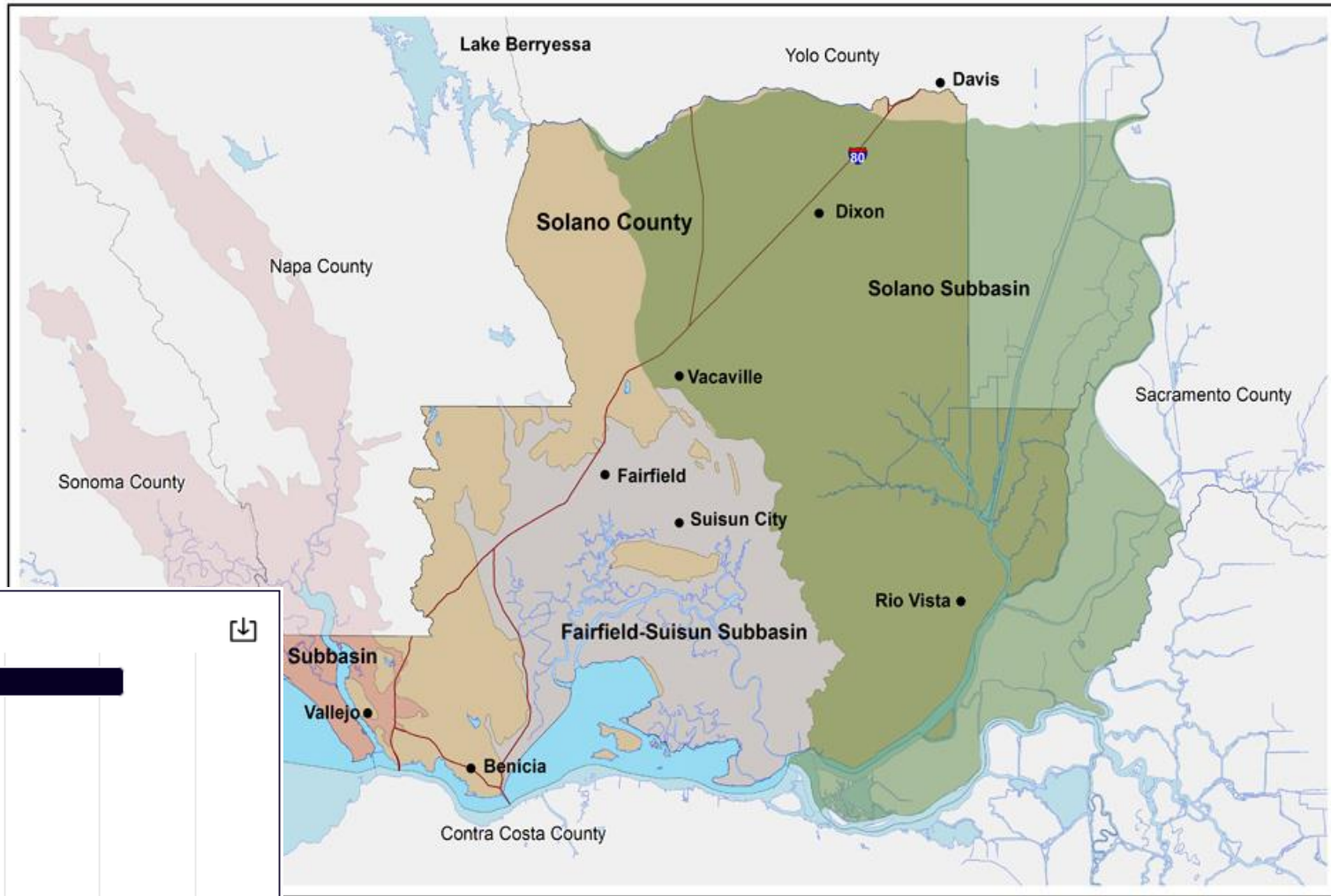
Solano HEALs' Vision Statement



All Black mothers, babies and families thrive through empowerment and being well-informed in their community, family, and personal health outcomes.

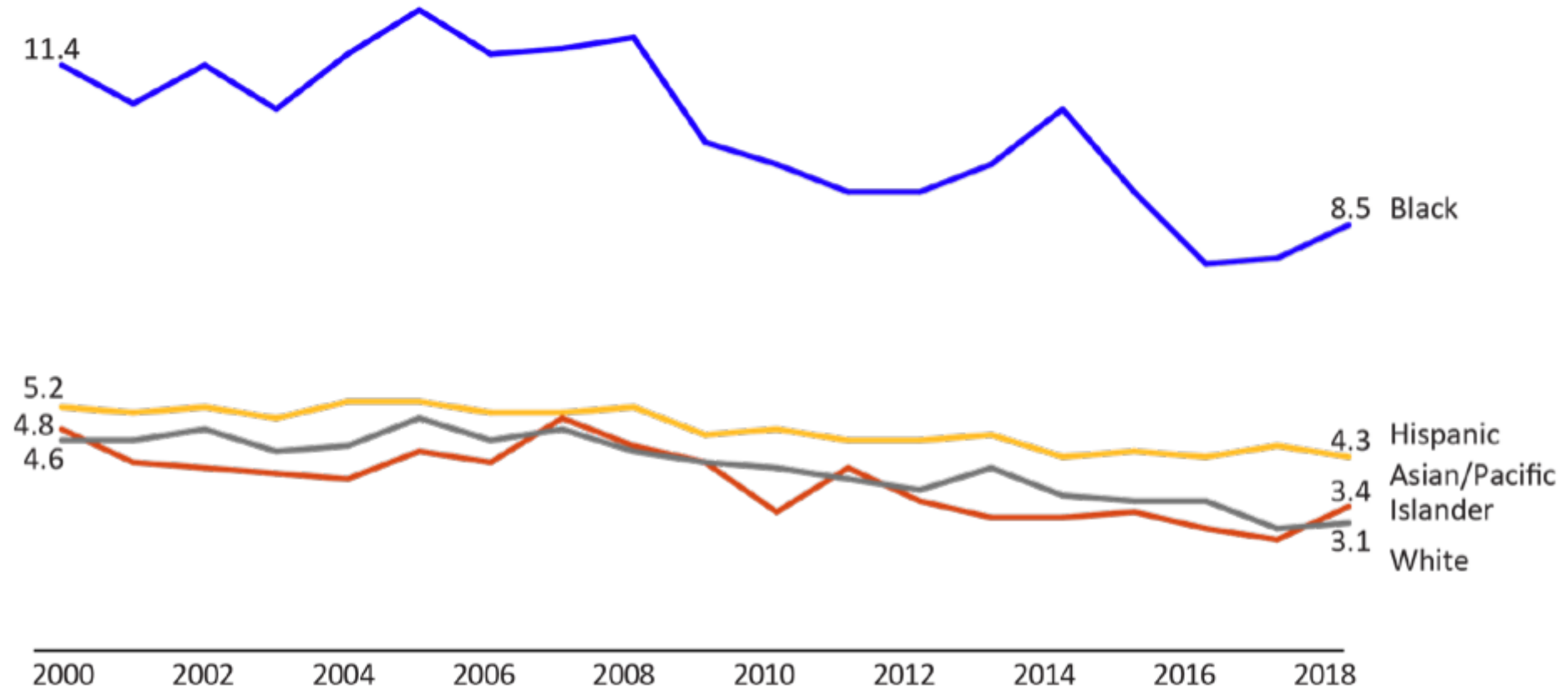


Solano County: Racial Demographics



Infant mortality declined among births to Black birthing people over the past 10 years, but rates remained inequitably high

Number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births in California, by race and ethnicity, 2000–2018



Source: California Birth Cohort File, 2000–2018.

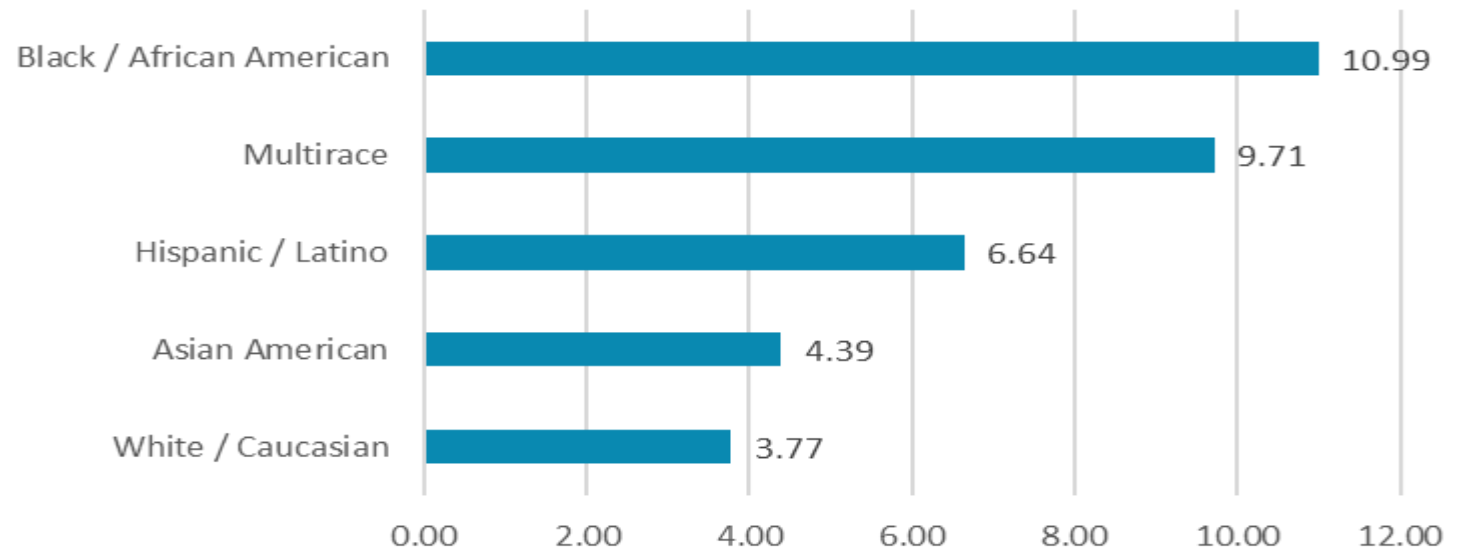
Total Infant Mortality by Race/Ethnicity

Solano County

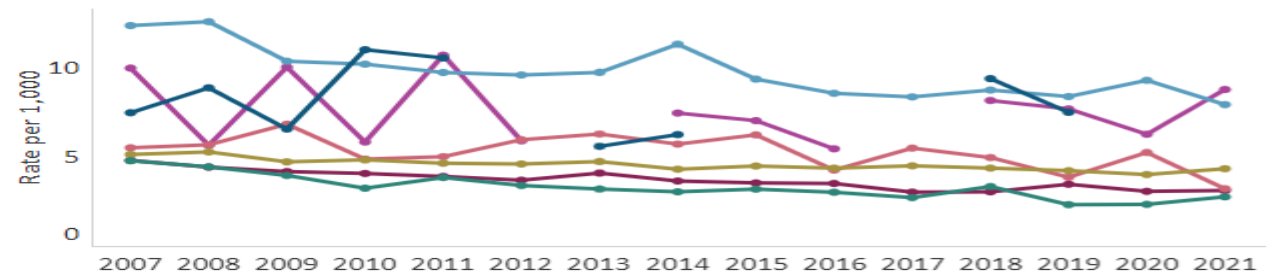
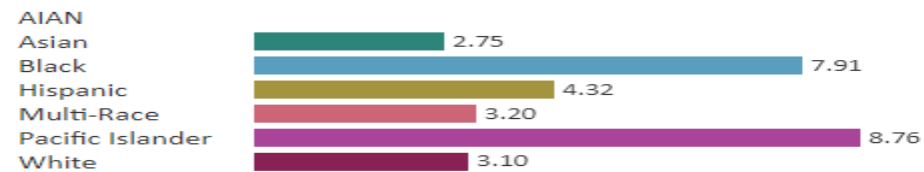
The infant “mortality rate” is the number of infant deaths for every 1,000 live births.

Although Black/African American infants make up 13% of total deaths, this group had the highest infant mortality rate, with 10.99 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Infant Mortality Rate by Race/Ethnicity, Solano County, 2023



Infant Mortality by Race/Ethnicity, California, 2021





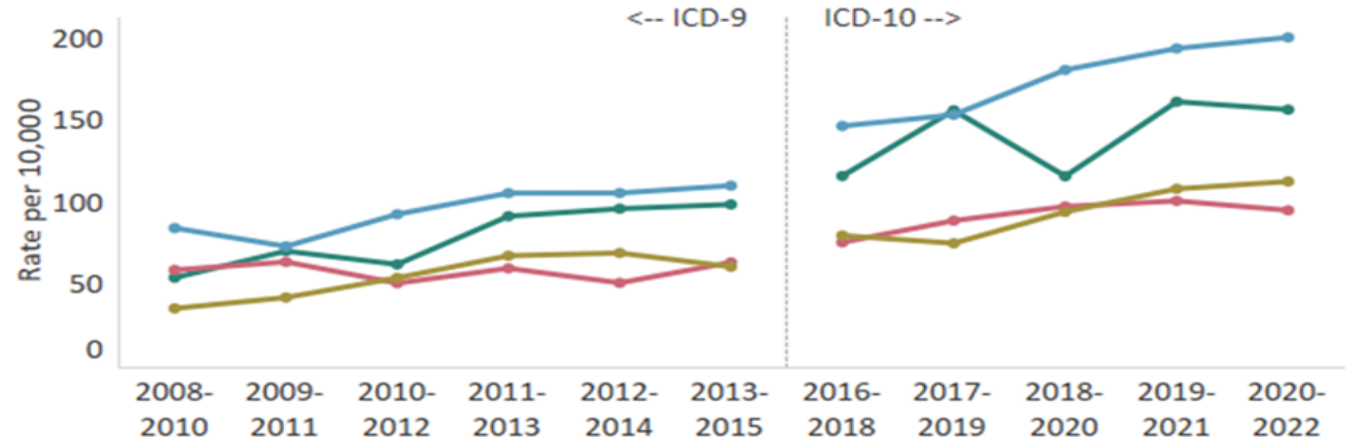
Black Infant Mortality in California

“As in the state of California and the nation as a whole, the rate of death for Black infants is higher than that for Whites. The strongest contributor to higher rates of infant mortality for Black infants is higher rates of premature birth and very low birth weight. These, in turn, are driven by social determinants of health such as income, access to health care, toxic stress, and racism.”

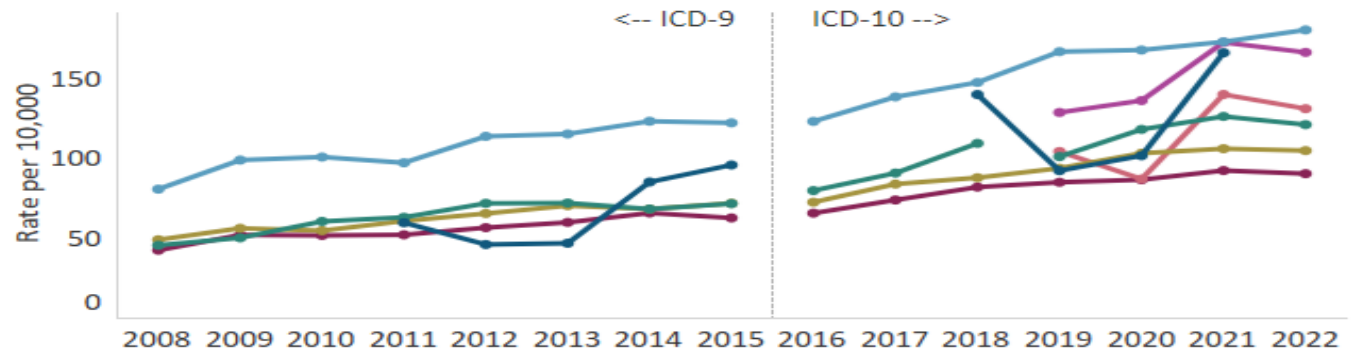
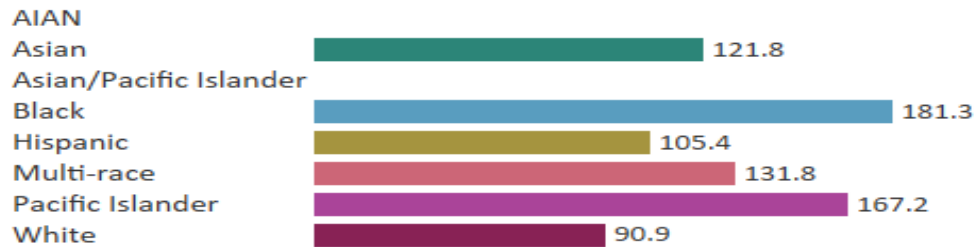
Maternal Child & Adolescent Health Five Year Needs Assessment 2020-2024
Solano County Health & Social Services Department
Public Health Division, Maternal Child & Adolescent Health Bureau

Maternal Morbidity

Severe Maternal Morbidity by Race/Ethnicity, Solano County, 2020-2022

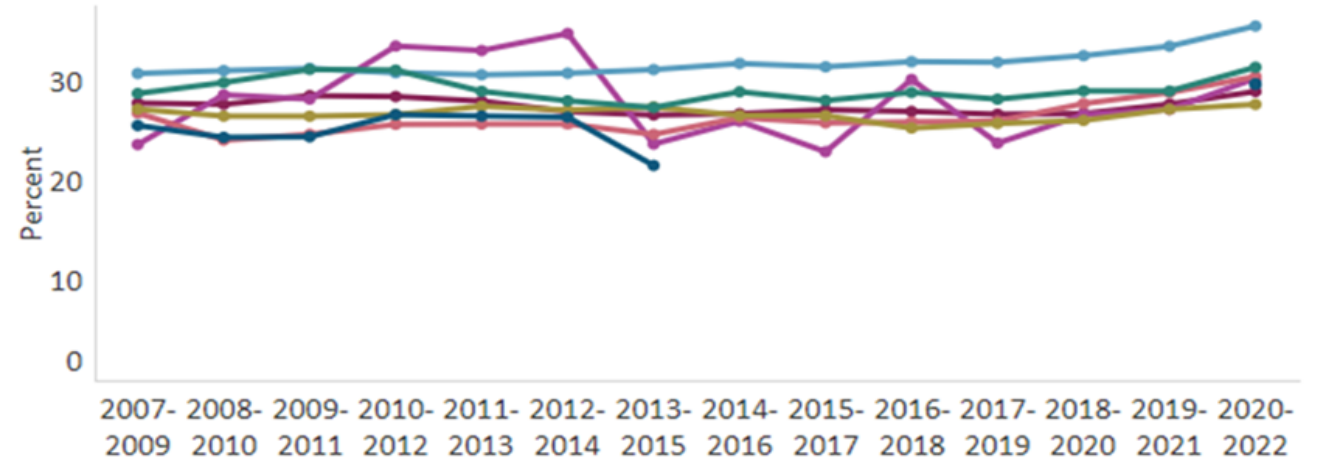


Severe Maternal Morbidity by Race/Ethnicity, California, 2022

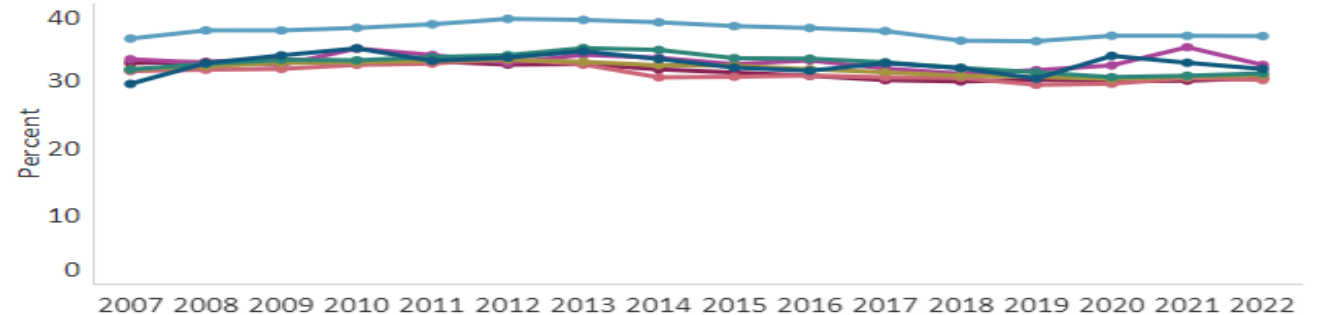


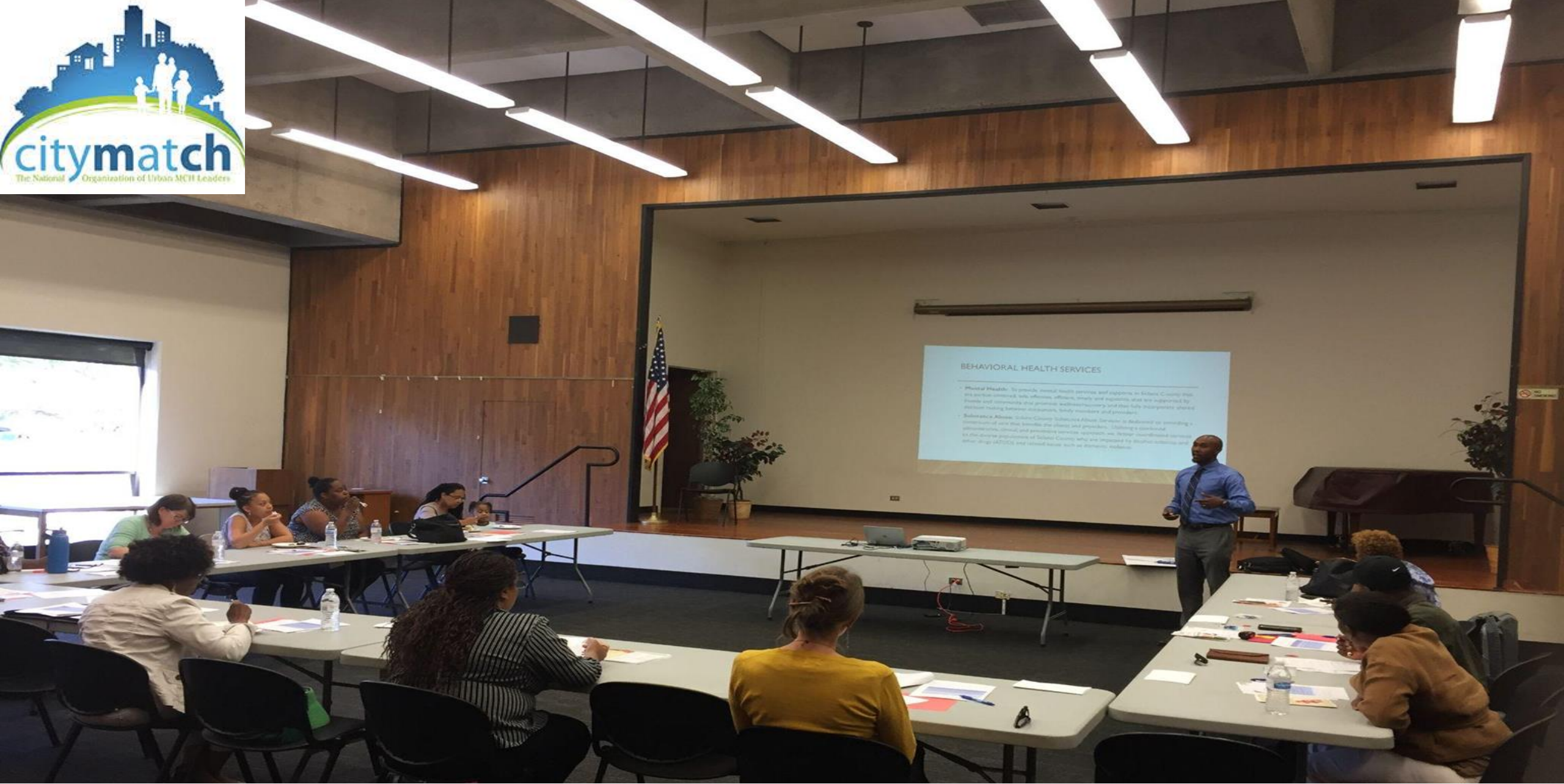
Cesarean Delivery Disparities

Cesarean Deliveries by Race/Ethnicity, Solano County, 2020-2022



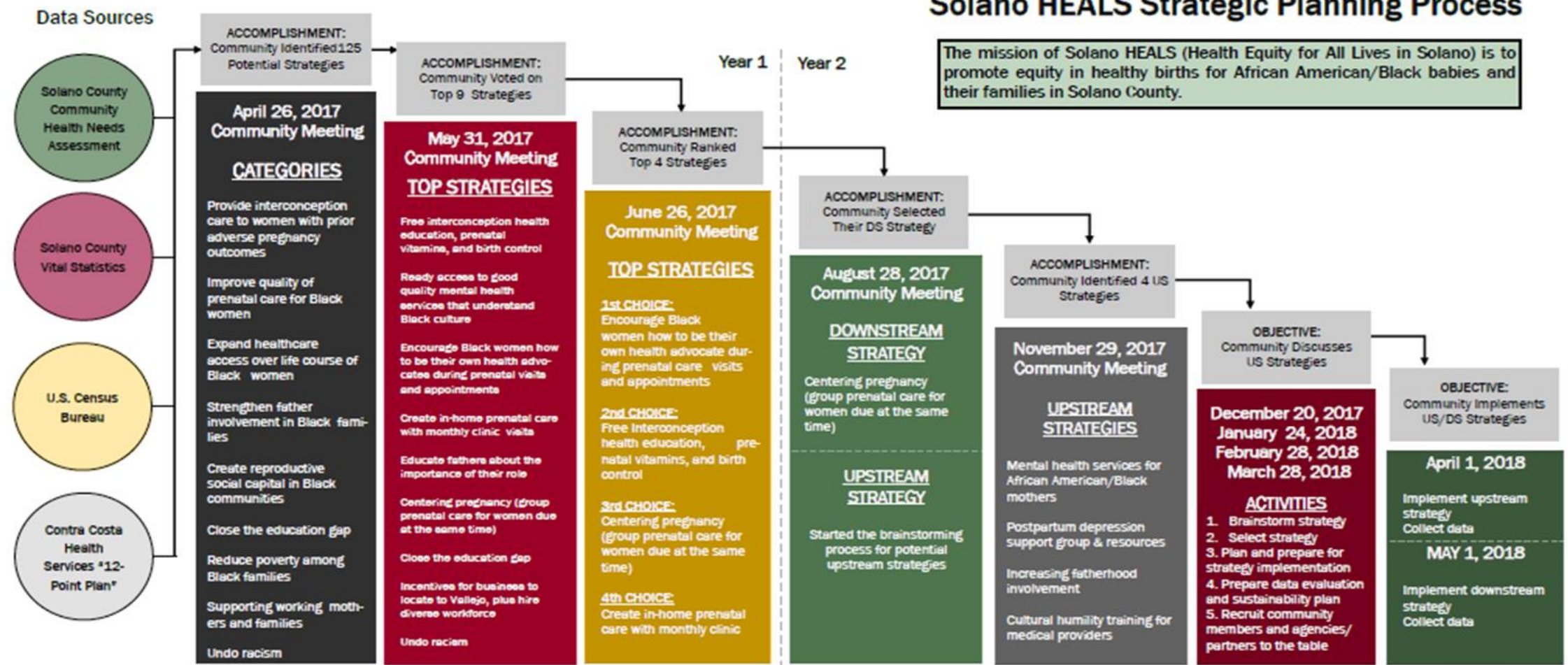
Cesarean Deliveries by Race/Ethnicity, California, 2022





Solano HEALS Strategic Planning Process

The mission of Solano HEALS (Health Equity for All Lives in Solano) is to promote equity in healthy births for African American/Black babies and their families in Solano County.



| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|------------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Mar 2017 | April 2017 | May 2017 | June 2017 | July 2017 | Aug 2017 | Sept 2017 | Oct 2017 | Nov 2017 | Dec 2017 | Jan 2018 | Feb 2018 | Mar 2018 | April 2018 | May 2018 | June 2018 | July 2018 | Aug 2018 | Sept 2018 | Oct 2018 | Nov 2018 | Dec 2018 |
|----------|------------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|

TIMELINE LEGEND:

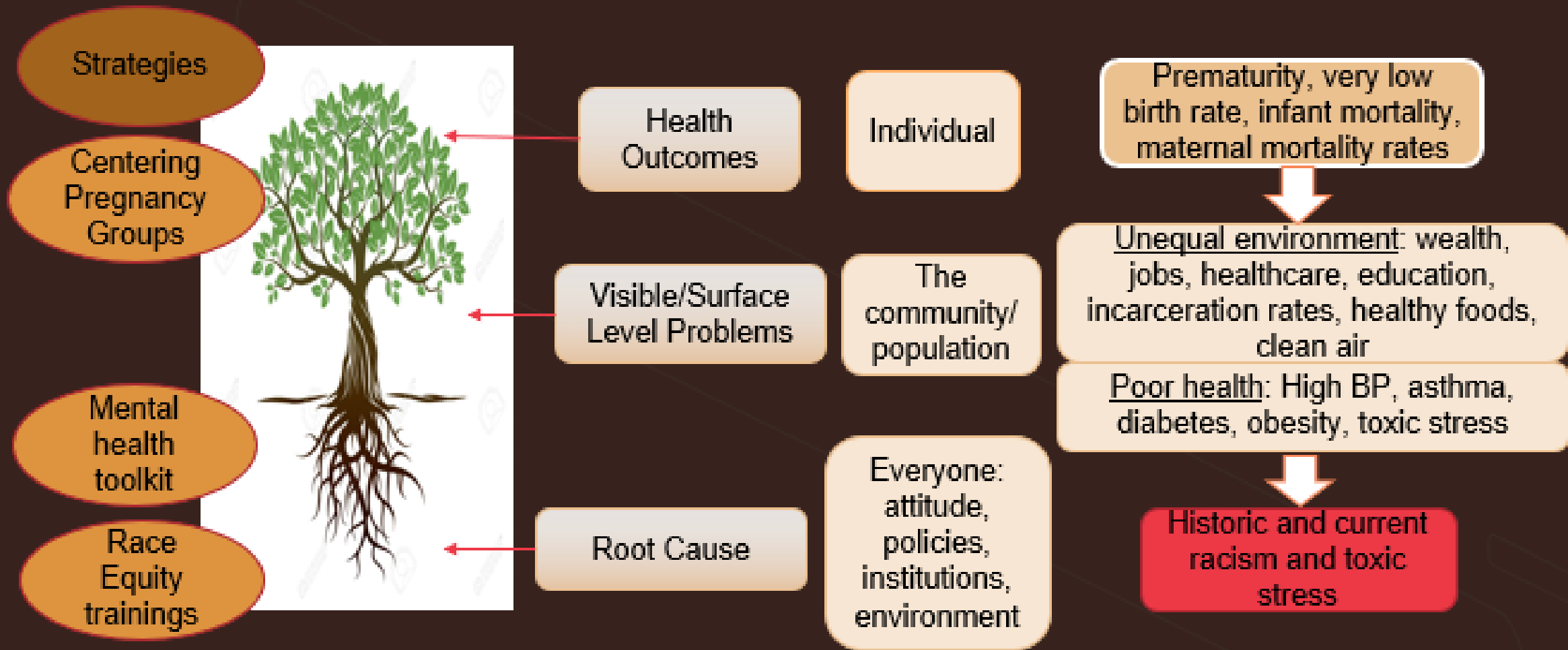
- Past (Black box)
- Present (Green box)
- Future (Grey box)
- Important Task (Yellow box)
- Important Event (Purple box)

Timeline of key events and tasks:

- Dec 2017: DS Strategy Selected (Important Event)
- Jan 2018: Brainstorm US Strategies (Important Task)
- Feb 2018: Select/Plan/Prepare US Strategy and Plan/Prepare DS Strategy (Important Task)
- Mar 2018: Implement Strategies (Important Task)
- July 2018: CityMatch Site Visit (Important Event)
- Aug 2018: Annual Training & Project Year 3 Starts (Important Event)

ABBREVIATIONS:

- US = Upstream
- DS = Downstream



Our Partners- The key is relationships and collaborations



Aliados Health
Access | Equity | Advocacy | Innovation



SOLANO
PUBLIC
HEALTH



Impact of Doulas on Healthy Birth Outcomes

[Kenneth J. Gruber, PhD,*](#) [Susan H. Cupito, MA,*](#) and [Christina F. Dobson, MEd*](#)

▶ [Copyright and License information](#) [PMC Disclaimer](#)

Doula-assisted mothers were **four times** less likely to have a low birth weight (LBW) baby, **two times** less likely to experience a birth complication involving themselves or their baby, and significantly more likely to initiate breastfeeding. Communication with and encouragement from a doula throughout the pregnancy may have increased the mother's self-efficacy regarding her ability to impact her own pregnancy outcomes.



First 5 Grant

- Award Amount: \$310,000 (\$100,000 per year, plus an additional \$10,000 in year 2). Time period July 2023 - 2026
- Components:
 - Centering the Doula Program
 - Solano HEALs Infrastructure
 - Positions: HEALs Facilitator, Director of Finance & Philanthropy and Director of Community Outreach/Advocacy
- Second First 5 grant in Year 2: \$20,000
 - Health Equity train-the-trainer series



First 5 Grant Positions



Nailah Souder, M.S.

HEALs Program Director



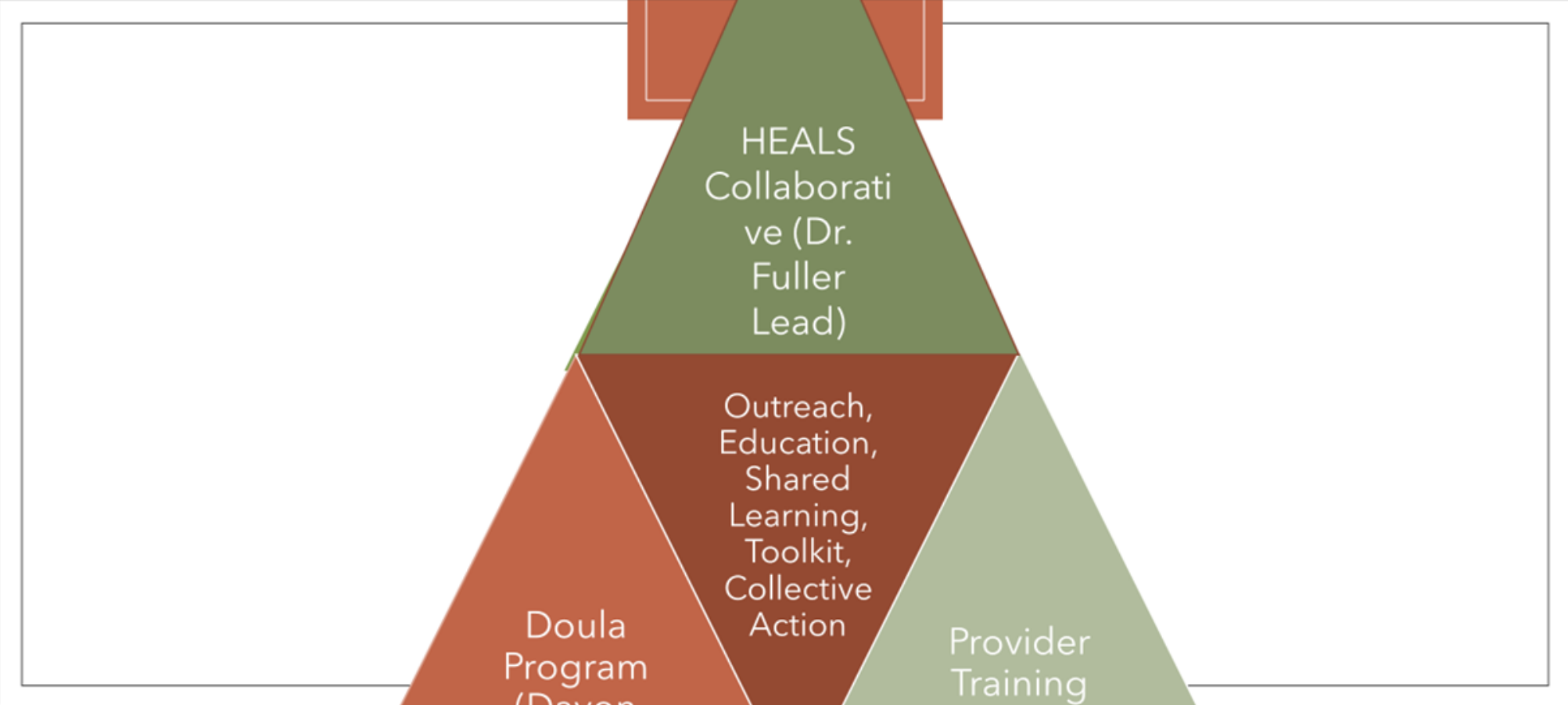
Cristian Aquino

Director of Finance

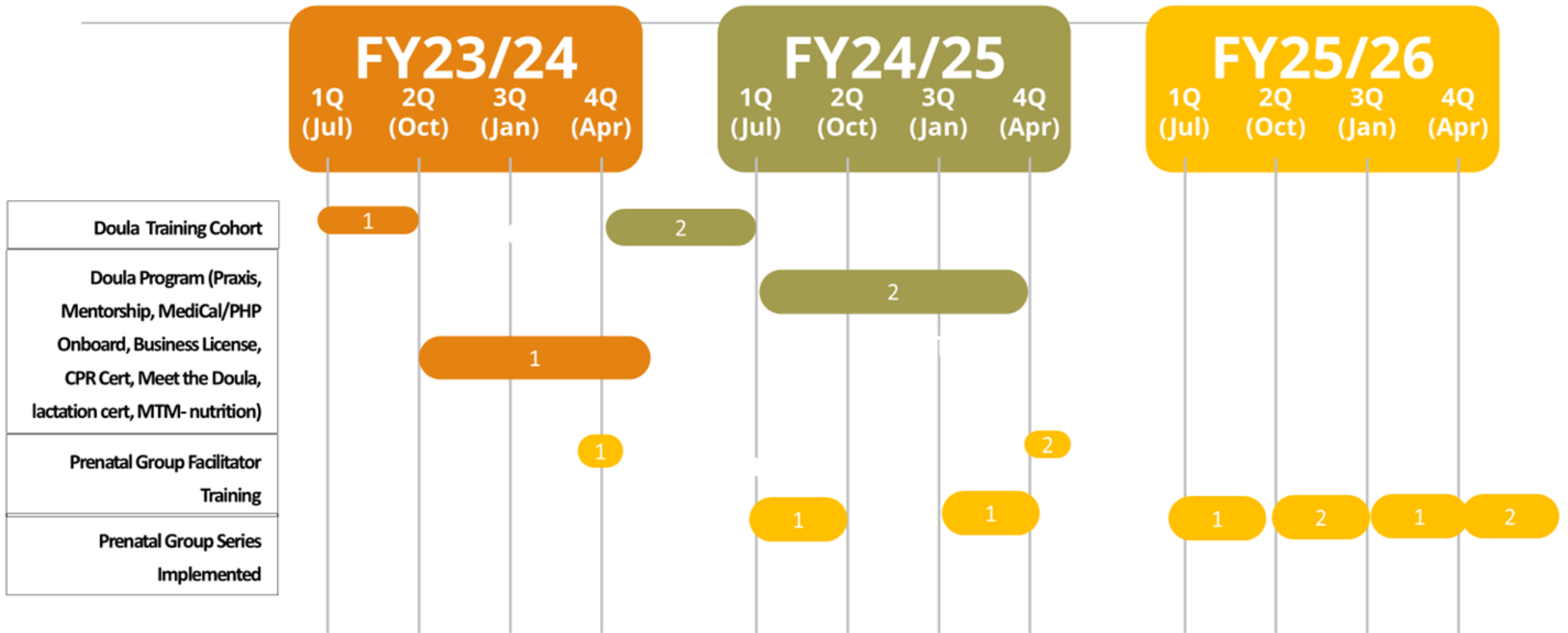


Azalea Menefee

Director of Community Outreach/Advocacy



THREE-YEAR HEALS DOULA PROJECT





Solano HEALs Centering the Doula Program

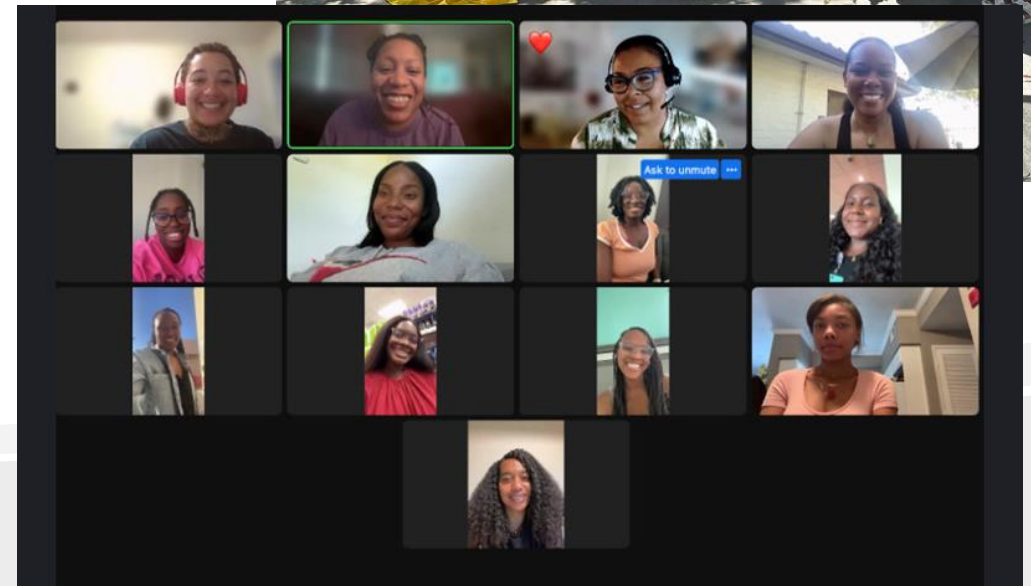
Overview

- 16-hour Doula training:
 - Advocacy
 - Anatomy and Physiology
 - Nonmedical Comfort
 - Postpartum navigation
- Monthly Mentoring
- Medi-Cal Onboarding
 - SB65: Highlight the impact of SB65 (Momnibus Bill), which now allows doulas to be reimbursed for their services.
- Meet the Doula Nights
Community Meetings
- *Additional Elements:*
 - Lactation Support: Certified Lactation Education Counselors: 10 doulas trained through a grant with UC San Diego.
 - Workforce Development: Connected with Black Infant Health (Solano) and Innovative Health Solutions for a 12-week medically tailored meal program.
 - Healing Circles: Collaboration with SCOE (Solano County Office of Education) to provide education on facilitating healing circles for our prenatal groups.
 - Community Connections: Hospital tours and workshops.
 - Prenatal group facilitation

Solano HEALs Centering the Doula Program

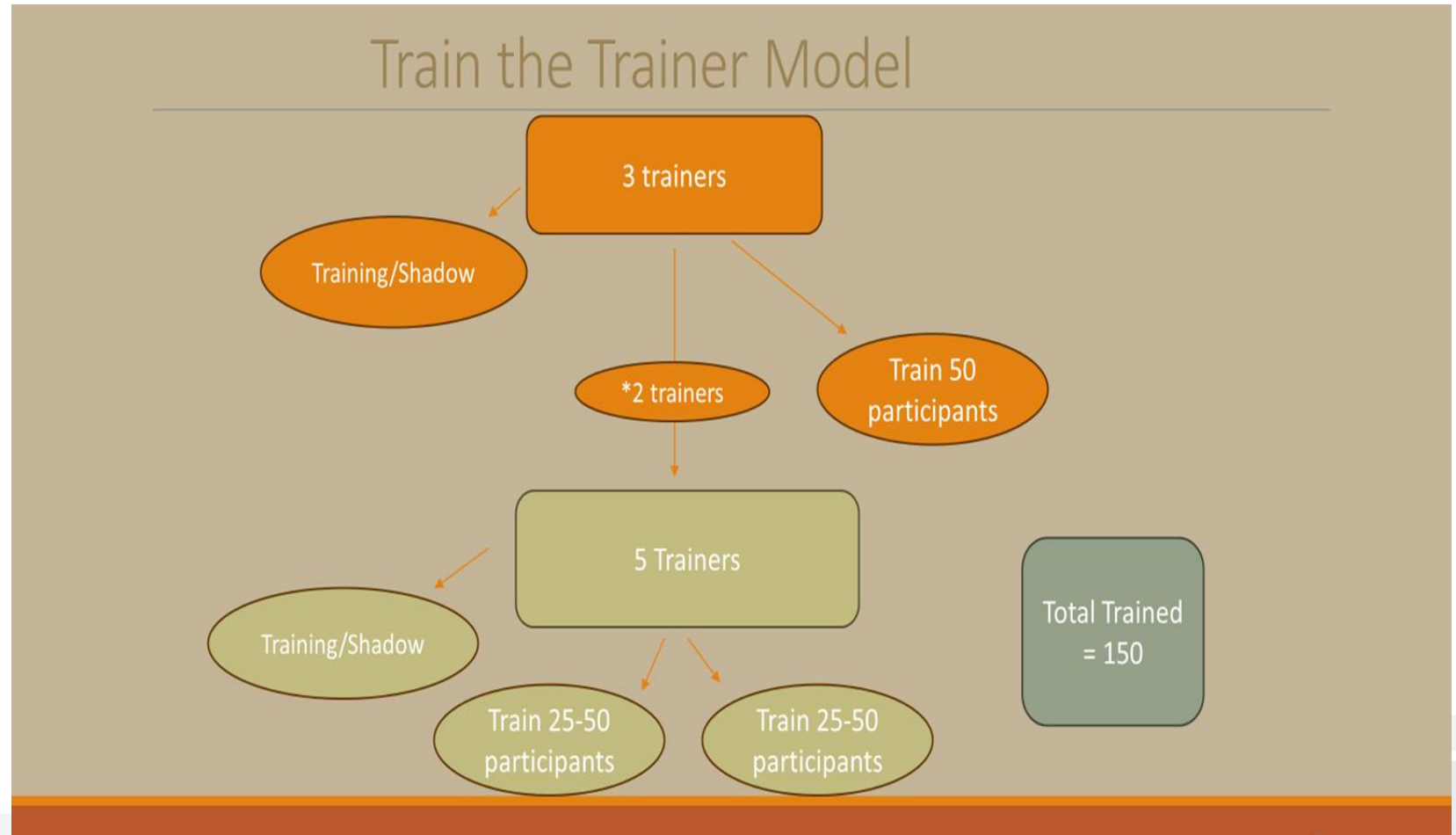
Successes

- Year 1 Achievements:
 - Trained 14 doulas in Cohort 1
- Year 2 Achievements:
 - Trained 13 doulas in Cohort 2
 - Expanded efforts to Sonoma County
 - Cohort 1 in Sonoma will start October 2025 with 8 to 12 doulas.
- Exclusively Black prenatal group facilitation
- Impact:
 - Increased workforce of black doulas in the community
 - Decreased traumatic birthing experiences of black women
 - Improved birthing outcomes



Race Equity Training Grant- Solano

- One year of training
- Two cohorts
- Stipends given to trainers
- Will replicate model in Sonoma in 2025
- **Impact:**
 - Increase safe spaces for families and doulas in the healthcare environment
 - Increase awareness and decrease bias
 - Decrease infant and maternal mortality and morbidity



Solano HEALs Expansion July 2024 - Sonoma HEALs



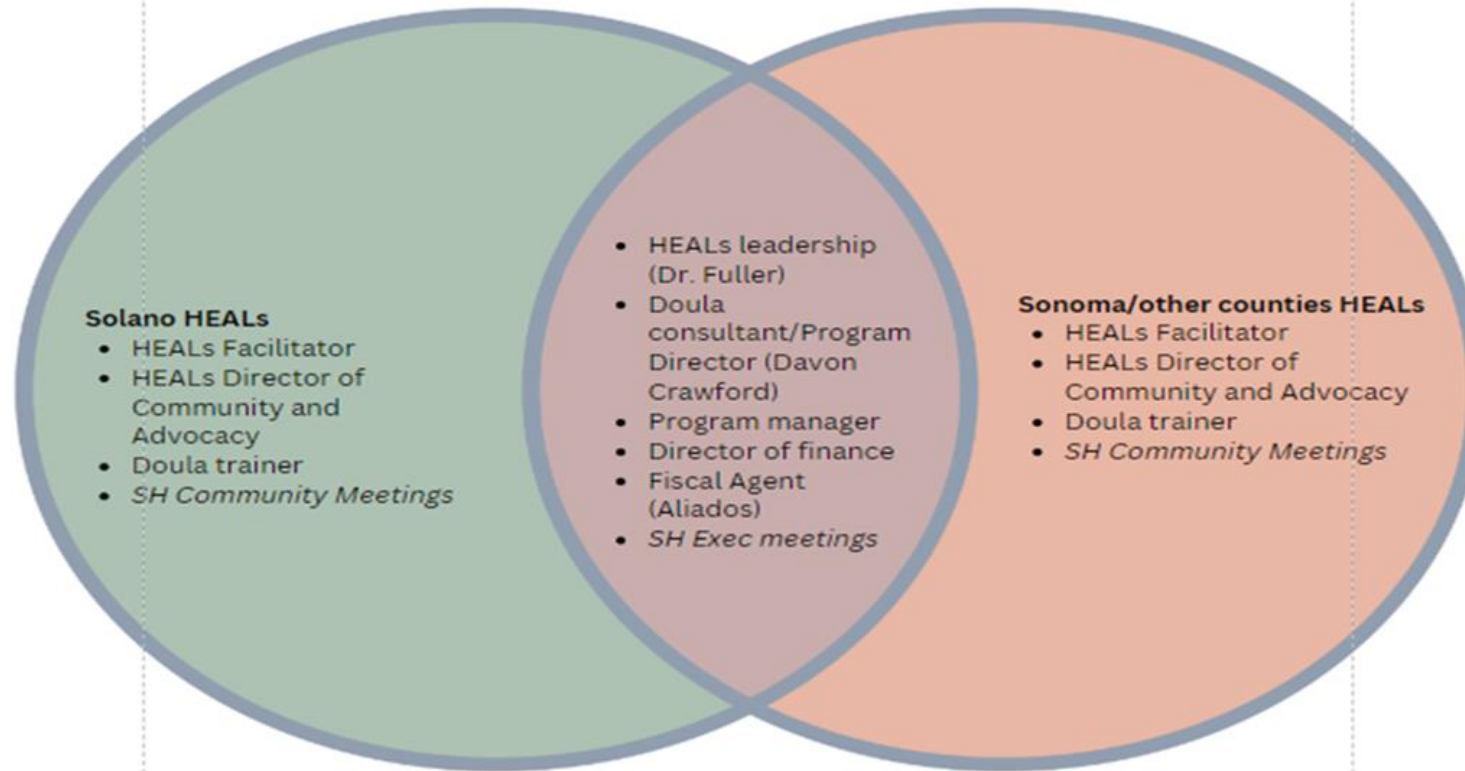
Sonoma HEALs

Added Positions

- 2 HEALs stipend positions:
Facilitator and
Community
- Doula trainer
- Project manager

Expanded Positions

- HEALs Exec
Director
- Doula Program
Manager





Client Testimonials

“...My doula was awesome, and I would score her off the charts. I recently lost my mom, and this program helped me at a critical time. My doula listened to me and was a great source of support.”

“...My doula was very supportive. I would rate her 100 out of a scale of 1 to 5. She provided me with lots of community resources. She helped me with breastfeeding, and I am still breastfeeding. She helped me when my daughter had to have tubes put in her ears. I wish it were not ending.”



Testimonials provided by Innovative Health Solutions. Mothers participated in the Black Infant Health Medically Tailored Meal Program and were supported by doulas trained through Solano HEALs Centering the Doula Program.

Healthcare Policy in Support of Doula Services

- Doula services are considered Preventive Health Care services which, within the scope of authorized practice under State law will:
 - Prevent disease, disability, and other health conditions or their progression;
 - Prolong life; and
 - Promote physical and mental health and efficiency
- In 2019, ten doula pilots initiated by in MediCal Managed Care programs across California.
- In 2022, California submitted a State Plan Amendment to add doula services as a Medi-Cal benefit – approved in January 2023.
- In January 2023, California Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans became required to cover doula services.

Partnership Doula Benefit

- Partnership members who are currently pregnant, or have been pregnant in the last 365 days, are considered eligible for the doula services benefit.
- Partnership encourages doulas be integrated into member's perinatal visits
- Doulas are an important part of the perinatal care team and support the standards of care for routine perinatal services.



Pathway for Doulas to Work with Partnership Members

1) Enroll in the Medi-Cal PAVE process:

- Documents requirements to participate
- Establishes ability to submit claims in Medi-Cal systems

2) Contract with Partnership HealthPlan:

- Establishes basic tenet as a service provider in the Partnership Network
- Requires liability insurance and business license

3) Credential with Partnership

- Reviews the doulas training/experience background to ensure meets all requirements

4) Onboarding with Partnership Provider Relations and Claims Staff

- Standard review of Partnership provider policies
- Training in submitting claims
- Review of Partnership Benefits and Services with emphasis on perinatal and early childhood care and resources

Doula Provider Requirements & Qualifications

Training Pathway

- Minimum 16 hours of training in the following areas:
 - Lactation support
 - Childbirth education
 - Foundations of anatomy of pregnancy and childbirth
 - Nonmedical comfort measures, prenatal support, and labor support
 - Developing a community resource list
- Provide support at minimum of three births

Experience Pathway

- At least 5 years doula experience
- Attestation to skills in prenatal, labor and postpartum care as demonstrated by the following:
 - Three written client testimonial letters or professional letters of rec from a licensed provider.

Requirements for all Doulas

- 18 years and older – State ID
- Adult and Infant CPR – Certificate
- HIPPA training – certification /attestation
- Continuing Education - 3 hrs/3 year – attestation and available if requested

Partnership Covered Doula Services

- Prenatal, Intrapartum, and Postpartum Care:
 - During pregnancy labor and delivery, miscarriage, still birth and abortion
 - Physical, emotional and non-medical care
 - Services can be provided up to 12 months from the end of pregnancy.
 - Does not require supervision of clinical provider
- Covered services Include:
 - 1 initial visit
 - 8 additional visits (pre and/or post partum)
 - Labor support
 - Up to 2 extended 3-hour postpartum visits
 - Additional visits (≤ 9) may be considered, if needed

Perinatal Services in Maternal Care for Partnership Members





Thank you

Shandi Fuller, MD, MPH

MCAH Medical Director/CCS Medical
Consultant
Solano HEALs Executive Director

Solano County Health & Social Services
Public Health Division
275 Beck Avenue
Fairfield, CA 94533

Office: (707) 784-8662
Cell: (571) 277-4684
sjfuller@solanocounty.com

Colleen Townsend, MD

Regional Medical Director
Health Services Department

Partnership HealthPlan of California
4665 Business Center Drive, Fairfield,
CA 94534

Direct: (707) 863-4524
Fax: (707) 420-7861
ctownsend@partnershiphp.org