

# A Combined Summer with Birthmark Doula & NOBC

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This past summer I've had the opportunity to work with Birthmark Doula Collective/the New Orleans Breastfeeding Center (NOBC) as a research intern. Thus far in my time with NOBC, I've been lucky enough to observe the complexities of laying the foundation for CITI-certified and IRB-approved research. From completing my own CITI training to attending biweekly team meetings, I've been honored to be in conversation with individuals passionate about justice in the realm of child-rearing, as well as those accustomed to collecting and analyzing quantitative data.

In the past two months, my work has been very self-directed, as my supervisor allows me the space to get as involved as my comfort level will allow. This has led to ongoing projects such as crafting flyers to reach out to our research demographic to conducting my own preliminary investigation into the link between disaster vulnerability and low breastfeeding rates. Moving into this fall, I am excited to move past these phases to get into the midst of data collection via interviews. These interviews will not only illuminate the living conditions for caregivers on the Gulf Coast living with the looming threat of natural disasters, but give me the opportunity to connect with more local Louisianians.

As the thick of hurricane season rapidly approaches, I'm excited to be in contact with an organization actively educating local residents and preparing resources and materials to ensure infant and family safety. For me, the initial appeal of attending Tulane has always been to connect with a community as diverse and pulsating with life as the many sects of people in New Orleans. Moving into my junior year, it feels more important now than ever for me to develop off-campus networks about which I am passionate that will connect me to the city until graduation and far beyond.