Marie Buchanan Wiles and her family have contributed an endowment to the Duke Physician Assistant Program in memory of Robert “Buck” Buchanan. This donation, at $50,000, is the largest ever donated directly to the PA program, and will provide funding for PA education indefinitely.

“Buck” Buchanan was well known in the Clarksville, Virginia community. He was mayor for many years, and was central in bringing business and technology to Clarksville. He was a deacon at Clarksville Baptist Church, and in his younger years, a volunteer for the local fire department. He married Vera Dorio, Marie’s mother, in 1963. Until Mr. Buchanan became ill in late 2012, he continued to serve on the town council, work part-time, and teach Sunday school. He passed away on March 31, 2013 of a brain tumor. Marie describes her dad as “a hard working, intelligent, determined and driven person with a strong work ethic, who always provided and cared for his family.” He was a great supporter of Marie’s education and her becoming a physician assistant.

In his younger years as an electrician, Mr. Buchanan helped maintain Dr. Eugene Stead’s lakeside cabin near Clarksville. Marie currently resides in Clarksville, VA with her husband, Dan, and daughter, Elaine. She is employed as a PA by Wake Emergency Physicians, based in the emergency department of Granville Medical Center. She also regularly teaches at the Duke Physician Assistant Program and is a strong believer in “giving back to the PA Program.”

In 2015 the Duke PA Program will celebrate its 50th anniversary. The Buchanan and Wiles families are proud to contribute this $50,000 endowment in honor of Buck Buchanan and the anniversary of the program. Through this gift, Robert Buchanan’s name and legacy will live on well into the future, and continue to aid those seeking a career as a physician assistant and higher education in general, as well as provide encouragement to others of the importance of hard work and using both learned skills and acquired financial means to contribute to education.
When I became program director, I turned over chairing the Admission Committee to Sherrie Spear, MHS, PA-C (Class of 1995). She is bringing a fresh perspective to the process as we handle a robust national applicant pool. At alumni events, we often are asked about our admission process. Admission to the Duke PA Program is very competitive. PA class size is typically 88 students per year. For the 2013-2014 admissions cycle, there were more than 1,600 CASPA (Centralized Application Service for PAs) applications. This represents an almost 16 percent increase from last year. The ranges of academic and experiential qualifications for the middle 50 percent of accepted applicants for Fall 2013 were as follows:

- Overall GPA: 3.3-3.7
- Natural science GPA: 3.2-3.7
- Total natural science credits: 43-76
- GRE General Test scores:
  - Verbal: 500-583 (153-158 new GRE scoring)
  - Quantitative: 630-733 (150-157 new GRE scoring)
  - Analytical Writing: 4.0-4.5
- Months of full-time patient care experience: 13-40

In addition to having a highly competitive applicant pool, the program has long been dedicated to a holistic admissions approach. The Duke PA Program is committed to recruiting and matriculating minority and disadvantaged students as well as students from underserved AHEC areas (Area Health Education Centers) in North Carolina for careers as physician assistants.
Susan Blackwell, MHS, PA-C, Class of 1989  
Chair, Duke PA Alumni Steering Committee

Let There Be Cake

When we celebrated my parents’ 50th wedding anniversary in 2006, it was a radiant fall day in October. Family and friends gathered for delicious North Carolina BBQ and fixins overlooking the beautiful rolling Piedmont hills of my brother and sister-in-law’s farm. There was a slight chill in the air just perfect for the first sweater of the season and a bonfire that drew folks to share stories and reminisce. It was a splendid occasion to recognize a grand couple. Photos from years past were shared as were toasts, some belly rolling funny, others more sentimental. And of course, there was cake. (A beautiful replica of the 1950s wedding cake, exquisite and so tasty.)

Several years later, as my life partner Jeff and I drove towards my parents’ home it was a dark, damp, cold December evening. I knew I was in trouble when he began to take an unexpected turn. Now it was the occasion of my 50th birthday. Despite having every member of my family and Jeff promise there would be no shenanigans for this unavoidable day-no such luck! However, the evening proved to be nothing short of magical. Adorning the entrance of the historic 1800s farm house turned local restaurant, was an oversized, glitter covered banner, made by my niece that shouted to guests and patrons alike,” Happy 50th birthday Aunt Susan!”

Dozens of roses perfumed the air. There were smiles, hugs, kisses and well wishes. This was truly a happy celebration after all. And there was cake. (Red Velvet, the best ever.)

Here we are on the eve of the 50th anniversary of the Duke University Physician Assistant Program. Here is where it all began. Dr Stead and a brave, unprecedented, unparalleled idea. We surely have cause for celebration! Let there be stories, photos, banners, roses, smiles and hugs. Let us shout about our grand profession and all that has been accomplished over 50 years. Let us listen, share and learn from each other’s experiences as Duke PAs. Let us feel the magic and toast the future. Let us all gather to celebrate 50 years of our profession. And let there be cake!

Save the Date for our 50th Anniversary!

Saturday, October 3, 2015 has been selected as the date to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of PA Education at Duke. Planning is underway for a full day of activities in Durham, culminating in a gala evening event. So, mark your calendars! Invitations will be mailed to alumni and other guests 3 months before the event.
News from Alumni

**Michael Quirk (’70)** announced that he semi-retired in 2011, but still works part-time at age 70 – loving patient care! Since completing the PA Program, he has lived in four states and has earned his BS and MBA in healthcare. He has been a clinic administrator, a hospital administrator and an assistant professor at the AT Still University PA Program, all while working part-time as a PA in the ER or urgent care setting. Michael has been married for 46 years, is a grandfather of four boys, and lives in the Florida Keys.

**Charles Lewis (’71)** shared that he earned his doctorate in Health Care Science (D.H.Sc.) in 2009 from the Nova Southeastern University College of Health Care Sciences, and is currently an Assistant Professor there (on faculty since 2000). He has been teaching online classes from home in Columbia, SC since 2007.

**Richard Turner (’72)** retired as a practicing PA in January 2013 after 40 years in clinical practice. He originally worked in Emergency Medicine and started the Paramedic Training Program at the University of Cincinnati. For the past 18 years he practiced Occupational Medicine in Dayton, Ohio. Richard is still living in Cincinnati with his wife, Joyce.

**Edmund J. Wise, Jr. (’74)** became a distinguished fellow of the American Academy of Physician Assistants on February 7, 2013. Ed is also one of the first inductees into the Tennessee Academy of Physician Assistants Hall of Fame, and is Chair of TAPA’s Hall of Fame Committee.

**Stephen Nagle (’76)** retired from Geisinger Medical Center in December 2012. He was the senior PA in the Gastroenterology/Hepatology department where he worked after completing the first AASLD mid-level fellowship program in 2004-05. Prior to that, Steve was the senior PA in the Department of Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery at Geisinger beginning in 1981. Stephen remains in Danville, PA with his wife, Kathie.

**Rosann Ippolito (’82)** was excited to announce in 2013 that she has accepted a new position as an Assistant Director with the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the PA (ARC-PA).

**Marylou Bembe (’86)** announced that she retired on August 30, 2013 after 35 years at Duke.

**Rhonda Feldman (’95)** accepted a faculty position at the University of New England in September 2012 after nearly 18 years in clinical medicine. She was promoted to Academic Coordinator in March 2013.

**Peter Lindland (’96)** announced in August 2013 that he joined the US Foreign Service and is working as Foreign Service Health Practitioner abroad. He was accompanied by his wife, Emily, and his boys, Nathan (5) and Jacob (9). Prior to this, he completed a 3 year contracting job as a Family Practice PA in Ramstein, Germany.

**Mark (2002) and Denise Dillon Gallegos (2001)** had their third child, Naomi, on June 24, 2013. She joins older brothers Alex (5) and Ryan (3).

**Meredith Price Beadles (’04)** and her husband Chris had a baby girl named Annelise Elizabeth Beadles on June 30, 2012. Meredith continues to work in Orthopedics at the Durham VAMC.

**Christine Furmick (’06)** and her husband, David Fussell, welcomed baby boy Robert Lewis Fussell III on January 17, 2014. He is the little brother of Catherine.

**Melinda (Townley) Hughes (’06)** announced that in 2010, she left family practice at a community health center to start her own integrative medicine practice, Hughes Health. In 2012, she had a daughter, Camille Marie. Melinda also guest lectured at Idaho State University’s PA Program on Integrative Medicine in 2013.
Melinda Blazar ('07) and her husband, Jeff Boardman, welcomed baby boy Harris James on March 24, 2014. He joins big sister Tess.

Veronica McKay Heath ('06) was married to Matthew Heath in South Lake Tahoe in April 2011 and gave birth to a baby boy, Edwyn, on November 10, 2012. She recently moved to La Crosse, WI after working for the last four years as a Neurohospitalist PA at Forsyth Medical Center in Winston Salem, NC.

Kelly A. Taylor ('07) shared in August 2013 that she was selected for a one year academic fellowship with the Medical University of South Carolina PA program. Like the Duke fellowship, it is an opportunity to learn about faculty and program responsibilities and to develop skills as an instructor.

Katie (Muench) Sweetapple ('08) gave birth to a baby girl, Addison Kate Sweetapple, on January 7, 2013.

Roger Diaz ('09) and Dawn (Stella) Diaz ('09) were married on April 28th, 2013.

Mary Houston ('09), her husband Jason, and big sister Isabella welcomed new baby boy Alexander James on June 11, 2013. In July 2013, the family moved to Montgomery, Alabama.

Justin Call ('10) and Heather Morgan Call ('09) were married on April 27, 2012 and are now living and working in Colorado.

Krista Melvin Jordan ('10) married Brad Jordan on September 14, 2013. She is currently the first-ever vascular neurology PA within the health care system for which she works in Minnesota.

Nicole Blackwell Ray ('10) has welcomed two babies since graduation - Shelby was born November 9, 2011 and Jackson was born February 13, 2013. She now works in Marion at Healthplus of McDowell Hospital providing primary care/urgent care under National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program.


Teshia Jones ('11) and her husband welcomed baby boy, Caleb Michael Jones, on July 12, 2013.

Nicole Lane ('11) announced that she was married to her partner, Melanie, on June 7, 2013 at Duke Gardens.

JD Rutledge ('11) and his wife, Ashley, welcomed their third daughter on January 21, 2013. They are all doing well and greatly missing North Carolina. The family resides in Rochester, MN.

Katie Fernandez Langston ('12) was married on September 21, 2013 to C.W. Langston.

Mollie (O’Mara) Lindholm ('12) was married on October 6, 2012 to Jeff Lindholm in Stillwater, MN, her home town. She currently works at Oak Island Pediatrics in Southport, NC.
During our annual National PA Week Celebration on October 7, 2013, students, faculty, staff, and guests gathered to eat cake and celebrate PAs all over the world. As part of the celebration, Dr. Harvey Estes, one of the founders of the PA profession, gave his usual enlightening remarks. In addition, the Chair of the Alumni Steering Committee, Susan Blackwell ('89), inducted three alums into the Duke PA Hall of Fame: Mary Jo Bondy, DHEd, MHS, PA-C ('93), William Vaassen, PA-C ('74), and Gilbert R. Nelmes, RPA-C ('71).

In 2014, we will begin a “Day of Service” in lieu of the in-house celebration of PA Week. Saturday, October 4, 2014 will be the PA Program’s first “Day of Service” in the Durham community. A blast e-mail will be sent to alums so that they can join students and faculty in serving the Durham Community on October 4, 2014!
The American Academy of Physician Assistants’ 41st Annual Conference was held May 25 – May 29, 2013 in Washington D.C. The Duke PA Program had a fantastic showing at our Alumni Reception on May 26th, with over one hundred alumni, students, and faculty in attendance! We were also well-represented at the conference by our 2nd year students. Sarah Tillema, Caitlin Donahue, and Ben Pierce presented their poster titled “Burton Elementary School Health Hygiene Project.” Second-year students Danielle Feser and Ben Pierce entered their EBM papers into the AAPA Student Writing Contest — Danielle placed first in the contest, and Ben placed third. Both traveled to the conference to present their papers and receive their awards. Several alums also presented posters. Joshua Gay, Kimberly (Pastrana) Lennon, and Andrea Calef, all from the Class of 2012, were at the conference to present posters having to do with their individual residency programs. We hope to see all of you this year in Boston!
**Alumni News**

**Alumni in the News**

*Justine Strand de Oliveira, DrPH, PA-C ('81)* authored an article entitled “Access to Care: Beyond Health Insurance” which was featured as a Special Article in the November 2013 issue of The Journal of the American Academy of Physician Assistants.

*Alan Watt, PA-C ('05)* was a guest on the House Call segment of the Greensboro NC news station, Fox 8, in December 2013. Alan spoke about Seasonal Affective Disorder and “Preventing the Wintertime Blues.”

The November 2013 issue of The Journal of the American Academy of Physician Assistants included an article written by alumnus *Jeanne Monique Beyerle, PA-C ('08)*. The article, “A Collection of Red Macules on a Forearm” was featured in the Dermatology Digest.

**2013 Distinguished Alumnus of the Year**

*Mary Jo Bondy, DHEd, MHS, PA-C* was honored as the 2013 Distinguished Alumnus of the Year at the Duke PA Commencement Ceremony on May 12, 2013. Dr. Bondy graduated from the Duke University PA Program in 1993. Her career as a PA demonstrates passion for clinical medicine and PA education. Prior to becoming a PA, Dr. Bondy graduated from Marquette University and was a medical technologist.

After graduating from Duke's PA program, Dr. Bondy practiced as a PA in Orthopedic Surgery at Duke University Medical Center for two years prior to joining Wilmington (NC) Health Associates and practicing in Internal Medicine. She subsequently joined Forstner Family Practice and Urgent Care in Southport, NC where she practiced for two years. She returned to Duke in January 2000 to practice in the Emergency Department; during that time, she also served as a Regional Clinical Coordinator for the Duke PA Program. In the latter role, she recruited and developed potential PA students and preceptors, and served as a liaison to coastal medical and educational communities. After three years, she moved to Washington DC and became a Senior PA and Assistant Clinical Professor at George Washington University in the Emergency Department and also at the Bethesda Naval Emergency Department. During that period, she began her work with Anne Arundel Community College PA Program. She became PA Program Director in 2007 and continues in that role.

Dr. Bondy earned the Doctor of Health Education degree from AT Still University in May 2011. She is active in the Physician Assistant Education Association, and currently is Director at Large. She has also served on their Government Relations Committee. In the Maryland Academy of Physician Assistants, she has been Public Relations Chair and a member of the Legislative Committee.
Alumni Steering Committee News

We are excited to announce two new members of the Alumni Steering Committee as of November 2013! Tara Hanaway-Quinlan, PA-C ('12) is now the representative for Classes of 2012 through 2016. Adam Cady, PA-S ('15) will serve as the Student Representative until his graduation.


Pioneers are Honored

In honor of the Duke PA Pioneers (Classes of 1967-1971), two teakwood benches were placed in front of the Duke PA building for students, faculty, and staff to enjoy.

In Memoriam

Michael James Conwell ('75) passed away on Sunday, October 20, 2013 following a motorcycle accident. Mr. Conwell was the first PA in Greensboro, NC and worked for Cardiovascular & Thoracic Surgeons from 1975 to 1985. In 1985, he became an officer in the Greensboro Police Department, serving primarily in the Financial Crimes and Homicide Squads. He retired from the Police Department after 22 years of service and then became a Medical Examiner for Guilford and Rockingham Counties. Michael is survived by his wife, Rita Shugart, children, and grandchildren. From his funeral program, “As is evident by his occupations, Michael had long exposure to death and its effects on families and loved ones. Perhaps because of that, he was well aware that none of us knows our time on earth. He fully understood the dangers of motorcycle riding, and many of his other risky hobbies like rock climbing, kayaking, and sailing. But he loved his Harley, and he was always perfectly happy riding in the beautiful countryside on a lovely sunny day.”

Carlos “Mike” Bray ('71) passed away on Saturday, January 14, 2012 in Macon, GA. He was the first Physician Assistant in the state of Georgia, and worked with the Department of Corrections for 17 years. Funeral services were held on Monday, January 16, 2012.
Duke Alum Seeks to Solve Global Health Crisis by Partnering With Communities

Elizabeth Sheehan (’85), Duke PA Program 2010 Alumnus of the year, is looking to try something unusual in the global health arena.

Elizabeth founded Containers 2 Clinics (or C2C), a Boston-based organization that is saving lives by bringing primary health care to communities in the developing world. The organization is partnering with patients – setting out to prove that, with philanthropic help to get them started, even very poor communities can sustain a primary health care clinic without the need for continued philanthropic support. The goal is simple: to bring life-saving, sustainable care to communities in need. The four pillars of the model include 1) C2C uses flexible infrastructure, often shipping containers to provide a clean, secure, adaptable clinical space 2) C2C provides proven health interventions, delivered by local medical staff 3) C2C partners with local communities to ensure our services meet their needs 4) C2C clinics become sustainable after 3-5 years when low user fees begin to cover operating costs.

C2C’s 3 clinics have treated over 20,000 patients in Haiti and Africa. In addition over 20,000 lifesaving prescriptions have been filled, over 1100 ultrasounds have been performed, 500 health education sessions have been held, 3500 home visits by community health workers CHW’s have been conducted and 1180 mothers have graduated from safe motherhood programs.

Elizabeth is looking forward to sharing future updates with the Duke community.

Employment Data for Class of 2012

The new graduate surveys are in, and we can finally report on what the Class of 2012 has been up to since graduation! In 2012, the average starting salary of a Duke PA graduate was $83,370.

Members of the Duke PA Class of 2012 are employed as physician assistants in the following distribution:

- Primary Care (family medicine, pediatrics, general internal medicine): 38%
- Surgery: 17%
- Emergency Medicine: 15%
- Internal Medicine subspecialties: 24%
- Other: 6%

Graduate surveys are mailed approximately 9 months after graduation – we encourage new grads to return them promptly so that we have robust employment information to share with others!
Time really does seem to fly when one is having fun. This time last year our class could not wait to get out of the lecture hall and into the clinic and now, here we are! Two-thirds through our second year finds the Class of 2014 realizing how much we have learned in practical knowledge and how much we continue to improve on a daily basis. We find ourselves having moments of pride and confidence as well as some moments of self-doubt; yet, with the help of our preceptors, instructors, and peers, we move forward doing our best.

One of the exciting things about this year is hearing my classmates talk about the rotations they have loved, especially if it was a rotation they were nervous about or not looking forward to. Many of my classmates have found their calling regarding how they want their future career to look. With each clinical rotation, we seem to learn something new about not only clinical practice but also about ourselves. Although we do not see each other as much as last year, the time we do have together is rich with stories, lessons learned, and laughs.

As we finish out the year and our time in the PA Program, we are excited to demonstrate the extensive knowledge we have gained. We anticipate being colleagues in the world of medicine without forgetting the friends, family, faculty, preceptors, and patients that have helped us along the way. Though our two years spent at Duke has yielded invaluable experiences, it is only the beginning of an exciting future as PAs and practicing clinicians. Many opportunities await each of us as we set forth in different directions, never forgetting the memories we made while at Duke. We look forward to August while still cherishing the remaining time we have in our clinical year.
Early in our Duke PA Journey, the Class of 2015 encountered a quirky question during admissions interviewing: "If you were a superhero, what would your power be?" I initially thought this was the supposedly nonexistent "silly question" and suspect many of my classmates shared that sentiment. However, in the midst of second semester it is now obvious that this was an incredibly relevant inquiry.

The rich fabric of the Duke PA program is woven from the lives of everyday superheroes: Visionaries, Pioneers, Educators, Innovators, and Leaders of one of the world’s great professions. On behalf of my class, it is our humbling honor to join your fold and have so many alums and friends of the program contribute to our education. I will not claim superhero status for myself, but assure you the Class of 2015 is the most remarkable group of men and women I have ever had the pleasure of working with. The lecture hall is thick with budding “heroes and heroines” doing incredible things, so I would like to share a little about how our class is adding its own unique thread to the tapestry of the Duke PA legacy.

As you might suspect, the majority of our time is spent diligently drinking from the “fire hydrant of knowledge” while attempting to balance a home life with family and friends. This is both expected and unremarkable, but what our class does with its free time never ceases to amaze me. This fall we participated in Habitat for Humanity builds, fundraising to brighten the holidays.
for three separate families, volunteering at the Durham Ronald McDonald House holiday party, tutoring middle and high school students, collaborating with medical students on the “Duke Med Elementary” project, and much more. Highlights of the spring semester include the Burton Elementary School project, St. Baldrick’s fundraiser, an American Red Cross Blood Drive, and volunteering at the Special Olympics, Urban Ministries to feed the homeless, and Bull City Fit. Other classmates promote our collective growth as professionals through involvement with both national and regional organizations. These efforts regularly bring us guest speakers who cultivate our understanding of the PA profession, the importance of advocacy, and our role in the rapidly evolving healthcare system. These experiences and alumni (and Faculty Develop Fellow) Lorraine Anglin’s mentorship of our Challenge Bowl Team make us especially eager to attend the AAPA Conference in Boston this year!

Perhaps the most unique thing about the Class of 2015 is the bond we share with each other. There is a culture of compassion and camaraderie at 800 S. Duke Street that is second to none. Classmates offer free yoga, fitness boot camp, slack-line, and salsa dancing sessions to help other students de-stress. Locally grown produce from the farmer’s market routinely shows up in the break area so there are healthy snacks available. We regularly have potluck lunches to share foods and traditions from our diverse backgrounds and remind ourselves of home. I may not be a superhero, but I am surrounded by them in class, educated by the ones comprising the faculty and staff, and inspired by the everyday heroes among the alumni and friends of the program.

In September 2013, the Class of 2015 elected their Stead Society Officers. The following students were elected: President: Trey Levers, Vice President: Scott Jones, Secretary: Casey Herdson, Treasurer: Anna Zelov, NCAPA Student Representative: Holly O’Sullivan, AAPA House of Delegates Representative: Angela King, SAAAPA Representative: Carla Longanecker, SAAAPA Alternate Representative: Blaine Montague, Diversity Chair: Chenie Xu, Outreach Chair: Todd McVeigh, Graduate and Professional Student Representative: Bethany Applebome, Honor Council: Eddie Kim, Green Chair: Andrew McGraw, Historian: Stephanie Agoncillo. Stead Society advisor is Associate Director, Sherrie Spear.
Commencement 2013

Commencement for the Duke Physician Assistant Class of 2013 was held on May 12, 2013 at the Washington Duke Inn in Durham. Seventy-eight students received their Master of Health Sciences diploma and were hooded in front of guests, faculty, and staff. During the ceremony, Dr. Nancy Andrews, Dean of the School of Medicine, led the Hippocratic Oath. Katherine Pocock (’13) gave graduate remarks and Terri McGuire (’13) received the Richard J. Scheele Award. The Alumnus of the Year award was presented to Mary Jo Bondy, DHEd, MHS, PA-C (’93) by the Student Representative of the Alumni Steering Committee, Kimberly Shultz (’13). Certificates of Appreciation were presented to Cornelius Cathcart, MD, Cori Corcoran, PA-C, and Ricardo Padilla, DDS. An Honorary Physician Assistant Award was presented to Khanh Vu, MD. A reception was held immediately following the ceremony.
Award recipient Cori Corcoran, PA-C and Nick Hudak
Betsy Melcher and award recipient Dr. Ricardo Padilla
April Stouder and Honorary PA award recipient Dr. Khanh Vu
Adaptive Sports Experience

In collaboration with Duke Doctor of Physical Therapy students, the Duke PA Class of 2015 and faculty co-coordinator, Betsy Melcher, participated in a three-hour adaptive sports experience with athletes in the community with a variety of disabilities. Their experience included observation of and active participation in wheelchair basketball, sitting volleyball, and blind bocce ball. This interdisciplinary educational experience successfully educated students in healthcare professions on the opportunities and benefits of physical activity for people with disabilities. It also gave them insight into the cultural competence necessary to care for people with disabilities, and the importance of advocacy in the community for this population.

National Wear Red Day

Students, faculty, and staff observed National Wear Red Day on February 7, 2014 to show their support for those women who are suffering with or who are affected by heart disease.
**Holiday Cheer**

In December 2013, members of the Class of 2015 went to the Durham Ronald McDonald House to host a holiday party for the residents. They enjoyed an afternoon of crafts and games with the children and their families.

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**Pink for Breast Cancer**

Students wore pink for Breast Cancer Awareness on October 24, 2013.

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**The White Coat Ceremony**

The White Coat Ceremony for Class of 2015 was held on August 23, 2013 in front of an intimate group of students, faculty, and staff. Later that evening, family and friends joined us for our annual Welcome Picnic at the Doris Duke Center. Both events are symbolic to the students – it means their PA Education at Duke has officially begun!
Preclinical Curriculum Update

Here’s an update on recent happenings and changes in the preclinical (otherwise known as “didactic”) year, provided by Annamarie Streilein, Director of Preclinical Education.

Melvania Briggs, MA, PA-C, assumed the role of coordinator of the Diagnostic Methods courses when she joined the preclinical year team as an Academic Coordinator in July 2013. This content includes laboratory medicine, diagnostic imaging, and EKG, and topics are sequenced with the Clinical Medicine and Pharmacology courses. Ms. Briggs also lends her content expertise in the biopsychosocial practice of medicine in a number of lecture and small group teaching venues.

The Patient Assessment and Counseling I, II and III courses, coordinated by Nick Hudak, MPA, MSEd, PA-C, now span the first year of the curriculum. These courses encompass material formerly presented in the Physical Diagnosis and Patient Assessment I and II courses and the Behavioral Medicine course.

For the last several years, the first year students have participated in an interprofessional Prevention course with students from the Duke MD, DPT and Nursing programs. This course is team-taught by faculty from each program and provides the students an early and vital opportunity to learn about and interact with other future members of the healthcare team in lecture and small group settings. This year, the course was presented in the new Trent Siemans Learning Center. Betsy Melcher, MS, ATC, MHS, PA-C brings her interprofessional education expertise by serving as the course director from the PA Program.

The most recent change to the preclinical year curriculum is the addition of a new unit of the Clinical Medicine II course: Critical Care. This unit is presented at the end of the academic year and provides an introduction to critical care medicine. Kenny Railey, MD serves as unit coordinator.

Underserved Communities Scholar Program Update

Our last two newsletters have highlighted the Underserved Communities Scholar Program (UCSP), which is grant funded from the Health Resources and Services Administration designed to increase the number of PA graduates working in primary care. There were eight scholarship recipients for the Class of 2014 - Janett Aguilar, Nadine Minani, Kyle Pusey, Kina Smith, Sarah Spainhour-Reese, Jenna Staples, David Stevens, and Scott Tercero. With assistance from the Clinical Education Faculty Development Fellows and other clinical faculty, two new sites have been developed to accommodate the eight students: Cherokee Indian Hospital Authority and Green County Health Care. Eight students from the Class of 2015 have already been selected. They will begin their clinical year in late July 2014.
A
s part of the Duke PA Program’s mission to education caring, competent physician assistants, students are provided with a multitude of clinical learning opportunities in various settings and with diverse patient populations. In addition to their completion of 8 required rotations, Primary Care, Internal Medicine, Behavioral Medicine, Emergency Medicine, Pediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynecology, and Evidence-Based Medicine, students also participate in 2 elective courses. Over the past several years, an increasing number of applicants and students have been expressing interest in learning in communities in international settings. In 2008, the first global health elective rotation was offered. Since joining the faculty in 2009, Clinical Coordinator Nick Hudak has taken the lead in developing this 4-week elective course. Currently, students have the opportunity to participate in a Global Health Elective in Bolivia, Ecuador, Sri Lanka, or Tanzania. Duke faculty from various departments, including our own Justine Strand de Oliveira, who have professional connections in the countries have facilitated introductions with these unique sites.

One of the goals of a Global Health Elective is to gain knowledge of common conditions and diseases that are endemic to unique regions outside of the United States. Students also develop an understanding of patient assessment and treatment in an international setting, and they recognize how the culture impacts health and healthcare. Students who wish to participate in a Global Health Elective must submit an application, and if selected, must also take part in various preparatory lectures and activities. There is a formalized orientation process that proves invaluable when students’ feet hit the ground in the international settings. Each student application is under continual evaluation for qualifications, which includes a completed application by the due date, satisfactory academic and professional standing, motivation, adaptability, and maturity. At the end of their experiences, students are evaluated by preceptors (actual providers from the country) and are encouraged to share their experiences with classmates and potential students. Ten to twelve students per year (about 10% of the class) participate in a Global Health Elective – thirty-nine students total since 2010.

Nick Hudak says, “I have had the privilege to individually meet with students after their international rotation since 2010 and each have consistently confirmed they experienced an immersion in the culture, strengthened their cultural competency, and broadened their knowledge of health and healthcare within a global construct.” Preceptors and staff at the international sites continue to report positive experience with Duke PA Students. Our program is very proud to offer this distinct elective that allows students to gain further understanding of and experience with communities in international settings.

We are grateful to Maria del Valle-Torres, PA Class of 2009, who donated $5,000 to establish a Global Health Scholarship for PA students. Students who undertake a Global Health elective incur additional costs beyond their tuition. The Global Health Scholarship will make a difference to PA students who might not consider this elective due to financial considerations.
Sylvie K. Hill, MS, MHS, PA-C (‘09) served as our Clinical Education Faculty Development Fellow from June 1, 2013 to September 30, 2013. She received her Master in Health Science (MHS) and Physician Assistant certificate in 2009 from the Duke PA Program. Upon graduation she joined the Duke Cardiac Electrophysiology (EP) team where she has been working as a physician assistant in an outpatient setting at the Duke South clinic. During her fellowship, Sylvie assisted the clinical team with developing sites for the Underserved Community Scholars Program. Her clinical and research interests include management of atrial fibrillation in the minority population with metabolic disease, particularly diabetes type 2.

Lorraine Anglin, MHS, PA-C (‘08) joined the Duke University PA program in October 2013 as the Clinical Education Faculty Development Fellow. She primarily works with the clinical year team to develop new sites and preceptors for the Underserved Community Scholars Program. Prior to the fellowship, Ms. Anglin practiced for 4 1/2 years at West Side Community Health Services in St. Paul, MN, serving low-income and immigrant communities. In addition during the past 2 years, she has served on the board of directors for the Minnesota Academy of Physician Assistants and is a member of the American Academy of Physician Assistants. Her educational and clinical interests include applied learning, culturally-competent health care, chronic disease prevention and management, and promotion of primary care.

Lovest Alexander’s (‘78) title has been changed from Director of Minority Affairs to Director of Diversity and Inclusion. April Stouder (‘00) was promoted to Assistant Professor effective April 1, 2013. Nick Hudak was promoted to Assistant Professor effective June 1, 2013. Betsy Melcher (‘05) and Melinda Blazar (‘07) were both promoted to Assistant Professor effective February 1, 2014. Dr. Maggie Gradison was promoted to Professor on April 1, 2014.

Claire Terhune, PhD, the PA Program’s Anatomist since 2009, resigned from the PA Program in December 2013. She accepted a tenure-track assistant professor position in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville.

Megan Holmes joined the PA Program as Anatomist on March 17, 2014. Megan is a PhD Candidate in Anatomy at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.
Duke PA Program and PAEA

In October 2013 at the PA Education Association meeting in Memphis, Academic Coordinator Betsy Melcher was the recipient of the New Faculty Award. The award recognizes faculty members with three years or fewer of service who have made significant contributions to PA education in teaching, administration, scholarship, or professional service. Nick Hudak, Clinical Coordinator, was recipient of this award in 2012. Also in 2012, Assistant Professor Peggy Robinson was the recipient of the PAEA Master Faculty Award, and Dr. Joseph Bell of Pembroke Pediatrics was the recipient of the PAEA Partnership Award.

Karen J. Hills, MS, PA-C, Duke PA Program Director, became president of PAEA on January 1, 2014. ■

Former PA Division Chief Takes On New Role As Vice Chair for Education

After 13 years as Chief of the Physician Assistant Division, Justine Strand de Oliveira has taken on a new role as Vice Chair for Education for Duke’s Department of Community and Family Medicine. She is the first physician assistant to hold the position at Duke, and the second physician assistant in the nation to be appointed Vice Chair of an academic medical center family medicine department.

“I am delighted to welcome Justine into this major leadership role, at a time when interprofessional practice and training are moving to center stage,” said Lloyd Michener, MD, Chair of the Department of Community and Family Medicine. “Justine’s work as a clinician, as a public health officer and most of all as an educator have well prepared her to help the Department, Duke, and PAs across the country prepare for a new era in health care.”

During her time as division chief, Strand de Oliveira worked to expand and evolve physician assistant education at Duke. Under her leadership, the division relocated its headquarters from the medical center complex to its current location in its own building. The move enabled the program to increase its enrollment by 42 percent. Strand de Oliveira also oversaw a shift in the program’s curriculum, which was adapted to better align with the current health care system.

“During my time as division chief, I worked with faculty and staff to ensure that our curriculum fostered leadership,” said Strand de Oliveira. “The product of our physician assistant program is access to high quality health care. For that reason, health education curriculum has to evolve with our health care system.”

In her new role, Strand de Oliveira plays a major leadership role in the department’s population health and faculty development initiatives. She also works with the PA Program, the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program, Occupational and Environmental Health, and Family Medicine Residency programs to promote programmatic collaboration and educational leadership.

Strand de Oliveira continues to inspire her peers to open doors for future physician assistants. In addition to her new role, she was the first physician assistant to serve as a member of Duke’s Institutional Review Board and Institutional Committee on Graduate Medical Education. She was also the first physician assistant to serve as president of the North Carolina Medical Society Foundation, and to complete the Physician Executive Leadership Program (PELP) and Chancellor’s Clinical Leadership in Academic Medicine Program (CCHAMP) at Duke. ■
Welcome to New PA Researcher, Christine Everett!

The PA Division welcomed Christine Everett, MPH, PhD, PA-C to our faculty in August 2013. Dr. Everett joins Perri Morgan, PhD, PA-C in our research group.

Dr. Everett brings many skills to our program. She is a BS graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and received the MPH degree from Johns Hopkins University in 1998. Her entry into patient care came through her Physician Assistant degree earned at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She earned her PhD in Population Health also from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Dr. Everett’s clinical work as a PA has included urgent care and emergency medicine.

Prior to coming to Duke, Dr. Everett was a post-doctoral fellow in health services research at Wisconsin; she has held a variety of positions related to research including Director of Research at the PA Program of the University of Wisconsin. She was the recipient of an AHRQ NRSA T32 Training Grant Pre-Doctoral Fellowship. In 2011 she was the Breitman-Dorn Fellowship Recipient, a prestigious fellowship offered by the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA). In 2012 she was the Primary Care Faculty Development Fellow nominated by the AAPA.

Earlier in her career, Dr. Everett was a Public Health Specialist/Program Analyst with the Office of Women’s Health, Office of Science and Health Coordination, Office of the Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration. While in that position, she received an Honor Award and the Commissioner’s Award of Excellence, and the Deputy Commissioner’s Award for Community Service.

Dr. Everett has unique skills in health workforce analysis and outcomes research, and she arrived at Duke with a full slate of research activities already underway. Her most recent publication was in the prominent journal Health Affairs (Everett CM, Thorpe C, Carayon P, Bartels C, Smith MA. Physician assistant and nurse practitioners perform effective roles on teams caring for Medicare patients with diabetes 2013. 32(11): 1942-1948.)

Admissions

There are typically six weeks of interviews from October through February with all applicants notified of the outcome of their application by early March. On interview day, applicants are encouraged to get all of their questions answered. We continue to offer a series of presentations regarding the curriculum, financial aid information and a virtual tour of the campus and Medical Center. Applicants have the opportunity to take a tour of DPAP, to sit in on a lecture or small group and eat lunch with students. During the lunch hour, no faculty or staff are present, so applicants can really get the inside track on what it is like to be a Duke PA student. There are two interviews with faculty and a team process exercise observed by a clinical year PA student and faculty observer. The program greatly appreciates the role of the students who serve as members of the Admissions Committee. The students bring insight regarding an applicant’s team skills and the perspective of what it would like to be a classmate or on a clinical rotation together. Student team process observers are selected from the group of students participating in the Evidence-Based Medicine II (EBM II) course.

The 2014-2015 admissions cycle will bring additional innovations to our process as the Centralized Application Service for PAs (CASPA) is going paperless. Since our supplemental application has been electronic for some time, we are excited about the potential to be even more environmentally friendly as we will be able to review all aspects of the application electronically.

We are grateful for the participation we receive from members of our alumni community who help with the interview process. Lisa Shock, MHS, PA-C (Class of 1999) and James H. Carter, Jr., MHS, PA-C (Class of 1986) have been long-time Admissions Committee Members. If you are interested in serving on the Admissions Committee as an interviewer, please contact Sherrie Spear at 919-681-3161.
Contributions to the Alumni Scholarship Fund

We thank all of our donors who have given to the PA scholarship fund and gifts at any level make a difference. Below we recognize our donors giving at the Member level and higher.

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Please send your note to:
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