

Denise Fisher – WABA-ILCA Fellow giving a talk on lactation management to health care professionals, students, lecturers, trainers and community health nurses at the Penang Medical College.



The WABA-ILCA Fellowship is now known as the Chris Mulford WABA-ILCA Fellowship in honour of the beloved late Chris Mulford. Chris, a long-standing ILCA member, helped to guide the birth and growth of the International Lactation Consultant as a profession with her gentle spirit and wise leadership. Chris first joined WABA in 1996 at the first WABA Global Forum in Bangkok, Thailand and became a long term volunteer at WABA. She paved the way for the first WABA-ILCA Fellowship in 2007.



Chris Mulford.

In 2010 WABA was invited to the International Lactation Consultant Association (ILCA) Conference in Texas, USA. This event provided opportunities for cross-fertilisation of ideas between WABA and ILCA. WABA was introduced to the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE) team at the conference, and the interaction led to WABA becoming a Continuing Education Recognition Points (CERPs) provider. WABA could offer CERPs at its Global Breastfeeding Partners Forum and the 2011 BAP Course. As a result, many International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs) know more about WABA and are participating in WABA events. The long-term goal for both ILCA and WABA is to see more lactation consultants worldwide become involved in international breastfeeding advocacy.



Sallie Paige (centre) with Chris Mulford (left) at WABA Global Forum 2.

*Connections – one never knows where connections will lead you. In the late 1980s, I participated in the first Wellstart United States training course under the direction of Dr Audrey Naylor. From there, I became an IBCLC, and integrated lactation management into my Paediatric Nurse Practitioner practice, as well as attempted to encourage my institution to adopt more Baby-Friendly practices. Then, I was tapped to serve as the President of ILCA, and was given opportunities to represent ILCA at WABA workshops related to HIV and infant feeding held first in Tanzania, and then in Zambia. My connections with Dr Naylor and ILCA then led to being named the ILCA liaison to WABA – an amazing three-year experience. Meeting breastfeeding advocates from all over the world: hearing the stories, and seeing the clinics supported by UNICEF and others opened my eyes widely. Seeing the difference that implementation of WHO/UNICEF policies could make for women and their children was far more powerful than reading the compelling reports. WABA's network for advocacy includes amazing women and men working on behalf of the women and children of this world. At times, I am discouraged thinking about all that needs to be done, and then*