

# Faces of FRONTIER: *FOCUSED ON THE MISSION*



**Jill Alliman, CNM, MSN**  
*FNU Student*

**A**s a Birth Center midwife in rural Appalachia for almost 26 years, Jill Alliman has worked to improve access to care for some of the most underserved women in the US. Her educational background includes a Nurse-Midwifery Certificate from the Medical University of

South Carolina, a Master's in Nursing in Midwifery from Case Western Reserve, and she is currently a student in the DNP Program at Frontier Nursing University.

Jill is actively involved in the American Association of Birth Centers (AABC), where she is a Past President and currently serves as Chair of the AABC Legislative Committee. She believes that giving birth in the birth center can be a transformative experience for women—including the neediest—empowering them to improve their families' situations for the better. Having helped a rural birth center to survive for over 26 years, she now devotes her time to extending the birth center model of care to a wider group of women.

Following the mission that FNU Founder Mary Breckinridge set forth over 70 years ago, to serve women and families with a focus on rural and underserved populations, Jill has made many contributions toward improving access to high-quality midwifery health care. As a proud FNU student, she shares, "Mary Breckinridge's life is an inspiration to us all to keep working to provide access to quality midwifery-led care."

To demonstrate her dedication to FNU's mission, Jill took the lead in writing the Strong Start grant for AABC. The Strong Start for Mothers and Newborns initiative, an effort by the Department of Health and Human Services, aims to reduce preterm births and improve outcomes for newborns and pregnant women. AABC was notified in February that they had been awarded a \$5.35 million four year Strong Start grant to measure outcomes and costs from enhanced prenatal care in birth centers. With the AABC Strong Start in Birth Centers grant, the birth center model of enhanced prenatal care program will be evaluated in 48 Birth Center sites, located in 22 states across the US.

Jill is honored to be able to serve as Project Director for this 4 year AABC Strong Start project that will care for 11,000 underserved women in birth centers. Frontier alumna Susan Stapleton, DNP, CNM, will serve as Data Coordinator and lead the data collection for the Strong Start team and Cara Osborne will serve as Research Analyst.

Jill's work with the AABC has demonstrated that even a small group of innovative, dedicated individuals can make a significant impact on health care for women and newborns. Moving forward through her work as Project Director with the Strong Start project, Jill will continue following in the footsteps of Mary Breckinridge incorporating her mission and passion to serve women and families and improve access to care for rural and underserved populations.

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Read the AABC Press Release About the Strong Start Award:  
<http://www.birthcenters.org/content/aabc-leads-successful-national-grant-award-48-local-birth-center-sites>