

Jessica Densmore Ballot Question Responses

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

I believe every midwife is actually qualified for this position because we all come to this profession with a passion for caring for individuals and families! To do the work that we love, we need a strong organization to look out for our best interests, and the best interests of the people we care for. In addition to many years of full-scope midwifery practice, I have always worked to advocate for this profession on a state and national level. I would continue to do so as a Region 1 Representative. I am interested in any work that will strengthen our States, our region, and the national organization to create a better practice environment for Midwives.

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

The most important role of ACNM, in my opinion, is getting a seat at every table where policy is being made. Involvement in policy creation is the only way to make a healthcare environment that supports us as midwives and the people we care for. The strategic plan highlights this through the work the organization is doing through strategic partnerships. However, this work cannot move forward unless the other tenets of the strategic plan are also met. It is essential to recognize that as an organization, we cannot do the policy work without financial stability, which is driven by membership. The strategic plan needs all its components to build an effective network of policy influencers.

Ballot Question 3: Visit the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) [HERE](#). What ideas do you have for enhancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging?

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) needs to be at the core of everything this organization does. As an organization, we need professionals in DEIB work to help us recognize areas of bias and support building a better organization. A DEIB lens needs to be used to analyze everything the organization does. We need to work on every level of the education system to support building a diverse Midwifery workforce. Building our workforce will require DEIB training for all our preceptors, building education programs accessible to people in marginalized communities, resources to support our student midwives, and building support systems for new midwives. Now is the time to build a diverse midwifery workforce so that we can improve DEIB within our organization and for our community.

Ballot Question 4: What is your vision for innovation and improvement within ACNM?

ACNM is a member-driven organization, and it is essential that all midwives feel supported by their national organization. To accomplish this, work is needed to better understand what midwives need and how the organization can support them. The second step is to help midwives understand how important ACNM is to protecting their practice, moving the profession forward, and the benefits of membership. Work in these areas is at the core of creating a strong organization.

Ballot Question 5: What are two improvements that ACNM should prioritize and how would you help address them in your role?

Engagement: Since starting Midwifery school 20 years ago, I have always felt strongly that ACNM is a strong advocate for me and my work. Just like many of you, I am a full-scope midwife with a busy clinic schedule and long shifts supporting pregnant individuals through labor, birth, and postpartum. My brain can rest after those shifts because I know ACNM is looking out for my interests. I think it is essential that all Midwives understand how important ACNM is for our profession and that Membership is the way to continue to have a strong national organization. As an organization, prioritizing the engagement of midwives will help us become financially stable and be able to do more of the vital work that is needed to advance the midwifery profession as a whole. This is work that is needed in every region including mine!

Favorable Practice Environments: I think the most important role of a regional representative is supporting state affiliates to do work that improves their midwifery practice environment. ACNM has published each State's fact sheet (<https://www.midwife.org/Toolkits Resources>), which makes it clear where work needs to be done. I would like to support the states in my region to continue to work toward an optimal practice environment.