

Current information about the CHA/PA Physician Assistant Program at the University of Colorado Denver.

Is this email not displaying correctly?  
[View it in your browser.](#)



## CHA/PA Newsletter

Students have had remarkable experiences in Guatemala, Nicaragua, and rural communities. Read on to learn more!



**PA Education Leads to  
Research and Community  
Outreach**



**New Medical Director**

The CHA/PA program is excited to announce that Dr. Tai Lockspeiser

Pam Donohue's PA education has served as the launching point for her diverse career in research, education, healthcare, and community outreach. Pam was initially drawn to the CHA/PA program in 1979 in part due to its emphasis on working with the underserved. After graduation, she headed to the coast of Maine to practice in a small town. Despite the size of the town, her experiences there were varied as it served a large geographical area and was a stabilization center for patients transported to larger facilities. She loved the rural style of practice that was integrated into the community through home visits, community screenings, wellness education programs, and on-site coverage for area high school football games. Pam was recruited from her job in Maine to join the step-down unit in the NICU at Johns Hopkins University. She provided primary care

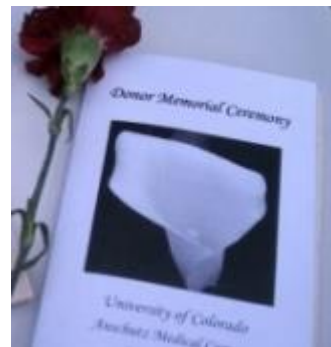
has been named the new CHA/PA Medical Director. The prior Medical Director, Dr. Celia Kaye, retired in May 2013 after serving in this leadership role for six years. Dr. Lockspeiser attended medical school at the University of California, San Francisco. She joined the University of Colorado Denver faculty as an Assistant Professor in pediatrics four years ago. As a general pediatrician, she works mostly in the Child Health Clinic at Children's Hospital Colorado supervising medical students and residents. She is also the Director of Electives for the School of Medicine and the Co-Director for the pediatric residency career focused experiences.

Much of Dr. Lockspeiser's educational scholarship has been concentrated on the use of learning goals in medical education. She has won several awards for her educational research including the

to very preterm infants and long-term developmental care for NICU graduates. After five years of this rewarding work, she became interested in clinical research. Her first research experience was on a randomized controlled trial of surfactant for respiratory distress in preterm infants—she was hooked. Her research has included the study of neonatal intensive care, high risk obstetrics, patient/family-provider communication and how it shapes treatment decisions, and ethical decision making in newborn and obstetrical care.

Pam did find herself limited when applying for research grants. She was disqualified from applying for grant money as she did not have a terminal doctorate degree. It was then that she opted to pursue her doctoral degree in Maternal and Child Health with an emphasis on research. Pam is currently an Associate Professor of

AAMC RIME best paper award for her paper on the creation of a learning goal scoring rubric. Additionally, she recently completed a master's degree in health professions education from the University of Illinois, Chicago to further strengthen her educational skills. Outside of medicine, Dr. Lockspeiser loves reading, the outdoors, road biking, and photography.



### **Donor Memorial**

A still settled over the room as the bitter-sweet melodies of the Arrhythmias rose and fell, stirring and soothing, mourning and

Pediatrics in the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and an Associate Professor of Population, Family, and Reproductive Health at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Her 31 years of experience at Johns Hopkins has also entailed educating students and community involvement. Pam trains medical students, pediatric residents, neonatology and perinatal fellows, and masters and doctoral students in public health. "I hope I am encouraging medical providers to practice patient and family centered care, and to conduct research in a rigorous, economical, and thoughtful way." Her involvement in the Pediatric Family Advisory Council as Staff Chair at Johns Hopkins enables her to interact with patients' families, pediatric faculty, and staff to advise the Hospital administration on policies and programs to focus attention on patient and family centered

delighting. An unspoken understanding of the significance of the moment resonated in the hearts of all in attendance at the Donor Memorial on April 23, 2014. As the music elicited this dichotomous response - one that embraced the reality of both beauty and pain - so the memorial itself reflected the complexity the of donors' gifts. An array of students, faculty, and donor family members spoke, expressing their gratitude and respect. Some brought a bit of light humor to the ceremony for levity while others provoked tears with the depth of their admiration for those who donated their bodies to science. Perhaps the most meaningful moments of the ceremony came at the words of donor family members as they told story after story about the interesting lives of their loved ones. The memorial succeeded brilliantly at producing awareness of

care. Additionally, Pam remains closely connected to the PA profession through her involvement with the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA). She has been a member of the AAPA Professional Practice Council for several years and just finished a three year commitment as chair of the AAPA Professional Practice Commission.

the humanity of each donor – at revealing the fullness of their lives and the nobility of their gift in death. I applaud those involved in the planning of this memorial, for there are few better ways to honor the lives of those who gave us so much.

**Haley Smith, Class of 2016**



### **A Student's Experience in Nicaragua**

For my global health track project, I went to Nicaragua this summer to work in a rural health clinic and also to evaluate the effectiveness of a non-



### **Learning About Global Health in Guatemala**

While Guatemala is known to be an economically poor country, it is rich in culture, language, and beauty. This is the second year that the

profit organization called the Health Outreach for Latin America Foundation (HOLA) that does work in the community.

There is a trending phenomenon in global health today of "volunteer tourism", which gives people opportunities to gain a global perspective of disparities abroad. This is a valuable endeavor. The HOLA Foundation, however, is challenging this idea by acknowledging the potential faults of these operations and is transitioning to becoming a stronger development organization through various public health initiatives and more sustainable operations. My project was to survey community members, doctors, patients, teachers, veterinarians, and more about their needs and also about their feedback for the organization so that it can improve future operations. While these surveys were the focus of my project and I firmly believe that an

CHA/PA program has sent students to Xela, Guatemala to complete a community clinic rotation. I was able to participate in this opportunity for the month of June, along with my classmates Anna Moore and Erin Evenson. Each morning we traveled to small government-run clinics in the rural communities outside of the city, while in the afternoons we were able to improve our Spanish skills by taking classes at the Celas Maya language school. The clinic in which I worked is located in a town called San Martín Sacatepéquez in the western highlands of Guatemala. The clinic serves a population that mainly belongs to the indigenous Mayan Mam tribe, so many of the patients spoke to the healthcare providers in a mix of Spanish and Mam. It was interesting to learn how medicine is practiced with a complete lack of diagnostic testing as well as the challenge of caring for patients who

effective approach to global health is through public health, I was still able to find some time to work with a local doctor in treating diabetes patients who had been identified in the community. The survey evaluation project coupled with some clinical exposure proved to be a valuable experience abroad that served to both bolster clinical skills and assist non-profit health outreach through community feedback.

**Laura Tippit**  
**Class of 2016**



### **Rural Immersion Week**

Last month, I traveled to Lamar, CO

are used to using traditional home remedies to cure their illnesses. Some of the most common health concerns at the clinic were: nutritional support for infants and young children, prenatal care, immunizations, respiratory infections, and intestinal parasites due to poor hygiene and water contamination. During my time there, I learned a great deal about the challenges of global health, but I also learned practical skills that will help me to relate better to Spanish-speaking patients right here in Denver.

**Amber Durkee, Class of 2016**



### **Reaching Out in a**

for Rural Immersion Week. This experience, a collaboration between the School of Medicine's rural track program and Prowers County hospital, was designed to give health profession students interested in rural practice a better understanding of rural life outside of medicine. We were given time each day to investigate one area of the community in depth. I joined a group with three pharmacy students to investigate business and economy. We quickly found out that agriculture is a main driver of the economy in Lamar (and Prowers county as a whole), so we spent most of our week learning about farming and ranching. One of the highlights was being invited to an early morning branding, where we were encouraged to participate. I ended up branding about 30 calves! We also spent a lot of time with Kelli Spritzer and her children on their family farm. We learned about different grains and

## Guatemalan Community

In June 2014, CHA/PA faculty members, Claudia Luna-Asturias, Rebecca Maldonado, and Joyce Nieman accompanied three CHA/PA students on a Spanish language immersion and clinical experience in Guatemala. The purpose of this clinical experience was to provide students an opportunity to improve their Spanish language skills, through cultural immersion and formal instruction at an accredited language school in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. Additionally, the students had the opportunity to learn approaches to medical care in this developing country through clinical experiences in neighboring rural villages. Past experience in these village clinics had informed the CHA/PA program of significant needs for medical equipment and other supplies, as well as issues with



many of the challenges that farming in this area presents. We saw firsthand the effects of drought on agriculture and how these effects trickle down to so many other aspects of life in Lamar. This was overall a great experience and one that has reaffirmed my love of rural life and my desire to practice medicine in this community-oriented setting.

**Kali Saxton-Shaw, Class of 2016**



### **CHA/PA in the News**

CHA/PA Graduate and former CHA/PA Faculty Member Sandy Hoops was awarded this year's PA of the Year by the Colorado Academy of Physician Assistants.

Faculty Members Darcy Solanyk and

pediatric developmental delays. With this knowledge, the faculty and students instructed the providers and staff of the clinics on the use of the Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ), as well as how to educate parents on development-enhancing activities to perform with their children. Additionally, the students and faculty partnered with Project CURE, a Colorado-based organization which distributes donated medical equipment and supplies to developing countries, to perform needs- assessment applications for two rural clinics. We hope Project CURE can assist these two clinics with urgently needed medical equipment and we are eagerly awaiting the outcome.

Cathy Ruff presented their poster “Development of a Valid and Reliable Evidence-Based Practice Curriculum Assessment Tool” at the President's Teaching and Learning Collaborative in May.

CHA/PA student Geoff Slater, Class of 2015, received the Society of Air Force Physician Assistants and Veterans Caucus scholarship. The scholarship honors veteran Physician Assistant students who served with distinction in the United States Air Force.



**CHA/PA's 1000th Graduate**



If I could sum up the 2014 AAPA Conference into one word, it would be: encouraged. As I made the trek to Boston, I felt encouraged. With nearly 20 of my peers, we flew across the country to learn, network, and explore. On the plane, we started planning our days, filling them with different sessions, AOR meetings, and sightseeing along the freedom trail.

PAs and PA students from around the country were all converging in one place and the camaraderie and support I felt from complete strangers was incredible. While attending different sessions throughout the week, I started realizing that somehow the information that has been crammed into my brain from the past year of

The CHA/PA program graduated its first class in 1972 with nine graduates. Over our 45 years of educating PA students, we have grown and expanded in many ways, including the move to the medical campus in Aurora in 2003, the addition of curricular options with the program tracks, and the size of the class itself accommodating 44 students per class. This year we reached a major milestone in graduating our 43rd class with our 1000th graduate!

classes was actually sticking. It made me feel confident that even when I'm overwhelmed with studying, it is worth it. Then we went to the Challenge Bowl and I was quickly humbled. Yes, I've learned a lot, and yes, I am retaining it, but there is still so much more to be learned. As we left Boston, I felt encouraged. It was a bittersweet departure, but I was left with confidence that I am going into the right career. I wish I had been able to attend more sessions and explore more of the history that lines the streets of Boston, but as we flew back to Denver, I began reflecting on the past week and felt inspired. I am excited about my future as a PA and to continue learning as I head into second year!

**Brielle Smith, Class of 2017**



## Admission Deadline

The admission deadline for the 2014-15 admission year is quickly approaching. All applications must be completed by September 1st. See [the website](#) for details on requirements and procedures.



## Interested in Teaching?

The Interprofessional Education Program Council at AMC oversees an interprofessional course taught to over 600 health professions students including pharmacy, MD, PA, nursing and dental. The course contains content around ethics & values, quality & safety and teamwork & collaboration. The IPE program is currently looking for facilitators. Please contact Reesie Roland at [Reesie.Roland@ucdenver.edu](mailto:Reesie.Roland@ucdenver.edu) for further information.



## CH/PA on Facebook

["Like" us on Facebook](#) to check out this year's graduation photos.

## Contact Information:

CHA/PA Program  
Mail Stop F543  
13001 E. 17th Place, Room E7019  
Aurora, Colorado 80045

Phone: (303) 724-7963; Fax: (303) 724-1350

Email: [PA-info@ucdenver.edu](mailto:PA-info@ucdenver.edu)

Web: [medschool.ucdenver.edu/paprogram](http://medschool.ucdenver.edu/paprogram)

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday

---

MOVING? NEW CONTACT INFORMATION? Please email the office at [PA-Info@ucdenver.edu](mailto:PA-Info@ucdenver.edu) so that we can keep in touch with you!!



[unsubscribe from this list](#) | [update subscription preferences](#)