

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

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CHA/PA Newsletter

Read on to learn more about our sold out Alumni Reception, new faculty and staff, and the recent achievements of students!



A Passion for Advocacy



Alumni Reception at the Wynkoop

Almost two hundred alumni, their guests, and current students gathered

Michelle Gaffaney was first prompted to explore the PA profession by her grandmother, an OB/GYN nurse. The more Michelle learned about the profession, the more she was certain that the PA profession, and CHA/PA in particular, was the right path for her. While challenged to maintain a balance between school and her personal life, she has found support through fellow students, faculty, and staff. She notes, “The program fosters a feeling of support for one another and everyone involved only wants the best for others. I think this is what separates our program from others across the country and has made my time here so enjoyable.”

Michelle has a passion for advocacy that she pursued long before joining the Class of 2016. Throughout her undergraduate education, she involved herself in groups dedicated to preventing sexual assault on college campuses as well as groups

for a reception on October 11th at the Wynkoop in downtown Denver. This reception gave alumni and students the opportunity to network as well as celebrate the launching of the CHA/PA Alumni Association. The CHA/PA Alumni Association will focus its attention on engaging and supporting alumni. Next year's reception is scheduled for October 10, 2015 – so mark your calendars! Interested in participating in the Alumni Association? Contact Jonathan Bowser at jonathan.bowser@ucdenver.edu.



Partnership with South African University

CHA/PA has an educational partnership with the Clinical Associate program at Walter Sisulu University (WSU) in South Africa. The Clinical Associate program,

that worked to protect the reproductive rights of women. So, it was only natural that she was drawn to the LEADS track upon joining the CHA/PA program. LEADS stands for Leadership, Education, Advocacy, Development, and Scholarship. It is an interdisciplinary track within the School of Medicine focused on training healthcare professionals to advocate for the needs of underserved and disadvantaged patients. This track enables Michelle to gain the knowledge she desires to advocate for patients at an individual, community, and policy level.

As part of the LEADS track, Michelle conducted a research project last summer with Mimi Chau, a CU medical student, in conjunction with a local OB/GYN doctor to evaluate the availability of emergency contraception in Colorado and Wyoming. They collected and analyzed data on overall availability, cost, behind the counter status, and

the South African equivalent of a Physician Assistant program, began in 2008 in response to the significant need for health professionals in South Africa. Jonathan Bowser, CHA/PA Program Director, and Eva Aagaard, CU Associate Dean for Educational Strategy, spent five days at WSU in October focusing their time on sharing teaching methodologies and course development strategies with the WSU clinical associate faculty. Jon notes, "It is inspiring to work with our colleagues in South Africa who are building a new profession that mirrors the PA model."



AHEC Scholarship Recipients

Keli Sherman & I are honored to be selected as Health Professions Scholars. Health Professions Scholars are granted scholarships by the Colorado Area Health Education Center (AHEC) in exchange for agreeing to practice in a rural or underserved area

age restrictions by relentlessly contacting over 700 pharmacies in six weeks. Michelle and Mimi have the opportunity to present their data at the National American Public Health conference in New Orleans this month and at the National Society of Adolescent Health and Medicine conference in Los Angeles in March. Additionally, they are preparing a manuscript to publish in a national journal this year.



PAEA Annual Conference

Several CHA/PA faculty members presented at the Physician Assistant Education Association's (PAEA) annual conference held in Philadelphia in October:

for a minimum of two years after graduation. AHEC's ability to provide funding to programs statewide is a great asset to healthcare in Colorado. This award is an excellent way to provide incentive to a wide variety of providers across the state to work in areas where they are needed the most. Growing up in small towns, I understand the meaning of a provider shortage. This was, in part, what motivated me to become a physician assistant. I am confident this award, in combination with the School of Medicine's Rural Track, will help provide me the resources necessary to start a career where I want to be, in one of Colorado's rural areas.

Scott Krankkala, Class of 2017



- "Providing Formative Feedback: Trials and Tribulations"-Cathy Ruff & David Eckhardt, CHA/PA
- "Introducing the PAEA Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest"-Gino Gianola, Univ of WA; Joyce Nieman, CHA/PA
- "Developing Script Concordance Items for Clinical Reasoning Assessment"-Rebecca Maldonado & Kevin Bogart, CHA/PA
- "Developing Functional Proficiency in Medical Spanish: Creating a Longitudinal Curriculum?"- David Eckhardt & Claudia Luna-Asturias, CHA/PA
- Basic Clinical Coordinators Workshop - Joyce Nieman, CHA/PA

Sharing the PA Profession with Students

Faculty member Joyce Nieman participated for the third time in Project Access during the PAEA Education Forum in Philadelphia. Project Access is an outreach recruitment program that encourages children from underrepresented minority groups to consider the PA profession as a career option. Its main goals are to increase the number of minority PAs, provide primary care, and eliminate health disparities. Joyce visited Benjamin Franklin High School located in the north part of Philadelphia. "Franklin" has a very diverse student body consisting of mostly African American and Hispanic students. With her two team members from Yale University and University of California Davis, Joyce gave a short presentation highlighting the PA profession and then the team answered questions. Joyce notes, "It is so gratifying to share the PA profession

- Enhanced Clinical Coordinators Workshop – Jacqueline Sivahop, CHA/PA



New CHA/PA Employee

Jenny Smidt has joined CHA/PA as the Clinical Services Coordinator. Jenny works closely with our preceptors to ensure all necessary affiliation agreements are in place and with students to obtain all required certifications. She also manages the rotation evaluation process. She has an extensive background in medical office management. Jenny is married and has 2 beautiful children and several pets. She enjoys cherishing time

with students, especially those who have never heard of a PA. I'm hopeful that sessions like these increase the future diversity of the PA profession.”



Halloween Party at Children's Hospital Colorado

The second annual CHA/PA Halloween party took place on Monday, October 27th at Children's Hospital Colorado. It was a wonderful experience for all who participated. A group of first and second year CHA/PA students, dressed in festive Halloween costumes, set up activities in the lobby to celebrate the holiday with many of the children. The group helped with mask painting, decorating trick-or-treat bags, and coloring

with her family, cooking, gardening, and creating multi-media art.



Welcoming New CHA/PA Faculty

Several long-term CHA/PA adjunct faculty retired or otherwise moved on from the program after numerous years of service. We are so grateful for their contributions to our students: Kyle Tick, MSW, Sandy Fallon, PA, and Mark Abzug, MD. We have added three new faculty members to assist in training our students. Rachel Byrne, PA, teaches Applied Behavioral Medicine and Psycho-Social Aspects of Healthcare. Janka Flaska, PA, teaches Emergency Medicine, and Donna Curtis, MD, MPH, teaches Medical Microbiology. Welcome!

Halloween pictures while engaging in memorable conversations with the patients and their families.

Participating in this event for the past two years has been a fun and rewarding experience. Seeing all the smiles truly brought back the excitement around the many traditions of Halloween!

Leslie Brentlinger, Class of 2016



Outreach to Local High School

As a part of our Professional and Clinical Practice course, I and several other CHA/PA students had the opportunity to speak to freshmen students at Aurora High School about sexually transmitted infections and the PA profession. Having grown up in a suburb of Minneapolis where 95% of high school students matriculate into college within three months of



CHA/PA in the News

Faculty member Jacqueline Sivahop presented a poster at the 14th International Conference on Shaken Baby Syndrome entitled "Using a Train-the-Trainer Model for Physician Assistant Students to Provide Community Education on a State-Wide Education Outreach Campaign on the Prevention of Abusive Head Trauma".

The University of Colorado Unite Program (CU-Unite) has a new Director, Jamal Mooloo, MD. CU-Unite is a track offered to PA, MD, and NP students who are committed to serving the uninsured and those with limited access to health care in urban areas.

Stacy Parmenter, Class of 2014, was awarded the Barb Quarantillo

graduation and where parents were way too involved with their children's lives, I was shocked to discover that many students have no parental figures in their lives and are forced to fight for themselves each day.

It brought joy to my heart to see the teacher's vision for this classroom. He was so full of hope and encouragement for these kids. It was obvious that he has made a significant impact in their lives through his support both in the classroom and in their personal lives. Working with these teenagers in Aurora, I rediscovered my passion for the PA career field. I am here at CHA/PA because I love children. I am here because I want to make a difference in their lives by keeping them healthy and by educating them about their overall health. Furthermore, these students taught me how to communicate with my future patient population—a population full of joy and hope, yet ridden with anxiety and hardship. A population that desperately needs someone on their side, fighting

scholarship. Barb Quarantillo graduated from the CHA/PA program in 1990. After a long battle with ovarian cancer, Barb passed away in 2008 and this scholarship is awarded in her honor. Each year's recipient is a practicing PA or PA student who is interested in Infectious Disease. The awarded funds enabled Stacy to attend the annual Children's Hospital Colorado Pediatric Infectious Disease meeting in Vail, CO.

for them—both for their health and otherwise.

Kelli Greene, Class of 2016

Program Director Jonathan Bowser was interviewed for an article in the Denver Business Journal in October discussing the PA profession and its expanding role in Colorado's healthcare system.



Information Sessions

Information Sessions will be held on the Aurora campus starting in January 2015. Information will be presented on the PA profession, the CU program, and admission requirements. See [our website](#) for details.

AAPA Photo Challenge

The American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) held its first-ever PA Week Photo Challenge in October. CHA/PA students received a runner up position as the sweetest photo. Congrats!

CH/PA on Facebook

["Like" us on Facebook](#) to check out photos from the Alumni Reception!

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



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