

Executive Director

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***Northwest Mothers Milk Bank Partners with Rainbow Helicopters:***

***Providing Breastmilk to Maui Babies***

***For Immediate Release***

On August 21, 2023, Northwest Mothers Milk Bank (NWMMB) packed very special boxes as part of the relief efforts focused on Maui families. NWMMB was contacted by local community member Nicole Battjes to partner with her Oahu-based company, Rainbow Helicopters. Rainbow Helicopters has been instrumental in partnering with Maui-based nonprofits to provide needed supplies to young families, including diapers and feeding supplies. NWMMB staff and volunteers quickly worked to assemble packages of pasteurized donor human milk to be shipped through the Rapid Relief program (see attached images). Rainbow Helicopters will pick up the donor milk in Oahu, provide necessary refrigeration, and fly it directly to Maui to be distributed in the community.

*“As an organization we have been thinking about the breastfeeding families affected by the fires in Maui. How are they coping with the stress? and the possible loss of stored milk? Providing pasteurized donor milk is an amazing use of our Rapid Relief Fund. An unforeseen disaster, like the one in Maui, is exactly the reason we have set these funds aside.”*

*-Brynn Tran, NWMMB Recipient Coordinator*

The donation of pasteurized donor milk is made possible by NWMMB’s Rapid Relief Fund, one of many community care programs. NWMMB understands the importance of having access to a safe source of human milk during times of crisis. The Rapid Relief program was created in 2022 in response to the nationwide formula shortage, designed as a bridge to support breastfeeding for families needing donor milk on a short-term basis. Rapid relief can also help in crisis situations such as the devastation currently affecting Maui families.

*“We have a community of generous milk donors who are eager to help families provide the best nutrition for their babies, whatever the circumstance.”*

*-Sonia Brown, RD, IBCLC, NWMMB Donor Engagement Manager*

NWMMB is proud to partner with Rainbow Helicopters to provide support to Hawaiian families in this difficult time.

Lesley L. Mondeaux, RNC, IBCLC

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**About NWMMB:** Northwest Mothers Milk Bank is the only nonprofit, community-based milk bank in the Pacific Northwest. The organization's mission is to improve the health and survival of the Northwest's most vulnerable infants. **For Additional Information,** contact Lesley Mondeaux, Executive Director at [lesley@nwmmb.org](mailto:lesley@nwmmb.org) or 503-469-0955 x113. Additional photos available.

