



## CHA/PA Newsletter

Read on to learn about the Justina Ford, MD Scholarship Awardee, recent alumni and faculty accomplishments, CHA/PA guest lecturers and CHA/PA students' volunteer activities. Also, make sure you "Save the Date" for the next PA info session and the 2024 CHA/PA Fall Alumni Reception!



### Inaugural Justina Ford, MD Scholarship Awardee

First year CHA/PA student, Samantha Lettenberger, was the inaugural recipient of the Justina Ford, MD Scholarship funded from an endowed scholarship diversity fund. The goal of the fund is to provide graduate scholarship awards to underrepresented students pursuing a Masters Degree with CHA/PA.



### Faculty Feature: Kate LaPorta MHS, PA-C, awarded CAPA PA Educator of the Year

In late February, faculty member, Kate LaPorta, MHS, PA-C was awarded PA Educator of the year by the Colorado Academy of PAs (CAPA) at the CAPA Winter CME Conference. This award recognizes a PA's contribution as a PA preceptor or educator and the recipient must be a CAPA member. Kate's recognition was based on her support of educational advancement

While she was a student at the University of Wisconsin – Madison, Samantha developed an interest in global public health and immersed herself in the study of social determinants of health, public policy and health systems. She continued on this pathway by advocating for Black Maternal and child health equity. Samantha is quoted as, “My goal in joining the PA profession is to bring primary care to the underserved, specifically immigrant and refugee populations. In learning more about Dr. Ford’s accomplishments, with so many forces against her, I really want to live up to that.”

Justina Ford, MD was the daughter of enslaved Africans who sought freedom in Illinois. Dr. Ford said ever since she was small, she wanted to be a doctor. Her parents made great sacrifices to put her through Hering Medical College in Chicago. After she came to Colorado and was refused membership in the Colorado State Medical Society because she was a woman and a woman of color, she ended up delivering 7,000 babies out of her home and made house calls during her career. After 47 years, Dr. Ford became Colorado’s first licensed African– American female doctor August 1, 1902.



of PA students, promotion of student leadership, mentoring efforts, involvement in professional leadership activities, and community and volunteer activities.



The CAPA Winter CME Conference was attended by PAs and PA Students from across the state of Colorado. In addition to the award ceremony, the conference offered two days of networking, lectures, workshops, and medical trivia. CHA/PA was well represented at the conference with faculty and students, and our students participated in the Student Challenge Bowl, the annual medical trivia contest!

We are so proud of Kate and her efforts to support our PA students in CHA/PA and beyond and this makes 4 years in a row that CHA/PA educators have been awarded the CAPA Educator of the year.

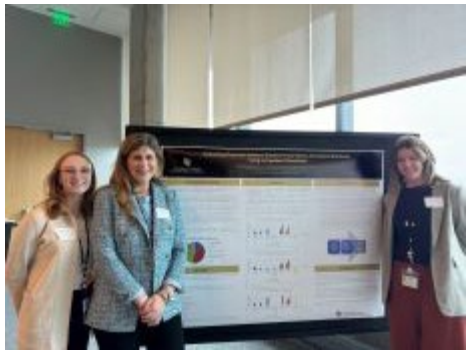


Guest Lecture Spotlight: Meet Tracy Price Johnson

If you would like to learn more about Dr. Ford and her legacy, you can visit the Justina Ford, MD exhibit at the Fulginiti Pavilion lobby on campus through October 31, 2024. You can also learn more about the scholarship fund at the link below.

[Justina Ford, MD Endowed Scholarship](#)

We would like to extend our congratulations to Samantha for earning this scholarship that allows her to represent CHA/PA doing meaningful work in honor of Dr. Ford.



**CHA/PA Faculty Features**

Evaluating Physician Assistant Student Preparedness for Clinical Rotations Using an Inpatient Simulation

CHA/PA Faculty members, Kelsey Dougherty, PA-C, Kate LaPorta, PA-C, and Kristen Oase, PA-C, presented a poster at the Office of Advanced Practice Providers annual conference at the University of Colorado on the implementation of an inpatient simulation experience that second year students complete just prior to their clinical year (3<sup>rd</sup> year) of the program. A survey was conducted to assess student perception of preparedness for inpatient rotation experiences both before and after

Guest Lecturer, Tracy Price-Johnson, MS, MBA, has been involved with the CHA/PA program since 1994 and shared some a little about herself and what she loves about educating CHA/PA students.

Take a look at what she shared below:

I'm from Tulsa, OK and attended Graduate School at the University of Denver. I also studied at a University in Sweden to learn about systems of care and Universal Access to care.

I practice with the Ethics Consult team, which works with the teams at The Children's Hospital Colorado. In this role, the Ethics Consultants support providers, and families around ethical decisions. I am also the Director of Community Advocacy at JFK Partners and with Developmental Pediatrics, School of Medicine as the Faculty Liaison.

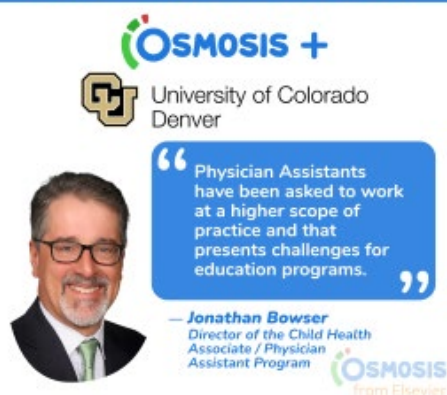
In 1994 I started working with the CHA/PA program directors to integrate disability and Patient and Family Centered Care into the curriculum. That expanded to support the PA Program with the Home Visit Project and I have been involved with the curriculum ever since.

I do a lecture on Narrative Medicine and the value of listening to your patients to truly understand their needs. From my work in the community with individuals with disabilities, I bring in panels of both providers and individuals to share how providers can better care for their patients with disabilities.

completing the inpatient simulation. The survey results found that student perception of preparedness for inpatient rotations significantly improved after completing the inpatient simulation.

Special acknowledgements to Tanya Fernandez, PA-C and Linsey Weller, PA-C for their valuable contributions to the inpatient simulation.

### Raise the Line **PODCAST**



**OSMOSIS +**  
University of Colorado Denver

“Physician Assistants have been asked to work at a higher scope of practice and that presents challenges for education programs.”

— Jonathan Bowser  
Director of the Child Health Associate / Physician Assistant Program

**OSMOSIS**  
from Elsevier

Looking for a great podcast? Listen to our Program Director, Jonathan Bowser, discuss how PA programs are rising to the challenge of preparing physician assistants for the expansion of their role in healthcare delivery on the Raise the Line podcast. (~40 minute listen)

Listen to it and let us know what you think: [Raise the Line](#)

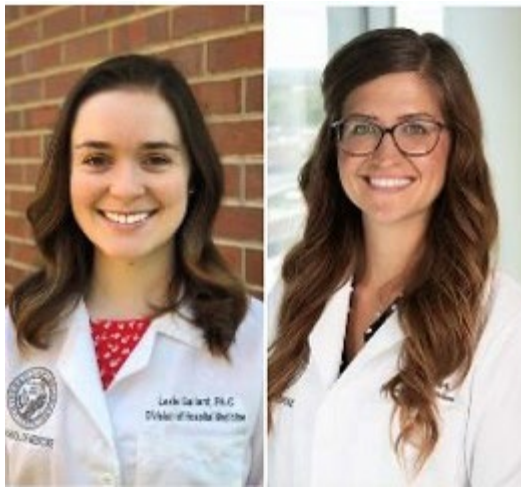
My favorite thing about working with CHA/PA students is the students themselves. The students are so eager to embrace what they are learning. They want to see patients as a whole person and their enthusiasm is infectious. Each year, the group of students are so enthusiastic and humble about what they don't know and what they want to learn. PA students really embody the humility and compassion needed in medicine.

For fun, I am an avid cyclist who enjoys mountain biking, road biking and gravel biking. I even have a Fat Tire bike that I ride in the mountains when it is snowing. I also enjoy hiking, skiing, snowshoeing and backcountry skiing and spending time with my wonderful husband and fabulous son.

Tracy leaves us with the following thoughts:

I think CU's PA program has always been open to incorporating ideas that are new and cutting edge. The program and faculty are willing to see how medicine is changing and adapt the curriculum to include new ways of teaching and approaching patients with innovation and thoughtful care.

Working with the students and faculty in the PA Program has been the highlight of my career and I have been happy to stay in touch with many PA students after graduation and watched their careers grow and develop. It is so gratifying to see the students take off and become fully actualized in their own careers.



### Alumni Article Published in the Journal of the American Academy of PAs

We are always excited to share the accomplishments of our CHA/PA Alumni. Alumni, Alexandra (Lexie) Gallant, PA-C (c/o 2016) and Laura Erdman, PA-C (c/o 2015) co-authored a research study with other colleagues and the findings were recently published in the Journal of the American Academy of PAs.

The research study abstract states: "Through a needs assessment, month-long pilot, and buy-in from our academic hospital medicine group, we initiated a peer feedback platform that sought to highlight individual faculty strengths, facilitate thoughtful and constructive feedback, and create effective collaboration among colleagues. Three months after implementation, results indicated that the platform provided important information on clinical skills and identified areas for growth and opportunities for additional training. Peer feedback can also improve working relationships among PAs, NPs, and physicians by highlighting the clinical skill sets and value of all team members".



### Faculty/Alumni Feature: Tanya Fernandez, MS, PA-C recognized as CU Anschutz Alumni Hero

There are roughly 40,000 graduates and residents of the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. They include graduates of the CU Child Health Associate/Physician Assistant Program, College of Nursing, Colorado School of Public Health (including graduates from the University of Northern Colorado and Colorado State University), CU Anschutz Graduate School, Physical Therapy Program, School of Dental Medicine, School of Medicine, and Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, as well as those who completed their residency,

This accomplishment gave us a chance to catch up with both Lexie and Laura to hear about what they've been up to. Here's what they said:

Laura:

"I work as a Hospitalist APP through the Division of Hospital Medicine where I have been employed since 2016. After graduating from the CHA/PA program in 2015, I completed a one year Advanced Practice Fellowship in Hospital Medicine. I currently split my clinical time between Inpatient Hospital Medicine and the CARE Clinic – which is an urgent care for cancer patients at University Hospital. I also serve as the Co-Chair for the Division of Oncology Clinical Case Review Series, as well as the APP Schedule Lead for the Division of Hospital Medicine. I love teaching at the CHAPA program and am honored to have received the Guest Lecturer of the Year Award in 2023!"

Lexie:

"After graduating from CHA/PA I completed the Hospitalist fellowship at University of Colorado then joined their faculty as a hospitalist APP. I've been with the group since 2017. Within the group, I am also one of the lead APPs, one of the Directors of Provider Experience, and recently became the Director of APP onboarding. I feel like there are lots of smaller moments I'm really proud of. Our article and the creation of our peer feedback program being a bigger one, but also the work I do to understand how my Division's wellbeing is doing and how we can better support our clinicians; being a lead APP and representing a large

internship, or fellowship in a health science program at the University of Colorado.

The CU Anschutz Alumni Hero Award program recognizes Anschutz alumni who give back and support the CU Anschutz Medical Campus, whether they have mentored a student, volunteered in their community, served on the frontline, or provide an example of the best of the healthcare professions. Faculty Member, Tanya Fernandez (class of 2005), was nominated anonymously for this award and received a "Hero" pin as a symbol of her dedication to inspiring the next generation.

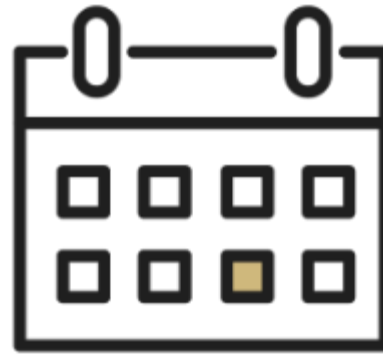
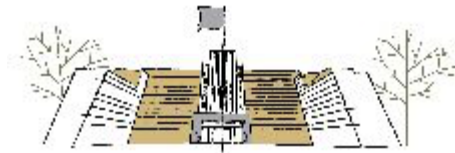
Here's what Tanya's nominator said, "Tanya has dedicated her career to serving students in the CHA/PA program and members of our community through her Clinical Care at Children's Hospital. She has positively impacted the lives of hundreds of students and patients."



If you see Tanya around campus with her Alumni Hero pin, please congratulate her.

group of APPs to leadership, increasing recognition of our APPs through advocating for APP awards, mentoring numerous APPs and learners, and giving lectures to our fellows and PA students.

We are so grateful for continued connections with our CHA/PA alumni.



### Save the Date for the Fall 2024 CHA/PA Alumni Fall Reception

Save the date on your calendar (Friday October 4, 2024) at the Wynkoop Brewing Company and please share this with your CHA/PA alumni friends.

If you missed it, checkout our [FB post](#) featuring our favorite images from the event.

We are looking forward to seeing you this fall!



### PA Info Session Hosted with ThePAC Inc.

We are excited to co-host our next Info Session on April 9th at 5:30pm, MT with the Physician Assistants of Color (ThePAC). ThePAC exists to support PAs of color, diversify medicine through advocacy and education, and empower diverse patients through representation. If you or someone you know is interested in participating in this Admissions Informational they can [Register here](#).



### CHA/PA Students make time to Volunteer

In addition to maintaining their busy



### PAEA Exam Development Summit

Faculty Member, Kristen Oase, PA-C, was invited to attend the 2024 PAEA Exam Development Summit in St. Louis Missouri in March where about 75 PA educators from across the US convened to update the PAEA End of Rotation (EOR) Exam Blueprints, Topic Lists, and Taks Areas in addition to item writing for the PACKRAT and End of Curriculum Exams. Kristen served on the Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, and Pediatrics Blueprint and Topic List Working Group with PA educators from Florida, New Jersey, Missouri, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina. Reflecting on her experience, Kristen said, "What a challenging and rewarding experience! I loved coming together to work with PA educators from across the country to reach a common goal, and I was proud to represent the CHA/PA Program!" The updated EOR Exam Blueprints and Topic Lists are in the next phase of review and will be published in the coming months.

didactic and clinical skills schedule, our CHA/PA students make volunteering a priority. Whether it is supporting their fellow classmates or working to improve the health of our community, they are active participants. Two student led volunteer events held in the last quarter were a Scrub Exchange and Health Screenings at the National Western Stock Exchange.

PS2, Christy Yohannes, organized a Scrub Exchange (gently used scrubs that students and staff donated) along with some professional outfits and shoes as well. Students could stop by and look through scrub sets, dresses, and shoes and grab items they need for clinical rotations or professional events. This exchange was a win-win for those that donated and those that gained new attire.

One of our lecturers (Dr. Aimee Bernard) also played a large part in making this event a success by donating the dresses.

Our PA-S2s volunteered at the 2024 National Western Stock Show by teaming up with the Colorado Area Health Education Centers group for free health screenings - BP, blood sugar, vision & balance screens, and heartfelt conversations about general health topics! Healthcare access in rural communities is very limited, so providing free health screenings at the stock show enabled them to connect with thousands of rural community members throughout January! This unique initiative not only promoted overall health but also



identified individuals with elevated blood pressures and blood sugars, who could benefit from getting established with a primary care provider.



We are proud of our students for continuously prioritizing volunteer work in our community, in addition to their didactic and clinical training and rotations.



### Have an Idea for our Newsletter?

We love to hear from our alumni that are doing unique things in the PA field. If you are interested in being a part of a future alumni spotlight in our newsletter, please email [pa-info@ucdenver.edu](mailto:pa-info@ucdenver.edu) and we will follow-up with you.



### Interested in precepting CHA/PA students?

There are so many advantages to training our next generation of PA students. If you are considering being a preceptor to CHA/PA students check out this area of our website [Preceptor section](#) and contact



### Job Listings!

Do you know that we have an active job listings page on our website? If you are looking for a new opportunity, you can find [job listings](#) on the Alumni webpage.

If you have an open PA position in your practice, we are happy to post the listing to our website. Email [pa-info@ucdenver.edu](mailto:pa-info@ucdenver.edu) to add a listing to our website.

us today!

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Web: <https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/physician-assistant-program>

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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!!



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