

2019 Student Report

Thank you for the opportunity to present this report to the American College of Nurse-Midwives and be a collaborative voice for change as part of this highly-respected organization. We thank the planning committee of this exciting and successful annual meeting in Washington, DC and extend our deepest appreciation for all of the hard work you have done to make this event a reality.

We, the student liaisons, wish to recognize the work that the ACNM has accomplished this year including:

- The development of an action plan to weave anti-racism and diversity and inclusion into all levels of the ACNM and the midwifery profession.
- The creation of a Transgender Care Work Group to provide input on care of this population and the inclusion of Transgender and Nonconforming (TGNC) care providers in the midwifery profession.
- The inclusion of both the student representative to the Board of Directors and Midwife of Color Committee chair as voting members of the Board of Directors.
- The effort to increase student involvement in the ACNM through the creation of the Volunteer 411 webinar, the advertisement of volunteer opportunities on social media, and the incorporation of student suggestions and ideas into the planning of the 2019 ACNM Annual Meeting.
- We thank the ACNM for their position statements on abortion, midwives as abortion providers, and opposition to state legislation that threatens abortion care. We acknowledge that this is a divisive issue within the ACNM and thank the college for their statement on conscientious refusal. Access to sexual and reproductive healthcare options, for patients of all genders, is an integral part of ensuring equitable midwifery care to the patients we serve.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

According to the American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB), of the 11,826 certified nurse midwives and certified midwives practicing in the United States in

2017, only 2%-6% were midwives of color. Due to the traumatic history of structural racism against midwives of color, there is a current lack of minority midwives, as well as a lack of minority instructors, in the United States. Studies show that cultural and racial congruence increases patient trust and reduces disparities. It is our collective vision to eliminate racial disparities in sexual and reproductive healthcare through culturally humble midwifery care. This is best achieved through an equally diverse group of midwives of all races, genders, and cultures.

The ACNM has made strides towards increasing diversity and recognizing the history of midwifery through projects such as the Shifting the Frame Report and the current Listening Project. Most significantly, we applaud and are encouraged by ACNM's 2019 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Report released on May 15th. Of note within that report is a call to "bold and courageous long-term commitment to unearthing racism's root causes and addressing barriers to racial equity in and between individuals, institutions and systems."

As student midwives, we feel called to boldly and courageously unearth ACNM's history of structural racism that systematically uprooted indigenous midwives and midwives of color in the early 20th century, and the impact that this continues to have on midwives of color today. In order to rectify the lasting negative impact of this history, we must first understand our role in the structural oppression of midwives of color. This begins with educating future midwives of our history as a nation, as states, and as an organization. Consequently, we call upon ACNM to add to Core Competencies covering the history of midwifery practice by midwives of color and indigenous midwives.

We also wish to see greater action to continue to recruit, support, and uplift current and future midwives. We can achieve this goal by concentrating our recruitment efforts in promoting and supporting future midwives of color in the following ways:

1. Offer more scholarships to minority students.

2. Create a reading list for educational programs that includes the history of midwives of color in the US.
3. Provide preceptor training to address the presence of racism and bias in clinical education.
4. Highlight the success stories of minority midwives to promote diversity of the profession.
5. Encourage state affiliates to promote the midwifery profession to minority students from high schools and BSN programs.

We also recognize ACNM's initial efforts to address scope of practice bias and discrimination against transgender non-conforming persons. The creation of the TGNC Scope of Practice Task Force is an encouraging first step towards what we believe should be full scope midwifery care for all persons regardless of their assigned gender at birth. ACNM needs to address gender inequities both by educating midwives on the appropriate treatment of LGBTQ and TGNC patients and the acceptance of gay, lesbian, nonconforming, and transgender providers and preceptors.

Preceptorship

We recognize the efforts put forth by the ACNM to assist students in locating preceptors in various locations across the United States, but the burden of securing clinical placement still persists for many students. Many of the midwifery students' posts on the ACNM Town Hall Digest highlight a major issue in securing preceptors in numerous locations around the country. Even midwifery programs that do guarantee clinical sites to students struggle immensely with securing an adequate number of sites.

There are thirty-nine educational programs throughout the country. One-third of these programs reimburse preceptors for providing clinical education. Another one-third provide compensation in the form of free CEUs and books. Many schools, however, do not provide any compensation to potential preceptors. Additionally, some students are required by their program to personally reimburse

preceptors. We urge the ACNM to investigate the ethical ramifications of requiring students to personally compensate their preceptors.

We request more transparency on the timeline and progress ACNM has made to support educational programs in recruitment of preceptors. We also recommend the initiation of a nationwide survey to explore the reasons why so many midwives decline to become preceptors.

We encourage the ACNM to continue advocating for funding of midwifery education. As long as student midwives are denied federal funds for clinical placements and clinical residencies, hospitals will be economically incentivized to prioritize the education of OB/GYN residents. We therefore ask the ACNM to advocate on our behalf for funding that is comparable to medical education, and for funding to be allocated so that midwives may be reimbursed for educating medical students, medical residents, and student midwives. We would like to see more legislation written and introduced both nationally and locally to support these goals.

Membership and Annual Conference

The ACNM Annual Meeting presents the perfect opportunity for students and seasoned midwives to join together in celebration of our chosen profession, enhance clinical skills, gain knowledge on current healthcare guidelines, and network. This meeting is especially beneficial for students who have only experienced a sliver of what this exciting career has to offer. Unfortunately, most midwifery students around the nation will never get the opportunity due to the cost of attendance.

While the ACNM generously offered a limited number of opportunities to allow students to attend the conference for free in exchange for volunteering at the Annual Meeting, only a very limited number of spots were available. We propose

the following suggestions for decreasing cost and increasing access to the Annual Meeting for students:

1. Provide a block of rooms at a considerably discounted price and be exempt from penalty for booking outside of the room block.
2. Offer more opportunities for students to earn free or discounted registration rates through volunteer opportunities or scholarships, potentially in collaboration with state affiliates.
3. Continue to support the student volunteer program.
4. Alert all students who apply for volunteer opportunities and scholarships when the selections have been made and inform them of the results weeks before the early-bird registration deadline.
5. Arrange the Annual Meeting in a location that is more economical for students.

Midwifery students make up a large portion of the ACNM membership. It is understood that the organization of an annual meeting of this magnitude requires significant financial means. The continued success of these annual meetings, therefore, relies on adequate student attendance. We respectfully request that the ACNM consider these suggestions to allow students a more affordable way to partake in the incredible opportunity of the ACNM annual meeting.

Conclusion

We thank the ACNM for their diligence on the advancement and advocacy of the midwifery profession. We thank the board for giving us the time to speak today, and we thank the audience for listening and being supportive of the ACNM. We look forward to the future advancement of midwifery and are honored to have the ACNM to represent the midwifery community.

Respectfully submitted by:

Baylor University Laura Rice

Baystate Medical Center Alex Plasman

Bethel University Mike Loomis
Case Western Reserve University Jessica Shattuck
Columbia University Alice Schreiber
East Carolina University Sarah Dey
Emory University Hannah Walters
Frontier Nursing University Cory Rogers
Georgetown University Caitlin Mayhew
Marquette University Chobanian, Kimberly
Jefferson (prev. PhilaU) Ryan Pryor
New York University Dana Cosentino
Ohio State University Amanda Stellar
Oregon Health Sciences University Catherine (Katie) Grinnell
Rutgers Biomedical Health Sciences Nurse Midwifery Education Program
Jessica Wahler
Shenandoah University Karen Carbaugh
State University of New York (SUNY) Downstate Medical Ctr Lindsay Felker
Stony Brook University Jessica Russell
Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center Erica Eggbrecht
University of Cincinnati Nurse-Midwifery Valerie Ramsay
University of Colorado Denver Mallory Otto
University of Illinois at Chicago Teri Ryals
University of Kansas Emily Martinez
University of Michigan Melissa Libby
University of Minnesota Sarah Rose
University of New Mexico Emily Johnson
University of Pennsylvania Erin Andrew
University of Utah Lindsay Felker
University of Washington Andrea Shelton
Vanderbilt University Anna Harty
Wayne State University Chisma Harper
Yale University Naomi Schwartz

