



**2020**  
**INTERNATIONAL YEAR**  
**OF THE NURSE AND**  
**THE MIDWIFE**

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**NPWH Recognizes Excellence in Women's Healthcare 2020:**  
***Inspiration in Women's Healthcare Awards and the Fran Way Legacy Award***

October 16, 2020 – Today, the National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health (NPWH) honored six Women's Health Nurse Practitioners (WHNPs) for their leadership and demonstrated excellence in the WHNP profession. This year's awardees are diverse in race, gender, and geographic location, and also areas of expertise and focus in women's healthcare. From enacting policy to protect human sex trafficking victims, to setting parameters of practice for nurses nationwide, to supporting access of care for vulnerable female veterans, to working tirelessly to provide high quality sexual and reproductive healthcare to vulnerable populations, to teaching the next generation of WHNP students, these award winners have dedicated their careers to improving women's lives. Awardees were selected based on their achievements and contributions to the field and to the Women's Health Nurse Practitioner (WHNP) community.

"This year's awardees demonstrate the depth and richness of the WHNP profession, as well as the vast contributions to women's healthcare across the life span," said Heather L. Maurer, MA, CEO of NPWH. "Our winners shine a spotlight on what makes a great WHNP provider: dedication, innovation, and a deep care for women and diverse populations."

"We are proud to lift up these leaders, experts and advocates for women," said Dr. Diana Drake, Chair of the NPWH Board of Directors. "Today we honor their commitment and look forward to supporting them in the year ahead."

These annual awards include four **Inspiration Awards in Women's Health**, recognizing innovation in education, research/quality improvement, clinical practice, and policy, and the **Fran Way Legacy Award**, recognizing a career-long commitment to women's health through practice, education, and advocacy. In consideration of the **2020 World Health Organization (WHO) Dedicated Year of the Nurse and the Midwife**, the NPWH Awards Task Force has given

special recognition to a WHNP student who has already made exceptional contributions to the profession and to the global community. The WHO named 2020 the year of the Nurse and the Midwife to mark the 200th birthday of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing.

The winners were announced at the NPWH 23rd Premier Annual Women's Healthcare Conference held October 15-18, 2020. This national gathering brings together hundreds of women's health practitioners who care for women across their lifespan, in a variety of settings around the country. This year, the conference and its many offerings of continuing education programming was completely virtual.

## **2020 Awards**

### **Fran Way Legacy Award**

Fran Way, RNC-E, WHNP, MS devoted her nursing career to the advancement of the women's health nurse practitioner role. Fran's career in reproductive healthcare began in 1960 and spanned 32 years. She was instrumental in so much of NPWH's history. She was a member of the original organizational committee, served on the Board of Directors, helped establish NPWH's popular continuing education approval program, and represented NPWH in a national coalition of nursing education credentialing organizations. If it weren't for Fran, digging in her heels and standing up for the role definition of WHNPs, there would be no WHNP specialty today. To honor those who share her extraordinary vision, passionate advocacy, and outstanding commitment to the WHNP role, NPWH has created the Fran Way Legacy Award. Each year, NPWH bestows this award to a WHNP who has demonstrated commitment to women's health through practice, education, and advocacy.

The 2020 winner of NPWH The Fran Way Legacy Award is **Judith A. Berg, PhD, RN, WHNP-BC, FAANP, FNAP, FAAN**. Dr. Berg is honored with this award in particular for her tireless and passionate advocacy to promote the health and well-being of women across the lifespan. She has devoted her entire nursing career to advance women's health. She worked closely beside Dr. Mary Rubin in the 90's as a (WHNP) at Planned Parenthood in California to advocate for women's rights and access to care. Her commitment to women's health is reflected through the numerous honors she has received in her lifetime. Dr. Berg has written numerous chapters in textbooks on subjects ranging from women's sexual health, perimenstrual symptoms and syndromes to women's health midlife. She has published over 40 journal articles including a recent editorial post, [Professional growth and development: A lifetime endeavor](#) published in the Journal of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, which discusses the ongoing effort to define, clarify and defend the role of the NP. Dr. Berg is now retired, and she continues to serve and advocate for women's health and WHNPs.

## **2020 NPWH Inspiration Awards**

The NPWH Inspiration Awards recognize excellence in women's health advanced practice nursing. They are awarded each year in four categories: education, research or quality improvement projects, clinical practice, and policy. We actively seek nominations for these prestigious national awards that demonstrate a record of dedication, achievements, and contributions to women's healthcare and advanced practice nursing. All nominees must be certified WHNPs and members of NPWH.

### ***Education: Mary T. Hickey, EdD, WHNP-BC, FNP-BC***

Dr. Hickey has dedicated her career to the education of WHNP students. Her focus and priority is to ensure students are supported through a curriculum centered in women's health and the provision of care to all women to the highest standard of care. Most recently, Dr. Hickey played a key part of an awarded HRSA grant to SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University for \$3.25 million dollars entitled, *Brooklyn's Bridge: Reaching Across the Healthcare Quality Chasm with Disadvantaged Advanced Practice Nursing Students*. This grant enables students from marginalized communities to advance their careers through education and doctoral preparation.

### ***Practice: Kahlil Demonbreun, DNP, RNC-OB, WHNP-BC, ANP-BC, FAANP***

Dr. Demonbreun has made significant contributions to improving the healthcare of women, particularly within the Veteran's Health Administration (VHA) system. Last year he was named one of the top 10 WHNPs in the United States by the Point of Care Network. He is the first male WHNP to serve in the role of Women's Health Medical Director in the VHA system and oversees the provision of primary and gynecological care to approximately 12,000 female veterans. He is the only WHNP on the National VHA APRN Council. The council serves as a regulatory advisory to the Office of Nursing Service in strengthening and enhancing excellence for the 7,350 APRNs in the VHA system.

### ***Research/Quality Improvement: Katherine Simmonds, PhD, MPH, WHNP-BC***

Dr. Simmonds is passionately committed to ensure that all people, especially within vulnerable populations, have access to quality sexual reproductive healthcare which fuels her passion for teaching the next generation of women's healthcare providers. Dr. Simmonds' interests include in how political and social forces impact people's reproductive decisions and health, and what health care providers learn about providing sexual and reproductive care during their education and training.

***Policy: Ashley Leith Hodges, PhD, WHNP-BC, FAANP***

Dr. Hodges is an avid women's health advocate, providing opportunities for restoration to female victims of human trafficking who have been sexually exploited. She has committed decades of her time to promoting health policy that protects all women in the United States who are victims of human trafficking. Dr. Hodges launched the WellHouse Clinic in Birmingham, AL, which uses a unique model of care to deliver residential, therapeutic programs to female victims who have been exploited sexually by offering medical, spiritual, mental, and emotional care.

**NPWH 2020 WHO Dedicated Year of the Nurse and the Midwife Award**

**Nasra Giama, DNP, RN, PHN, (WHNP candidate)**

This award is a first of its kind and will only be recognized in 2020, the WHO dedicated Year of the Nurse and the Midwife. Dr. Giama was nominated for this award because of her extraordinary commitment and demonstrated years of work in health justice and the underserved female African immigrant community. She was chosen for this award because of her understanding of the social determinants of health and the needs of the immigrant population, her deep passion for her community and the the Somali culture. Dr. Giama has published in several textbooks the subject of caring for Somali patients and numerous peer-reviewed journal articles.

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[The National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health](#) is the nation's leading voice for courageous conversations about women's health. In our clinics and in our culture, women's health nurse practitioners champion state-of-the-science health care that holistically addresses the unique needs of women across their lifetimes. We elevate the health issues others overlook and compel attention on women's health from providers, policymakers, and researchers. Other advanced practice registered nurses rely on us for authoritative resources and education that improve women's health and wellness through evidence-based practice. NPWH pioneers policies to address gender disparities and forges strategic partnerships that advance health equity and holistic models of care.