Ballot Questionnaire: Kathleen Lavery, Region 4 Representative

Ballot Question 1: What makes you interested in this position? Why are you running for this office?

I'm active in the policy and legislative activities of Michigan already, plus practice management, scope of practice and reimbursement issues. I feel I bring a great deal of knowledge and experience to the role, and can expand it to more states. I want to bring us together, improve communication between affiliates, share regional knowledge and help people work together to make progress. I am looking for my next challenge as I decrease my time in birth work.

Ballot Question 2:  Visit ACNM's Strategic Plan HERE. What part of the strategic plan embodies your personal philosophy?

"A midwife for every woman" is what I have been striving for in my professional life for 30 years. We are the appropriate providers for most women; we need to help the powers in our health care universe see it and act on it. The "Core Commitments" are integral to how I have lived my life and done my work. The rest of the 'domains' all flow from these ideals. "Listening to women" plus inclusion, communication, leadership, interprofessional work and research are the lifeblood of our profession, and are central to the work the organization needs to do. Overall, I want to see midwives doing more of the work, helping more of the women and families (and getting paid a decent wage for doing so!). ACNM has a critical role in achieving this goal .... we must be a strong national organization in order to have the impact we all need. Workforce expansion and recognition is key to appropriate womens' health. Women need us - ACNM needs to keep working to make the legislative and policy changes which will make 'a midwife for every woman' a reality.

Ballot Question 3: What ideas do you have for enhancing diversity and inclusion?

Just like we 'listen to women', we need to listen more to our colleagues and sisters (and brothers), to hear their issues from their framework and experiences. Working together is the best way to move the profession forward; understanding issues from all perspectives will help us do that. The past can not be changed, but it can be acknowledged and the future can be better. Color of skin, gender, sexuality and age should not matter - but experiences do, and barriers, and differing opportunities .... and all of these things are influenced by 'how and where you were born', including race, income, education and so much more. Our life experiences shape us, and can make us better midwifes; we need to celebrate our differences, expand our knowledge of others, and emphasize our similarities. I look forward to more conversations about this important topic.

Ballot Question 4: What innovation or improvement would you bring to ACNM?

Open ears, a broad knowledge base, experience in many different midwifery settings and roles, and regulatory experience. These tools, and a keen strong intelligence, are keys to seeing broad pictures, also for not getting caught up in the weeds of conflict and history. We need to prioritize getting midwifery seen and utilized and at the top of the list of strategies to improve maternal child outcomes in our country. We need a strong, well recognized work force to do this, and ACNM should be leading the way. I'd like to help make that happen in Region 4.