The Duke PA program has consistently been ranked one of the top programs in the nation, and currently is ranked No. 1 by U.S. News & World Report. There currently are 179 students in the program — 90 in the first-year class, and 88 in the second-year class.

Patricia Dieter, MPA, PA-C, professor of community and family medicine and chief of the Duke Physician Assistant Division, says that students who come to the Duke PA program make tremendous sacrifices to attend, including traveling across the country and relocating families.

“It’s not a matter of convenience at all for our students,” Dieter says. “It’s people making major life changes in order to come here.”

“It’s not lost on students that they are attending such a historic program,” says Karen Hills, MS, PA-C, associate professor of community and family medicine and program director of the Duke PA program. Hanging on a wall in the PA program building at 800 S. Duke St. in downtown Durham are photos of all the graduates of the program — starting with the first three who graduated on Oct. 6, 1967.

“When [students] … walk down the hall and they see those … three pictures, and then there’s a few more pictures,” she
Future of PA Profession Very Promising

“To the 2,123 alumni of the Duke PA program, we salute you for your many accomplishments and contributions to health care. We salute you for your leadership, your compassion and your heart for service. To those who are educators and preceptors of PAs, we thank you for your commitment to the future of the profession and your dedication to quality education. And finally, to our students, who represent the future of the profession and all that the next 50 years will bring.”

At the conclusion of the 50th anniversary celebration, I was joined on the stage by Harvey Estes, Reginald Carter, Justine Strand de Oliveira and Patricia Dieter for the program director’s toast. It was a culminating moment in what had been a dazzling evening of memories, tributes and accolades for all that the Duke Physician Assistant Program has contributed to PA education and the PA profession.

The event also marked the beginning of all that the PA program has to look forward to in the next 50 years. It felt like a big moment as I was standing there with legends of our profession. However, it was not until William Kohlhepp, now president-elect for the Physician Assistant Education Association said, “By making that toast, you are forever part of PA history,” that I fully appreciated the magnitude of that opportunity.

continued on page 29
“You can’t know where you’re going until you know where you have been,” is an old but true cliché. Growing up in rural North Carolina, most of my family lived within 10 miles of each other. We always celebrated birthdays, anniversaries and holidays together. Once the dishes were cleared, I remember fondly sitting around the table listening to the older folks talk and share stories about surviving the Great Depression, making sacrifices during the Great War, years of success and hopes for the future.

Fast forward to Oct. 3, 2015, and a historical and magical celebration for our PA family, the 50th anniversary of PA education at Duke! This event was perfectly planned and elegantly presented. This was our time to reminisce, share stories and yes, I think see the future.

Standing strong and proud on the foundation established by the first PAs, early educators and supporters of our profession, we are readied for the future. We are the No. 1 PA program in the country, preparing the brightest and best PAs to deliver safe, affordable, compassionate care to the sick and their families. The Duke PA faculty and staff continually embrace new methods and technologies to provide state-of-the-art education. The Duke PA students, faculty and staff deserve our full support.

Together we have accomplished much over the first 50 years of our profession. The Duke PA program will continue to lead the way for the next 50 years and be a great source of pride for us all.

I enjoyed seeing and talking with so many of you at the 50th celebration. Many thanks for your continued support of the Duke PA program and for being the outstanding Duke alumni that you are. I look forward to seeing you again at another celebration in the near future.
50 Years of Educating PAs
continued from page 1

says. “And then they walk around and they’re like, ‘Oh, my gosh. My picture’s on the wall with all of these pioneers of the profession; all the people who did these things for the first time.’ I think ... that begins to kind of hit home a little bit.”

In the beginning

The PA program at Duke began in October 1965 when Eugene A. Stead, Jr., M.D., then-chair of the Department of Medicine at the Duke University School of Medicine, began a two-year curriculum to train people to fill a gap between physicians and nurses, and expand the prior education and experience of ex-military corpsmen.

There was a nursing shortage during this time, according to E. Harvey Estes, Jr., M.D., professor emeritus, Duke University School of Medicine, and former program director of the Duke PA program and chair of Duke Community and Family Medicine. He says that skilled individuals were needed to assist in the laboratories and with medical procedures at Duke University Medical Center.

Estes says that Stead recognized this gap needed to be filled and turned to his division chiefs and colleagues to help him solve the problem.

“He wasn’t the only one that had these innovative thoughts,” Estes says. “He had a lot of young people working with him that had their own ideas that he ... supported.”

According to Estes, Stead and Henry McIntosh, M.D., head of Duke’s cardiac catheterization lab and coronary care unit, put their heads together to identify the best candidates to train for this new role.

“They looked at the employment structure around Durham and they said, ‘OK, what about firemen? Firemen work and they’re smart and they can learn to do things. ... Many firemen work three days a week and then they’re off. Maybe we could recruit firemen to come in and do this.’ And they did that,” Estes says.

However, Estes says that because of the irregularity of the firemen’s schedules, this idea did not ultimately work. McIntosh and Stead then looked at the possibility of bringing former military corpsmen into this role. Some of McIntosh’s former medical students who had been in the Navy were successfully running laboratories in various Navy centers across the country, according to Estes.

This idea led to the recruitment of four former Navy corpsmen to comprise the first class of Duke PA students. Three of these students — Kenneth F. Ferrell, Victor H. Germino and Richard J. Scheele — completed the program.

In a letter dated Sept. 24, 1964, Stead stated the following about developing the PA program.
“The Department of Medicine of Duke University Medical Center is establishing a program to create a new position in the health field. We have chosen to call these individuals ‘physician-assistant.’ We believe there is a need for males to be committed to the health field to fill a gap between the physician and the nurse. This gap cannot be filled by additional training for nurses because nurses are already in very short supply.

“These individuals will become skilled in many areas of the medical profession, such as general patient care, intravenous therapy, cardiac resuscitation, respiratory care, catheterization of the bladder, lumbar puncture, paracentesis, gastric and intestinal intubation—to name just a few. They will be capable of extending the arms and brains of the physician, so that he can care for more people. They will work under physician supervision in the home, the clinic, the hospital, and in specialized medical care units.”

Stead modeled the physician assistant role after Henry Lee “Buddy” Treadwell, an assistant to Amos N. Johnson, M.D., in a medical clinic in Garland, N.C. Treadwell and his work as an assistant to Johnson was well known at Duke University Medical Center and to Stead, and Treadwell is widely regarded as the “prototype PA.”

A commitment to diversity

Lloyd Michener, M.D., professor and chair of Duke Community and Family Medicine, says the Duke Physician Assistant Program has always had a focus on diversity.

“Because diversity alone is worthwhile, but also because we know that diverse groups come up with better solutions,” he says.

The program graduated its first African-American student, Prentiss Harrison, in 1968. Harrison was the first African-American PA in the country. According to his biography on the Physician Assistant History Society website, Harrison was instrumental in educating African-American physicians about the PA concept.

Originally, the PA program was intended for training solely men, however in 1970, Joyce Nichols became the first female graduate of the program, in addition to being the first female African-American graduate and the first African-American woman to practice as a PA.

It was because of Nichols’ persistence that women were allowed admittance to the program. Nichols was working as a licensed practical nurse at Duke when the PA program began. Estes says that Nichols began to push PA program administrator Jim Mau to allow her in the program.

“Joyce continued to prod Jim Mau, and Jim Mau prodded Gene Stead. … Sooner or later, she prevailed,” Estes says.

Today, the first-year class of Duke PA students consists mostly of women — there are 66 female students and 24 male students.

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50 Years of Educating PAs
continued from page 5

Eugene Stead as a teacher and innovator

Estes says he first met Stead in 1945 when he was a medical student at Emory University, where Stead was the dean and professor of medicine.

“He was feared, and he was respected, and he was loved at the same time,” Estes says. “Everybody revered him, because he genuinely cared about your education and about you.”

“He taught at the bedside; continued to do that all of his career,” Estes says. “He never would sit down in a conference room in a formal setting and say, ‘I’m going to talk about typhoid fever today.’ It was always … ‘What can we learn from this particular patient?’”

Estes says that Stead was the only person — not just at Duke, but anywhere — who could have started this program and launched the PA profession.

“No one anywhere could have gotten this done. Anywhere,” Estes says. “Here is a man who is renowned in the medical world, trained more people that went along to become professors … than anyone else at that point … and his authority carried a long way. And his authority was not just at Duke; his authority was nationwide. So it’s just damn fortunate that he was here and felt as he did.”

A permanent home

In 1967, just two years after the program’s founding, Estes, who had been named chair of the newly created Department of Community Health Sciences in the School of Medicine, assumed responsibility for the PA program. At this time, Stead had stepped down as chair of the Department of Medicine and took a sabbatical from Duke.

The PA program became part of the Department of Community Health Sciences and has been housed within that department — later renamed Duke Community and Family Medicine — ever since.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Estes was a staunch supporter of PAs, writing articles, chairing or serving on advisory committees, and traveling extensively to promote the concept of PAs.

“I’m proud of the PA profession,” Estes says. “I think it’s going to be the biggest innovation in medicine in my lifetime.”

The pairing of the PA program with the department in 1967 was brilliant, according to Michener. He says the department was founded to make a difference in communities through innovation, and the PA program, itself being new and innovative, has been focused on partnering with practices to bring in health care providers to make a difference.

“The two feed on each other,” Michener says about the department and the PA program. “One’s focused on training and one’s focused on innovation. I think the department — and the field — has been driven by that combination.”
Looking ahead
Michener says that over the next 50 years, the scope of work of PAs is going to broaden and students will have more options than they’ve had before. He says that because of a shift in care delivery that is more focused in the community, there will not be enough doctors. However, he says that even if there were enough doctors, that wouldn’t be the answer.
“We’re going to need much more comprehensive team models from the community side,” Michener says. “And we’re going need PAs in all those settings.”

Dieter agrees. “The skills of the provider are going to need to change,” Dieter says. “PA education has been very flexible and the model of PA practice has been very flexible. So I think that … we need to support the change in the health care system.”
“I think it’s on a good path,” adds Estes. “We’ve got to make sure that they continue to do one thing well … and that’s train the PAs to take care of a person who needs care and taking responsibility of getting them that care they need.”

PA profession
by the numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tr>
<td>Number of certified PAs in the nation</td>
<td>101,977</td>
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<td>Average salary of PAs</td>
<td>$98,387</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage of PAs who are female</td>
<td>66.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage of PAs who were female in 1974</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average number of months PA programs last</td>
<td>26.4</td>
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<td>Number of PA education programs in the U.S.</td>
<td>196</td>
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<tr>
<td>Projected number of PA education programs in the U.S. by 2019</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2014 Statistical Profile of Certified Physician Assistants

photo key
1 Eugene A. Stead, Jr., M.D.
2 PA Scrapbook, 1998
3 Class of 1979
4 Class of 2004
5 First PA students, featured in Look magazine in 1966
6 Class of 2007
A Grand Affair to mark the 50th Anniversary of PA Education at Duke

NEARLY 300 ALUMS of the Duke PA program were in Durham the weekend of Oct. 3, 2015, for a series of events planned to celebrate the 50th anniversary of PA education at Duke.

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The 50th Anniversary of PA Education at Duke on Oct. 3, 2015, was the culmination of over two and one-half years of planning. And what a day it was! Many, many thanks to all of the alumni, faculty, staff and students who made the day a huge success. We are also grateful to our colleagues in a variety of units at Duke who worked alongside us to add their expertise. Despite days of soaking rain and difficult travel, over 400 alumni attended events throughout the day.

I helped to plan the 25th anniversary at Duke in my early days as a faculty member here. On October 3, it was so obvious how much the Duke PA program and the PA profession have grown. Throughout the day, as we greeted alums from near and far, I had an opportunity to reminisce about my time here as a faculty member. I counted up the number of Duke PA graduates I have taught – that’s about 70 percent of our total graduates. And, I am fortunate to have worked with and/or met many of the earlier graduates. PA education is my passion. My notebook of class composites of each PA class I have ever taught is one of my most treasured possessions. When I am out and about with my daughters, and we run into someone I know, my daughters will usually ask “another PA?” I am fortunate to count many of you as friends who have provided great memories.

Our individual relationships as PAs are so strong and collegial, but Oct. 3, 2015, was a day to celebrate the collective Duke PA graduate community. You are a talented, diverse, and devoted group of folks! Out of this community have come remarkable achievements in establishing the PA profession and encouraging its growth. Congratulations!
At least one graduate from each of the 50 classes was in attendance.

Events included breakfast and continuing education activities, reunion luncheons, tours of the PA program building, and a reception and gala Saturday night at the Durham Convention Center. The morning consisted of a breakfast and three hours of continuing education lectures featuring favorite faculty lecturers — Peggy Robinson, MS, MHS, PA-C, associate professor and director of curriculum; Vicki Scott, MHS, PA-C, associate consulting pro-
fessor; and Nick Hudak, MSEd, MPA, PA-C, assistant professor and clinical coordinator.

For lunch, attendees ate and reminisced with classmates and other graduates from their decade. Thirteen of the Duke PA “Pioneers” — classes of 1967 through 1971 — were given the opportunity to formally speak on camera about their memories and experiences. Additionally, one of the two living graduates from the first class in 1967 — Ken Ferrell — continued on page 12
attended and spoke at the Pioneer luncheon.

Tours of the PA program building in the afternoon were hosted by current students, faculty and staff. Attendees toured the 30,000 square-foot facility and were able to view the classroom, educational technology, and lab. The tour gave alums an opportunity to interact and compare notes with the current students. The students were shocked to learn that some alums had their didactic training in a trailer!

The evening’s formal reception and gala, attended by 500 alumni, special guests, faculty and staff, consisted of several speakers, film tributes, and dinner.

Karen J. Hills, MS, PA-C, associate professor and program director, and Patricia M. Dieter, MPA, PA-C, professor and division chief, welcomed the audience and Major Roger Diaz, Class of 2009, spoke about the PA program’s connection to the military. Following the Presentation of Colors by the Duke Naval ROTC, Mia Lassiter, PA student from Class of 2016 led the audience in a beautiful rendition of “America the Beautiful.”

Among the other speakers at the gala were Richard H. Brodhead, Ph.D., president of Duke University; A. Eugene Washington, M.D., MPH, MSc, chancellor for health affairs at Duke University and president and CEO of the Duke University Health System; E. Harvey Estes, Jr., M.D., professor emeritus and former program director and chair of Duke Community and Family Medicine; Justine Strand de Oliveira, DrPH, PA-C, Class of 1981, former program director and division chief and current vice chair for education, Duke Community and Family Medicine; Susan Blackwell, MHS, PA-C, Class of 1989 and chair of the Alumni Steering Committee; and Lazaro Gonzales, Jr., PA-C, Class of 2009.

The evening concluded with a toast, given by current program director Hills alongside the former program directors.
Dr. Stead’s daughters, Lucy Stead Barnhill (left), and her husband, Curt Barnhill (right) and Dr. Nancy Stead Atwood (center)
1960s
Paul Moson (’68) lives in Cape Elizabeth, Maine with his wife Anne-Lise and on December 31, 2015, he celebrated his 75th birthday. After graduation from the second class of the Duke PA Program, he immediately took a position at the University of Vermont working in a dual position with the clinical research unit and the Regional Medical Program. After that, he worked at Yale and then St. Francis College in Loretto, PA to direct and develop their PA programs. He served as President of the Academy (AAPA) and also on the Board of what was APAP (now called PAEA). He also served as an editor in the early days of the Physician Assistant Magazine and also served a three year term as a commissioner on the NCCPA. He continues to do some consulting and recruiting work.

1970s
Jack Lasoski (’76) made history this year as the first PA elected to the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) board of directors where he will serve a three-year term. Jack has served as AAPA’s appointed Medical Liaison to the ACOEM since 2005. He co-founded the American Academy of PAs in Occupational Medicine in 1981 and serves as their Chief Delegate to the AAPA House of Delegates. Jim Hill (’76) recently completed a year as president of the NC Medical Society Foundation Board, the second PA – after Justine Strand de Oliveira (’81) – to ever serve in this position. He reports that it was rewarding and challenging and an opportunity to further cement physician-PA relationships. In addition, Jim serves as the director of PAs and NPs at Emergency Medicine Physicians in Charlotte.

Kenneth Rathey (’78) retired from clinical practice on December 31, 2015. He had the privilege of working at Duke Medical Center for 24 years and the Durham VA Medical Center for 13 years.

1980s
Jon Gootnick (’82) is home safe after a unique and life changing trip to the Zaatari refugee camp with The Syrian American Medical Society. This medical assistance volunteer trip was at a refugee camp whose numbers (though unknown) are between 80,000 and 100,000 and is located 20 minutes from the border of Syria and about 300 miles from Raqqa, Syria.

Margie (Gay) Shirosky (’86) and her husband John, who she met while doing a rotation at Womack Army Hospital, in Fayetteville, NC, will be married 25 years in May 2016. They have one daughter, Anna, who is now 20 and attending Northeastern University. Margie has been at a private pediatric practice for nearly 20 years.
Lynn Szabo (‘87) is approaching her 30th anniversary as a PA by working in an underserved community of northwestern California. She has two daughters, the younger of which is interested in carrying on the family tradition in medicine as a PA.

Elizabeth Sheehan (‘89) celebrated the sixth year anniversary of Care 2 Communities (C2C), a global health nonprofit she founded to provide high quality, sustainable primary health care to families in developing communities. She also celebrated the opening of C2C’s newest clinic in Northern Haiti. To date, Elizabeth and her team have provided 41,000+ low-cost patient visits and 33,000+ potentially life-saving prescriptions to poor communities in Haiti and Namibia. Elizabeth looks forward to growing the C2C network in Northern Haiti in 2016.

1990s

John K Colby III (‘93) and his family have relocated to Colorado Springs, CO, after living in the Northwoods of Wisconsin for the past 12 years.

Mary Jo Bondy (‘93) has been promoted to assistant dean of academic programs for the Graduate School, University of Maryland Baltimore, effective Jan 4, 2016.

Memory Dossenbach (‘95) was recently appointed assistant professor in the Department of Physician Assistant Studies at Elon University in Elon, NC.

Rhonda Feldman (‘95) was promoted to program director for the University of New England in January 2015.

Marion Wells (‘96) left clinical medicine last year to start teaching at the Red Rocks PA Program in Lakewood, CO. Marion, her husband Jeff, and her 9-year-old daughter live in Evergreen, CO.

Sam Dyer (‘98) lives in Chapel Hill and has worked at Triangle Orthopedics since PA graduation. He currently staffs their Chapel Hill orthopedic urgent care clinic full time. Mr. Dyer received the orthopedic CAQ in 2014 and was elected president-elect of PAOS (Physician Assistants in Orthopedic Surgery) in March 2015.

Lisa Shock (‘99) was appointed to the NC Institute of Medicine Board of Directors in December 2015. She is the first PA to serve on the board. She continues to teach geriatrics to community partners in her role as a member of the Duke Geriatrics Workforce Education Project (GWEP).

2000s

Ellen Seitelman (‘00) has been a PA in the ER setting for more than 12 years now. She is now working part-time in the emergency department of a community hospital and is enjoying time with her husband Adam and her kids Ava (5) and Zoe (3).

Valerie Schaffer (‘00) and partner Tara Herrmann (‘10) welcomed baby girl Adele Claire Herrmann on December 21, 2015.

Leigh Florio (‘02), her husband Jim, and their four children are still in Virginia, where Leigh works full-time as an Ob-Gyn PA in a small private practice. They are about 45 minutes outside of Washington, DC, and would be happy to see any Class of 2002 alumni who are visiting the area.

Meredith (Price) Beadles (‘04) and her husband Chris welcomed their second daughter, Lorelei Grace Beadles, on Sept. 27, 2015. They recently made the move to Hillsborough, NC, and she is beginning her 12th year at the Durham VA Orthopedic Department.

John Goldfield (‘04) has been working for Raleigh Emergency Medical Associates in the Rex Emergency Department for four years and was recently nominated by his PA colleagues for “Lead PA” who is responsible for coordination of communication amongst the PAs, liaison with the MD partners, and coordination of holiday scheduling. Mr. Goldfield has also been sitting on the Unit Practice Council for three years and is involved in their newly minted Throughput Committee. He continues to play harmonica with his blues duo Hogtop Charlotte around the Raleigh/Cary, NC, area.

Thao Doan (‘04) volunteered as a mentor for clinical associate students (similar to the PA profession here in the US) at the University of Witswatersrand in Johannesburg late January through April 2016.

Lindsay Kuhn (‘06) published her first author manuscript in the Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine in May 2015 and won ACP of the Year for Carolinas HealthCare System in October 2015. She was married on January 23, 2016.
Roger (’08) and Dawn (Stella) Diaz (’08) had a baby boy named Oliver Ruben October 7, 2015.

Michelle (Altizer) Radley (’08) had a second son, Jace Duncan Radley, on October 5, 2015.


Joshua Andrew (’09) has worked in cardiothoracic surgery since graduation. He currently works at Kaiser Permanente Sunnyside Medical Center in Clackamas, OR. They were recently ranked among the top 15 hospitals in the country for coronary artery bypass grafting and aortic valve surgery by Consumer Reports. Josh and his wife Melissa had a baby girl named Ava in November 2015.

Molly (Swallow) Reilly (’09) and her husband John welcomed a baby girl named Fiona Swallow Reilly in October 2015. Fiona is adored by her older brother, Peter. Molly continues to work as a surgical PA at Commonwealth Surgical Associates just outside Boston.

Sylvie Hill (’09) was inducted into the Pi Alpha Honor Society in 2015. She has been a part-time lecturer in the Cardiology Diagnostic Methods unit for the Duke PA program since 2013.

Hannah (Hill) Mathews (’10) and her husband Michael welcomed their first baby, Victor Fritz Mathews, on Sept. 24, 2015.

Shervon (Stoutamire) Robinson (’10) and her husband welcomed their baby girl, Peyton Averi Robinson, on Oct. 3, 2015.

2010s

Chad Eventide (’11) and his wife Lara adopted a daughter named Starling who is 1 year old. She joins big brother Caspian, who is now 6 and in Kindergarten. Beginning in Spring 2016, Chad will be working in general practice clinics in northwest London as part of the National Physician Associate Expansion Programme. This program was launched by the National Health Service to infuse dozens of American PAs into the system over the next few years.

JD Rutledge (’11) and his wife Ashley welcomed their fourth child (the first boy!), John Henry Rutledge, on July 21, 2015.

Lacee Leach (’11) is happy to announce that she was married on April 2, 2014 to Chris Wilkinson.

Kristina Sanfilippo (’11) and her husband Brian had a baby boy named Braden James on October 29, 2015.

Sweta Patel (’11) celebrated her four-year anniversary at NYP/ Columbia University Medical Center in November 2015. She has been working in the Neuro ICU since 2013 and just began working part-time at NYU Langone Medical Center on the neurosurgery service. In 2015, she contributed to a case report that was accepted for publication by the Journal of Clinical Neuromuscular Disease. Sweta was named runner up for PA of the Year at Columbia in October 2015.

Alena Thomas (’12) and husband Tristan had a baby girl, Violet Statia Thomas, on Oct. 7, 2015.

Hillary Tester (’12) and her husband welcomed daughter Marin Serena Tester on Aug. 28, 2015. Marin joins big brother, Harrison.

Allison Ross (’13) and husband Kevin welcomed baby girl Kyla Alexandria Ross on June 6, 2015 (their 6th wedding anniversary!). Baby Kyla joins her “sibling” Niko the Husky.

Kristen Fromal (’13) and Eric Ho (’13) were married on Sept. 19, 2015 in Weaverville, NC.

Kim Milliam (’13) and her husband James had a baby boy, Cameron Jay Milliam, on July 6, 2015. Big sisters Sophia and Vanessa are very excited for this new addition.
Sarah (Ramey) Peters (’13) was married in May 2015 to husband Steve and they are expecting their first child. She continues to work in her first PA job in Cardiology at Carle Physician Group in Urbana, IL.

Cina Dixon (’14) completed an Advanced Clinical Practitioner Fellowship through Carolinas HealthCare System in October 2015. She began working at the Levine Cancer Institute in Charlotte, NC, on the Bone Marrow Transplant Team in December 2015.

Fiorella Galas (’14) was married on July 17, 2015 to Daniel Arthur.

Dustin Jones (’14) and his wife had a healthy baby boy Nov. 14, 2014. His daughter is now 4 ½ years old and Dustin has been at Duke's CTICU since graduation.

Sarah Spainhour-Reese (’14) and her husband welcomed their first baby girl, Olivia, into the world on Nov. 22, 2015. Sarah currently works as an orthopedic PA at DePaolo Orthopedics in Asheville, NC.

Megan Bunch (’15) and her husband welcomed a healthy baby boy named Barrington Edward Bunch on Aug. 25, 2015 (after completing her PANCE on August 15!)

Sarah Spainhour-Reese (’14) and her husband welcomed their first baby girl, Olivia, into the world on Nov. 22, 2015. Sarah currently works as an orthopedic PA at DePaolo Orthopedics in Asheville, NC.

Corina Lopez (’15) was engaged on Sept. 9, 2015 to Tron Hardy.

Elizabeth Sermons (’15) and Dr. Aria Ghaffari were married on Sept. 12, 2015 in the Elizabethan Gardens on Roanoke Island, NC.

Anna Zelov (’15) and her husband welcomed daughter Evan Elizabeth Zelov on Oct. 31, 2015.

In Memoriam

Frank H. Wright Jr., Class of 1976, passed away on April 27, 2015, at Pruitt Carolina Point Healthcare in Durham, NC. Mr. Wright worked as a lab technician for 20 years in the Air Force — including an assignment in Vietnam — prior to entering the Duke PA Program. Following his graduation, Mr. Wright worked more than 20 years as a physician assistant in student health at North Carolina Central University. A military honor ceremony was conducted at Salisbury National Cemetery in Salisbury, NC on May 8, 2015.

John “Jack” Gerstbrein, Class of 1972, passed away on July 16, 2015, at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City, IA. Following Mr. Gerstbrein’s graduation from the Duke PA program, he went to Iowa where he was employed by the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics. He left UIHC to work at the Palmer Clinic for eight years and then he returned to the University of Iowa Hospital Urology Department where he worked until his retirement in 2001. A funeral mass was held on July 20, 2015 at St. Joseph Catholic Church in West Liberty.

Corbin J. Peterson, Class of 1971, passed away on April 3, 2016, at his home in Kittrell, NC. Mr. Peterson was a veteran of the U.S. Navy and had recently retired from his career as a physician assistant. He worked over 40 years at Duke University Medical Center, most recently treating children in the Dermatology Laser Clinic. A memorial service was held on April 16, 2016, at Clements Funeral Chapel in Durham, NC.
Congratulations to the Duke PA Program’s Members of the Duke Physician Assistant Program Class of 2015 became our newest class of alumni on Aug. 7, 2015, when they received their physician assistant certificates in a ceremony at the Duke Physician Assistant Program building in downtown Durham.

The Class of 2015 included 89 graduates — 67 women and 22 men, ranging in age from 24 to 52 years old. The students began the two-year program in August 2013 and received master of health science degrees from Duke University in a commencement ceremony at the Washington Duke Inn on May 10, 2015.
Ennis E. Turrentine, MHS, PA-C, was honored as the 2015 Distinguished Alumnus of the Year at the Duke PA Commencement Ceremony on May 10, 2015. Ms. Turrentine graduated from the Duke PA program in 2004 with a Master of Health Sciences degree. Prior to entering the PA Program, she worked as a certified pharmacy technician and earned a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from North Carolina Central University in 1998. Ms. Turrentine’s career as a PA demonstrates a true passion for clinical medicine and PA education.

In 2005, Ms. Turrentine became one of the first inpatient PAs employed by the Division of Medical Oncology at Duke University Medical Center to improve the continuity and overall care of patients admitted to the inpatient oncology unit. Undoubtedly, due to Ms. Turrentine’s role as a mentor, her excellent clinical skills, compassion, and tireless work, this new PA model was successful and now employs four fulltime PAs.

Ms. Turrentine is also a valued contributor to the education of Duke PA students. She has been a preceptor since 2008 for students choosing an elective oncology clinical rotation. In addition, she has served since 2010 as a small group facilitator for Clinical Medicine Oncology, Nephrology and ENT Common Problem Labs as well as a small group instructor for the Patient Assessment and Counseling course.

Ms. Turrentine’s co-workers on the oncology unit, students, and Duke PA faculty describe her as “competent, compassionate, an outstanding mentor and teacher who consistently goes above and beyond as a physician assistant, friend, and colleague.” Because of these attributes she was a nominee for the Duke University Strength, Hope and Caring Award in 2008, which was developed to honor employees who demonstrate extraordinary care.
Just as fall gave way to winter, winter will give way to our last spring as Duke PA students. This elicits feelings of excitement and, yes, even trepidation. It was little more than 18 months ago when we arrived on campus eager to learn and be challenged as newly minted Duke PA students. We have been pushed to the limit and have felt a spectrum of emotions, but with this, we have developed the early markings of experience.

When we all departed for summer break and reassembled a few short weeks later to begin Clinical Year, many of us commented how we truly felt different. We knew that we had prepared for this time from Day One, but the second year has proven a challenge in a different way.

We have transitioned from massive amounts of class time and late nights studying to long work days, never-ending patient logs, end of rotation exam preparation, and resume building. Clinical Year has truly been fun and exciting, with a new adventure waiting to be discovered each day.

As students, we had doubts that the knowledge we packed away all last year would find its way back to the surface. However, by the end of each four-week rotation, the pieces of the puzzle come together and we are able to assimilate the information and apply it to the patients we are caring for.

Clinical Year does not lend itself to many group community projects as our class is spread out across the state and farther. Several classmates elected to spend a rotation in medically underserved countries, such as Tanzania and Ecuador. Others found themselves in rural towns or in community clinics of larger cities. Hopefully, each student has taken time to think about how he or she might contribute to the community in which they will soon choose to
work and live. One fellow classmate has elected to serve in a leadership role as student director-at-large for the NCAPA. The opportunities to serve are endless and our education at the Duke PA program has not only prepared us for a great career, but also to use our skills for the betterment of those less fortunate.

I speak for the Class of 2016 by saying that it has been a pleasure to be a part of something special here at the Duke PA program. I have enjoyed meeting so many wonderful and dedicated people along the way. It is hard to believe that we will enter our final rotations, graduate and then launch into our future careers. While we are all eager to move into the next phase of our lives, it is my hope that we will slow down and be grateful for this opportunity.

**Congressman David Price visits Duke Physician Assistant Program**

U.S. Rep. David Price, D-N.C., visited the Duke Physician Assistant Program on Sept. 14, 2015, to speak with faculty and students about the role of physician assistants in the changing health care environment and how the government can help support them.

Price, who represents the 4th District, spoke to first-year PA students in a town hall setting, first giving remarks then taking questions. Karen Hills, MS, PA-C, Duke PA program director, introduced Price to the students as “a great friend to the PA profession,” adding that he is very supportive of Title VII funding, which helps PA educators and PA students. Price supported $280 million for Title VII health professions education programs in fiscal year 2016.

Price spoke to the students about legislative and legal challenges in regards to health care reform and funding in the country and state, and the availability of health care.
In August 2015, 90 students from different states, health care back-
grounds, and passions in medicine and in life started their PA training at Duke as the Class of 2017. I am incred-
ibly thankful to be a part of this jour-
ney with my classmates for these two years. Each student here is a leader and has a unique story. Together, we form a quilt of diverse backgrounds and experiences combined in strength and purpose for the path set before us.

We arrived at Duke nervous, but excited and ready to learn. Once our clinical medicine units began, we buckled up for the ride and tread to keep our heads above the water as the pace of classes, exams and assign-
ments quickly escalated. Now we un-
derstand the metaphor that PA school is like drinking water from a fire hose. So much information is being thrown at us in every different direction, and we soak up what we can and power through.

Being able to practice taking a history and completing a focused physical exam on patients at the local hospitals has been a rewarding experi-
ence to get a snapshot of what we will be doing as future medical providers. It becomes more real every day—it’s crazy to think that each day brings us closer to being PA-Cs.

In spite of the rigorous academic challenges that are relentlessly catapulted at us, we still make time to socialize, have fun and engage in the community. We cheered loudly and obnoxiously at Duke basketball games, cook dangerously delicious dishes for potluck get-togethers, cele-
brate birthdays with social events, and share real questions and future concerns on practicing as a PA in the United States and abroad in lunch seminars with faculty. Several of our classmates eagerly anticipate attending the AAPA conference in San Antonio in May, and Quiz Bowl prepara-
tion is underway.

Our class has a genuine heart for service, and we have been able to give back to our community by partnering with local non-profit organizations in Durham. For the PA Day of Service on Oct. 10, 2015, we volunteered with Habitat for Humanity, Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina, Keep Durham Beau-
Beautiful, Book Harvest, Ronald McDonald House of Durham, and Urban Ministries of Durham.

In the fall of 2015, we marked Breast Cancer Awareness with a Pink Day, hosted and played bingo with residents at Carillon Assisted Living, and supported men’s health through the “Movember” fundraiser.

In preparation for the holidays, we collected food and non-perishable items for the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina, caroled for kids at the Ronald McDonald House of Durham, and hosted a fundraiser to purchase and deliver Christmas presents to a Salvation Army family that we adopted as a class.

This past winter, we hosted a student blood drive with the American Red Cross, collected winter clothing and outerwear for Urban Ministries, and participated in a health fair at the Boys & Girls Club of Durham where we provided information on nutrition and physical activity to kids and their families.

We also planned our annual outreach event at Burton Elementary in April, where we engaged the fourth-grade class by performing a skit and setting up stations focused on health education.

First year has been crazy, challenging, tiring, funny, tearful, scary and incredible, but I wouldn’t trade it for anything. We have grown closer to one another as we have been pushed to exceed our mental, physical and emotional limits, and we have become stronger, more capable and resilient learners because of it.

We accept the challenges that lie ahead, and we trust that our learning experiences here at Duke will continue to shape us for the greater purpose in the path set before us as future PAs.

Phillips Scholarship

We are pleased to announce that The Samuel L. Phillips Family Foundation has made a substantial donation to the Duke PA program to support the tuition of a student who commits to completing six months of clinical rotations in Mitchell County, NC. Ashley Wagner, PA Class of 2017, has been selected as the first Phillips Scholar. Ashley is a Wisconsin native who has substantial experience in rural practice.

Mitchell County is in rural western North Carolina, near the Tennessee border. We are grateful to the Phillips Family Foundation for their support!
Duke Physician Assistant Program students were the first PA students in the country to test a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention pilot project designed to teach health professions learners about prevention, population health and the social determinants of health.

The pilot, part of the CDC Experience Legacy Project, took place Sept. 17, 2015, at the Duke Physician Assistant Program and used a “meeting-in-a-box” concept that provided learners with everything they needed to explore the social determinants of health, which include access to health care, food, safe housing, and education and job training, and consider what they can do about them.

The physician assistant (PA) students worked in small groups and read a case study on gang violence prevention, based on the work of Rochelle Dicker, M.D., a surgeon and director of the San Francisco General Hospital Wraparound Project, a hospital-based violence prevention program. The story is based on a young man in San Francisco who continuously entered the hospital with gang-related injuries. All names were changed for the case study.

Hannah Cody, a first-year PA student, said the case study was helpful in understanding what she and other students may encounter when they are practicing PAs.

“I hadn’t thought of gang violence being an issue a health care provider would address,” she said.

Virginia Watson, MA, project manager for the CDC Experience Legacy Project, was at Duke to help facilitate. The gang violence case study was shared with Duke University by CDC’s Denise Koo, M.D., MPH, in a meeting about nine months ago. Koo is adviser to the associate director for policy at CDC, and also a consulting professor of community and family medicine at Duke.

A team of educators at the Duke PA program — Justine Strand de Oliveira, DrPH, PA-C, vice chair for...
education, Duke Community and Family Medicine; Betsy Melcher, MS, ATC, MHS, PA-C, assistant professor and academic coordinator of the Duke Physician Assistant Program; and Amanda Gunter, MS, educational technology specialist — had been working on creating curriculum for the first-year PA students’ “Introduction to Prevention and Population Health” course when Koo suggested that the CDC’s pilot project could be the perfect fit.

“We were thrilled to have our PA students participate in a pilot of this project,” said Melcher, course director for “Introduction to Prevention and Population Health.” “The gang violence case study provided a unique experience for our learners to consider the health of a patient and a community from a citizen/patient perspective.”

The CDC Experience Legacy Project, funded by a grant from External Medical Affairs, Pfizer, Inc., through the CDC Foundation, uses content which originated with The CDC Experience Applied Epidemiology Fellowship, a year-out program directed by Dr. Koo for medical students from 2004 to 2014.
New Faculty

Mara Sanchez, MMS, RD, PA-C, joined the Duke Physician Assistant Program in October 2015 as assistant professor. Sanchez is teaching the nutrition unit and is involved in the patient assessment and counseling course in small group and lab sessions.

Before arriving at Duke, she worked as an assistant professor at the physician assistant program at Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Sanchez received her bachelor’s degree from the University of Florida in 1997. She received a Master of Medical Science and PA certificate from Nova Southeastern University in 2004.

“My aspirations are to help make Duke PA students think more critically and learn more about how to care for their future patients in a compassionate and thought-out manner,” Sanchez says. “I hope to make a difference in their education.”

Quincy Jones, MSW, MHS, PA-C, joined the Duke Physician Assistant Program in October 2015 as the clinical education faculty development fellow. Jones is part of the PA faculty and working on developing knowledge base and skills as they relate to PA education.

Before arriving at Duke as a fellow, Jones worked as a physician assistant in the family medicine department at Lincoln Community Health Center. She hopes to develop her knowledge and skill sets as they relate to PA education.

While working with the clinical year team on developing and monitoring rotation sites, she is also doing small group teaching, and working with first-year students on one of their annual service projects at Burton Elementary.

Jones graduated from the Duke University Physician Assistant Program in 2009. Prior to that, she received a Master of Social Work from East Carolina University in 2001 and a Bachelor of Arts from UNC-Chapel Hill in 1997.

“I was trained as a physician assistant at Duke and take pride in this institution,” Jones says. “I hope that I can continue learning here while also making positive contributions to the program.”

Kim Cavanagh, DHSc, MPAS, PA-C, joined the Duke Physician Assistant Program in August 2015 as the director of assessment and evaluation. Cavanagh is also facilitating small groups and teaching cardiology topics in the preclinical year.

She previously worked at Gannon University in Pennsylvania and received her Bachelor of Science in biology from Siena College. She graduated from the PA program at Hahnemann University, now known as Drexel University, and earned her Doctor of Health Science degree from Nova Southeastern University in Florida.

When asked what interested Cavanagh in this position at the PA Program, she replied “In short, the place, people and opportunity. Clearly Duke and the Duke PA program have a long-standing history of tradition and success. So the opportunity to be part of that was very attractive. Additionally, I have had the privilege of working with several Duke faculty members as part of committee work at the national level. Recognizing the quality of faculty and staff working here was another huge attraction. Finally, assessment and evaluation efforts are critical to the success of our students, graduates and program. The opportunity to have a part in these efforts is a true honor.”

“This is a very exciting opportunity. The Duke PA Program has been known for a wonderful tradition of success; I hope to maintain the success and work to enhance the program in whatever way I can.”
Faculty News

Kenny Railey, M.D., assistant professor of community and family medicine, was awarded the first Henry “Buddy” Lee Treadwell Award on August 7, 2015. The Class of 2015 named the award which is given by graduating classes to an individual who had a profound influence on their education. It was presented by students Brittany Macon and Heather Alcorn at the PA program Class of 2015 Certificate Ceremony. The award is named after Treadwell, who was considered the “prototype PA,” and greatly influenced the vision of Eugene A. Stead Jr., M.D., for PA education and function.

Peggy Robinson, MS, MHS, PA-C, assistant professor of community and family medicine, began a new role as director of curriculum in the Duke Physician Assistant Program effective July 1, 2015. She is responsible for a focused approach to curriculum design, development and innovation. Robinson is also responsible for developing and implementing medical education curriculum including a careful review of current units of clinical medicine, pharmacology and diagnostic methods; integration of new teaching strategies to include “flipped classroom” and synthesis opportunities; and incorporating professionalism in an ongoing and intentional manner. Director of curriculum is a new position in the Duke Physician Assistant Program. Robinson is also the director of the clinical education faculty development fellowship and will retain that role.

April Stouder, MHS, PA-C, Class of 2000, assistant professor of community and family medicine and PA program director of clinical education, was appointed to the PAEA Conference Council in January 2016 and will serve a two-year term. The council is responsible for developing the educational program for the annual Education Forum.

Nick Hudak, MSEd, MPA, PA-C, assistant professor of community and family medicine and PA program clinical coordinator, was named chair of PAEA’s Committee on Clinical Education from 2015 to 2017.

Sandro O. Pinheiro, PhD, MA, MRE, joined the Duke Physician Assistant Program in January 2016 as the senior education specialist. Pinheiro collaborates with the PA faculty to enhance the PA school curriculum, its implementation and evaluation, as well as developing education scholarship.

Pinheiro is also an associate professor in the Department of Medicine, Division of Geriatrics and senior fellow of the Center for the Study of Aging and Human Development. He is the education director of the Donald W. Reynolds Program for Faculty Development to Advance Geriatric Education and the Geriatric Education Center at Duke University.

He has worked in medical education for over 20 years, directing faculty development activities for clinical and basic science faculty, designing medical and interprofessional education curricula, and conducting research in medical and interprofessional education.
**Staff News**

**Brandi Leach, MS**, joined the PA program in July 2015 as research analyst, and works primarily with faculty members Christine Everett and Perri Morgan in the Duke Physician Assistant research group. Prior to joining the PA staff, Brandi worked as a research analyst with NCSU’s Cooperative Extension program where she participated in local foods projects and a drop-out prevention program for Latino high school students. She is currently pursuing her PhD in sociology.

**Irene Lynch** joined the PA program in August 2015 as an administrative secretary. Prior to joining the PA staff she worked as a social security paralegal for Golson, McCracken Inc.

**Diane Spell** joined the PA program in December 2015 as the administrative manager. Prior to joining the PA staff, Diane worked as administrative manager of the Division of Family Medicine within the Department of Community and Family Medicine. Diane brings an abundance of experience and expertise to our program as a 20-year veteran of Duke and the Department of Community and Family Medicine.

**Catherine Errington, BFA**, joined the PA program staff in December 2015 as staff specialist working primarily with the clinical year team as well as providing support to students. She earned her BFA at Southampton College, in Southampton, NY. Prior to joining the PA staff, Catherine worked as a temporary employee at the Duke University Fuqua School of Business Career Management Center helping out during their busy recruiting season.

**Maria Ayscue** joined the PA program in February 2016 as a staff specialist, and is responsible for processing all financial reimbursement/payments and assisting the administrative manager with building maintenance. Prior to joining the PA staff, she worked with DukeEngage as a staff specialist in a financial capacity.
Jacqueline Barnett joins Duke Physician Assistant Program as associate program director

Jacqueline S. Barnett, DHSc, MSHS, PA-C, joined the Duke Physician Assistant Program in October 2015 as associate program director. Before arriving at Duke, Dr. Barnett worked as an assistant professor in the Department of Physician Assistant Studies at the George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

“The biggest thing that attracted me to Duke is their mission,” Dr. Barnett says. “The PA program has always been known as committed to underserved populations and community oriented. I already see how the mission of the program resonates with faculty, staff and students and is integrated throughout all aspects of the program.

“I am so honored to have the opportunity to work with this incredible faculty,” Dr. Barnett says. “Many of them I have admired and built relationships with over 15 years. How cool is that to be able to work with icons as well as up-and-coming leaders in the profession?”

Barnett’s scholarly interests include PA workforce, underserved populations, improving learning experiences for students with disabilities, and the use of technology to enhance the delivery of innovative educational pedagogies. At Duke, she hopes to assist with curriculum revision and modernization in efforts to ultimately prepare graduates to improve health care quality and health equity.

“My aspiration for this position is to support the department by enhancing all aspects of the program, better prepare graduates for 21st century health care practice, and to ensure that our esteemed faculty are thriving,” Barnett says. “Although the Duke PA program is No. 1, we can do better. I want us to be visionaries and lead efforts nationally to innovate PA education, while also mentoring new leaders in the profession who can help to transform the healthcare system.”

Barnett says that her experience here has been nothing short of fabulous.

“Being that I am from a rural and underserved community and the first to graduate from college in my family, I am forever grateful for this opportunity,” Barnett says.

Barnett received her Bachelor of Science from West Virginia University in 1985, a second Bachelor of Science from George Washington University in 1994, a master’s degree from George Washington University in 2002, and her doctorate from A. T. Still University in 2013.

Future of PA Profession Very Promising

I realize in many ways Duke PA program faculty, staff and students have the opportunity to make history every day. Our students represent the future and, when I look into their eager eyes, it feels very bright. When I hear about the patient encounters, the Stead Society projects, the demonstration of the students’ heart for service and other accomplishments, it is equally as inspiring as standing on a stage with PA education icons.

The Duke PA program has never rested on its laurels. With a robust student applicant pool, hard-working students, a dedicated faculty and staff and curricular innovations, the future seems very promising indeed.
Peggy Robinson receives School of Medicine’s Master Clinician/Teacher Award

Peggy R. Robinson, MS, MHS, PA-C, assistant professor of community and family medicine and director of curriculum for the Duke Physician Assistant Program, received a Master Clinician/Teacher Award at the School of Medicine’s Spring Faculty Meeting on May 5, 2015.

The award, presented by Edward Buckley, M.D., vice dean for education in the School of Medicine, honors individuals who have made an extraordinary commitment to teaching, have gone “above and beyond” normal expectations, and who might be considered an “unsung hero” in teaching at Duke.

The School of Medicine asked for nominations for this award in January, and after a committee review, Nancy C. Andrews, M.D., Ph.D., dean of the School of Medicine, made the final selections.

Robinson is the first physician assistant to receive this honor.

Here are a few excerpts from the nomination letters for Robinson:

“She serves as a clear role model for our learners because of her clinical acumen and experience, and because of her deep integration with and commitment to the community of Durham.”

“Each year at graduation, Ms. Robinson’s enthusiasm for medical education and the desire to commit to a career of “life-long learning” is expressed in the accolades from new graduates. She inspires by example through providing compassionate patient centered care and always adhering to the highest ethical standards.”

“Peggy is the best of us. She knows the value of changing the life of a single patient or student. She sets lofty standards, but demonstrates their attainability by achieving them herself.”

Duke PA Faculty Publications


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