

MCU IN REVIEW

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2

SUMMER 2014

WELCOME!

MCU is pleased to introduce four new faculty members beginning in Fall Semester.

We warmly welcome...

Ayesha Ibrahim
MBA and Certified
Health Education
Specialist, NCHEC

Megan Koontz
CPM

Melissa Smith-Tourville
LM, CPM

Sharise Clostio
CNM

We look forward to their expertise enhancing our program!

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The Art of High Stakes Communication

Kristi Ridd-Young—President



In June, I had the opportunity to attend the 30th International Confederation of Midwives' Congress in Prague as the representative for MEAC. Imagine the emotion and energy when 3,500 midwives from all over the world gather for four days of plenary sessions, workshops and networking.

Dr. Ngai Fen Cheung, Adviser to Chinese Midwifery Expert Committee, Chinese Maternal and Child Health Association, was the final Congress speaker and gave a presentation on cultural sensitivity and midwifery. "Cultural sensitivity is a key concept running through the ICM Essential Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice," said Dr. Fen. She went on to say that, "Midwifery is an indispensable culture. Midwives have brought not only physical comfort to the birthing woman, but also cultural comfort. Cultural sensitivity in midwifery care is meeting the cultural needs of women and families in childbirth; overcoming those cultural practices that harm women and babies; and having a healthy culture of its own to meet these challenges."

I would like to focus on the very last statement of Dr. Fen's quote. As an MCU student or alumni, are you promoting a healthy midwifery culture in your state, in your community and at MCU? As student midwife, you spend a lot of time focusing on the knowledge and skills required to develop your technical expertise. Fine-honed skills assure that you can safely care for mothers and babies and are foundational to a healthy midwifery culture. In addition, I believe the attitudes and behaviors you exhibit in your interactions with preceptors, clients, peers, the staff and faculty of MCU are just as important in assuring a healthy and sustainable midwifery culture.

MCU's mission is three-fold—to build midwives of technical expertise, professional excellence and personal greatness. As an MCU student of midwifery, I challenge you to give equal time to fine-tuning the art of diplomatic communication as you do honing clinical skills and attending births. After all, being a midwife is as much relationship as it is clinical expertise.

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The Art of High Stakes Communication

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There might be an awkward situation with your preceptor that you'd rather avoid but would be better confronted with mutual respect and maybe even compromise. An administrative policy change or financial issue might not be to your liking. Perhaps one of your professors is not responding to you in a timely manner and you want to let him/her know that your expectations are not being met. How you choose to handle each of these conversations is integral in your becoming a midwife of personal greatness and professional excellence.

If you've been a part of MCU for very long, you know that we often refer to and use as a text the book *Crucial Conversations* by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan and Al Switzler. The authors did not intend to write a book on communication; they initially planned to write a business book on top performers. In their research, they found that those who are considered leaders in their field were not indistinguishable from their colleagues until the stakes grew high. When emotions run strong and expectations are not met, they found that top performers are significantly more effective than their peers in navigating challenging conversations. In difficult conversations we have a tendency to move toward silence by masking, avoiding, or withdrawing or violence by controlling, labeling or attacking others. If you

find your skills lacking when it comes to communicating with compassion and clarity, I challenge you to read and continually remind yourself of the key principals in *Crucial Conversations*.

As a practicing midwife or educator, I promise you that there will be plenty of opportunities to communicate when the stakes are high. If each of us develop and practice the art of communicating with a loving heart and mastering our stories, we will be the leaders in creating and maintaining a healthy midwifery culture.



Retrieved from <http://blanketstatements.org/shop02.html>

Career Opportunities

Soldotna, Alaska - CPM for Heritage Birth Center

Heritage Birth Center is looking to add a full time CPM, or equivalent, to our Soldotna, Alaska location. This is an amazing opportunity to be an integral part of a thriving midwifery practice. Soldotna is a small community where a high value is placed on out-of-hospital birth options and we are looking for the right midwife to help support that. We offer home and birth center births and enjoy tending to a wide variety of clientele. You can visit us online at heritagebirthcenter.com

The right midwife will possess an appreciation for the inherent normalcy of birth and a strong desire to provide that to healthy, low-risk women. They should also enjoy being a valuable part of a small town practice. At Heritage, we place a high value on creating an atmosphere that trusts birth and your fellow midwives.

If interested, please send resume and cover letter to heritagebirthcenter@gmail.com, ATTN Lena

Fall Student Conference: Oct 6th –11th

Register today at <https://www.midwifery.edu/october-2014-conference-classes/>

Monday October 6th

Childbirth Education - Kristi Ridd-Young & Angie Rosier – 9:00 am – 6:00 pm

Catheter and Blood Draws – Carrie Ann Kemp – 9:00 am – 6:00 pm

Tuesday October 7th

Pediatrics & Newborn Exams – Sonia Ochoa – 9:00 am – 6:00 pm

OB Pharmacology – Sarah Carter – 9:00 am – 6:00 pm

Wednesday October 8th

Charting - Carrie Ann Kemp – 9:00 am – 12:30 pm

Cultural Competency – Aisha Al Hajar – 1:30 pm – 6:00 pm

Well Woman Care – Adrienne Trahnstrom – 9:00 am – 6:00 pm



Thursday October 9th

Prenatal Care Lab - Cathy Larson – 9:00 am – 6:00 pm

Prenatal Complications – TBA– 9:00 am – 6:00 pm

Friday October 10th

Prenatal Care Lab - Cathy Larson – 9:00 am – 6:00 pm

IV Skills – Carrie Ann Kemp – 9:00 am – 6:00 pm

Saturday October 11th

Aromatherapy– Kathryn Ramirez – 9:00 am – 6:00 pm

Ultrasound Interpretation – Phillip Yocum – 9:00 am – 12:30 pm

Conferences Classes are beneficial for all. Taught by expert instructors students have the opportunity to gain hands on learning in addition to their regular classes. These intensive courses provide valuable experience as they learn clinical skills and have the opportunity to pass off some of those skills.

Briana Blackwelder Equal Access Scholarship

We are pleased to announce that Marquita Strauss has been selected as the 2014 recipient of the Brianna Blackwelder Equal Access Scholarship. Marquita has been a dedicated member of the birth community since 2003. Currently, she is completing her first-year in the BSM program at MCU and is a passionate aspiring midwife that aims to advance equity and diversity in the midwifery profession. As stated in her scholarship application, “I want to make my family & ancestors proud by claiming my destiny and becoming a proud African American Midwife that provides competent, compassionate care to clients who are from underrepresented communities”. In addition to serving as a midwife, Marquita’s career goals also include opening a community center that would provide families with comprehensive resources, education and support related to self-sufficiency and sustainability. Marquita has been an exemplary student thus far in her career at MCU, consistently contributing critical thoughts and commentary to class discussions, supporting her peers in collaborative learning spaces, and demonstrating an “above and beyond” attitude to social justice initiatives at MCU. Congratulations, Marquita, on your award! We are so proud of you.



Authored by: *Courtney Everson, MA, PhD*

On Behalf of: MCU Scholarship Selection and Diversity Committees

To learn more about this scholarship, please visit:

<https://www.midwifery.edu/diversity-scholarship-fund/>

To learn more about MCU’s diversity initiatives and position statement, please visit:

<https://www.midwifery.edu/cultural-diversity-position-statement/>

Canadian Brief



Congratulations to Mimi Pothaar who has been accepted into the IMPP. Blessings of continued success to Terrie Fortner-Menders who is finishing her time at the IMPP and preparing for registration in Alberta. Good luck to Joanna South who has graduated from a Canadian program and is preparing to write the CMRE (national exam) in September.

Briana Blackwelder Equal Access Scholarship Recipient

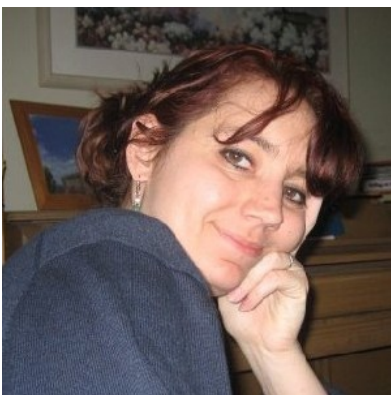
Marquita Straus

I am sincerely honored to have been selected as the recipient of the 2014 Briana Blackwelder Equal Access Scholarship. Midwifery runs through my blood, as I am descendant of slave and granny/grand midwives, but as a Black woman there have been many barriers and stumbling blocks on my road to midwifery including: racism, oppression, homophobia, inadequate childcare sources, lack of access to midwifery education, and the lack financial resources to attend midwifery school.

Since I began birth work 6 years ago, I realized the dire need for more diversity in midwifery, doula, childbirth education, and breastfeeding support. Members of my community who are LGBTQ, underserved, incarcerated, survivors of abuse, under educated, impoverished, recovering from addiction, single, teens, disabled, relinquishing their parental rights, and many others are slipping through the cracks of the healthcare system and my goal was/is to seek out these communities and deliver the compassionate, loving care that they deserve. The staggering statistics of infant and maternal mortality across the nation has increased my passion for midwifery, but it has also increased my awareness and calling for more midwives of color. As a student midwife of color I have made it my passion to reach out to as many midwives of color and potential student midwives of color for support and to encourage them to embark on this journey to midwifery.

Being the recipient of the Briana Blackwelder Equal Access Scholarship will put me one step closer to fulfilling my life's calling, and it will provide me with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to knowledgeably serve my community, to help cultivate a far-reaching web of support to decrease the infant and birthing person mortality rates of black and brown people, and to one day be a mentor and preceptor to other student midwives of color. I am so proud to continue the legacy of my midwifery ancestors; it is my desire as a Certified Professional, Licensed Midwife to educate and empower future generations of families and children this scholarship will help make that dream a

Clinical Program News



Congratulations MCU students who passed the NARM exam!

Aisha Al Hajjar

Nicole Hope

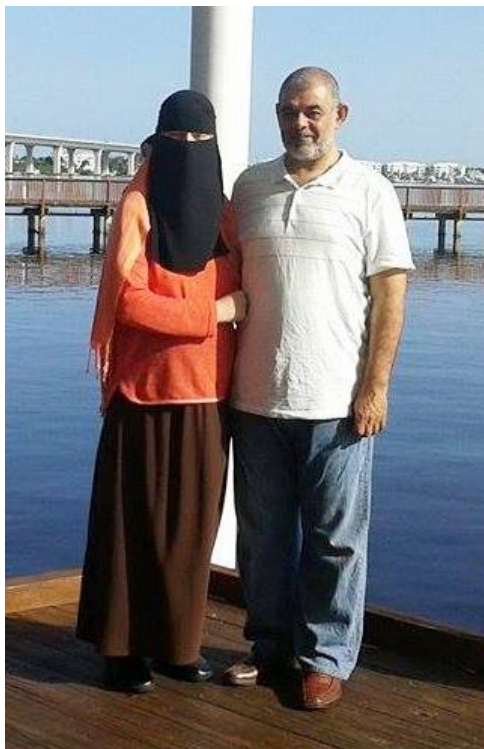
Eleanor Larison

Megan Nowland

Joella Pettigrew

Sarah Simmons

Shannon Smith



Keeping Focus

By Aisha Al Hajar, MCU Student Council

The journey through midwifery school is paved with assignment after assignment and class after class. The road can seem never ending and often times feels more like an unpaved obstacle course than a clearly mapped voyage. We've all been there, in the perpetual tunnel of academia and clinical practicum wondering if there is a light on the other side.

As a recent BSM graduate, I can attest to the fact that graduation does happen. It's almost magical and surreal when the last assignment is turned in, the NARM exam is behind you, and you've clicked "send" to submit your Graduation Application. Am I really "done?" Of course, I can't relax just yet as I'm continuing on with MCU as a newly enrolled Master's student.

As I begin a new educational excursion I feel it's time to reflect on the things that got me successfully through my BSM. This serves as a reminder to myself as a continuing student and I hope that it may be just as relevant to other students on the journey with me. I think that the main factor that got me through my BSM, and that will hopefully propel me through my MSM, is *focus*. It's the one thing that I know I cannot lose in order to not only see the light at the end of the tunnel, but also to eventually bask in the rays on the other side.

One of the most helpful concepts that got me off to a good start early on was the idea of "eating my elephant one bite at a time, bite by bite." I remember a new student orientation in which this model was introduced and an Excel spreadsheet was suggested for tracking goals and accomplishments. For the first year or two I utilized my spreadsheet daily and updated it every week. It truly helped me stay focused and motivated on each individual step that eventually led to completion of the whole journey. As I advanced in my studies I found that I had matured enough in my study discipline that I was able to keep focused and motivated without the spreadsheet, but I would never have gotten to that point if I hadn't used it in the first place. It was a great tool and training ground that set a foundation for perseverance and completion of my degree. I highly recommend this strategy to all new, or even struggling, students.

But I also want to take a step back and analyze the core of my journey. This is where I realize that that without a path to follow I wouldn't be a midwife at all. I really must honor and give credit to the pioneering midwifery generation before me. It's their dedication to passing the trade and love of the profession and care for birthing culture that has given each of us a venue of study to start with.

With that in mind, I'd like to share some inspiration from an online meeting early in my MCU studies with MCU founder and "Teacher Extraordinaire," Dianne Bjarnson. The title of the lecture was "Trials." Thankfully, I took notes as she spoke and I'm now able to reflect on some of the gems from this amazing midwife. Dianne's wisdom, vision, and dedication to midwifing the next generation of midwives have made a difference in my life and in the lives of so many aspiring midwives and the families they serve. Below I leave you with just a few quotes from her inspirational testimony.

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Keeping Focus

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“A strong midwifery community supports one another; they do not compete.”

“One important thing, especially for students, ‘Keep your eye on the target.’ Focus on the specific point you are aiming for. Looking away will ensure that you miss the target.”

“For students just this semester is a big target. What are you hoping to accomplish this term? We will finish quickly if we are focused on our target. We enrich ourselves and clarify our intentions when we focus our efforts. When we get distracted we debilitate our efforts and dilute our intentions.”

“ Sometimes we miss a target by doing more, going beyond our target. We can get involved in many good things. But evaluate if they are going to help you reach your target. Our time is valuable so focus it on the things that will help you reach your target.”

“Look at stresses, ask what can you learn from it and take responsibility. Many people ignore the issue or focus on placing blame. Assess your responsibility and move on.”

“At the beginning of the semester, start by writing down your goals and target for the semester. Take a few minutes, as it will help you crystallize what you want to do. You will be redoing this work over and over again as it changes and evolves as the weeks pass by. Be flexible and adapt it as your situation changes.”

“If you get into the work of studying midwifery and you get discouraged, because it’s a big commitment, you need to understand that determination will be required of you to get through to the end. Students get bogged down along the way. They have to visualize the end and focus on the target of midwifery. They need to start to sit down and think about what their vision is of the future. Rebuild the focus and center yourself around what it is for you.”

Thank you, Dianne, and the many staff and faculty members at MCU that have midwifed me on my MCU midwifery journey. The dedication and support is forever appreciated and I am humbled and honored to be a graduate and continuing student at MCU. Graduation does happen; keep your focus!

MCU in Review Is For You

Alumni, let us know what you are up to! Field Faculty, announce clinical opportunities! Current students, share your stories with us. Letters to the editor are always welcome.

Submit your articles to studentlife@midwifery.edu.

Join us at MCU!

Fall Conference October 6th - 11th.

Register today at <https://www.midwifery.edu/october-2014-conference-classes/>

Become an MCU student!

Application deadline for Winter 2015 semester is October 3, 2014

Apply today at <http://www.midwifery.edu/application-process/>



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