



## CHA/PA Newsletter

Read on to learn about our Global Health Track, recent alumni and faculty accomplishments, CHA/PA guest lecturers and educators and new staff. Also, make sure you "Save the Date" for the next PA info session and the 2024 CHA/PA Fall Alumni Reception!



### CHA/PA Students get Clinical Experience in Tanzania

This past September, our two Class of 2024 Global Health Track (GHT) students had the opportunity to participate in an OB/GYN rotation at St Francis Referral Hospital in Ifakara,



### Alumni Spotlight: Sandra Kuester, PA-C and Lilliam Samour, PA-C

In early December, two of our CHA/PA Alumni, Sandra Kuester, PA-C and Lilliam Samour, PA-C were recipients of the Career Teaching Scholars award for 2023. Both Sandra and Lilliam are Clinical Professors of Pediatrics and were recognized for their outstanding contributions to

Tanzania. Kirsten Gorski, PA-3 and Maria Michelotti, PA-3 said they had an amazing learning experience with most time spent in the labor and delivery ward and a few other inpatient and surgical experience days.

Kristen joined the GHT to expand her knowledge in caring for diverse and underserved populations. She received her undergraduate degree in public health and is passionate about preventative population-based health programming and providing equitable care to individuals in low resource settings both locally and abroad. Kirsten thought the GHT would be a great opportunity to continue learning how to reach underserved populations and a chance to continue exploring this passion.

Maria chose to apply to the GHT because she thought it would help her form into a more competent provider that is better equipped to provide healthcare specifically for underserved groups like those she has worked with in the past including people seeking asylum or refuge in the US.



When asked about the takeaways from the experience and how they plan to incorporate the knowledge and skills acquired, the students

pediatric education. We had the chance to interview Sandra and Lilliam so they could share some highlights about their careers.



Sandra was always interested in pediatrics and after meeting a student while she was teaching, prior to becoming a PA, she was introduced to the CHA/PA program. She decided to apply and never looked back. Sandra has been at Denver Health for almost 23.5 years, the last 8 years in the Nursery and prior to that she spent the first 15 yrs in the NICU and Nursery. Her very first day of work, she had a PA student, and a 4th year medical student to precept. She says they definitely learned a lot from each other that day! And since that day, almost every work day is filled with Residents, PA students, Med students, Nursing students and occasionally Paramedic Students, which fills her with joy! The legacy Sandra hopes to leave is that having the opportunity to take care of the newest beings on earth, and getting to spend time teaching and learning from the next generation of Medical Providers is a joy and a privilege! Sandra says she has a wonderful career, and she has been lucky enough to spend her entire career working with her Best Friend, Lilliam, after meeting in PA School.

Lilliam became interested in becoming a PA after talking to a

responded:

"The opportunity to talk about international medical systems and exchange ideas with other students in similar stages of training from Tanzania, Italy, Austria, and Switzerland was invaluable. Exchanges and cooperation like that help us build better global and local health systems." –Maria

"I want to say thank you to the people of Ifakara for allowing me to learn alongside you in your medical system. I will forever be grateful for the experience I had getting to witness multiple deliveries and use the skills I learned in my prior nursery rotation to help with newborn care and resuscitation. The women and babies I met here will always be in my heart and will continue to shape the provider I am becoming. You are some of the strongest people I have ever met, and I hope to take some of your grit with me into my future career." –Kirsten



When asked would they recommend this experience to other students?

"I would highly recommend the Ifakara, Tanzania rotation to future students. This rotation was absolutely wonderful and provided me an amazing opportunity to understand how healthcare works in an international capacity. It challenged me to practice medicine in a low resource setting with different tools than what I have used in the US, to

college friend that had been accepted into CHA/PA while Lilliam was working in the hotel industry. During a clinical rotation at Denver Health in her 3rd year, Lilliam was recruited by another CHA/PA graduate to work in the nursery/NICU. After 13 years of working in both the nursery and the NICU, she eventually moved to working only in the nursery and has been there for the last 10 years. Teaching has always been her passion and they teach all types of learners (CHA/PA students, Pediatric and Family medicine residents, medical students, nursing students and paramedics) on a daily basis at Denver Health. Lilliam never thought she'd leave a legacy, but she hopes that a few of her students will find a small piece of her teaching and knowledge useful in their careers. Finally, one of the things that Lilliam is most proud of is getting to work alongside her two best friends her entire career (all CHA/PA alumni) that have a combined 75 years of experience between the 3 of them.

We are proud to have passionate CHA/PA alumni like Sandra and Lilliam teaching our current CHA/PA students and having such a large impact in educating so many different healthcare providers.

recognize where my skillset would be most valuable, and to understand my capacity and not wanting to step outside my scope. I do think it is important to recognize the impact global health work can have on communities. It is extremely important to remember while practicing abroad not to overstep skills, to understand the culture and needs of a community, and to practice in a sustainable way integrating into a medical system without leaving gaps when you leave. I really tried to remember these principles during my time in Ifakara and hope I was able to reflect this in my interactions with the community."

"Bonus we also had the most amazing time experiencing Tanzanian culture, shopping at the local market, and learning to make chapati. We spent every spare second away from clinic adventuring with the amazing friends we met swimming in jungle waterfalls, exploring the local area in canoes, and having a crazy adventure on bike safari. To top it all off we ended our month away on the top of Africa by summiting Mt. Kilimanjaro. We can't thank the people of Ifakara enough for welcoming us into their community and treating us like family. We are truly so thankful for this experience and hope we can visit again someday soon!" – Kirsten



### Guest Lecture Spotlight: Meet Sarah Schwenk

We are excited to introduce guest lecturer, Sarah Schwenk. We asked Sarah to tell us a little bit about herself and here's what she said.

I'm from Utah by way of Michigan, however I've been in Colorado for 20 years this year.

I completed the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner program here at CU – Go Buffs!

Currently, I practice in the Department of Psychiatry in the School of Medicine here at CU where I primarily work in the Johnson Depression Center and the Infectious Disease Group Practice.

My lecture this past fall was my first for the CHA/PA program and I look forward to more. I enjoy providing lectures on the diagnosis and management of an array of psychiatric conditions from mood disorders to anxiety disorders and more. I also very much enjoy working with students and colleagues on issues involving patient safety and quality improvement with the goal of improving patients access to safe,

The CHA/PA program hopes to continue building its relationship with St. Francis Hospital and Medical School to continue facilitating this opportunity for its Global Health Track students.



### CHA/PA Faculty Features – Jonathan Bowser, PA-C

Our Program Director, Jonathan Bowser, PA-C was recently featured in a PA Education Association (PAEA) podcast. Dr. Sara Fletcher, CEO of PAEA and Jonathan, discuss his experience leading a major curriculum change.

Listen to it and let us know what you think (17 minutes): [Navigating a Curriculum Change](#)

high quality health care. My favorite thing about lecturing is I love to see people get excited about psychiatry. So often we forget that patients in all care settings may come to us with psychiatric or psychological distress. To be a small part of helping students appreciate the impact of mental health on patient’s overall wellbeing is so rewarding. Watching students light up as they draw these connections helps me to continue to find joy in my work. If I could be any organ in the human body, it would be the brain, of course!



### Longtime CHA/PA Educator, Dr. Kohn retires

At the end of 2023 Dr. Mary Kohn, who had been a long-time partner in educating/precepting CHA/PA students in the specialty of Neonatology and in the Nursery, retired. She started teaching the Care of the Neonate class at the CHA/PA program in June of 2004 and then continued to give lectures after the move to the Colorado Curriculum as well as precepting in the Nursery. Dr. Kohn has been so supportive of PA education over the years that we asked our alumni to share their memories of her. We received so



### Welcome New Staff Member

Lindsey Huttner (she/her) joined the CHA/PA team in October 2023 as the Didactic Services Coordinator. Lindsey grew up in Boston, MA, and received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from Boston College in 2016. After college she worked at the MSPCA–Angell Animal Medical Center as a Client Care Coordinator for intern and resident veterinarians specializing in Internal Medicine, Cardiology, and Emergency/Critical Care. Lindsey’s family is from the Denver area and after spending most of her life on the East Coast, she was excited to relocate to Colorado to spend more time with her parents, many cousins, and grandfather. She is an avid animal lover and currently shares her household with a very spirited rescue chihuahua named Peanut Butter and hopes to eventually add a lowkey senior cat to the mix. If you’re ever in the CHAPA offices, feel free to knock on her door to say hi and show her pictures of your pets!

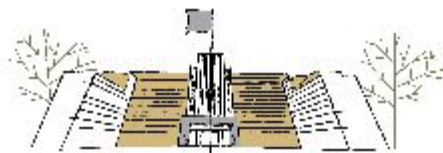
many heartwarming memories and thank-yous that we wanted to share a few.

"You have truly made an impact and left your mark on so many students. I will never forget the first newborn head-to-toe exam you taught me in 2005. Your words of wisdom will forever be with me and passed along to future learners. It's been an honor to work alongside you for the last 2 years."

"You have no doubt touched the lives of hundreds of CHA/PA alumni and by extension thousands of patients. Your class and nursery rotation were definitely my favorites and the most memorable. Thank you for all you have done to impact the PA profession!"

"Your calm approach, level of discernment regarding educational practice, and no nonsense (but fun!) attitude are what I remember most."

"Thank you, Dr. Kohn for the countless hours you gave to precepting our program. I loved our neonatal rotation with you. You did an amazing job at empowering us as students. It was also the first rotation



## Save the Date for our next PA Info Session

If you or anyone you know is interested in learning more about the PA profession, CHA/PA and the admissions process, be on the lookout for the [sign-up form](#) on our website for the March 1st virtual session from 1 – 3pm.



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

In case you missed it, after a few years hiatus, CHA/PA and the Office of Alumni Affairs co-hosted a Fall Reception for our Alumni, Students and their guests. It was a beautiful night of fellowship with some fun giveaways and some words from CHA/PA Program Director, Jonathan Bowser, PA-C. The reception was held at the Wynkoop Brewing Company and it was such a fun event, that we have already reserved it for this coming fall.

Save the date on your calendar (Friday October, 4, 2024) and please share this with your CHA/PA alumni friends. In the meantime, enjoy a few photos

that inspired me to want to work with pediatric patients."

"My rotation in the newborn nursery with you will always stand out as one of my favorites and most informative rotations. I use information that you taught me there almost every day now that I am in practice! You are such a role model to all of us CHA/PA grads and have taught us what a supportive PA/ supervising physician relationship should look like."

"Your kindness and empathetic care serve as a constant reminder of our purpose."

"My time in the nursery was so impactful, thanks largely to you and the learning environment you created, that I sought to continue working with newborns and their families after graduation. When I landed in Alaska, choosing to work in Family Medicine, I spent the first-year petitioning to become the first PA at our hospital credentialed for newborn care at deliveries (and then got to take care of the family in follow-up once they were home.)"

"I can honestly say that you have been the most influential person in my professional career as a Physician Assistant. It was during your course, Assessment and Care of the Neonate, that I first realized my passion for newborn medicine. My rotation with your team at the University Hospital solidified this interest and inspired me to pursue newborn medicine. You were instrumental in connecting me with the team at Denver Health where I began my dream career as a PA in the newborn nursery. Thank you for

highlighting the event.



We are looking forward to seeing you this fall!



### Have an Idea for our Newsletter?

We love to hear from our alumni that are doing unique things in



### Job Listings!

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

trusting me to take over some of your lectures to the CHA/PA students – this is one of the most fulfilling aspects of my career."

"You are wise, compassionate, extremely knowledgeable, and above all else a kind and wonderful human. I'm fortunate to have been able to watch you in action and learn so many nuggets from you and I wanted to say THANK YOU for investing in my education as a future PA and for believing in PAs and the role we play in the healthcare system."

Dr. Kohn had an impact on alumni from the late 2000s up until recently, and we at the CHA/PA program are so grateful for her dedication to our students over the years. Congratulations on your retirement, Dr. Kohn!



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 us today!

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.

### Contact Information:

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

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