

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF NURSE-MIDWIVES RECOGNIZES EXEMPLARY  
MIDWIFERY LEADERS**

ACNM Members are Awarded for Outstanding Service to Midwifery and Women

**Silver Spring, MD** – The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) honored a select group of midwives during the 62nd Annual Meeting & Exhibition in Chicago, IL. During the 2017 Awards Dinner, ACNM's highest honors were announced to recognize members of the College.

**The Hattie Hemschemeyer Award**, named in honor of ACNM's first president and a pioneer of the profession, is ACNM's most prestigious award and is given annually to an ACNM member who has been certified for at least 10 years and has made continuous outstanding and/or historically significant contributions to midwifery, ACNM, and/or maternal child health.

**Frances T. Thacher, CNM, MS, FACNM is the 2017 recipient of the Hattie Hemschemeyer Award.** Thacher's remarkable contributions to the development of midwifery leadership throughout the profession, her openness and advocacy about mental illness and disability, her steadfast commitment to diversity and inclusion, and her remarkably selfless philanthropy on behalf of our beloved profession are at the heart of her nomination for the prestigious Hattie Hemschemeyer award.

While her path toward these continuous outstanding contributions and distinguished service began more than three decades ago, it is her unparalleled contributions since 2000 that characterize her professional legacy through the many ways she has advanced midwifery leadership, supported the mission and strategic initiatives of the American College of Nurse-Midwives and advanced the health and well-being of mothers and children worldwide. What is more, she has ensured that similar contributions will occur time and again and well into the future, through her sustained philanthropic leadership roles with The A.C.N.M. Foundation, Inc.

In 2008, Frances and her husband Thomas 'Toby' D. Thacher, II established the Frances T. Thacher Midwifery Leadership Endowment Fund with the intention that the endowment would forever enable the A.C.N.M. Foundation to support midwives as leaders and empowering midwives facing challenging clinical leadership roles, while at the same time advancing initiatives for women and midwives with chronic physical or mental disease and disability and striving to improved MCH care globally. In a 2013 video interview, Frances said: "There's nothing I wouldn't do for midwifery or midwives. I've been giving to this profession since 1980...and it seems like no time at all. It really is a gift...and a calling." (YouTube - Midwifery Legacies Project Video, 2013).

**The Kitty Ernst Award**, affectionately known as the “Young Whippersnapper Award,” is named after the College’s fourth and youngest president, Eunice (Kitty) Ernst, CNM, MPH, DSc (hon), FACNM, and one of its most dynamic living legends. The award was established in 1998 to honor an ACNM member who has been certified for less than 10 years and has demonstrated innovative, creative endeavors in clinical practice, education, administration, or research relating to midwifery and women’s health.

**Ann Marie Konkoly, CNM, MSN is the 2017 recipient of the Kitty Ernst Award.** *Fierce, fearless, leader, passionate and innovative* are the enduring terms used to describe Konkoly. Only in her ninth year as a midwife, Konkoly demonstrates “whipper snapper” qualities of being direct, evidence-based, challenging, and compassionate in her role as preceptor, and was awarded Outstanding Preceptor at the 2016 ACNM Annual Meeting & Exhibition. Her colleagues, and even midwives her senior, note that Konkoly’s leadership skills are beyond her short time in practice. Konkoly was recently promoted as the Medical Director of Ambulatory Practice at a large local clinic, and the first midwife in this role. She’s also served as treasurer, and is currently Vice President of the ACNM Ohio Affiliate. A vibrant mover and shaker, Konkoly, has demonstrated innovative and creative endeavors in her nine years of midwifery practice that honors the Kitty Ernst Award.

The **Dorothea M. Lang Pioneer Award** is the most distinguished honor bestowed by the A.C.N.M. Foundation. Now in its 16th year, the Lang Award has honored 33 exceptional “unsung heroes” who have demonstrated pioneering vision and innovative leadership in midwifery.

This year two exceptional midwives whose careers are so interwoven that it was deemed proper that they jointly share the honor were awarded the **2017 Dorothea M. Lang Pioneer Award - Rosemary J. Mann, CNM, MSN, JD, PhD and Susan J. Leibel, MSN, MPH**. Over four decades ago, Mann and Leibel, working with a few others, crafted legislation authorizing the CNM to provide full scope midwifery care. Their innovations in midwifery practice at the San Francisco General Hospital and their visionary leadership in midwifery education both at UCSF and Stanford University are legendary. Together, they created a legacy of why and how to educate midwives who could serve low income women of color or middle and upper class women seeking an alternative. They also created a legacy of family centered care that collaborated across the professions. In recognition of their critical leadership in developing midwifery in San Francisco, as well as their persistence to formally establish practice and education in California, which flourishes to this day, the dynamic duo of Rosemary Mann and Susan Leibel are honored with the prestigious Lang Award.

**Dorothea M. Lang, CNM, MPH, FACNM**, the much beloved past-President of both ACNM and the A.C.N.M. Foundation, passed away on May 16, 2017 at the age of 84. She will forever be remembered through this remarkable award for which she served as chief architect and major benefactor. Ms. Lang will also be cherished for her fondness and devotion to ‘esteemed midwives’ who have served the profession for 30 or more years.

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The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) is the professional association that represents certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs) in the United States. ACNM promotes excellence in midwifery education, clinical practice, and research. With roots dating to 1929, our members are primary care providers for women throughout the lifespan, with a special emphasis on pregnancy, childbirth, and gynecologic and reproductive health. ACNM provides research, administers and promotes continuing education programs, establishes clinical practice standards, and creates liaisons with state and federal agencies and members of Congress to increase the visibility and recognition of midwifery care.

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The A.C.N.M. Foundation, Inc., a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization, was incorporated in 1967 as the philanthropic arm of ACNM with a mission to promote excellence in health care for women, newborns, and families worldwide through the support of midwifery. The Foundation collaborates closely with ACNM by supporting midwifery education, research, practice, and leadership activities that advance the provision of high quality maternal, newborn, and well-woman health care services. All donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.

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