

## ACNM BOD/Staff Response to the 2017 Student Report

Thank you for your considerate and thoughtful Student Report. We respect and honor your opinions and are excited about working with you in making the College a place where students feel included and supported. We will respond to the four sections in your report below. We appreciate your suggestions for increasing student participation, promoting diversity and inclusion, growing the field of midwifery, and increasing student involvement in policy work. These sections have been subdivided to address the specific requests of your report.

The ACNM Board of Directors (BOD) reviewed the Student Report in detail at their May 2017 and September 2017 meetings and asked many ACNM leaders to respond by October 2017. This letter includes those responses.

### Student Involvement

- **Mitigate the Costs of the Annual Meeting**

Thank you for your thoughtful appendix including ideas to reduce costs of the Annual Meeting by providing free or low cost housing options for students. Unfortunately this is not feasible for the Program Committee to organize annually. It is suggested that students consider sharing hotel rooms, renting out local homes, and network with local students for other housing options. Your ideas were submitted to local students in the Savannah area, in preparation for the 2018 meeting.

- **Involvement in the Volunteer Structure**

BOD members are liaisons to each of the committees, sections, and divisions within the College. The liaisons have requested and encouraged each of these groups to engage and ignite opportunities and share these varied options. These opportunities will be made available as a document, the Student Opportunities Form, as soon as possible. As well—there is the opportunity for each midwifery program to have and utilize a student representative to the Students and New Midwives Section (SANMS) of ACNM. We encourage every program to be involved and to optimize the representative for sharing knowledge and opportunities with their student cohorts as they become available.

- **Communication**

ACNM continues to strive to make communication to and among members easier and more accessible. The new ACNM Connect was recently rolled out and will make it easier to connect with other students, members, and groups within the College! We highly suggest you register on the ACNM Connect webpage and begin to explore. Prior to the kick-off of ACNM Connect, the Communications staff created a beta-testing group, comprised of several students. These students were able to review the new system from a student perspective and speak to potential issues.

The request for the Students and New Midwives Section (SANMS) to update and clarify the role and responsibilities of the SANMS student liaison position was shared with the SANMS co-chairs. They will update Appendix B, the Roles and Responsibilities of the Student Liaisons, and make it available on the ACNM Students page.

## **Diversity and Inclusion**

- **Midwife of Color Board Member Position:**

Based on our current bylaws, we were not able to create the position with voting rights without changing the bylaws. To change the bylaws, there is a 6 month timeline for submission of changes to the Bylaws committee, comment and review period and a 60 day dissemination requirement before the annual meeting for any proposed changes. This would have meant waiting a minimum of a year to have a Midwife of Color position with voting. Instead of waiting that long or potentially longer the Board approved the use of a currently available option which was to have an ad hoc appointment. The President has the opportunity to appoint an ad hoc member to the Board that could be effective immediately, but it is without a vote. The opportunity to have a midwife of color representative on the Board was prioritized for immediate implementation. The person in this role has full access to all information any other Board member has and is an active participant in all discussions, including voicing their support or not for any item that is being addressed. A companion decision was also approved to establish a task force to consider Board composition, representation and expertise to assure we can meet our mission and vision as an organization. A task force chaired by President-elect, Susan Stone is in process and will report out at the Annual Meeting in May 2018. Their recommendations will then be taken forward for approval by the Board and any proposed bylaws changes focused on representation and board composition can be brought to the membership within the timeframe required. In the meantime, there is an ad hoc member, Patricia Loftman, on the Board who is representing Midwives of Color.

- **ACNM Responses to National Events Regarding Diversity & Inclusion:**

ACNM as an organization has provided responses to national events regarding diversity and inclusion. We work to make our voice heard and our views known on critical topics of this nature and we highlight our current position statements, philosophy and ethical principles to guide our responses. If there are scenarios or situations that create member interest in having a response any member can reach out to ACNM via their regional representative or directly to the President. There is a balance in managing this process and determining when and how we should create responses to varied events.

- **Core Competencies**

ACNM is working diligently as we update the core competencies and they are cognizant of the desire for all documents to reflect inclusive language along with addressing needs of our diverse community. We provided your request to change the phrasing of one of the Hallmarks of Midwifery from “integration of cultural humility” to “demonstrate cultural humility” to the Core Competency Section for their review and consideration. Additionally, we presented your request for student representation on the Core Competencies Section to the Division of Education. They have stated that while they are not currently able to create such a position, after the Volunteer restructuring process has taken place, they will consider how students could be involved.

- **Coded Language**

The Board heard your request along with a similar motion that was presented at the 2017 Business Meeting. We will continue to strive to move away from coded language, such as inner-city and vulnerable, and urge our membership to continue having these important conversations. We urge our membership to consider how their language impacts the clients we serve and cease using these coded phrases.

Additionally, your requests have been shared with the Gender Equity Task Force for their consideration in their ongoing work. We have also shared your feedback with the editors of Varney's text as they begin work on their new edition.

## **Growing the Field of Midwifery**

- **Social Media Presence**

ACNM Communications staff will continue to make social media presence a priority! We will continue to update and seek improvements to our Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and Twitter pages.

- **Preceptor Shortage**

ACNM is working diligently to encourage CNMs/CMs to foster the new generation of midwives through being a preceptors and mentors. There will be presentations regarding preceptorship and mentorship at the Annual Meeting, educating midwives to work efficiently and effectively to nurture students that are adult learners. Additionally, your request for a list of preceptors has been shared with the Division of Education. The chair of this division states they intend to continue their work of having a preceptor station at the Annual Meeting to discuss opportunities for midwives to become preceptors. They are also generating a list of preceptors, which is an ongoing endeavor that will be shared with the Directors of Midwifery Education Programs (DOME). ACNM encourages you to reach out to your schools, student representatives, and midwifery program directors with additional concerns.

- **ACNM Annual Meeting Workshops**

The Program Committee is aware of the interest in continuing to offer workshops on clinically relevant topics, including ultrasound training and reproductive choice, and will continue to make this a priority. There will be many workshops on varied topics available at the Annual Meeting, although the details are not yet published. However, for the 2018 Annual Meeting in Savannah, we are planning to offer workshops and educational sessions that address ultrasound training and reproductive choice.

## **Local and National Policy Efforts**

- **Student Legislative Contacts**

ACNM has been working to ensure there is at least one student from each midwifery education program who serves as a Student Legislative Contact (SLC) to both the Political Action Committee (PAC) and the Government Affairs Committee (GAC). However, because this student report request has come forward it is evident that there needs to be increased communication between the student representatives from the midwifery programs and the student legislative contacts. Each student representative

to the Students and New Midwives Section could increase communication within their student body, in order to increase the visibility of opportunities to become involved in ACNMs advocacy efforts. As well, the ACNM Student Opportunities Form will be posted on the website along with Facebook page and ACNM Connect.

- **Research Packet/ Credentialing Information/ Advocacy**

ACNM provides resources to support you as a student, as you begin your career, and as you continue to provide care to women. There are many resources on the website to assist new midwives with negotiating privileges, advocacy information, and other helpful information. The ACNM BOD encourages students to explore the website and all that it has to offer in regards to documents, Our Moment of Truth, advocacy information and assistance with credentialing. Here are just a few of the pages on the website that may be helpful:

- Education & Careers Tab:
  - New Midwives Section
- For Women Tab:
  - ACNM Healthy Birth Initiative
  - Our Moment of Truth- A grassroots toolkit for midwifery advocacy work
- About ACNM Tab:
  - About Midwives: Many helpful documents with information about midwives in the United States
  - Research
- Professional Resources Tab:
  - ACNM Documents: Includes clinical briefs, position statements, & standard setting documents
  - See How ACNM is Representing You
  - Workforce Resources: Understanding state practice environments, salary information, contract Negotiation, & core data survey
- Advocacy Tab:
  - State Resource Center: Information for advocacy at the state level
  - Issue Areas: Full practice authority, hospital credentialing & privileges
  - Our Moment of Truth Toolkit

Once again, thank you for your thoughtful report. We have attempted to address your concerns as best as we can and look forward to continuing to work with you and for the future of midwifery.

Best,  
The ACNM Board of Directors and Staff  
December 2017