

Faces of FRONTIER: *FOCUSED ON THE MISSION*



Kendra Adkisson, CNM
FNU Graduate, Class 72

Kendra Adkisson was born to be a Frontier midwife. "I'm a Kentucky woman," she says, "it was only right."

Kendra is inspired to make an impact in the state she calls home, just as Frontier's founder, Mary Breckinridge, did.

A recent graduate of Frontier Nursing University, Kendra, CNEP Class 72, has hit the ground running in her new career as a certified nurse-midwife. "I am incredibly excited and OVERWHELMED," she says after three months of practicing in Central Kentucky with Women's Care of the Bluegrass in Frankfort. "At the end of the day, I am exhausted, and my brain feels as though it can't hold any new information!"

Kendra works alongside Frontier graduates Emily Dial and Katie Isaac. "The doctors and fellow midwives I work with have been great at helping me navigate these new waters. At the end of the day, I feel I make the biggest difference by my patient education. I am able to review handouts, discuss lab results and really do a lot of counseling. At our clinic (as in much of Kentucky), obesity is a major issue. I am able to talk to new OB clients about diet, exercise, protein and hydration. I hope and feel that this helps set the stage for a healthy pregnancy."

About 60 percent of Kendra's clients are on Medicaid, and the population she serves is mostly white. Many are teens, and many of the women she serves use narcotics or marijuana. "I serve these women by trying to educate them from the get go. We work on nutrition ... I never knew that I would need to educate on drinking water. I'm amazed at how many women don't drink ANY water. ... Lots and lots of educating! It's like being a teacher, but I don't grade papers, I deliver babies at the end!"

Kendra is an active member of the American College of Nurse-Midwives and a board member of the ACNM Midwives Political Action Committee. She is also the creative mastermind behind a



Frontier graduates Kendra Adkisson, Emily Dial and Katie Isaac serve women in Central Kentucky as certified nurse-midwives with Women's Care of the Bluegrass in Frankfort.

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couple of brilliantly hilarious videos that have made the rounds on youtube and played a starring role in the last two ACNM national conferences. Her 2011 video (<http://youtu.be/ny1xtOAnBrc>) won honorable mention in the ACNM video contest. This year, she was commissioned to create a video for the opening session of the 2012 conference that was met with wild laughter (<http://youtu.be/vdLoawgafCc>). She was greeted by a standing ovation when called to the stage by ACNM President Holly Powell Kennedy.

For anyone who has met Kendra, it's clear that she is a dynamo and a force for positive change. Currently, she has her energy focused on policy change in her home state. "I live in a state that does not support out-of-hospital birth," she says. "Mary Breckinridge would roll over in her grave! I want to work towards the expansion of midwifery in Kentucky. Women need more options!"

"The first birth I saw was in the out-of-hospital setting, and it was so peaceful," she says. "So different than many of the over-medicalized births I have since seen as an RN."

Kendra says it's an amazing experience to greet a newborn into the world. "I love birth. I think it is an honor and a privilege to be present for a birth....a new human being hitting the planet."

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