

# THE PLEXUS POST

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE  
MODERN HUMAN ANATOMY - ALUMNI ASSOCIATION (MHA AA)

## HELLO, FROM THE MHA AA

"A COMMUNITY THAT NEVER LEAVES YOU..."

The above quote (from an alumni), really exemplifies an amazing feature of the MHA program, and is a message that came through on March 18th, with an MHA AA Networking event. It was wonderful hearing from some of our amazing alumni, and seeing friendly faces via Zoom (lower photo). Thank you again, to all our panelists (below), and to one of our Social Events Coordinators (Laura Weinkle, Class of 2017) for "MC-ing" the panel portion. Here's hoping that a future where in person networking is again a possibility is on the horizon!

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Interested in joining the MHA AA  
Leadership Team? Please email our  
current alumni director, Angelique  
([angelique.duenas@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:angelique.duenas@cuanschutz.edu)).  
We're looking to build our group!

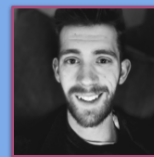
### Meet Our Alumni Panelists



**Avery A. Williams, MS**  
MHA Class of 2017  
MD Candidate, Class of 2024  
University of Arizona, COM,  
Phoenix



**Moli Keeler, MS**  
MHA Class of 2017  
PA Student  
(Graduating May 2021 WOOT WOOT!)  
George Washington University  
(but currently in Denver, finished clinical rotations & job hunting)



**Peter Thomsen, MS**  
MHA Class of 2019  
PT Student, University of Colorado  
Anschutz Medical Campus  
Graduate Research Assistant -  
Interdisciplinary Movement Science Lab  
& RESTORE Team



**Adam Lawson, MSc, MSMHA, PhD**  
Class of 2014  
PhD Candidate - Clinical Anatomy  
Louisiana State University Health  
Sciences Center - New Orleans



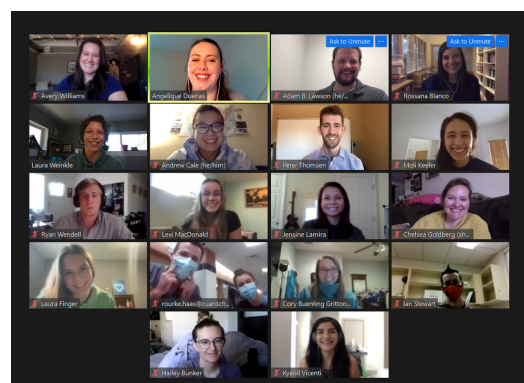
**Justin Blaskowsky, MS**  
Class of 2018  
Osteopathic Medical Student, Year 3  
Western University of Health Science -  
COMP-NW, Lebanon, Oregon



**Rossana Bianco, MS**  
MHA Class of 2018  
Solutions Consultant, Medidata  
Clinical Trials Software



**Andrew Cale, MS**  
MHA Class of 2018  
PhD Student (Anatomy Education)  
Indiana University School of  
Medicine - Indianapolis



# 5 QUESTIONS WITH OUR FEATURED ALUMNI

Each newsletter, we plan on featuring some alumni. We'll be looking for volunteers tri-annually, so keep an eye out!

## DR. RAE LEIGH VAN SANDT (RUSSELL\*), CLASS OF 2014

\*I can't change my name until Covid is over unless I MAIL in my very important documents, which is not possible at this time.

Associate Research Scientist, University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY

[RRusse19@uwyo.edu](mailto:RRusse19@uwyo.edu)

"My dissection skills I learned from the MHA program have been very valuable for my research program here at the University of Wyoming."



### What is your favorite memory from MHA?

Once while experiencing pre-practical anatomy exam jitters, our MHA group prepared by saying words that you would use to describe successful people as studies show this exercise improves exam performance. The "word" we collectively used to describe successful people was, "good memory." Watch out world, genius level intelligence at work over here.

### What was your favorite course/class you took during MHA?

I took an elective with Dr. Lee to make an online learning module for gross anatomy of the spinal cord. I now work in spinal cord injury research and I still refer to that video which is available on MedEdPORTAL!

### How do you use anatomy in your current career/life?

I use my anatomy knowledge on a daily basis. I still cannot decide if I want to store my anatomy atlases at home or in my office because I refer to them so often, mostly to confirm to others the anatomy fact I just told them from memory!

### What do you love most about your current position/job?

My dissection skills I learned from the MHA program have been very valuable for my research program here at the University of Wyoming.

### If you could transport yourself to Denver/Aurora right now, what's the first thing you would do?

I try to visit the old stomping grounds of the MHA program whenever I am in town. It is on the way to the airport after all!

## PROGRAM UPDATE

From your MHA AA Program Liaison, Chelsea Goldberg, Class of 2016

We are in the middle of our Spring semester with 1st year students taking Neuroanatomy and Gross Anatomy. With continued Covid-19 protocols, our students are learning remotely, but having in-person dissection labs. 1st years are about to take their anatomy head & neck exam after their spring break next week. We've all been there...let's wish them the best & may the force be with them!!!!

Even though our anatomy suite is still a ghost town ☹️, the back old OR space was renovated with a new duct system and has been totally cleaned out (see pics!!) Can you believe it's the same space?! We are so missing our students and the commotion here....looking forward to being back!







As I walked out of my final peripatetic exam, or “bell-ringer”, of pre-clerkship, it was one of the many times during med school I was beyond grateful for the anatomy foundation I gained from MHA.

This is likely a common sentiment from other alumni who pursued medicine, but I felt like my understanding of clinical content came much easier for me because of this background. My medical school is a condensed 3-year program, leaving very little time for anatomy in the curriculum. I quickly became the anatomy enthusiast of my class and enjoyed helping my classmates in the labs (pre-COVID/online school) and running online review sessions for the first-year class as they struggled through the orthopaedic unit anatomy online.

As I start clerkship on surgical rotations, I still use Dr. Royer’s and Shannon Curran’s circulatory tools to brush up on the cardiovascular system, I recently revisited Dr. Orr’s head and neck lectures to recall the layers we’d be slicing through in the OR, and when I was feeling the diaphragm the other day during a thoracic surgery, I couldn’t help but saying in my head “hellooooo septum transversum” (thanks, Dr. Lee!). My gratitude for this program was so overwhelming, I just had to express it! THANK YOU to all the amazing mentors and faculty at MHA!

Your friendly Canadian alumni,  
Hannah Koury, Class of 2018

## "ANATO-MEMES"

Courtesy of our Meme Finder Andrew Cale, Class of 2018

When you realise the lymph nodes aren't green irl.



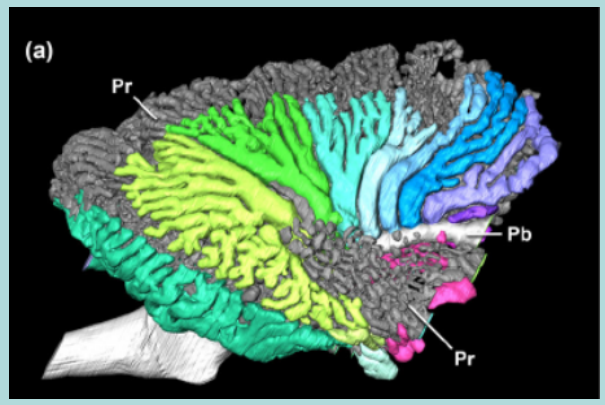
## "GOOD NEWS!" SECTION

SOME RECENT GOOD NEWS FROM OUR ALUMNI!



### Brian Kelly (Class of 2019)

Congratulations to Brian, who has accepted an Instructor position (Human Anatomy Lab Virtual Reality Coordinator and Instructional Support) and Director of their VR Anatomy lab at CSU!



### Adam Lawson (Class of 2014)

Adam recently published a portion of his dissertation work – congratulations on this accomplishment. Titled "Anatomy, variation, and asymmetry of the bronchial tree in the African grey parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*)" in the *Journal of Morphology*, this piece features some amazing segmentations (see one image above, from Figure 6). Check it out: <https://doi.org/10.1002/jmor.21340>