

For Patrice Bobier, the senior midwife at Full Circle Midwifery, childbirth is a normal event for most women. Much of how Patrice has built her private practice has evolved from this thought. She strives to empower women to stay healthy during their pregnancies, which helps keep birth safe.

Patrice apprentice trained with midwives in Grand Rapids from 1978 until 1982, when she began her private practice in the small town of Hesperia, MI. She has personally attended over 1900 births during her career and has witnessed many changes in midwifery, including licensure in the state of Michigan, which passed in 2017. Patrice serves on the Michigan Board of Licensed Midwifery, helping ensure that Michigan Midwives are respected and have the protections they need. Patrice recently noted, "I used to be anti-licensure, but when the 26th state passed a licensure bill, it was a tipping point for me". In the US, 35 states now require licensing for midwives. Her crucial work toward licensing has allowed midwives a greater potential for serving clients. They now have access to tools that they didn't have before. The guidelines for licensing also help to ensure families receive the quality care they deserve when seeking out-of-hospital options.

In her 40 plus years of being a community based midwife, Patrice has often shared her wisdom and skill with other aspiring midwives, and has built space into her practice to train students. It takes a midwife preceptor years of dedication to help a student achieve their educational goals. Patrice was the primary preceptor for 4 currently licensed midwives, assisted in the training of another 3 licensed midwives, and is currently training 3 students.

Patrice and her husband Bill have two adult children, five grandchildren, and one great-grand baby born in 2023. Bill and Patrice started Earthscape Farms LLC in the 1970s where they have farmed using sustainable and organic methods ever since. Since then, they have expanded Earthscape Farms to 415 acres, including rotational pastures, hay fields, a beef herd, a few pigs, and chickens. They manage sustainable forests and educate others regarding sustainable agroforestry. Bill and Patrice are often asked to share their knowledge, expertise, and wisdom with the greater community. They work to do this by giving talks, hosting workshops, and even annually hosting a children's farm camp at their property. Somehow, with all of this work they do, they still manage to keep up with an extra large garden, where they preserve and sustain their family's food needs throughout the year.

As Patrice winds down her midwifery practice in 2024, she hopes to spend more time with her family and spend more time traveling the world. We won't use the word retirement yet. Patrice plans to share some of her time teaching students at the Full Circle Birth Center and passing along her years of experience to others.