



Patricia O. Loftman, CNM, LM, MS, FACNM is NYSPA's 2026 Stanley James Award Recipient!

Ms. Loftman has demonstrated an extraordinary and sustained commitment to advancing access to high-quality reproductive, maternal, and infant health care in New York State, particularly for communities historically underserved by the health care system. Her expansive lifetime of service gives the utmost honor to L. Stanley James' legacy.

As a Certified Nurse-Midwife and former Midwifery Service Director at Harlem Hospital Center, she provided comprehensive primary and reproductive health care to women in Central Harlem for over three decades. She developed extensive clinical expertise in caring for pregnant individuals affected by HIV and substance use, at a time when stigma, limited evidence, and systemic inequities significantly restricted access to appropriate and compassionate care.

Patricia's influence extended well beyond the bedside. She played a key role in shaping public health policy and clinical standards related to HIV in pregnancy. In 1995, she testified in New York City on the unblinding of newborn HIV test results, advocating for policies that balanced public health priorities with patient rights and ethical care. She contributed to national guidelines as a member of the United States Public Health Service Task Force on the Use of Zidovudine to Reduce Perinatal HIV Transmission, and participated in the landmark ACTG 076-related policy work informing recommendations on HIV counseling and voluntary testing for pregnant women. These contributions advanced practices that dramatically reduced perinatal HIV transmission and improved maternal-infant outcomes.

Within New York City, she promoted equitable maternal-infant care through systems change. As Chair of the Women's Health/Clinical Care Group, she led the successful effort for Harlem Hospital Center to become the first New York City hospital designated as a Baby-Friendly facility by the WHO. This achievement significantly improved breastfeeding support and maternal-infant bonding practices, particularly benefiting Black and low-income families who face disproportionate barriers to this care.

A dedicated educator and mentor, Ms. Loftman precepted numerous midwifery students, strengthening the future workforce and expanding access to culturally competent care. Since her retirement from clinical practice, Ms. Loftman has continued to be engaged in advancing maternal and infant health. She serves on the NYC Dept. Health & Mental Hygiene's Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee Mental Health and Injury Subcommittee, as well as the Health and Human Services Secretary's Advisory Committee on Infant Mortality, Health Equity Subcommittee. She continues to influence policy and practice aimed at reducing disparities and improving outcomes for birthing people and infants across New York State and nationally.

