IBCLC Certification Program Reaccredited by the NCCA!

The International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners® (IBLCE®) is pleased to announce that the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) of the Institute of Credentialing Excellence (ICE) recently reaccredited IBLCE's International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® (IBCLC®) certification program! The NCCA Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs are recognized worldwide as the first accreditation standards in the certification industry and the IBCLC program has been continuously accredited by the NCCA since 1988.

IBLCE Chair Tomoko Seo, M.D, IBCLC of Aichi, Japan stated, "This is excellent news for IBLCE and indeed for all IBCLCs. The IBCLC program was one of the very first certification programs to earn the prestigious NCCA accreditation and it is a tremendous accomplishment to hold this accreditation for 26 consecutive years.”

During the objective third-party review...
During the objective third-party review process of NCCA reaccreditation, numerous aspects of the IBCLC certification program are examined and evaluated against the twenty-one rigorous NCCA Standards including: the structure and governance of IBLCE; the development, administration, validity and scoring of the IBCLC certification examination; the information available to applicants, certificants, and the public; and recertification requirements designed to evaluate continued competence on the part of IBCLCs. Reaccreditation by NCCA demonstrates that IBLCE is committed to self-examination, external periodic review against recognised certification industry standards and continuous improvement to maintain the quality of the IBCLC certification program.

### IBLCE Adopts Policy on the Translation of the IBCLC Examination

The International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners is an international organisation and is committed to making the expertise of IBCLCs available around the globe. The intent of this policy is to foster the successful establishment of the IBCLC credential when considering the translation of the examination into a new language.

The translation process requires intensive human and financial resources. IBLCE will consider translating the examination into a new language when the following items have been submitted and these criteria have been met:

- A description of the reasoning behind the request, including information on the breastfeeding environment in the area(s) to be served by the new exam translation;
- Documentation of a minimum number of 10 current IBCLCs who are fluent in the language requested;
- Documentation of the availability to the language group of pre-examination educational materials, courses and instruction;
- Documentation of a plan for continuing education;
- The number of candidates who are working towards completion of exam eligibility;
- An application, including payment, submitted by a minimum of 20 candidates at least 18 months prior to the desired date of the exam;
- In order to sit the exam, candidates must complete all eligibility requirements by the exam application deadline.
Questions? Contact the Regional Office serving your country. To submit a request for a translation of the examination, including required materials outlined above, write to the IBLCE International Office at international@iblce.org or at IBLCE International Office, 6402 Arlington Blvd., Suite 350, Falls Church, VA USA 22042.

---

Information on 2015 Examination Application Season

IBLCE is pleased to announce that the application system for the 2015 examination opened in December rather than in January as it was in recent past years. Visit the IBLCE website for details.

As previously shared in IBLCE communications, IBLCE derives its worldwide fee schedule from the purchasing power parity (PPP) metric. These calculations are established by various international organisations, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The PPP is used in setting the IBLCE annual fee schedule. Unlike the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the PPP actually reflects differences in cost of living in different countries and the inflation rates in those countries. IBLCE sets its fee schedule on an annual basis so as to reflect not only changes in fluctuating exchange rates but also to reflect changes in the PPP as adjusted by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, typically on an annual basis.

Certificant Spotlight

IBCLCs work around the globe in a variety of practice settings in lactation care. This feature of the eNewsletter and IBLCE website highlights IBCLCs and the important work they perform for mothers, babies and families. Read about certificants around the world and why they value the IBCLC credential!
Serena Debonnet, IBCLC, a midwife in Brussels, Belgium wanted to know more about breastfeeding so in 2004 she participated in a lactation educational program while at the same time breastfeeding her own twenty-month-old daughter. After taking the course, Serena was one of the first group of people in Belgium to sit for the IBCLC examination. One year later, in 2005, Serena became the national coordinator of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) and subsequently organized a number of national breastfeeding conferences featuring internationally renowned speakers.

Since then, Serena has served as Vice President of the European Lactation Consultants Alliance (ELACTA) and currently serves as Vice President of the Belgium Lactation Consultants Association (BVL).

Serena, who just recertified at ten years, pursued the IBCLC credential to both assess and validate her professional experience and saw the value in earning a prestigious international credential in lactation. Serena finds the IBCLC invaluable in her role as a BFHI coordinator working with hospitals throughout Belgium as well as in her own work with mothers and babies.

---

**Board of Directors' Transitions**

IBLCE is pleased to announce the election of two new members to the IBLCE Board of Directors, Norma Escobar, IBCLC, RLC and Clifton Jamil Kenon, Jr., DNP, MSN, RN, IBCLC, RLC and bids farewell to a valued former Board member Rebecca "Becky" Mannel, IBCLC, RLC.

Originally from Mexico City, Norma Escobar originally trained as an English as a Second Language Instructor. After moving to the United States and having children, she found her passion in helping breastfeeding mothers. Norma has been working with breastfeeding women since 1994 as a Leader with La Leche League, where she served in a multitude of roles. She became an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant in 2002. She currently serves as the Breastfeeding Coordinator and Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Manager for the New Hanover County Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program in North Carolina as well as the Perinatal Region V WIC Breastfeeding Coordinator. Norma is the proud mother of two grown sons without whom she...
would have never discovered the joys and challenges of breastfeeding.

**Clifton Kenon, Jr.**, earned his Master's Degree in Nursing from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte as well as a Doctorate of Nursing Practice from Chatham University of Pittsburgh. He is currently pursuing a second doctoral degree at the University of Tennessee.

A dedicated lactation consultant and avid breastfeeding supporter, Clifton led the first hospitals within the Indian Health Service to become Baby Friendly, as well as the first and only hospitals within the state of North and South Dakota. Additionally, he created the first national nurse residency program to train nurses to work in resource constrained rural settings, and wrote the National Indian Health Service Breastfeeding Protection guidelines.

For Clifton's leadership in the area of breastfeeding, he was recognized by Michelle Obama's "Let's Move" initiative, and was invited to speak at the White House in 2012. He has been recognized by the Surgeon General of the United States and received the 2011 Lucille Woodville Award in honor of his contributions to the health of women and newborns in the United States. In 2013, he took home the top national award at IHS, the Reyes Award, making him the first nurse and the youngest person ever to receive this honor. He was the Award of Excellence in Practice Recipient from the Association of Women's Health Obstetrics and Neonatal Nurses in 2014.

Clifton currently serves as a Senior Research Advisor in the Office of Population and Reproductive Health at the United States Agency for International Development, where he continues to work on breastfeeding, fertility awareness based family planning, and postpartum family planning.

In addition to his job, Clifton continues to help mothers and families as a labor and delivery nurse and lactation consultant. Prior to USAID he served as the Director of Maternal and Child Health in the Great Plains Area of the IHS. In that position, he
worked throughout North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, and Nebraska serving the needs of American Indian and Alaska Native women. He has worked as labor and delivery nurse, mother baby nurse and lactation consultant at both the University of Virginia Hospital, and Duke University Medical Center.

IBLCE recognizes with great thanks and appreciation the outstanding leadership and dedication of outgoing Board member Rebecca Mannel. During her tenure Becky served as both Chair and Treasurer and helped to guide IBLCE through a period of tremendous transition. She will be greatly missed.

News & Notes

IBLCE, including the Board of Directors and staff, do much more than administer the International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) examination and are pleased to share information about the many initiatives in which IBLCE is involved.

Joan Meek, formerly IBLCE’s primary representative to the United States Breastfeeding Committee (USBC) recently was elected by the USBC membership to the role of Chair-Elect. Congratulations to Joan on this great honor! In light of Joan’s election, the IBLCE Board voted to transition Rebecca Mannel to the primary representative and Immediate Past Board Chair Rachelle Lessen was elected by the IBLCE Board as the new alternate representative to the USBC.

IBLCE Board member Dale Hansson served as Program Chair for the Liquid Gold Conference organized by the Australian Breastfeeding Association in a celebration of its 50th birthday. Asia Pacific & Africa (APA) Regional Director Karolyn Vaughan and team exhibited at the August conference held in Melbourne, discussing the value and benefit of IBCLC certification. The conference included over 1,300 delegates included ABA counsellors, members, mothers, midwives, doctors, psychologists, psychiatrists, nurses and allied health professionals.

IBLCE First Impression Specialist Nia Morris and Recertification Coordinator Sarah Stallard exhibited at the Fifth National Breastfeeding Coalitions Conference held August 2-4, 2014, in Arlington, Virginia. Every other year, USBC brings together breastfeeding coalition leaders from every U.S. state and territory. The goals and objectives of these conferences include dissemination of information on current evidence-based best practices, strategy planning, and coalition building and strengthening. The title of this year’s conference was:
“Transforming Barriers into Bridges: Cultivate Your Community Leadership”.

IBLCE First Impression Specialist Nia Morris with Surgeon General Boris D. Lushniak M.D., M.P.H.

IBLCE Regional Director Karolyn Vaughan highlighted the benefits of the IBCLC with attendees at the Australian College of Midwives Queensland annual conference September 24 & 25, 2014, Gold Coast, Australia. Over 300 midwives and student midwives from all over Australia and New Zealand attended the conference.

Board Member Dr. Andreja Teckauc Golob and European and Middle East (EUME) Regional Director Ilse Bichler represented IBLCE at the fifth Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine European Regional Meeting for Physicians in Bucharest, Romania. The two-day conference, organised in cooperation with Asociatia ProMAMA and Dr. Marta Muresan, IBCLC, included 70 participants from 20 countries including IBLCE Country Coordinators for Turkey, Estonia and Romania.

IBLCE exhibited at the American Academy of Family Physicians' Assembly in Washington, DC from October 23-25, 2014. The AAFP Assembly is called "the family medicine event of the year" in the US with over 4,000 family physicians in attendance.

International Director of Certification Pam Weber and team promoted the IBCLC at the American Academy of Nursing
Conference, October 16-18 2014, in Washington, DC. The American Academy of Nursing's annual policy conference identifies ways nurses are transforming health and building a better care delivery system. This conference showcases the extraordinary work nurses are undertaking to drive policy changes that meet the health needs of individuals and populations. This year's theme, "Transforming Health: Driving Policy" highlighted nursing initiatives that are transforming health, leading change, and influencing policy and ultimately improving the healthcare in the US.

IBLCE also had a presence at the Inaugural Conference for the Australasian Society for Tongue and Lip Ties which was held October 23-24, 2014, in Gold Coast Queensland. There were over 250 delegates plus 250 online delegates from multidisciplinary backgrounds, including midwives, IBCLCs, pediatricians, dentists, dental therapists, speech pathologists, nurses and occupational therapists. The inaugural general meeting was also held to formalise the bylaws of the organisation and future direction.

IBLCE exhibited at the 5th International Conference on Maternal and Infant Nutrition and Nurture held November 5-7, 2014 on the University of Western Sydney Parramatta Campus in New South Wales, Australia. The conference included approximately 300 delegates mostly from midwifery, nursing, child and family health as well as general practitioners.

IBLCE endorsed the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) Statement to the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) held November 19-21, 2014 in Rome, Italy. The WABA Statement to ICN2 asserted that Protection, Promotion and Support of Breastfeeding is "a human right, and is a vital component of any concrete response that governments and relevant UN agencies intend to take in tackling the critical problems facing countries on nutrition."

In August, IBLCE leadership specifically applauded the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention's use of the Breastfeeding Report Card as an invaluable tool to monitor the progress of the important work that is being done on many levels to support breastfeeding mothers and families. At the same time, IBLCE recommended that the Report Card be enhanced by providing more comprehensive descriptions of the various breastfeeding credentials so that consumers receive the information they need to make truly informed choices about their healthcare options. Specifically, IBLCE emphasized the rigor associated with the International Board Certified Lactation Consultant which currently mandates extensive health sciences education, extensive direct clinical experience working with mothers and babies and a professional certification examination. IBLCE also recommended that the CDC Report Card include information about others who support breastfeeding including the Women's, Infants and Children (WIC) Peer Counselors. IBLCE
applauded the reporting by the CDC on La Leche League leaders but noted that there are not always LLL leaders in underserved communities which have the lowest breastfeeding rates. IBLCE recommended providing the aforementioned additional information in the CDC Report Card to help bridge gaps in resources, decrease disparities and allow for informed policymaking and consumer choices.

IBLCE Executive Director Sara Blair Lake has been elected a commissioner to the National Commission For Certifying Agencies, the autonomous accrediting body of the Institute For Credentialing Excellence. She was elected for a three-year term to this important organization within the certification field.

---

**IBLCE Board Meets with DC Breastfeeding Coalition and Virginia Breastfeeding Task Force**

During a recent Board meeting in the Greater DC area, the IBLCE Board of Directors and senior staff enjoyed meeting with the DC Breastfeeding Coalition and the Virginia Breastfeeding Task Force. The groups discussed issues of common interest and concern and enjoyed the opportunity to get to know one another better.

The DC Breastfeeding Coalition was pleased to share many of its current initiatives, including receipt of a grant entitled, "Creating a Baby-Friendly District of Columbia", funded by the Government of the District of Columbia, Department of Health, as well as its work on the currently in production Breastfeeding Guide, Fifth Edition and its 10th Anniversary Celebration Luncheon at the 2014 Regional Breastfeeding Friendly Healthcare Provider and Workplace Awards.

IBLCE appreciated the opportunity to network with these two amazing groups doing so much to promote breastfeeding as the
IBLCE’s Strategic Plan Updated

With input from stakeholders around the world, IBLCE crafted a new strategic plan in 2012 and published it in 2013.

The foundation of the plan included Vision and Mission Statements accompanied by Values and Beliefs.

IBLCE also set four key goals in the plan, and pursuant to each goal, IBLCE defined main objectives, or the primary focus of each goal for 2013.

In reviewing and updating the plan for 2014-15, IBLCE retained the first two goals, refined the third and having enjoyed a great deal of success with respect to the final goal, established a new fourth goal.

**Goal 1:** "To administer the premier, international, rigorous, relevant, comprehensive, standardized, certification programme that promotes high quality lactation and breastfeeding care" is important and remains an ongoing goal. With respect to the underlying objective, IBLCE continues work on "streamlining and increasing the relevancy of the eligibility, application, examination and certification maintenance processes" yet focused this and established a new objective "Explore developments and current best practices in certification and recertification." This objective is timely in light of the work of the practice analysis (role delineation study). Pursuant to best practices, IBLCE is examining the IBCLC certification programme in light of the findings of the practice analysis study as well as latest developments and current practices in certification and recertification.

**Goal 2:** "To promote the IBCLC certification as the most valued and effective certification in lactation and breastfeeding care" remains an ongoing goal, yet the underlying objective has been sharpened from simply awareness of the evidence supporting the effectiveness of the IBLCE certification and IBCLC certificants, to "Communicate the relevance and effectiveness of the IBLCE certification, examination and IBCLC certificants." This objective is a focal point of IBLCE work in the coming year.
Goal 3: "To improve access to the certification by clearly communicating exam eligibility requirements". Progress has been made yet more work remains to be done in this regard. Therefore, IBLCE is determined that an even broader goal, incorporating this original goal, was appropriate. Goal 3 now seeks "To improve access to the certification by broadening outreach." The specific underlying objective is now to "Increase the number of IBLCE programs and communications to facilitate diversification." IBLCE is working in the coming year to meet this ambitious and critically important objective.

Goal 4: "To disseminate to stakeholders up-to-date communications proactively and in a timely and appropriate manner," with an associated objective of "Increase the frequency of updates on IBLCE programs, direction and strategies." With the introduction of a periodic enewsletter, a greatly enhanced social media presence including communications through a variety of platforms, a fair bit of success has been achieved, therefore IBLCE revamped the goal as simply "To enhance customer service." This is an area of improvement for IBLCE and you may have recently noticed links to a customer service survey in the signature lines of operations team members. Thank you for taking the time to provide your feedback. With such constructive feedback, IBLCE seeks to enhance your customer service experience. Additionally, in the New Year, please look for a comprehensive customer service survey going out to IBCLCs. We thank you in advance for taking the time to respond to the survey so that we at IBLCE can improve your customer service.

New underlying objectives to this customer service goal include an increased emphasis on timely translation of materials. Over the last few years, IBLCE has increased its core offices' linguistic capabilities (in addition to service provided by Country Coordinators) from English and German to now also include French and Spanish. IBLCE will be placing an increasing emphasis on this important area in the coming year.

If you would like to learn more, please visit the Strategic Plan section of the IBLCE website.

New Dates For IBCLC Care Award!

You know the IBCLC Care Award is a great way to distinguish your hospital or community-based health agency. It makes your facility more attractive to potential clients, aids in recruitment of staff devoted to lactation support and promotes good will by helping new families reach their breastfeeding goals.

But did you know that there are new deadlines for the Care
Award in 2015? Effective 2015, applications for BOTH the hospital-based and community-based awards will be accepted from **Monday, January 12, 2015** through **Friday, February 20, 2015**. Results will be announced **April 30, 2015**.

Before heading into the holiday season, mark your calendar now for this new deadline. Want more information? Visit the IBCLC Care Award website at [www.ibclccare.org](http://www.ibclccare.org)

---

**IBLCE Board Director Profile**

As an ongoing feature, the IBLCE eNewsletter features an IBLCE Board member and includes information about the focus of the Board member's work on behalf of the IBLCE certificant community and the public.

**Esmé Nel Hough**

Esmé has been an active La Leche League leader since 1986 and she obtained her IBCLC certification in 2002. She completed her Bachelor's degree in Commerce at the University of South Africa, shortly before the birth of her fourth child in 1991.

Esmé's passion for supporting breastfeeding mothers and babies grew out of the experience of breastfeeding her four children, as well as a result of the mother-to-mother support she had offered in her area.

Esmé has served La Leche League in various capacities including Editor for the International Division's newsletter, Coordinator of Leader Accreditation, and Area Professional Liaison of LLL South Africa.

Esmé has served on the IBLCE Finance and Marketing committees and recently was elected Treasurer.

When not working with IBLCE, together with her husband, Attie, she runs the Honnehokke Resort in Hondeklipbaai (Dogstone Bay), a small, remote village on the South African West Coast. She enjoys cycling, fishing, reading, knitting, travelling and gardening (a huge challenge in the semi-desert area in which she lives).

---

**More Frequently Asked Questions About Computer-Based Testing (CBT)**
IBLCE has administered the IBCLC examination via CBT for the past four years. First offered in 2011 as a pilot to approximately 500 test candidates, in 2014, approximately 83% of IBCLC test candidates took the examination in this format. IBLCE survey results indicate that most candidates prefer this format yet any major change brings questions. IBLCE has posted responses to many of your questions, and updates the list as it hears from you.

Below are a few updates:

**Q. Why do I have to remove my jewelry or hat prior to taking the examination?**

Security is a key consideration when administering any professional certification examination. The integrity of any professional credential is maintained by a number of processes and procedures, with security one of the paramount considerations. It is critically important that the public rely on professionals who have met all requirements and have fairly earned the certification. Also of importance is the fact that experts estimate that each examination item typically costs in excess of $1,000 to produce when factoring in professional fees such as psychometric fees, subject matter experts' (SME) and staff time, as well as meeting expenses associated with the generation of items. In order to remain the premier certification in lactation, it is imperative that IBLCE maintain the integrity of the IBCLC.

**Q. My colleague who is located in the same geographic area took the examination via paper and pencil. However, I took the examination via CBT. Why the difference?**

IBLCE works with the computer-based testing (CBT) vendor with the largest geographic footprint in the world, Pearson VUE. However, there are a limited number of CBT seats in certain parts of the world. Primarily to increase consumer satisfaction, but also to maximize the number of existing seats, IBLCE is moving to a twice per year administration schedule in 2016. Additionally, this shift to twice per year, from July (the busiest testing month) to April and October, will also help to facilitate the seating of IBCLC examination candidates. However, where there are a limited number of CBT seats, IBLCE must set up paper & pencil administration sites. The plan is to reduce the number of such paper and pencil sites to the extent feasible over time.

**Q. I think I would like a breastfeeding break during the examination. How do I facilitate a break?**

Please let IBLCE know you would like a breastfeeding break on your application and supply your accompanying documentation as soon as possible. Earlier lead time allows IBLCE to work effectively with the third-party testing vendor to facilitate a comfortable breastfeeding break experience for you, the IBCLC test taker.
Professional Certification Boards vs. Professional Associations

A common question is "What is the difference between a professional certification board and a professional association?" Both are important organizations but they are very different and largely serve different purposes.

A professional certification board such as IBLCE certifies practitioners in a given field. The certification body sets prerequisites and maintenance of certification standards based on the findings of a practice analysis, works with psychometricians and subject matter experts to develop a relevant and meaningful professional certification examination and provides verification to consumers, employers, other professionals and indeed the public as a whole that a given individual has met certain defined standards. It works to promote the credential and yet, at the same time, much of its work is focused directly on the development of the professional certification examination and related prerequisites and certification maintenance requirements.

A professional association is an organization which seeks to further a particular profession, and the interests of individuals engaged in that profession as well as the greater public. An association is a synergistic group. Its importance lies in the fact that the effect of a collection of people is greater than just one person. The saying that "there is strength in numbers" typifies the ability of a professional organization to advance the interests of its members. Professional associations support its members by providing opportunities for continuing education, communicating about issues that may impact their practice or pay, and promoting the profession.

Professional associations may offer a variety of benefits and their focus may be geopolitical in nature. For example, the International Lactation Consultants Association offers a truly international conference and publishes the highly regarded *Journal of Human Lactation*, a quarterly peer-reviewed journal publishing original research and literature relevant to lactation professionals, researchers and others around the globe. Other professional associations are focused on a particular region or country. For example, ELACTA is the umbrella organisation of European professional associations devoted to the lactation consultant profession. ELACTA offers both country-specific and regional networking opportunities. LCANZ, or the Lactation Consultants of Australia and New Zealand, offers similar opportunities for professionals in those countries. The United States Lactation Consultant Association (USLCA) provides support and promotes the IBCLC in the United States by engaging in advocacy and also by providing networking opportunities and US-specific resources.
While IBLCE is not a professional association, IBLCE recognizes the important role played by professional associations and invites you to explore the opportunities available to you through professional associations.

Professional associations are usually member organizations, relying on member dues for the funds needed to carry out the mission and vision of the organization. Your participation in a professional association gives you a voice in areas that matter to you, and provides the financial resources needed to advocate on your behalf. Become part of the synergy and help your professional organizations help you by joining today!

- The Board & Staff of IBLCE