



CHA/PA Newsletter

Read on to celebrate the Class of 2024, welcome the class of 2027, and learn about recent alumni and faculty accomplishments, CHA/PA guest lecturers of the year and CHA/PA scholarship awardees. Also, make sure you Nominate CHA/PA alumni for new Alumni Awards for the CHA/PA Fall Alumni Reception!



Congratulations to the CHA/PA Class of 2024

On Sunday, May 19th, CHA/PA held our annual Pre-grad celebration at Lowry Beer Garden, setting a record for attendance with roughly 200 graduates, family members, faculty and staff. The gorgeous weather contributed to an amazing evening of fellowship, appetizers, and desserts. It was the perfect lead in to the official ceremonies to follow the next day.



Welcome to the CHA/PA Class of 2027

On Monday, July 1st, we welcomed the CHA/PA class of 2027 to campus for Summer Block, led by faculty members Jackie Sivahop, Ed. D., PA-C and Jonathan Bowser, MS, PA-C. The Class of 2027 comes from an applicant pool of 2005 applicants and has some very impressive statistics. With an overall average cumulative GPA of 3.76 and an average science GPA of 3.69, they were also able to



On Monday May 20th, 2024, we officially celebrated the CHA/PA class of 2024. Forty-four graduates were joined by their families and the CHA/PA staff as they reached the culmination of their time in the program. At this year's convocation, long time preceptor, Dr. Mary Kohn received the CHA/PA Career Teaching award by Faculty Member, Tanya Fernandez, MS, PA-C and Boyd Hammond, MPAS, PA-C (former CHA/PA faculty) and graduate Courtney Zwirko, PA-C were the invited speakers. They both left the class of 2024 with some great words of wisdom and reflected on memories from the last 3 years. Boyd's advice was to say yes to things that align with your passion outside of day-to-day work as they add value to life and work and can help prevent burnout. And Courtney left us with a memorable quote from David Oxberg, "Being listened to is so close to being loved that most people cannot tell the difference." Courtney reminded us of the importance of making our patients feel listened to and heard by saying, "If listening is love, that is the least we can do."

Congratulations to the class of 2024, we can't wait to see what impact you make in the PA profession!

accomplish a median of 74 hours of shadowing, 2242 patient hours, 308 health related hours and 361 volunteer hours!



This year's class is comprised of 23 Coloradans and 21 out of state students. Our out of state students are from California, Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Virginia! We trust that they will discover all the amazing things about our state that we love and take advantage of the natural beauty here by experiencing all the outdoors has to offer in their spare time.

We are so excited to add the Class of 2027 to our family, as we know they will have much to contribute to our program and ultimately to the PA profession.



Alumni Spotlight: Lexie Gallant, PA-C receives prestigious Society of



CHA/PA Faculty Features

CHA/PA faculty members Kelsey Dougherty PA-C, Kate LaPorta PA-C, and Kristen Oase PA-C recently attended the Western Consortium conference in Sacramento, California and presented two posters. The titles for their posters were – “Demystifying Perioperative Care: An Innovative Curriculum Preparing Physician Assistant Students for Surgical Rotations” and “Evaluating Physician Assistant Student Preparedness for Clinical Rotations Using an Inpatient Simulation”. The CHA/PA faculty also got to listen to wonderful PA educational lectures provided by other PA program faculty from across the West.



Faculty members, Jackie Sivahop, PA-C and Amy Akerman, PA-C, recently

Hospital Medicine Award

Lexie Gallant, PA-C, graduated from the University of Colorado Child Health Associate/Physician Assistant Program and went on to complete a fellowship in hospital medicine before joining as faculty with the Division of Hospital Medicine at the University of Colorado.

Her passions include development of physician-APP best practices, clinical excellence post-training, APP education and career development, and clinician experience and wellbeing. As one of the lead APPs in the division, Lexie has spearheaded discussions around APP promotion and mentorship, aided in recruitment of numerous APPs and leaders throughout the division, and assisted with onboarding of the rapidly expanding hospitalist program.

With a strong desire to ensure her teammates thrive in the division, she became co-director of Provider Experience where she collaborates with colleagues across the Department of Medicine on wellness-related initiatives. She frequently advocates for her fellow hospitalists through provider experience rounds, where she discusses clinical and academic work and determines areas in need of improvement. This past year she was awarded a grant aimed at improving provider workspaces for our medical oncology urgent care clinic. Gallant is honored to receive the Society of Hospital Medicine Award of Excellence for Clinical Leadership for APPs.

presented their findings on a new CHA/PA admission variable and its ability to predict success in our program. Five years ago, CHA/PA removed the GRE and replaced it with the situational judgment test (SJT), Casper®, as an admissions requirement. Jackie and Amy examined whether Casper® scores were predicting professionalism success while in the program. They plan to continue to present and publish their findings, expand upon current and new questions, and partner with other PA programs to continue to learn more about SJTs and their role in PA program admissions. We are proud to have faculty that not only teaches our didactic classes, but completes research that can impact PA Education on a national level. Feel free to send your congratulations to Jackie and Amy for this impactful work!



CHA/PA Alumni among 2024 Experts Selected by Pediatrics Instructor Recognition Committee

The Department of Pediatrics Instructor Recognition pilot program



2023–2024 Guest Lecturers of the Year Awardees

We are so excited to share that we are in our 2nd year of recognizing CHA/PA Guest Lecturers of the year. When we started the program our goals were:

- To recognize our Guest Lecturers for their contribution to CHA/PA
- To share the skills and talents of our Guest Lecturers with those invested in our program
- To involve our students in selecting the final winner for each class

We have been able to accomplish these goals with the Guest Lecturer of the year nomination and selection process and the Guest Lecturer spotlights that you see via social media and the alumni newsletters.

The Guest Lecturer of the year awardees for the 2023–2024 academic year were Alex Huechteman, PA-C (Y1) for CVP (Cardiovascular and Pulmonary) and Dr. Eric Groce, MD (Y2) for Endo/Repro (Endocrinology/Reproductive Systems). Awards were presented during our Spring Faculty and Staff

aims to recognize instructor/senior instructor faculty who are making substantive contributions to the university above and beyond their primarily clinical roles. The program goals are:

- To recognize the depth of expertise and accomplishment across three different domains (Clinical Practice Development, Education and Research) and two levels of recognition (Expert and Senior Expert).
- To provide opportunities for professional growth and recognition throughout a faculty member’s career.
- To provide structure that facilitates mentorship pairing.

The Department’s Instructor Recognition Committee has completed its review of applicants for recognition in 2024 and is pleased to announce its selection:

Senior Expert in Research:
Brandon Nuechterlein, PA–C, senior instructor, Section of Hematology, Oncology and Bone Marrow Transplantation (CHA/PA class of 2009)

Expert in Clinical Practice Development:
Patrick Burchett, CPNP–AC/PC, senior instructor, Section of Emergency Medicine

Senior Expert in Clinical Practice Development:
Amy Wrenn, CPNP–PC, FNP, senior instructor, Section of Pulmonary and Sleep Medicine

Expert in Education:

appreciation luncheon by Faculty member Kristen Oase to Alex Huechteman, and Denise Ogden to Dr. Eric Groce.



We are grateful for all of our Guest Lecturers, as they are at the heart of our didactic program. If you know Alex or Dr. Groce, please congratulate them.



First Annual CHA/PA Alumni Awardees will be recognized at the Fall 2024 CHA/PA Alumni Fall Reception

We hope you have saved Friday October 4, 2024 on your calendar for the CHA/PA Alumni Fall Reception at the Wynkoop Brewing Company.

This year we are thrilled to announce,

Lori Lewis, CPNP-AC/PC, instructor,
Section of Emergency Medicine

Senior Expert in Education:

Mona Jacobson, CPNP-PC, senior
instructor, Section of Neurology

Danielle Mashburn, PA-C, senior
instructor with distinction, Section of
Critical Care Medicine (CHA/PA class
of 2011)

Linsey Weller, PA-C, senior instructor,
Section of Hospital Medicine (CHA/PA
class of 2005)

Melissa Widener, PA-C, senior
instructor, Section of Hematology,
Oncology and Bone Marrow
Transplantation (CHA/PA class of
2011)

Congratulations to all the educators
recognized, and especially our
CHA/PA alumni for going above and
beyond their clinical practice.



CHA/PA Students participate in National PA Events

This Spring and Summer, students
from CHA/PA represented the
program at two National Events – the

in partnership with the Office of
Alumni Relations, the launch of our
First Annual Alumni Awards. We aim
to honor outstanding individuals who
have demonstrated excellence,
leadership, and innovation in their
fields, while embodying the values
and spirit of our institution.

We invite you, our valued alumni, to
participate in this event by
nominating deserving candidates who
have made significant impacts in our
community for one of the two
following awards. You can use the
links below to nominate your peers
and/or self-nominations are
welcome.

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD: An
alumna or alumnus of the University
of Colorado Child Health
Associate/Physician Assistant
Program who has embodied the
mission of the CU CHA/PA Program
by demonstrating excellence and
leadership in service, clinical care,
education, professional organizations
and/or published research.

[Alumni Achievement Award
Nomination Form](#)

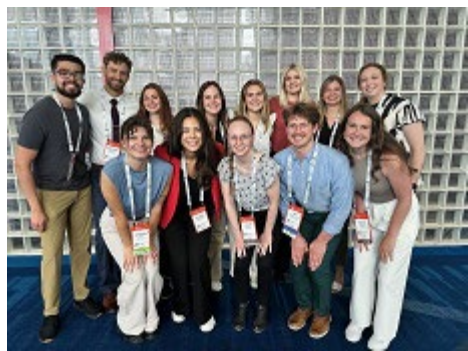
RISING STAR AWARD: An alumna or
alumnus of the University of Colorado
Child Health Associate/Physician
Assistant Program who has graduated
within the last 7 years (2017) This
nominee will have demonstrated
emerging and unique innovation,
creativity, and/or excellence in
categories of service, clinical care,
education, professional
organizations, and/or published
research.

PAEA (PA Education Association) Spring Advocacy Trip in Washington DC and the AAPA (American Academy of Physician Associates) 2024 Conference in Houston. They were both excellent opportunities to contribute to PA education in different ways.

PAEA Spring Advocacy Trip Five students and two faculty attended a training led by the PAEA Government Relations team and lobbyists from Polsinelli, who shared best practices when meeting with congressional staff to request support for legislative initiatives.

They then met with staff from multiple Congressional offices and talked about Title VII funding and promoted a bill to help re-instate subsidized loans for graduate students. Our CHA/PA group also met students and faculty from other PA programs that were in DC for the Advocacy event, including USC and Mass General's PA program. DC was beautiful on the day of the event and all the staffers were kind and responsive to the issues concerning the PA profession and education.

CHA/PA is already looking forward to sending our next group in Spring 2025.



AAPA Fifteen CHAPA students proudly

[Rising Star Award Nomination Form](#)

Please submit your nominations by Thursday, August 22nd, 2024. We are looking forward to seeing you this fall and celebrating our Awardees!



CHA/PA Students Chosen for 2024 PA Foundation Scholarship

CHA/PA Students, Taylor Mc Nair, PA-S2 and Terah Barnes, PA-S2 were among 19 PA Foundation Scholarship recipients this year. PA Foundation scholarships support PA students who demonstrate a passion for the profession and healthcare-related community service. Since the program's inception, the PA Foundation has awarded more than \$2.3 million in scholarships to over 1,500 PA students.

We'd like to share a bit about our Scholarship Winners. Taylor McNair, PA-S2 is from Raleigh NC and went to undergrad at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She's always known she wanted to work in Pediatrics and chose the PA profession for the emphasis on patient-centered care. She's very excited to be representing CHAPA as

traveled to Houston to represent CHA/PA at the AAPA 2024 conference and participated in the National Medical Challenge Bowl and the iScan POCUS competition. The National Medical Challenge Bowl is a high-energy medical game show where students are asked questions on a variety of subjects, including physical diagnosis, microbiology, anatomy, OB/GYN, pulmonary, cardiology, primary care, emergency medicine, and surgery. The iScan POCUS competition had teams of 3-5 students from all over the country rotate round-robin style and perform point of care ultrasound at various stations. The winners of the first round went on to the final round of the competition. We want to give a huge shout-out to our 3 outstanding teams at the National Medical Challenge Bowl and iScan POCUS Competition! In addition to the competitions, our students also explored the city, networked with professionals, and absorbed invaluable knowledge from numerous lectures! They are already counting down to AAPA in Denver next year — our home city awaits.

a 2024 PA Foundation Scholarship recipient!

Terah Barnes, PA-S2 chose to pursue a career in medicine at the age of 15 when her family fostered a child with hydrocephalus. This experience raised her awareness about the lack of access to proper specialty medical care in Haiti and inspired her to pursue a career in medicine. This mission kept her motivated throughout her undergraduate education, where she learned about the PA profession, and its emphasis on direct patient care. Terah also adds that while the monetary aspect of this scholarship will fund her educational pursuits; "It is the knowledge that people believe in me, my purpose and dreams, that truly encourages me to further pursue those dreams".

Congratulations to Taylor and Terah, as we are proud to have you represent CHA/PA.

If you would like to find out more about PA Foundation Scholarships you can visit the following link: [PA Foundation Scholarship](#)



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



Job Listings!

Do you know that we have an active job listings page on our website? If you are looking for a new

interested in being a part of a future alumni spotlight in our newsletter, please email pa-info@ucdenver.edu and we will follow-up with you.

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 us today!

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 to add a listing to our website.

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

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



Child Health Associate /
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