

To our fellow healthcare allies:

The American College of Nurse Midwives (ACNM) is the national organization representing the interests of Certified Nurse Midwives (CNMs) and Certified Midwives (CMs) practicing in the United States. The WA State Affiliate of ACNM represents 264 members across Washington. ACNM aspires to improve expertise in primary, reproductive and gynecologic care; prioritizing optimal pregnancy, physiologic birth, postpartum care, and neonatal care.

We would like to partner with your organization's journey to dismantle racism, as we grow and hold our affiliate accountable. Systemic racism perpetuates inequities in reproductive health and negative health outcomes for Black, Brown, Indigenous, and people of color. ACNM acknowledges the egregious racism within our own history, our midwifery programs, and our organization. We are committed to addressing historical and current racism within midwifery education, clinical practice, and institutions including our own.

The WA State Affiliate of ACNM has strongly urged our white affiliate members to continue, or begin, their work in "unlearning" racism, fighting oppression, and actively becoming anti-racist. We asked our white members to learn about the racist and oppressive history of the ACNM, and learn from these injustices. Our foundation, which was based on institutional racism, led us to an organization that lacks diversity and created a non-inclusive space that does not feel safe for all midwives.

The World Health Organization deemed 2020 the year of the Nurse and Midwife. Our Affiliate is dedicating all of our 2020 and 2021 efforts to dismantling racism in our organization and communities with the following commitments:

Financial Reparations

- Donate \$5,000 to a state organization supporting Black lives and match up to an additional \$2,000 based on member donations.
- Continue to offer Annual Meeting scholarships to Student Midwives of Color and add an additional scholarship for a practicing Midwife of Color to attend the Annual Meeting



- Creation of scholarships for membership to ACNM for Black, Indigenous, Midwives of Color.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee and Anti-Racism Efforts

- In 2019, we developed the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and an EDI Representative Board position. We are committed to continuing to amplify and listen to BIPOC midwives' voices
- All committee projects will have an EDI focus and must include efforts towards dismantling racism, including grassroots advocacy, marketing, and education for members and communities
- Gather demographic information for midwives in WA state to better understand the true disproportion in race amongst midwives and patients

Birthwork Community

- Continuing efforts to network and create partnerships across the state who also support the Black Lives Matter movement

Our efforts as the WA Affiliate of ACNM alone cannot bring about the systemic positive change we envision for our patient community, healthcare system, and country. If 2020 has taught us anything, it is that there is power in standing in solidarity across organizations. ACNM is making an effort to create a safe space for our BIPOC community members to continue being leaders, and would like to ask how we can support your organization to do the same. We recognize that many of you have already been hard at work on this. We applaud your efforts and also welcome any recommendations you may have for our organization.

Please reach out to our Outreach Committee Chair Kate Zeichner at katezeichner@gmail.com with any recommendations or feedback as we continue to move this important work forward.

In solidarity,
The WA-ACNM Board

EDI Board Member, EDI Committee Co-Chair: Jemma Nonog, DNP, CNM
EDI Committee Co-Chair, Student Representative: Ellen French, RN, SNM
Outreach Committee Chair: Kate Zeichner, DNP, CNM
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Vice President: Elizabeth Gabzdyl, DNP, CNM
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