

The ACNM board wishes to thank members of the student and new grad committee who contributed to the writing and delivery of the 2023 annual student report. We acknowledge your hard work as students and your commitment to ACNM and the profession of midwifery. Most of all, we value your resilience over a difficult year when the organization's future was in question and information was slow and clouded in financial uncertainty. The board is more confident today that with the continued support of our membership, including our students, our future is brighter than one year ago.

### **History of the Student Report and Recurrent Themes**

The board and membership of ACNM look forward to hearing from students and new graduates annually. Board members find the student report informative. It provides ACNM an opportunity for self-evaluation as we consider optimal changes to improve how we educate, welcome, and orient new members and future leaders. At the beginning of your report, you pointed to many common themes presented annually. Solutions were often suggested but not always satisfactorily resolved. Hence, similar requests are often repeated the following year. This was a flaw that last year's student representative pointed out to the board. In fact, we held up posting our response to the 2022 student report because we were hesitant to repeat the common practice of "promising much and delivering little." In the end, we refrained from posting our written response to the 2022 report and instead held a town hall where we focused on listening to you and less on promising solutions, which, largely due to our financial crisis, we were likely to fall short on. This year, we intend to provide a substitutive response to the 2023 report, where we promise less and, with your assistance, develop substantive plans to accomplish tangible action plans and results over the next 9-10 months.

To begin, we have already posted the 2021 and 2022 student reports and board responses on the ACNM webpage. We invite the entire student body to attend our upcoming town hall on October 17th. We will work with IT to enable participants to choose a gallery view where they can see the board and each other. We want to hear from you during this town hall. We will invite you to open your mics to ask a question or make a comment. We will, however, reserve the right to limit open mic access and close the chat feature to manage time and shield participants from any harmful and traumatic comments directed towards them. In addition, it has been challenging to monitor both the chat and Q+A features. Moreover, this year, our staff is extremely lean and does not have the bandwidth to monitor both. Only the Q+A will be available.

Led by our new CEO and financial staff, we have finally gained some insight into some of the causes behind our long-standing financial crisis. We hope that some of you were able to attend the general town hall in August. There largely focused on providing insight into ANM's financial status. We have more information to uncover and will present that to the membership as we become more aware. In the interim, our new CEO and financial staff have implemented new accounting and cost-saving measures designed to lift us out of the financial crisis that has developed over several years and, as many organizations have experienced, worsened due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Concerns**

Over the past decade, ACNM has made significant efforts to acknowledge and address its history of racism, implicit bias, and exclusion. In 2021, the D+I task force was formed. Their first project culminated in 2015, entitled 'Shifting the Frame' facilitated by Greater Good Consulting. It consisted of a series of interviews and focus groups and marked the college's first historic public steps to shift towards adopting a culture of inclusion and equity. Today's crisis in Black maternal mortality and morbidity concerns the entire membership. In 2021, the board approved the Truth and Reconciliation document and made a strong commitment to increase the % of Black midwives in efforts to support concordant care and thus

improve perinatal outcomes. While the increase has been slow, recognition of the need for more midwifery educators and leaders continues on many fronts. Many of the recommendations you raised have or are underway.

- In 2019, ACNM approved the Black Caucus to provide Black midwives and students with a greater sense of belonging.
- The board approved in 2021 the Truth and Reconciliation Statement. [link](#)
- 2020 ACNM appointed an anti-racist task force that produced and presented the Anti-racist tool kit at the 2021 annual meeting. The tool kit is specifically designed for midwifery educators and has been presented to faculty at educational programs and Dome to help eliminate racism and bias faced by students and educators in primarily White education programs.
- 2022-present. ACNM was awarded two grants by Johnson and Johnson for research and development over the next five years to increase the diversity of the midwifery workforce and access to midwifery education and care. The midwifery workforce study conducted research to identify barriers experienced by Black students for acceptance and success in midwifery education programs to support the development of a midwifery education program housed within an HBCU. The second grant focused on promoting health equity initiatives to identify policy changes needed to expand the midwifery workforce and reach optimum capacity to improve outcomes. Both studies are ongoing.
- ACNM works closely with ACME and AMCB however, it does not have the ability to direct their decisions and actions. They exist as independent organizations. Currently, there are no midwifery education programs housed within HBCUs. Frontier Nursing University graduates most midwifery students annually and, as a result, graduates the largest percentage of BIPOC midwives. They apply annually for HRSA funding to maintain a diversified student body and faculty. ACNM submits annual letters of support to FNU and any other program that seeks grants and maintains efforts to diversify the midwifery workforce.
- The option to offer PT study is a decision made by each program. ACNM has no influence over how various programs choose to operate.
- ACNM influences curricula through the writing and updating of the core competencies, the hallmarks of midwifery, position statements, and clinical briefs. Recently, ACME integrated ACNM's position statement on Racism and Diversity in their accreditation evaluation at all midwifery education programs.
- While it is true that Black midwifery educators make a huge difference in the success of Black midwifery students, ACNM cannot urge programs to hire Black faculty. It is also true that the more Black midwifery students we educate, the more they will become preceptors, educators, program directors, Treasurers, Vice Presidents, and Presidents of ACNM. All these changes help to motivate and inspire Black students to know, "If they can do it, so can I."

**Addressing prior and recurrent themes.** After much brainstorming, we developed the following action items to address prior themes and current student concerns: (We need to develop task forces to manage these items. Staff is limited. Committees can be asked to lead some items. Board members and fellows might be encouraged to provide leadership in one or more areas)

We understand students are busy with limited time. With the aid of the student and new grad committee (SNGC) we aim to provide self-paced videos, tic-toc, or YouTube posts on the student webpage to enable access on demand.

Orienting students to ACNM and student participation

- Ensuring a new student orientation and welcome package that outlines benefits and ways to engage as members are clearly delineated.

- Working with the co-chairs of the SNGC we are planning to update the “You are ACNM video.” which will cover general ACNM orientation and information. Board members, ACNM staff, division, and committee leaders will be called to participate in the video recording. When completed, the video will be made available on the online student page for viewing on demand.
- We have developed a speaker’s bureau for staff and board members to respond to requests from various programs to provide presentations on topics related to ACNM. These events may occur in person or online at the university’s expense.

#### ACNM Annual Meeting Accessibility to Students

- Next year, 2024 ACNM is supporting affiliates' celebration of regional annual meetings rather than hosting a large national event. We encourage students to join their affiliates and explore opportunities to attend at no or little cost by serving as pages and taking advantage of other discounts to support their local affiliates.
- We will post an on-demand video or tic-toc link to share discounted or free opportunities for attendance at the annual meeting on the student webpage in preparation for the next scheduled national annual meeting.

#### **Facilitating Student and New Grad membership and engagement.**

ACNM welcomes input from students and new graduates. At the same time, ACNM exists as a membership organization. It would not exist and accomplish the professional achievements we have over the past 68 years without the commitment and engagement of its membership. In the same way that the college takes pride in establishing Hallmarks of Midwives, Standards and scope of practice, and Core competencies for educational standards, we educate and encourage commitment to support the advancement of the profession, beginning with student membership and engagement. In recognition of the financial burden undertaken by students, we created a student membership discount at less than one-fifth of the fee for full-time active members. In addition, we have discount categories for new grads through the first four years of practice. We recognize the cost of living and education has drastically increased over the past few decades. We remain committed to exploring additional financial support to offset membership costs for students that will enable them to join and participate in the only national organization that supports the advancement of the profession and practice of CNMs and CMs.

- \$70 student membership
- \$214-year. New grad; First 1-2 years of practice
- \$288 year. Advancing membership. Years 3-4 of practice
- \$365. Active full membership. 5 years plus of practice
- \$144. Supporting, the disabled, unemployed, and more.

#### **Student Vote and the Number of Student Representatives on the Board**

- Many of you may be aware that members present voted to pass the motion, giving students the right to express their voices by voting. The ability for students to vote will require changes to bylaws. Currently, the bylaws committee and the board have agreed on a process to move the motion through both bodies. That process is underway. Ultimately, the decision to award students the ability to vote will require a positive vote from  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the membership.

- Last year's student representative recommended appointing two student representatives to the board. Again, this will require a bylaw change. The board, student, and new grad committee will work closely with this year's student representative to develop a process and submit an action plan to the bylaws committee to consider this change.

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Mentorship & The transition from Student to New Midwife. The following opportunities for mentorship are already in place or being considered. Any ideas you have are welcomed. Reach out to your affiliate leaders, faculty and or preceptors for ideas.

- MOCC mentorships
- Encourage fellows to mentor students as part of their responsibility.
- Committee or division leaders,
- Specific board/regional leaders
- Other members with whom you share an area of professional interest
- Live webinars to host simulations with manikins and provider-patient encounters to address specific topics.

Expanding Curriculum & Continued Education Opportunities for Students

- ACNM board acknowledge frustrations with state-to-state variations in practice variations. These are based upon state rights and autonomy. ACNM is working on advocacy to ensure that national certification is a path to licensure in all states.
- ACME accredited programs are responsible for teaching the hallmarks of midwifery and core competencies which are established by ACNM.
- Pathways exist that outline the steps midwives can undertake to add skills that go beyond the core competencies throughout one's career [Expanded skills](#); [cont.ed partnerships](#).
- Additional skills requested in the report are already incorporated into the core competencies; ie., basic ultrasound, gender affirming care, infertility and abortion care
- The board would like students to identify other advanced topics. We have considered working with the student and new grad committee to develop a survey to determine additional topics students are interested in. We welcome student's input.
- We are developing a speaker's bureau; Universities can participate in a new program to provide rotating monthly presentations on a topic in their program has demonstrated expertise in. i.e. Georgetown has expertise in advocacy.

New Grad facilitation projects: The following items have been discussed, and some planned. Again, we welcome student input.

- Recorded videos resume, job interview skills, negotiating contracts.
- Update job postings
- Residency-fellowship programs-availability dependent on individual practices and the institutions they work for, and the states they reside in. ACNM supports fellowships, but it is their position that new grads who meet the core competencies from an ACME accredited program and pass the AMCB exam are ready for practice.
- National universal practice guidelines-States establish their own scope of practice guidelines. This highlights one of the major functions of ACNM, which is lobbying on the national level for independent practice, hospital admitting privileges, CMS value-based, and equal reimbursement for equal services.
- Advisory column for expectant and new grads
- Monthly live meetings—"Ask a midwife"

#### Health Policy:

- Students are encouraged to join committees like PAC, GAC, and Bylaws for an upfront view regarding policy and governance. Email executive [office@acnm.org](mailto:office@acnm.org)
- Ongoing advocacy include efforts/policies to increase maternal mortality and morbidity, licensing for CMs across the US, independent practice for all midwives, and hospital admitting privileges in all states. FU with GAC, PAC and staff government advocacy.
- ACNM actively support the Black Maternal Health Momibus ACT, (a Bill which includes 13 individual bill with a historic investment to counter the maternal mortality, morbidity and disparity in the US. [link](#)
- ACNM is pushing the Standing with MOMs 23 ACT [link](#) ACNM is working with Amy Kohl, our director of legislation and advocacy to promote the MOMs 23 act.
- Amy Kohl, is coordinating with AABC in support the Babies act. Students are invited to follow up with Amy to support these acts.
- ACNM has worked with HRSA to award funds for the ANEW training and the MAT grant to many institutions. Grants to enable funding and scholarships for nurse-midwifery and APRN education.
- Students are encouraged to apply for grants from HRSA
- Students are encouraged to reach out to Amy Kohl and their local affiliates to contact their local legislators and participate in the ACNM health policy day.

In conclusion, we hope many of you will take the opportunity to read ACNM's response to the student report and join us at the upcoming Student town hall on October 17<sup>th</sup> from 6:30p-8p. We will review ACNM's Response. We welcome your feedback and seek your input to actualize some of the items you have requested to improve your student and new grad experience.