

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

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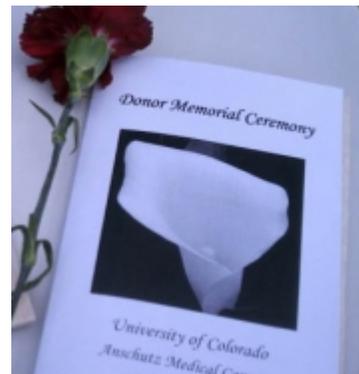
CHA/PA Newsletter

Read on to learn more about student awards, reflections from conferences and ceremonies, AAPA Task Force updates, unforgettable clinic experiences, and much more!



When Passion and Career Meet

After completing her Master's of Public Health, Lynsay MacLaren felt something was missing. She was looking for more experience and education in clinical medicine. Enter the CHA/PA program, she graduated from CU with her Master's in Physician Assistant Studies in 2010



2017 Donor Ceremony: Reflection

Anatomy was on everyone's mind when starting PA school. It was a mixture of excitement, nerves, and curiosity – not only with the class but also with the opportunity to work with cadavers. I think I can

and has been making an impact ever since. Lysay started working at Whitman–Walker Health in Washington, D.C. right after graduation. At Whitman–Walker she works closely with LGBT and HIV positive patients providing primary care and works as a research clinician. Whitman–Walker is a part of the AIDS Clinical Trials Group (ACTG) which conducts studies on HIV and Hep C.

Lysay was drawn to the PA profession because of her interest in studying infectious diseases and providing care to patients with HIV and sexually transmitted diseases. Working with a diverse population does present challenges. Lysay explains, “A challenge in regard to transgender care specifically is the lack of clinical studies in regard to this population. Much of what we do has no science behind it. The population is also very marginalized and can be treated [unfairly] in other medical centers so it is nice for us to be a welcoming and safe space.” Lysay enjoys helping people and finding her niche as a PA within the research field.

Lysay explains the impact her work has had on her life, “being a PA I have met so many people from different walks of life. I have had to learn over the years how to best deal with people with many different issues—be it mental issues, substance abuse, etc. I think that overall has changed the way I view the world and interact with people in general.”



speak on behalf of my class, that learning from our cadavers is an experience that will forever go unmatched. So, when asked to help organize a ceremony recognizing and thanking the generous donors and their families, I knew it wasn't an opportunity I could pass up. On April 21st, families, students, faculty and staff gathered together to recognize, remember, and thank those who donated their bodies to the continuation of science and education. This year's theme was resonance and its presence was felt throughout the afternoon. From the stories and memories shared by the donors' loved ones, to the experiences and feelings expressed by the students, the donors' lives and their stories moved us all and resonated among everyone. As a student, my donor served as my “first teacher” – her hands not only taught me anatomy, they told me a story. I learned so much from someone that I have never spoken to, a rare occurrence in today's world. Being among the families during the ceremony, I felt as if my experience came full circle. Students from all different programs were fortunate enough to set their future careers in motion by learning from their donors, and being able to share our gratitude and gather together meant so much to us.

Unforgettable Guatemala

Everything about Guatemala is good, and unforgettable. Dona Mary's lorocco tortillas are exquisite, topped with creamy guacamole sauce, made from avocados freshly picked from her garden. Warm breezes gently rock the hammock at the Buff's House making any evening after clinic a peaceful one. Socks (the friendly neighborhood dog) joins the team's evening fitness hour, jogging through the banana plantation. The patients are beautiful, in every sense of the word. Despite the sun, the sweat, and the journey the patients walk to wait in line to be seen at Trifinio Clinic, each one will greet you with a great smile and a callused handshake or a tight embrace.

An elderly woman of the community took care of everyone and everything, but she finally took the morning off to take care of herself. She slowly walked 1 hour to be seen for her knees that had been bothering her for years, and I listened to her tale. I listened about her life; how she sells freshly made tortillas to support her family, the struggles they face, the challenges of watching her great-grandkids, and her achy knees. I gave her topical analgesics, anti-inflammatory medications, and strengthening exercises for her knees, but also two open ears to listen to her story. She thanked me profusely, opened her almost empty purse containing a small water bottle and gave me the only other item within – a piece of wrapped

Berit Wallevand
Class of 2019



Welcome, Sarabeth!

Sarabeth Varriano works as the Didactic and Communication Coordinator for the program. Her duties include working with our Academic Services Coordinator to further our didactic mission and with the Director of Admissions and Communication to expand and enhance our communication efforts.

She has prior experience in higher education working in Marketing, Communication and Student Affairs with the University of West Florida and Westwood College. She graduated from the University of West Georgia with a BS in Sport Management and from the University of West Florida with an MA in Strategic Communication and Leadership.

Sarabeth is married and has one daughter, a cat and a dog. She is an active member of the Junior

gum. It's an incredibly humbling experience to receive such an immense gift- *everything she had* - for listening with compassion, acting with love, and trying to ease her pain. Guatemala reinforced my medical knowledge, my clinical practice, and rejuvenated my passion for serving others in a holistic manner.

Vanessa Nowosad
Class of 2019



AAPA Task Force

Janice Baker, MHR, CHA/PA Clinical Coordinator, recently participated on a Joint Task Force (JTF) of Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) and American Academy of PAs (AAPA) members charged to undertake research, identify policy solutions, and develop practical approaches to increase the availability and accessibility of preceptors and Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPE) for PA students. The JTF findings and

League of Denver where she serves on the Communication Council to help further the organizations impact in the community. Sarabeth enjoys volunteering, exploring Colorado with her family and baking.



Congratulations, Liz!

Elizabeth Barlow is the recipient of the **Award for Outstanding Community Service by an Individual Student** for the 2016-17 Excellence Awards for Student Organizations, Leadership and Service. This is an award that is provided by the AMC Student Senate on behalf of students, staff or faculty to the student or student organization whom they believe went above and beyond, exhibiting excellence, in their respective category.

The AMC Student Senate believes that Elizabeth Barlow is an outstanding representation of the campus' amazing student leaders and the tireless work they

recommendations were presented in a policy paper before the AAPA House of Delegates at their recent National Conference.

In response to their charge, the JTF reviewed previously published reference materials as well as conducted an informal survey of several key stakeholder groups (e.g. PAs in administration of large health systems, PAs who have never precepted, current preceptors and former preceptors). Overwhelmingly, respondents felt that precepting PA students is an excellent way to contribute to the growth of the PA profession and to give back to the profession without obligation. Overall findings addressed barriers to precepting, how to minimize those barriers and short-term solutions.

Based on the research, the JTF policy paper included recommendations such as: 1. Organized communication of the benefits of precepting to PAs, patients and employers (e.g. PAEA/AAPA collaborative development of an information toolkit for PA programs and preceptors), 2. Increased Category 1 CME credits for PAs who precept, 3. Potential development of a national database of SCPE similar to the CASPA (Central Application Service for Physician Assistants) platform and, 4. Collaboration with external medical organizations to support an interprofessional, collaborative clinical training model.

contribute to the university.



CHA/PA in the News

Faculty member Kevin Bogart received a scholarship to attend the American Academy on Communication in Healthcare's ENRICH course in June 2017

Four first year student, Lindsey Harr, Karlie Johansen, Carly Galimanis and Ashley Grise spent three days in Washington, D.C to attend the AAPA Leadership & Advocacy Summit

Christianna Ruple was a coauthor on a poster that was presented at the Consortium of Universities for Global Health's (CUGH) 8th annual Global Health Conference in Baltimore. The poster, entitled, "Knowledge, Beliefs, and Attitudes Towards Exclusive Breastfeeding in Dhulikhel, Nepal," won the Lancet-CUGH Student Poster Contest in the Women's Health category!

Jessie Cottle (Class of 2018) was awarded the PFC Roger W Cummins Memorial/Veterans Caucus Scholarship from the AAPA

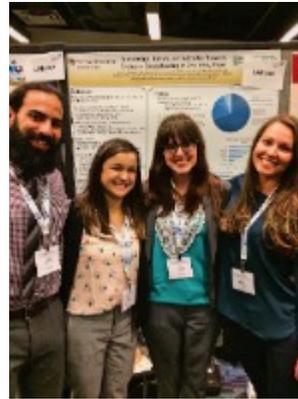
The policy paper was presented to and approved by the AAPA House of Delegates. The recommendations are now with the AAPA Board for implementation recommendations.

**Janice Baker, MHR
Clinical Coordinator**



AAPA Leadership & Advocacy Summit

In early March, myself and three other first year students were afforded the opportunity to attend the AAPA Leadership and Advocacy Summit in Washington D.C. The 2017 Summit largely focused on the “Full Practice Authority and Responsibility” Initiative or “Optimal Team Practice” (the name adopted following the conference). PAs and students from across the country were able to voice their concerns with the initiative and propose suggestions to improve it before the initiative was presented to the House of Delegates at the annual AAPA conference.



CUGH Poster Winners

During the summer of 2016, I traveled to Nepal for seven weeks as part of my Global Health Track rotation. Alongside a group of three University of Colorado medical students, we rotated through the antenatal clinic at Dhulikhel Hospital. In addition, we administered surveys as part of a longitudinal research project investigating exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) trends in Nepalese mothers. Nepal reports some of the highest numbers in the world for stunted growth in children under five and infant mortality rates. The research project was aimed at gathering data about EBF as a possible solution to reducing these rates.

After organizing our data, we submitted an abstract titled, ‘Knowledge, Beliefs, and Attitudes Towards Exclusive Breastfeeding in Dhulikhel, Nepal to the Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH) Student Poster Contest. Out of thousands

Workshops included advice about forming coalitions, how to get involved with advocacy for the PA profession on the state level, and information about newly published research highlighting the efficacy of PAs in patient health outcomes. When we were not attending workshops, we spent our free time in the District exploring national monuments and sight seeing. We were also able to meet with leaders from CAPA and other state boards who encouraged us to get involved with advocacy in small ways and then narrow in on an issue we are passionate about. Each leader I spoke with encouraged me that it does not take someone special to make a difference; it just takes someone with a passion and a vision. This conference opened my eyes to the utility of advocacy for, not only our profession, but our patients as well.

**Lindsey Harr
Class of 2019**



Congratulations Class of 2017!

of submissions, our abstract was selected as a finalist and we were invited to present our poster at the 2017 CUGH Global Health Conference in Washington D.C.

The conference felt timely amongst the backdrop of the uncertain political climate and the proposed budget cuts to the National Institutes of Health. Presenting and winning the CUGH Student Poster Contest in the category of Women's Health felt almost inconsequential amidst a room full of the world's leaders in global health, but if there is one lesson I have learned from global health it is this: our actions, as small as they may seem, affect not only ourselves but those around us.

Special thanks to the CHA/PA program, to our principal investigator and faculty member Dr. Jennifer Bellows, MD, MPH, and my groupmates Kara Blaisdell, Bijan Ghaffari, and Allison Strauss (M.D. candidates, 2019).

**Cristianna Ruple
Class of 2018**



Scholarship Recipient

Last month I was honored to receive the PFC Roger W. Cummins scholarship. This is one of several scholarships offered by the AAPA's Veteran's Caucus each year. As a Marine rifleman fighting in the Quang Nam province in Viet Nam, PFC Cummins died valiantly in 1969 in the throes of jungle warfare, earning the Navy Cross for extraordinary heroism. It is people like this who should absolutely be remembered and this scholarship is dedicated to the memory of this Marine. Being a Marine myself, this scholarship is quite meaningful to me. I've been on combat deployments, but the hardships endured in the Viet Nam era are almost unfathomable, as my father well knows from being a Marine himself in that era. This scholarship has not only helped me, but has helped my family as well by helping to relieve school expenses. I'm very grateful to the Veteran's Caucus of the AAPA and would encourage any eligible students in any accredited PA program to apply.

Jesse Cottle

Class of 2018



Do you have a PA position to list with your practice? Email pa-info@ucdenver.edu to add a listing to our website. You can find [job listings](#) on the Alumni webpage.



Interested in precepting CHA/PA students?

Have you considered precepting CHA/PA students? Find out about the advantages of training up our next generation of PA students and find contact information on the [Preceptor section of our website](#).

Contact Information:

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13001 E. 17th Place, Room E7019
Aurora, Colorado 80045

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

Email: PA-info@ucdenver.edu

Web: medschool.ucdenver.edu/paprogram

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



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