
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Contact:**

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Community Leaders, Health Experts, and Mothers Unite to Tackle Maternal Health Crisis in Arkansas

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (September 9, 2025) — On **Thursday, October 2, 2025**, from **6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.** at the **Arkansas Repertory Theatre** in Little Rock, six courageous women will take the stage to share personal stories of pregnancy, birth, and motherhood in Arkansas. These narratives aim to underscore the human cost behind the maternal health crisis in our state while celebrating the resiliency of mothers.

Arkansas is facing a maternal health crisis that touches families in every corner of the state. We have the **highest maternal mortality rate in the country** — about **43.5 deaths for every 100,000 live births** — and nearly **all these deaths are preventable**. Too many parents struggle to get the care they need: nearly **one in five** receive inadequate prenatal care, and **almost half of our counties** have no birthing hospital or maternity care provider at all. Black women and families in rural communities face the greatest obstacles, often traveling long distances for care and confronting higher rates of complications. Behind every statistic is a story and this event aims to center the voices of women – their challenges and triumphs, their heartbreak and hope - as they strive to bring children into the world.

Following the storytelling, a **panel discussion** will feature experts and advocates from leading organizations, including:

- Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families
- Arkansas Birthing Project
- Arkansans for Improving Maternal Health (AIM)
- The Doula Alliance of Arkansas
- University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS)

Together, they will explore the systemic barriers facing expectant and new mothers and discuss strategies to improve outcomes.

Event Details



- **What:** Maternal Health Storytelling & Panel Discussion
- **When:** Thursday, October 2, 2025 | 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- **Where:** Arkansas Repertory Theatre, Little Rock, Arkansas
- **RSVP/Tickets:** <https://bit.ly/maternalhealthstories>

Quote:

“This event is not just about statistics—it’s about the lived experiences behind the numbers,” said Hilary Trudell, CEO of Just Communities of Arkansas. “By amplifying women’s voices and bringing stakeholders together, we hope to ignite conversations and catalyze meaningful change.”

Presented by: Just Communities of Arkansas and The Yarn

Sponsored by: Arkansans for Improving Maternal Health (AIM), Arkansas Strong, Arkansas Repertory Theatre, Excel by Eight, and Arkansas Black Philanthropy Collaborative

About Just Communities of Arkansas

For over sixty years, Just Communities of Arkansas has been striving to build more inclusive environments through capacity-building, connection, and collaborative action. Our vision is an Arkansas where every voice is heard, every person is valued, and everyone has a fair chance to thrive.

About The Yarn

The Yarn was founded in 2017, with the mission to amplify voices, build understanding, and create a space for human connection. To date, the organization has hosted more than twenty (20) storytelling events and coached over 400 storytellers on how to share their true narratives with impact.

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