



## CHA/PA Newsletter

Students are involved in numerous campus, community, and international experiences. Read on to learn more!



### CHA/PA's Partnership with Chapines

Careful about our footing on the uneven dirt road during our morning run, my classmate, Kaitlin, and I were about two miles from the clinic where we were living. Suddenly, a loud honk and the sound of a 30,000 pound bus roaring down the hill in our direction, with no apparent intent of slowing down or veering to avoid us, caused us to quickly jump to the side of the mountain. A few seconds later the former American school bus, with a new paint job and a dismantled speed control device, sped past us and left us in its dusty trail. We jumped back



### My Experience in Peru

CU-Peru is a student-run non-profit that holds trainings for community health workers in the Loreto Region of Peru. These workers live in very remote villages located off of tributaries of the Amazon. Many of the villages are 5-18 hours by river from the nearest clinic. The villagers survive from what they farm and fish so deciding to spend the gas money to go to the clinic is not an easy decision, and often a logistical impossibility. Each village has one or two unpaid community health workers who have had limited schooling, no formal training, and get

onto the road to resume our run. Now trailing the moving vehicle, we saw the back emergency door swing open with a 10 year-old boy clinging to it. Both the boy and the other passengers were unphased by this, while I felt my heart jump into my throat as I looked on. He maneuvered his way to the ladder on the side of the bus, climbed to the roof and found a seat in the little roof space that was left amongst his fellow commuters. "We are definitely not in Denver anymore." I said to Kaitlin as we kept on trotting.

This June, four of my classmates and I had the opportunity to participate in the first year of a new partnership between CHAPA, and the Guatemalan university, Francisco Marroquín University School of Medicine (UFM). For four weeks, we joined 11 UFM medical students, and 3 Guatemalan medical doctors at Clinica Barbara, a small rural hospital, located 45 minutes northwest of the capital city, in a town called San Juan Sacatepéquez. The clinic serves as a primary care clinic, emergency department, and birth and delivery center to the mostly underserved population of the surrounding pueblos. During our time there, the learning curve was steep; not only did we improve our medical knowledge and Spanish skills, but we were immersed in a culture that directly translates to many of our patients back home. For example, now I might emphasize a little more the importance of a seat belt for any newly immigrated 10 year-old boys.

Chelsea Williamson  
Class of 2014

no recognition for their work. Despite this, their hunger for knowledge and desire to serve as leaders in their communities are remarkable. During my trip we held trainings for 60 community health workers, teaching a variety of subjects including first aid, women's health, and diarrhea/respiratory illnesses. I was extremely impressed by all of the hard work they put in and how well they were able to adapt to the challenges we presented them with.

Throughout my time in the Loreto region and its villages, I also adapted to the challenges that the Amazon presented me with. I learned to appreciate the simple joys of: taking bucket showers at the edge of the river without getting bitten by piranhas, playing card games in the light of the citronella candles to keep away the mosquitos, being greeted with fried plantains when visiting people's homes, learning to kick the latrines before sitting down to scare out the bats, and best of all, making friends with the children who became our protectors from tarantulas threatening to fall on our hammocks as we slept. I have come back to the U.S. with a new appreciation of the situation in which the community health workers are practicing and the sacrifices they make to provide for their communities.

Mathilde Sullivan  
Class of 2015



## Associate Director of Clinical Curriculum Appointed

Faculty member Rebecca Maldonado was recently appointed as the Associate Director of Clinical Curriculum. In this position, Rebecca serves as the leader of the clinical team and will focus her attention on continued refinement of the clinical education process at CHA/PA. "I am honored to serve as the Associate Director of Clinical Curriculum. The CHA/PA students, and the patients we are training them to serve, are the program's largest stakeholders. I am excited to work with a great group of faculty and staff who are dedicated to developing and maintaining effective clinical learning opportunities for our students."



## Exploring Precepting



## Exploring Solutions to Treating Hepatitis C in Rural Communities

Like many others, I came to PA school hoping to merge my love of science with an ability to work with people. When I imagined working with others, it was always in a clinical setting, one-on-one, just patient and PA. However, the wonderful thing about becoming a PA is learning to expand the definition of a PA. Through the Leadership, Education, Advocacy, Development, and Scholarship (LEADs) track I have learned that the scope of practice for a PA extends beyond one-on-one patient care. It extends to the field of Public Health. This summer, I had the opportunity to participate in an internship at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). I worked with a medical student to update the testing and screening procedures for hepatitis C. We also conducted a survey to see how providers at Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) were treating patients with hepatitis. We were then able to translate our results into suggestions for agencies that work on preventing and treating this disease. We learned that many providers in rural communities do not test patients because they feel that they do not have the resources to treat their patients and that their patients would

## Opportunities at CHA/PA

Precepting is an integral part of our students' education. As the Clinical Site Educator for the CHA/PA Program, I enjoy visiting students and preceptors out in the community. We are always looking for PAs who want to "give back" to the profession and being a clinical educator is an invaluable gift to future PAs. We can accommodate a variety of interest levels in precepting, whether you would like to have one student or ten students a year. We also have both short and long term commitments for rotations. Preceptors are offered individual support and training by our clinical team. Feel free to contact me at 303-724-7288 or at [joyce.nieman@ucdenver.edu](mailto:joyce.nieman@ucdenver.edu) with any questions you may have about precepting or to schedule an in-person appointment.

Joyce Nieman  
Clinical Site Educator



## The Rural Track at CHA/PA

I am a first year CHA/PA rural track student. My background explains the reason why I wanted to be a part of the rural track. I was born and raised in a town of 250 people in the southwestern corner of Montana. Lima, Montana is 50 miles away from the nearest healthcare facility and is

be unwilling to drive to Denver for treatment.

This challenge speaks to issues of access to care and provider education. Our guidelines are now part of an online resource for PCPs treating patients with hepatitis C at rural FQHCs. Hep C Connection and several other hepatitis C advocacy groups, are now working on disseminating the guidelines to providers. We were also able to connect these advocacy groups with another organization called Project ECHO: a consult program that enables PCPs without access to specialists to speak with a team of experts over the phone.

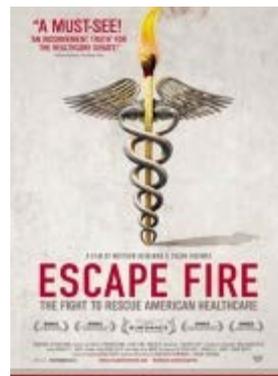
Medicine is truly always changing and shifting. We are currently on the edge of a transition: a transition from the exclusive patient-provider visit structure to a more preventive model of care. I certainly have no idea how it will look or operate, but I think as current and future PAs, we will have the opportunity to participate in analyzing larger determinants of health, beyond a chief complaint. We will all be faced with challenges revolving around issues larger than what can be controlled in an office, like access to care, and it is our responsibility to come up with solutions.

Erin Hagerman  
Clas of 2015

served only by a volunteer ambulance crew of a few EMT-Basics and first responders. This crew greatly impacted the members of the community, yet access to care still remains a problem.

I spent the year before starting the CHA/PA program as a CNA in a Critical Access Hospital in a community of around 6300 residents in Wyoming where I hope to return after completing my education. I loved working there and establishing relationships with my patients. The medical providers in smaller communities must be well versed in all aspects of medicine due to the lack of specialists. I am excited for this challenge with rural medicine.

I have spent the majority of my life living in a rural community and find it difficult to imagine myself residing and practicing medicine anywhere but rurally. For this reason, the rural track is a perfect fit for me. The rural track workshops and seminars are directed towards teaching us certain skills crucial to rural medicine as well as informing us of different challenges and rewards that we will face as providers. Additionally, a large proportion of our third year rotations will be in a rural setting. Rural rotations often provide for a greater opportunity for hands-on learning. I am hoping for several rotations in



## ESCAPE FIRE: Film Showing and Panel

The Anschutz Medical Campus was one of 90 locations across the nation to take part in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Educational Screening of ESCAPE FIRE: The Fight to Rescue American Healthcare on September 17, 2013. The CU Chapter of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement Open School, coordinated by myself (2<sup>nd</sup> year PA student) and Tyler Weigang (4<sup>th</sup> year MD/MPH student), hosted the movie screening and panel discussion. Our goal is to equip students with the skills to become change agents in health care improvement – particularly within quality improvement, patient safety, teamwork, leadership and patient-centered care.

Close to 90 students, faculty, and staff from the campus, Children's Hospital Colorado and University Hospital attended the event. The movie screening, ESCAPE FIRE, examines the powerful forces maintaining the status quo, a medical industry designed for quick fixes rather than prevention, for profit-driven care rather than patient-driven care. After decades of resistance, a movement to bring innovative high-touch, low-cost methods of

Wyoming or Montana that could build relationships that could be beneficial for employment upon graduation. The rural track is a very special component of the CHA/PA program and I am honored to be a part of this unique opportunity to prepare myself for the practice of rural medicine.

Amy Buck  
Class of 2016



### Jonathan Bowser Joins PAEA's Board of Directors

CHA/PA Program Director

Jonathan Bowser has been appointed to the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) Board of Directors as one of four Directors at Large. His role includes the administration of the Association's financial affairs, the appointment of standing and ad hoc committees, and the management of all Association business.



### CHA/PA in the News

Geoff Slater, Class of 2015, and Sarah Tietz, Class of 2016 CU Medical

prevention and healing into our high-tech, costly system is finally gaining ground. Award-winning filmmakers Matthew Heineman and Susan Froemke follow dramatic human stories as well as leaders fighting to transform healthcare at the highest levels of medicine, industry, government, and even the US military. ESCAPE FIRE is about finding a way out. It's about saving the health of a nation. This film has won numerous awards and was chosen for the 2012 Sundance Festival.

However, the highlight of the evening was the stellar panel discussion, led by four local leaders and experts. They included Sara Schmitt from the Colorado Health Institute, Adam Atherly from the Colorado School of Public Health, Dr. Gary VanderArk, a retired neurosurgeon who has experience and perspective with health policy and the medically underserved and Dr. Jay Want from the Center for Improving Value in Healthcare.

Karen Wilson  
Class of 2015



### PAEA Partnership Award

The Physician Assistant Education

Student, authored a paper entitled "Capacity and Access – Care in Colorado During Health Reform" as part of the LEADS track at CU. [The Idea Log at the Denver Post](#) profiled their ideas as guest commentators.

The Journal of Physician Assistant Education published the article "[To Teach or Not to Teach: 2011 National Survey of Physician Assistants and Preceptor Experiences](#)", in which CHA/PA faculty member Jacqueline Sivahop was an author. This article was based on a national survey of PAs and their responses to the incentives and barriers to precepting PA students. This survey resulted in the AAPA granting the ability for PA preceptors to earn Category 1 CME credit.

Joyce Nieman, a CHA/PA faculty member, was elected into the PAEA Ethics Committee for a three year term. This Committee promotes and advances PAEA Best Practices for organizational and professional ethics through the education of members and member institutions.

The New England Journal of Medicine published a [letter from Connie Goldgar](#), Class of 1982 and immediate past PAEA President, regarding the role of physician assistants in an integrated health care system.

Kaitlin Ahern, Class of 2014, was profiled in [CU's Global Health Link](#) on her month long experience in

Association (PAEA) acknowledged Tillman Farley, MD, Associate Professor of family medicine at CU School of Medicine, and Executive Vice President for medical services at Salud Family Health Centers in NE Colorado with the Partnership Award at the national PAEA Conference in Memphis. Dr. Farley was nominated by CHA/PA Program Director Jonathan Bowser. Salud Family Health Centers provide care to all community members regardless of insurance coverage or ability to pay. CHA/PA faculty member Jacqueline Sivahop supported the nomination and described her experience at Salud as the best clinical rotation she had. "Not only did I immerse myself in a new culture, learn medical Spanish, and begin to understand the health disparities and challenges of rural and urban underserved populations, but I learned what a knowledgeable, compassionate, and empathetic provider I wanted to be by mirroring the preceptors from Salud," notes Jacqueline.



## Interprofessional Education (IPE)

Despite the introductory emails the IPE orientation day was a bit of a mystery for many of us in the CHA/PA class of 2016. We all arrived early

Guatemala as part of the Global Health Track.

Chelsey Stillman, Class of 2010, attended the Child Neurology Society Annual Meeting in Austin where she received the Innovative Practice Award from the Association of Child Neurology Nurses.



On Saturday, October 19 thousands of people ran in the Denver Rock 'n' Roll Marathon and Half Marathon and the CHA/PA program was well-represented. Four first year students completed the half marathon and five others volunteered at the medical tent. The tent was also staffed by two physical therapy students and a PT faculty member from CU. Fortunately, there were no medical emergencies. Most of the runners came to the tent for muscle cramps or needed dressings for their blisters. It was a great opportunity to serve in the community and we look forward to participating again next year.

Lindsey Meyer  
Class of 2016

(thank goodness they had coffee) and registered for the day. In return we received a nametag that was color coordinated designating our IPE team. As we all filtered into one of the largest lecture halls on the Anschutz campus, it became apparent how lucky we are to be at CU. It is hard to describe the feeling most of us had sitting in a room full of over 600 future healthcare providers including Dentists, Medical Doctors, Nurses, Pharmacists, Physical Therapists, and Physician Assistants. The most appropriate word is proud. Proud to be going to a school that emphasizes teamwork not only within each program but also between the programs. References are regularly made in the media and AAPA Medical Watch emails regarding the measurable patient-outcome benefits of team-based healthcare. We are fortunate that the IPE curriculum will prepare us to step into an evolving medical environment which emphasizes this collaborative approach.

After listening to a few distinguished speakers from the school and community, we broke off into our teams. The smaller group activities of building a curriculum vitae and problem solving were fun and challenging, revealing the strengths and experiences we each brought to the table - it will be interesting to see how we grow together! We are personally looking forward to getting to know each of our group members better and to understand the similarities and differences in our training and approach to treating patients. We also look forward to recognizing a few more faces around



### White Coat Ceremony

CHA/PA had its second annual White Coat Ceremony for 1st Year Students on August 5th. This event commemorated the initiation of the students' clinical education. Dean Richard Krugman and Medical Director Celia Kay addressed the students. Invited Speaker Cindy Tanner shared her experience as a graduate of the first CHA/PA class in 1972 and her views on the evolving roles of PAs. The ceremony concluded with the faculty presenting 1st Year Students with their white coats.

campus!

Laura Pharies-Franzoni  
& Bianca Rios  
Class of 2016



### Suturing Workshop - 2nd Year Students



### Alumni Survey

Graduates will be receiving an Alumni Survey early in 2014. This survey provides essential data about where CHA/PA grads are practicing, changing trends in the PA profession, feedback on the program's curriculum, and the program's success in



### CH/PA on Facebook

"[Like](#)" us on [Facebook](#) to see students in action at their suturing workshop – and more.



implementing its mission and goals. This information will be used for grants and other institutional research. Please take the time to respond to the survey in January so that we have your input!

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