

## Annual Report: 2020

### Executive Summary

The Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME) is an agency established to advance and promote excellence in midwifery education. The aim of ACME is to ensure that midwifery education programs are performing at the highest level of quality and providing learning experiences that will lead to optimal outcomes for students. ACME is a reliable authority regarding midwifery education. The U.S. Department of Education grants the following scope of recognition to ACME: "the accreditation and pre-accreditation of basic certificate, basic graduate nurse-midwifery, direct entry midwifery, and pre-certification nurse-midwifery education programs, including those programs that offer distance education." ACME services are available to any midwifery education program that meets the eligibility requirements outlined in the ACME Policies and Procedures Manual. ACME is administratively and financially autonomous from the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM).

### Year in Review

Year 2020 was complete with changes, pivots, and wonderful new opportunities. From hiring a new Executive Director, weathering the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic to developing a new mission-driven strategic plan, change was certainly a common theme. Conducting a full review of each midwifery education program is central to advancing excellence in midwifery education. Already set to be a busy year for accreditation reviews, ACME worked quickly to develop solutions to ensure minimal impacts on overall operations during the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure that accreditation reviews could continue.

In accordance with the temporary flexibilities provided by the U.S. Department of Education (USED), we instituted a “new” virtual site visit process for Fall 2020 preaccreditation and accreditation reviews. To date, ACME has successfully conducted three site visits virtually—including one preaccreditation site visit for a new midwifery education program. A new *Virtual Site Visit Policies and Procedures Manual*, *Site Visitors’ Handbook*, *Program Directors’ Guidebook for Site Visits*, and other new resources were developed this year to ensure the continuation of high-quality program reviews. We offered a new educational ACME Learning Series, led by top-rated experts, that included 5 sessions to help program directors and other staff better understand the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and Pre-accreditation Report (PAR) requirements.

Year 2020 energized, and our board leaders, volunteers and staff provided a constant source of inspiration. We convened virtually and developed a new three-year strategic plan. We set new goals that are timely and responsive and that will move us closer to fulfilling our vision... *ACME envisions a world in which there are no barriers to excellence, diversity, equity, and inclusion in*

*midwifery education*. This year we also evaluated our infrastructure and foundation, added a new public member to the Board of Commissioners and moved closer to fully revising our Policies and Procedures Manual. It was a busy year. We are excited about our 2020 accomplishments and know that 2021 promises even more.

### **ACME Board of Commissioners (BOC)**

The ACME governance board- Board of Commissioners met monthly January-November. Eva Fried, ACME Commissioner was appointed to fulfill the role of Treasurer beginning May 2020 and Celeste Chavez was appointed as a Commissioner in March 2020. Theresa Coley-Kouadio joined at the ACNM liaison in May; and Ria Rodney joined as the public member in August. As part of the ACME BOC's annual training, the board read the book *Bandwidth Recovery* and held discussions to advance an understanding of behaviors, biases, and obstacles to higher education.

### **New Executive Director**

In March, the BOC launched a national search for a new Executive Director that resulting in the hiring of Angela Smith. Angela brings over 15 years of association management and accreditation experience to her new role. As a passionate advocate, she has devoted her professional career to helping organizations fulfill their missions by ensuring that programs and services are delivered with respect to the highest level of quality. Prior to joining ACME, Angela served as the Deputy Executive Director for an international membership organization and led their higher education; and community and school-based accreditation programs. In partnership with the Accreditation Council, she provided leadership, vision and direction for the accreditation framework, policies and procedures, review processes, and the development of quality standards.

### **Strategic Plan**

The BOC convened virtually to develop a new strategic plan. Several meetings were held in the month of August and a special 2-day planning session was held in September. The sessions resulted in new goals, mission, vision, and core values. The new strategic plan will guide the work of ACME in 2021, 2022 and 2023.

### **ACME Board of Review (BOR)**

The ACME Board of Review added a new public member, Mary Gibson who joined the board in January 2020. The BOR met in February and again in August. In February 2020, the ACME Board of Review granted preaccreditation for a new midwifery education program, Georgia College School of Nursing, which is located in the rural part of Georgia.

### **BOR Actions**

It was a very active year for the BOR. The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic required additional activity and actions. In total, the BOR granted the following:

## Quarter 1

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### **Preaccreditation**

- Georgia College and State University, School of Nursing, Nurse-Midwifery Program, for the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) and Post Masters Certificate (PMC) (Action Date: February 19, 2020)

### **Continued Programmatic Accreditation**

- Yale University, School of Nursing, Nurse-Midwifery Program, Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), Granted February 2020 - February 2030 (Action Date: February 19, 2020)

### **Extension of Accreditation**

- Oregon Health Science University, School of Nursing, Nurse-Midwifery Program, for the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), extension of accreditation until February 28, 2023 (Action Date: February 19, 2020)

## Quarter 2

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### **Extension of Accreditation**

- University of California at San Francisco, School of Nursing, Nurse-Midwifery Program, for the Master of Nursing (MS) and Post Graduate Certificate (PGC), extension of accreditation until July 31, 2021 (Action Date: 4/13/2020)
- University of Cincinnati, College of Nursing and Health, Nurse-Midwifery Program, for the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), extension of accreditation until July 31, 2021 (Action Date: 4/13/2020)
- University of Minnesota, School of Nursing, Nurse-Midwifery Program, for the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) (MSN) and Post Graduate Certificate (PGC), extension of accreditation until July 31, 2021 (Action Date: 4/13/2020)
- Vanderbilt University, School of Nursing, Nurse-Midwifery Program, for the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) and Post Graduate Certificate (PGC), extension of accreditation until July 31, 2021 (Action Date: 4/13/2020)

### Quarter 3

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#### **Extension of Preaccreditation**

- University of Pittsburgh, School of Nursing, Nurse-Midwifery Program, for the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) extension of preaccreditation until February 28, 2022 (Action Date: 6/9/2020)

#### **Extension of Accreditation**

- State University of New York (SUNY) Downstate, Health Sciences University, Midwifery Program, for the Master of Science (MS) and Post Graduate Certificate (PGC), extension of accreditation until July 31, 2023 (Action Date: 6/9/2020)
- University of Pennsylvania, School of Nursing, Nurse-Midwifery Program, for the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) and Post Graduate Certificate (PGC), extension of accreditation until July 21, 2021 (Action Date 6/16/2020)

#### **Extension of Accreditation**

- University of Pennsylvania, School of Nursing, Nurse-Midwifery Program, for the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) and Post Graduate Certificate (PGC), extension of accreditation until February 2022 (Action Date: 8/31/2020)

#### **Substantive Change**

- University of Illinois at Chicago Nurse-Midwifery program addition of a Post Graduate Certificate. (Action Date: 9/28/2020)
- Baylor University Louise Herrington School of Nursing Nurse-Midwifery Program changed from classroom based, face-to-face instruction to distance education. (Action Date: 9/28/2020)

### Quarter 4

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#### **Extension of Accreditation**

- Seattle University, College of Nursing, Nurse Midwifery Program, for the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) and Post Graduate Certificate (PGC), extension of accreditation until October 31, 2021. (Action Date: 10/26/2020)

### **BOR Training**

A new Learning Series was developed to help program directors and other staff to better understand the requirements for the ACME Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and the Preaccreditation Report (PAR). The series include 5 virtual sessions. In addition, the BOR held two webinars to provide instructions and clarity about the ACME Annual Monitoring Report.

### **ACME Site Visits**

In response to the pandemic, ACME developed new policies and procedures to guide virtual site visits. In addition, supporting resources were created that included a Virtual Site Visit Agreement, Technology Requirements Guide, Video Checklist, Virtual Site Visit Participation Instructions, Common Questions & Answers Sheet, Virtual Site Visit Policies and Procedures Manual, Site Visitors' Handbook and a Program Directors' Guidebook for Site Visits.

Three midwifery education programs were virtually visited in 2020:

University of Tennessee Health Science Center

Review Date: October 7-9, 2020

Type: Preaccreditation

New York University, Rory Meyers College of Nursing

Review Date: October 14 – 16, 2020

Type: Continued Accreditation

Fairfield University, Egan School of Nursing and Health Studies

Review Date: November 4 – 6, 2020

Type: Initial Accreditation

*Decisions for these programs will be made in February 2021.*

### **Advancing Excellence in Midwifery Education**

ACME's former Executive Director, current Executive Director and ACME Board members attended various meetings during the year. These meetings provided an opportunity for ACME staff and volunteers to remain current with information impacting midwifery education and higher education and to advance excellence in midwifery education. This included, but not limited to:

#### **Reconnecting the Triad**

Date: January 29, 2020

#### **Equity in Midwifery Education**

Date: February 20, 2020

*Cultivating a Sense of Belonging in Higher Education*

Presenter: Felina Ortiz, DNP, CNM, RN

#### **Distance Education Quality Review for Specialized/Programmatic Accreditation**

Date: 5/12/2020

Presenter: Leah Matthews

**Covid-19 and Curriculum Modifications**

Date: 6/30/2020

Presenter: Heather M. Stagliano

**Strategies for Advancing Birth Equity**

Date: 10/28/2020

Presenter: Kaprice Welsh, CNM, MSN, MPH & Lauren Nunally, MPH, BSN, RNC-OB

**Students - Resilience, Resistance, and Recourse: Advancing as a BIPOC Student in a Racist Structure**

Date: December 1, 2020

Presenter: Mariama S. Boney, LMSW, CAE

**Professionals - Resilience, Resistance, and Recourse: Thriving Through Systemic Racism**

Date: December 8, 2020

Presenter: Mariama S. Boney, LMSW, CAE

**Contact Information**

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