



NEWS RELEASE

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13 MIDWIVES INDUCTED AS FELLOWS OF THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF NURSE-MIDWIVES

ACNM Members Honored with Prestigious Distinction

Silver Spring, MD – The [American College of Nurse-Midwives \(ACNM\)](#) honored 13 midwives who have demonstrated outstanding professional achievement and contributions to the midwifery community throughout their careers. A limited number of midwives are selected for this highly coveted distinction and are inducted as fellows during the [ACNM Annual Meeting & Exhibition](#) each year.

The 2014 Fellows are:

Tanya Bailey, CNM, MSN, FACNM (NC)

Tanya Bailey completed a diploma nursing program in 1990. She received an undergraduate degree in nursing from Old Dominion University and her graduate degree in nursing from Case Western Reserve University. She received her midwifery training from Frontier Nursing University and has been a practicing certified nurse-midwife (CNM) since 2002. Her initial job as a CNM was with the Obstetrics and Gynecology Medicine Department at Women's Hospital of Greensboro as a faculty member. She is currently employed in private practice with Wendover Ob-Gyn & Infertility in a full-scope setting that includes first assist, limited ultrasound, infertility, and water birth. She is the first midwife president of the Guilford County Coalition on Infant Mortality. This organization works to reduce health disparities and infant mortality through the development of innovative programs. She led the formation of the Community Action for Healthy Babies Consortium to identify and address specific community issues contributing to infant mortality and health disparities. She precepts midwifery students and provides professional guidance to new graduate midwives. She has been involved with ACNM at the state level as a volunteer on the Program, Bylaws, and Legislative Committees. In addition, she has served as vice president and president of the state organization. Her national involvement includes serving as a member of the American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB) Exam Committee for 2 terms; currently, she is serving as chair of that committee and as a member of the AMCB Board of Directors. Most recently she was involved with the US Midwifery, Education, Regulation, and Association (MERA) group to address national midwifery issues involving education, accreditation, and licensure of all midwives in the United States.

Patricia Burkhardt, CM, LM, DrPH, FACNM (NY)

Dr. Patricia Burkhardt built a certificate midwifery education on a nursing diploma, then acquired public health skills and education at the master and doctoral levels from the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. From this vantage point, she watched the evolution of the profession and the health care system. This gave her a clear understanding that things are in motion in some direction most of the time. Dr. Burkhardt actively participated

in this evolution through local, state, and national leadership positions within ACNM in which she maintained her focus on the good of the midwifery profession and the well-being of women for whom the profession exists. When she returned to the United States from Latin America she directed a large private hospital practice, worked with New York State colleagues to pass the 1992 Midwifery Practice Act, and started the midwifery education program at NYU. She changed the teaching methodology to “Problem-Based Learning” and has aided other programs to do the same. Dr. Burkhardt served on the New York State Board of Midwifery, created by the Midwifery Practice Act, for 10 years and continues to work for midwives and women as president of NYSALM, the New York State ACNM Affiliate. Dr. Burkhardt is a firm believer in global midwifery and the value midwives add to the lives of all women. In her view, the International Confederation of Midwives created critical documents in the recent standards for education, regulation, and association and ACNM’s US MERA effort is essential to the future of US midwifery.

Victoria Henderson Burslem, CNM, MSN, FACNM (MS)

Victoria Burslem received her bachelor of science in nursing from Vanderbilt University and master of science in nursing and midwifery education from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Vicki is currently an assistant professor of nursing at Belhaven University in Jackson, MS. Prior to her move to Mississippi, she was the midwifery director of a large private practice in Atlanta, Georgia, for many years. Throughout her 37-year career she has been active in midwifery clinical practice and education, caring for women in public and private settings, and attending births both in-hospital and out-of-hospital at a freestanding birth center. She was a “CNEP Pioneer,” as one of the original faculty with Frontier’s Community-based Nurse-Midwifery Education Program. She is currently on faculty at the Midwifery Institute of Philadelphia University, educating students in both certified midwife and nurse-midwifery pathways through its distance education program. Additionally, she has been a clinical preceptor for numerous students from 8 midwifery education programs. Vicki is best known, however, for her role as co-plaintiff with Susan Sizemore in the anti-trust litigation, Federal Trade Commission suit, and Congressional Committee hearings that resulted from their inability to obtain hospital practice privileges. The 11-year litigation proved ultimately successful, strengthening anti-trust case law for non-physician providers, improving nurse-midwives’ ability to obtain hospital privileges, and protecting physicians who practice collaboratively with midwives from liability insurance cancellation. Vicki was ACNM chapter chair for Tennessee early in her career and is currently serving as president of the ACNM Mississippi Affiliate.

Michelle René Collins, CNM, PhD, FACNM (TN)

Dr. Michelle Collins completed a diploma nursing program at St. Anthony School of Nursing, her bachelor of science in nursing from Rockford College, a master of science in nursing from Marquette University, and her PhD from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. She currently serves as associate professor and director of the nurse-midwifery program at Vanderbilt University and as part of the faculty practice. Michelle is the first CNM to practice in the city of Marion, Illinois where she initiated a water birth service. She is a provider of colposcopy and LEEP services for uninsured women through both the Illinois and Tennessee Breast and Cervical Cancer Programs. She was the first CNM credentialed at Vanderbilt to perform colposcopy services. Michelle was appointed colposcopy mentor for the American Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology (ASCCP). Additionally, she has worked with a group of CNMs to initiate water immersion at Vanderbilt. Michelle spearheaded the initiative to bring nitrous oxide as labor analgesia to Vanderbilt presenting nationally and publishing her work on nitrous oxide numerous times since, assisting hospitals and birth centers across the country in initiating nitrous services. Working with a student nurse-midwife, Michelle initiated a volunteer doula service utilizing community doulas and student nurse-midwives. She is currently working on

setting up an umbilical cord blood donation program at Vanderbilt. Michelle has made vast contributions to both ACNM and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and serves as ACNM liaison to ACOG regarding nitrous oxide. She serves as secretary for the Directors of Midwifery Education (DOME) group, conducts media interviews for ACNM's national office, has been a member of the AMCB Exam Construction Committee for 6 years, and joined the ACNM Annual Meeting Planning Committee for last year's meeting in Nashville, TN. She currently serves as vice president for the ACNM Tennessee State Affiliate as well as past public relations representative. Michelle worked as a contributor to the construction of BirthTOOLS.org in the area of nitrous oxide analgesia.

Connie Dewees, CNM, DrPH, MN, FACNM (NC)

Dr. Connie Dewees teaches nurse-midwifery in the East Carolina University College of Nursing in North Carolina. In addition to her present faculty position, she has taught midwifery at Emory University and the Medical University of South Carolina. Her experiences establishing and maintaining faculty midwifery practices have contributed to her passion for teaching the business of midwifery to student midwives. Among her professional accomplishments which make her proudest is seeing her former students in the successful practice of midwifery and in leadership positions within the profession. She has served as Region III Representative to the ACNM Board of Directors, on various ACNM committees, and in a number of state level ACNM offices. She is currently the vice president of the North Carolina Affiliate of ACNM where she is continuing her long career in legislative advocacy for midwifery and women's and children's health issues. She is a member of the A.C.N.M. Foundation's Midwifery Legacies Project in which she co-chairs the 20th Century Midwives Student Interview Project.

Michelle Grandy, CNM, MN, FACNM (WA)

Michelle Grandy received her BSN at Seattle Pacific University and her master's in nursing from University of Washington. Her career began at Providence Midwifery Care in Everett, WA where she practiced for 7 years. In 2003, she became associate teaching faculty at University of Washington in the obstetrics (OB) department and practiced as a part of the UW Midwives – becoming service director in 2006. In 2011, Michelle started the Midwives Clinic at Northwest Hospital, a full scope practice including women's health, where she is currently the service director. Her passion has been to educate the OB consultants of the future to be supportive of CNM care and physiologic birth. She started a course for first and second year medical students to provide early exposure to the midwifery model of care. She also started a mentorship for residents during their intern year. Throughout her career, she has also precepted midwifery students. Michelle has been active in the Midwifery Business Network and received the Francis Thacher Leadership Award in 2009. In 2009, as the chapter chair, she led WA to become the 4th affiliate in ACNM. She has led an A.C.N.M. Foundation, Inc. Clinical Star Award Program in WA State that has recognized many exceptional midwives. She led the formation of the Medical Education Caucus of ACNM, becoming its first chair. As ACNM Region VI Representative on the Board of Directors, she served on the Awards Committee, was liaison to the Midwifery Business Network, led affiliate leadership workshops, and traveled the West Coast joining with affiliate leaders to improve their organizations.

Milree Keeling, CNM, MS, BCSI, FACNM (MA)

Milree earned a BSN at Case Western Reserve University in 1975 and a MS at the University of Minnesota School of Nursing nurse-midwifery education program in 1986. In northwest Wisconsin at that time, no local physicians would supervise a midwife, so Milree moved to central MA to work in the state's second birth center. In 1987, she was recruited to start the first midwifery practice in Eau Claire, WI, a practice which continues to this day. Returning in 1990 to MA, she pioneered a fully collaborative midwifery practice which continued until

2012. For 7 years, Milree was a Northeastern Regional Clinical Coordinator for the Frontier School of Midwifery and Family Nursing. From 2006 to 2011, Milree developed the role of perinatal nurse developmentalist in 1 of 9 nurse-family home visiting programs in MA. From 2000 to 2012, Milree served in the MA ACNM chapter leadership as vice-chair, chair, and legislative chair. She worked for 10 years as ACNM representative to the Coalition for Midwifery, which tried to establish a single midwifery board in the state, and led the final ACNM effort that resulted in statutory independence from physician supervision. Since 2011, Milree has been in private practice as a Board Certified Structural Integrator, restoring comfortable ease in movement to people of all ages.

Julia Lange Kessler, CM, RN, DNP, FACNM (NY)

Dr. Julia Kessler served as the founder, owner, and service director of the first midwifery-owned practice in the Hudson Valley area while initiating hospital privileges at 3 facilities. As program coordinator of the NYU Nurse Midwifery Program since 2008, Kessler obtained reinstatement and accreditation while expanding the program – graduating 3 times more midwives and enhancing the curriculum with the addition of a specific primary care clinical component. Kessler organized an educational trip to the Nygatare School of Midwifery and Nursing in Rwanda with 4 new grads. The educational sessions were designed to help reduce the rate of episiotomy, fundal pressure, and primary pulmonary hypertension while increasing the rate of neonatal resuscitation at the local hospital. An active member of the North East Regional Consortium for the Comprehensive Exam in Midwifery (NERCCEM) and member of the First Pass Committee, Kessler served as a former regional board member of New York State Association of Licensed Midwives (NYSALM) and is currently a sitting board member of the New York state Board of Midwifery (BOM). Within ACNM Kessler has served as chair of the Nominating Committee, chair of the Preceptor section of the Division of Education, served as a leader in the ACNM Virtual Quality Institute. Within the American Midwifery Certification Board, Kessler served on the CMP Committee and currently serves on the Executive Board as well as the Disciplinary Committee. Kessler has also been the chair of the Directors of Midwifery Education (DOME). Currently, Kessler is co-chair of the largest chapter in the ACNM – the NYC Midwives. She has published in numerous publications and given countless presentations regarding midwifery & midwifery practice.

Gwen Amber Latendresse, CNM, PhD, FACNM (UT)

Dr. Latendresse completed her BSN in 1986 at Metropolitan State University in Denver. In 1988 she received an MS in midwifery and in 2008 she received her PhD, both at the University of Utah. In 2009 she was a fellow at the Summer Genetics Institute at the NIH/NINR and Georgetown University. Dr. Latendresse is the current chair for the Legislative Taskforce for the Utah ACNM Affiliate, which in 2012 was successful in eliminating the physician signature requirement for CNMs in Utah. She is a past co-chair of the Utah Affiliate and a current member of the ACNM Division of Research. Dr. Latendresse has made significant scholarly contributions to the study of chronic maternal stress, preterm birth, and prenatal genetics. Her research has been funded by the A.C.N.M. Foundation, Inc., March of Dimes, the NINR, and currently by an NIH funded Center for Clinical and Translational Science to study the impact of maternal SSRI use on placental gene expression and serotonin levels in newborns. Dr. Latendresse authored the first genetics chapter in the recent 5th ed. *Varney's Midwifery*. She received the *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health (JMWH)* Mary Ann Shah New Author Award in 2006 and the Best Article of the Year Award in 2010. She frequently presents at ACNM's Annual Meeting & Exhibition, mentors and teaches midwifery students, and is invited to give lectures in her area of scholarly expertise. She serves as a peer reviewer for *JMWH* and many other national and international journals and organizations.

Elaine M. Moore, CNM, MSN, FACNM (TN)

Elaine Moore learned of midwifery at Capital University through her obstetrics professor— a nurse-midwife. This inspired her to enroll in graduate school for midwifery at the Medical University of South Carolina in 1980. After graduation, Elaine joined the Grady Memorial Hospital midwives with the goal of starting Atlanta's first private practice, which she accomplished in 1983 along with her best friend and 3 amazingly collaborative physicians. While in Atlanta, Elaine was very active in her ACNM chapter serving as chair, secretary, and bylaws chair. For this and more she was awarded the ACNM Region III Award for Excellence. In 2000, Elaine and her husband moved closer to family in Nashville. Shortly thereafter, she joined the Vanderbilt Midwifery Practice where she stayed through 2013, earning her recognition as a Clinical Star. Elaine now works in a clinic for underserved women and is assisting in the transition to establish the second midwifery practice in a large community hospital in Nashville. In 1990, Elaine founded one of the A.C.N.M Foundation, Inc.'s long-standing endowments: the W. Newton Long Fund for practicing CNMs/CMs. She served on the Foundation's board from 2005 to 2012, including a year as vice president. During a short hiatus, she helped found the OnGoing Group, now known as the Midwifery Legacies Project. In 2013 Elaine returned to the Foundation's board as president.

Whitney Ann Pinger, CNM, MSN, FACNM (Washington, DC)

Whitney Pinger is a third generation UC Berkeley graduate and completed her midwifery training at Yale University. Whitney is the founder and director of midwifery services at The George Washington University Medical Faculty Associates. Prior to coming to GW, Whitney established Wisdom Midwifery at The Washington Hospital Center. She has also served as the director of midwifery at Georgetown University and Washington Free Clinic's prenatal and pediatric programs. Whitney is recognized for initiation and leadership of the ACNM's DC chapter in the development of the Midwifery Pearls PowerPoint, a unique presentation of scientifically proven practices that midwives use to increase the incidence of normal birth. ACNM assumed ownership of "The Pearls" presentation in 2009, and has made it available online to a national audience. Whitney received the ACNM Regional Award for Excellence in 2009 and the ACNM Media Award the following year. Our Bodies, Ourselves honored Whitney in 2010 as a "Women's Health Hero." Whitney and her 7 partners at GW practice by "The Pearls" and use innovative labor management strategies to yield an 86% normal birth rate and a cesarean section rate under 5%. Whitney is committed to, and passionate about, the education of the next generation of physicians, midwives, and nurses. Whitney recently presented a poster at ACOG's annual meeting highlighting how collaborative models of care between midwives and physicians can significantly reduce the cesarean section rate.

Connie Swentek, CNM, MSN, FACNM (CA)

Connie Swentek graduated as a certified nurse-midwife and woman's health nurse practitioner from UCSF/UCSD in 1989. She has worked in the academic setting teaching medical students and residents, in a high-volume managed care setting, and in a private practice out-of-hospital setting. She has taught at 3 nurse-midwifery programs in the Southern California area and consistently provided preceptorship to midwifery students throughout her career. As a manager of a larger midwifery service, she helped ensure the on-going access for midwifery students in the practice and the ability for new graduates to move directly into the workforce. She has worked diligently to advance the profession of midwifery through legislative and leadership efforts as president of the California Nurse-Midwives Association and through participation in the Southern California CNM Leadership Committee. She co-chaired the local Program Committee for the ACNM 57th Annual Meeting & Exhibition in Long Beach in 2012 and is currently the chair of the ACNM Bylaws Committee. She has participated in other committees ranging from Patient Safety, Peer Review, and Family

Violence Prevention. She received the “Educator of the Year” Award from the California Nurse-Midwives Association in 1997 and the ACNM “Regional Award for Excellence,” Region VI, in 2008.

Ruth E. Zielinski, CNM, PhD, FACNM (MI)

Dr. Ruth Zielinski has been a certified nurse-midwife for 19 years, completing both her master’s and PhD at the University of Michigan. Her practice sites included co-owning a full-scope midwifery practice. She has taught and mentored many students and now teaches midwifery full-time at the University of Michigan, as well as being in clinical practice both with the University of Michigan nurse-midwives and Borgess Women’s Health. Her research accomplishments include her dissertation, *Private Places: Private Shame* which won the ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Award. She has presented and published on topics such as body image, sexual health, pelvic floor outcomes following birth, CenteringPregnancy, and out-of-hospital birth. She has served ACNM in various roles, the most recent being president of the ACNM Michigan Affiliate, chair of the Clinical Practice Section of the Division of Standards and Practice (DOSP), and as a member of the ACOG Preventive Health Taskforce. Ruth has a passion for international women’s health and her recent work includes teaching ACNM’s Home Based Life Saving Skills in South Sudan, an endeavor she hopes to continue.

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To learn more about ACNM’s 2014 fellows, please contact Damaris Hay, ACNM Media Relations Specialist at (240) 485-1856 or via e-mail at dhay@acnm.org.

The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) is the professional association that represents certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs) in the United States. With roots dating to 1929, ACNM sets the standard for excellence in midwifery education and practice in the United States and strengthens the capacity of midwives in developing countries. Our members are primary care providers for women throughout the lifespan, with a special emphasis on pregnancy, childbirth, and gynecologic and reproductive health. ACNM reviews research, administers and promotes continuing education programs, and works with organizations, state and federal agencies, and members of Congress to advance the well-being of women and infants through the practice of midwifery. More information about ACNM can be found at www.midwife.org

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