

Virginia's Only Black Owned Birth Center is Now Open



Midlothian, Virginia Dec 6, 2023 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Gather Grounded Midwifery (GGM) is the only Black midwife-owned birth center in Central Virginia. Located 20 minutes outside of Richmond in Midlothian, VA, the facility opened on Aug. 16, 2023, under the direction of Racha Tahani Lawler-Queen. Lawler-Queen is a licensed midwife, certified professional midwife, and a traditional midwife with over 20 yrs experience.

Currently, GGM holds an “Expectant Parents Gathering” once a month, on the 1st Saturday of every month, to provide an opportunity for parents to tour the birth cottage and hear about traditional midwifery practices.

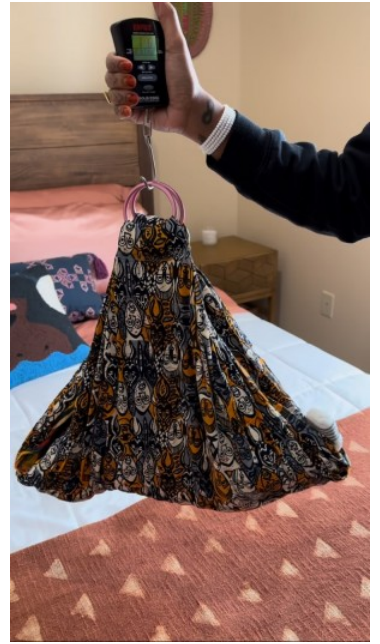
“Midwifery pre-dates medicine, and Black midwives, African midwives kept our communities safe until they were legally barred from doing so,” said Lawler-Queen. “The Black maternal health crisis has been upheld for all the years since Black midwives and the midwifery of our Ancestors was recognized as a threat against it.”

According to an analysis by the National Center for Health Analysis of data from the Virginia Center for Statistics, “between 2018 and 2021, 113 women in Virginia died pregnancy-related causes — a rate of 29.1 per 100,000 births. For Black women, the maternal mortality rate was 55.0 per 100,000 births, more than twice the rate for white women.”

Gather Grounded’s location contains a birth cottage for those that want accessible out-of-hospital births or water births; a healing room for physicals, lactation support, or supportive modalities that require privacy; a small kitchen; laundry room; the Freedom Birth Suite which contains a birth tub is surrounded in mother of pearl backsplash to welcome in the power & serenity of the ocean; and a family room where most of the appointments happen, which also doubles as a classroom.

“Racha supported me in my first pregnancy during COVID and it was a 180 compared to the level of care and support I was receiving from my OBGYN. She spent time listening to me, answering my questions, softening my anxieties, and providing me and my baby the space to be held emotionally and psychologically,” said client Jeanine Rogers. “I feel safe in her care - while being wrapped in her knowledge of supporting Black women like myself, she is priceless, essential, and very necessary!”





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