



NEWS RELEASE

KENTUCKY MIDWIFE RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS AWARD FROM AMERICAN COLLEGE OF NURSE-MIDWIVES

Melissa Willmarth Honored for Contributions to Midwifery & Women's Health

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Silver Spring, MD – Melissa Willmarth, CNM, DNP, a certified nurse-midwife from Florence, Kentucky, received the 2011 “Kitty Ernst Award,” one of the most prestigious honors awarded by the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM), during the ACNM 56th Annual Meeting & Exposition, in San Antonio, TX, on May 25, 2011.

A 2005 graduate in midwifery from Vanderbilt University, Willmarth has worked as a registered nurse and a certified nurse-midwife, and has been a faculty member at the University of Cincinnati since 2006. She currently serves as coordinator for the university's nurse-midwifery and women's health nurse practitioner programs, where she teaches and coordinates the fully-online Master's program. Her students say she is dedicated to helping them succeed.

“Melissa Willmarth is one of those passionate, enthusiastic teachers that student midwives say they will remember forever,” said ACNM President Holly Powell Kennedy, CNM, PhD, FACNM, FAAN.

“She goes out of her way to help students learn by constantly updating herself on the newest technologies in distance education. I have no doubt that she will continue to go above and beyond to support midwifery with her efficient, can-do spirit.”

Willmarth serves as chair of the Faculty Practice Council at the University of Cincinnati, and is an active participant in the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) committee there. She is the chair of the Educational Informatics Section of the ACNM Division of Education, and serves on the ACNM Health Information Technology (HIT) taskforce. She is also chair of the program services committee for the Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky March of Dimes. She serves on the advisory board for “Where's My Midwife?” and is also a volunteer for the Susan G. Komen Foundation's Race for the Cure. She earned her Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree from Vanderbilt University in 2010.

The Kitty Ernst Award, affectionately known as the “Young Whippersnapper Award,” is named after Kitty Ernst, CNM, the College's fourth and youngest president, and one of its most dynamic living legends. The Kitty Ernst Award was established in 1998 to honor a certified nurse-midwife (CNM) who has been certified for less than ten years and has demonstrated innovative, creative endeavors in clinical practice, education, administration, or research relating to midwifery and women's health.

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For more information, please contact Cassie Moore, Writer and Editor at 240-485-1822 or via e-mail at cmoore@acnm.org. Photos are available upon request.

With roots dating to 1929, the American College of Nurse-Midwives is the oldest women's health care association in the U.S. ACNM's mission is to promote the health and well-being of women and newborns within their families and communities through the development and support of the profession of midwifery as practiced by certified nurse-midwives and certified midwives. Midwives believe every individual has the right to safe, satisfying health care with respect for human dignity and cultural variations. More information about ACNM can be found at www.midwife.org.

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