

Director's Corner



► What an eventful year it has been in the PA program! We have experienced some ups and downs but are thrilled to be entering a new academic year.

In the fall of 2018, Hurricane Michael devastated towns in the panhandle of Florida. Because of this, many of our clinical partners in Panama City, FL sustained damage and their practices were affected for months. Some are still recovering. Unfortunately, our long-standing preceptors at Coastal Obstetrics & Gynecology will be closing their practice later this fall, indirectly due to damage sustained in the area from Hurricane Michael. We owe a great deal to the people of this practice who has worked with the Chatham PA program for about 20 years, training nearly 20 students each year.

Once Hurricane Michael hit, our clinical team immediately began contacting established and new preceptors who helped to back-fill the 45+ student rotations that needed to be rescheduled. Thanks to many of you, our alumni, we were able to provide rotations so that all 2019 students could graduate on time. The clinical team, entire faculty, and University administration pitched in to help!

On the heels of Hurricane Michael, we began thinking of alternate precepting models to support our ongoing struggles in finding clinical sites — particularly in pediatrics and women's health. So, as of July 2019, we are pleased to have a PA partner working for the program at Squirrel Hill Health Center, precepting Chatham students in pediatrics.

We have welcomed two new faculty members in the program this year. In the past six months, both Brenda

continued on page 9

Chatham PA Program Faculty and Staff, 2019

From left to right, Victor Capone, Brenda Ealey, Paige Cendroski, Alyssa Abebe, Dr. Jonathan Weinkle, Natalie Schirato, Nicole Brown, Judy Truscott, Denise Devlin, Dr. John Laird, Lea O'Keefe
Not pictured: Kelly Donkers and Kerri Jack



From the Dean



► Chatham University, founded in 1869, is proudly celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2019. To honor this milestone, Chatham has planned a year-long celebration

that highlights the school's pioneering contributions to the past, present, and future of sustainability and health, women's leadership and gender equity, and transformative opportunities in liberal arts education, in Pittsburgh and beyond.

The culmination of this celebration was October 11-13: Chatham 150 Celebration-Reunion Weekend. The University featured a

variety of engaging programs, speakers and events culminating in an immersive, interactive, and memorable Gala celebration featuring the sights and sounds of each era of Chatham's history. To see photos and read about the weekend, visit pulse.chatham.edu.

I would also like to update you on recent events within the School of Health Sciences. The physician assistant program is now the fourth graduate program to develop an annual student award that was launched this past spring. Thank you to all of the PA alumni that have already committed support for this award. We have had a lot of program accreditation activity this year: the nursing program has completed a very successful self-study and onsite visit by CCNE this past spring;

continued on page 8

FROM THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR

Dear Chatham PA Alumni,



► I am thrilled to be entering my sixth year as medical director of the Chatham PA studies program. This past year has seen an exciting synergy between my clinical work as a physician at the Squirrel Hill Health Center and the Chatham PA program. 2018 saw us facing a severe shortage

of pediatric clinical sites, including the unexpected and tragic loss of many of the slots in Panama City, FL after last year's devastating hurricane. The program and the health center met throughout the winter to create an embedded faculty position at our center who would greatly expand pediatric access for the health center and provide teaching for two second-year students each block, beginning in August 2019.

Even better, we found the perfect person for the job already working as a PA at Squirrel Hill Health Center. Lauren Yamada is a native Pittsburgher and graduate of the PA program at Yale University. She has already created a curriculum that promises our students a 360-degree view of pediatrics which will go far beyond vaccine schedules and diagnosing otitis media, and will join the first-year faculty as a skills instructor. In addition to Lauren's excellent work, we look forward to our second year as a regular teaching site for family medicine, welcoming a total of eight students this year.

I will also be continuing my involvement with the first-year class, both as a guest lecturer on topics in primary care and as the instructor for the Critical Reading of the Literature course. In the age of evidence-based medicine, understanding cutting edge research and being able to assess its quality

and relevance is a crucial clinical skill. I look forward to learning together in class, online, and in the small-group journal club sessions that I host at my house each year to make sure that we each meet personally.

Finally, this past September saw the publication of my book, *Healing People, Not Patients: Building Authentic Relationships in Modern Healthcare*. The book explores the "micro-ethics" of communication in the one-on-one relationship between healer and patient, and how that relationship fits (or doesn't) into the system. I try to reinforce the message of seeing the person first, not the disease, or the "consumer," and provide real tools that can be used in the clinic to embody this message, not just give it lip-service.

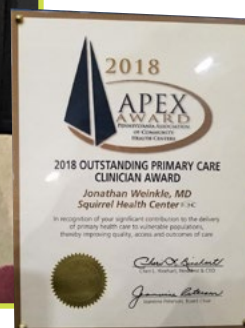
That message is the first step toward truly "sustainable" healthcare, a topic that I lecture on during the May Ethics course for the first-years, in keeping with the University mission to infuse the concept of sustainability across all disciplines and departments. It is also at the heart of the half-

day communication course for our second-year students after they return from clinical rotations, during which they have the opportunity to unpack the language they use when interacting with patients and troubleshoot relationships that got off on the wrong foot or presented challenges to their empathy.

In the coming year, we hope to find ways to explicitly address these critical communication skills in the PBL setting, so that they may be practiced in the same way that first-year students practice basic science in CABS, clinical knowledge in essentials, or hands-on competencies like suturing in Skills. The ultimate goal is to make the human side of medical practice a stated and integral part of the entire PA curriculum across the two years.

Thank you all for your continued support. I am proud of what I have seen our students accomplish in the time I have been here, and can only look forward with hope to even more in the future.

Jonathan Weinkle, MD, FAAP



Chatham University's PA program and School of Health Science would love to applaud Dr. Jonathan Weinkle! He is the recipient of the 2018 *Outstanding Primary Care Clinician Award* through the Pennsylvania Association of Community Health. In addition, we congratulate him on the publication of his book: *Healing People, Not Patients: Building Authentic Relationships in Modern Healthcare*. Great job, Dr. Weinkle!

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Alisa Vickrey, MPAS '15, PA-C

Alisa is a 2015 graduate of Chatham's PA program. She has practiced as a PA in Anchorage, AK in Emergency Medicine and Family Practice. She has been accepted to complete a Masters in Public Health through the University of Anchorage. Alisa is now relocating to Eureka, CA to work for Open Door Community Health Centers (an FQHC). In this setting, she will be working in outpatient primary care that focuses more on an integrative healthcare model and has a small street medicine program. She describes it as "All my passions under one organization." We certainly wish her well in this fantastic endeavor and can't wait to hear more about it!

Tell us about yourself and your PA career path.

► I grew up in a small rural town in Illinois, and had a surgical technology background; I never thought I would end up in primary care. I had thought I was interested in being a surgical PA. But after a rotation in Alaska doing rural medicine, that gradually changed. The path chose me. My first job was at the Alaska Family Medicine Residency with Providence Family Medicine Clinic, where they focus heavily on educating doctors for rural practice in Alaska. I loved Alaska, and the rural challenges. I even became an Advanced Wilderness Life Support co-instructor.

Dr. Jim Wither's and Operation Safety Net in Pittsburgh was also an inspiration. He challenged

me to "go do good things with Alaska's street people" before leaving for Alaska. I began volunteering in



Brother Francis Shelter's volunteer free clinic, and eventually became the volunteer Clinic Director. The Family Medicine Residents and I eventually started going out in Anchorage and doing "street medicine." We partnered with the City of Anchorage and piloted a street medicine team.

I later decided I wanted to pursue rural medicine, as I had done as a student. But I encountered some of my own health challenges while working remotely. I am relocating to be closer to family in Northern California working in a somewhat rural primary care clinic, which also allows me to practice some more urgent care.

Looking back on your time at Chatham, what was a highlight of the PA program for you?

► I think all students yearn for clinical year. It is when we get to test our wings, so to speak. Although, I learned a lot about myself the first year, and about medicine, my clinical rotation in Dutch Harbor, AK was the most valuable experience I have had. It shaped my professional life and decision to initially practice in Alaska.

What was the most rewarding aspect of your graduate studies at Chatham?

► I think completing a life-long dream to practice medicine. Also starting something



and finishing something like PA school in just over two years, is no easy task. I was able to walk away feeling confident that I was able to take on just about anything I chose to set my mind to.

How did Chatham's PA program prepare you for healthcare and ever-changing medicine?

► I think both the curriculum and the variety of backgrounds of the faculty/facilitators, and using them as sounding boards was always the most helpful in preparing us. They (faculty) really helped with the application, and understanding of "common practice." PBL was, in many ways, built for this reason.

What are some lessons that you have learned since practicing medicine as a PA?

► Always use a team approach if it is available. Never go it alone (if you don't have to).

Have confidence in your knowledge, but always be willing to admit when you don't know something. It's an awesome opportunity to learn. Your ego will do more harm to a patient than heal.

Learn from your patients. They are often the best teachers.

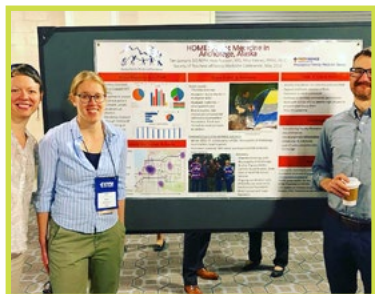
What is your greatest professional accomplishment?

► When the Alaska Family Medicine Residency graduating class of 2017 decided to nominate every faculty member for a faculty award. Traditionally, only physicians win this award. But this particular class was the first residency class to be able to work with PA's as faculty, and one resident wanted to nominate me. So they decided, since it was the residency's 20th Anniversary, they would nominate

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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Alisa Vickrey, *continued from previous page*



all Faculty members; this included PA's, PharmD, and Behavioral Health PhD, as well as all physicians. It was a great honor to be named as "Faculty of the Year" in this way; they felt we all represented an important piece of their learning during residency, and embodied true team-based patient care.

What are you most passionate about in your work?

► Practicing truly unbiased medicine and providing equal access to care is key to practicing good

medicine. Removing judgment of other's from our practice is challenging, but I feel our patients deserve this more than ever. We have a lot of work to do!

Did you participate in any volunteer programs while you were a student? In what area do you hope that students become active?

► There were several opportunities to volunteer as a student, and I cannot recall one opportunity that stood out. Patient advocacy always need champions though, and look to medical clinicians in training to educate and inspire.

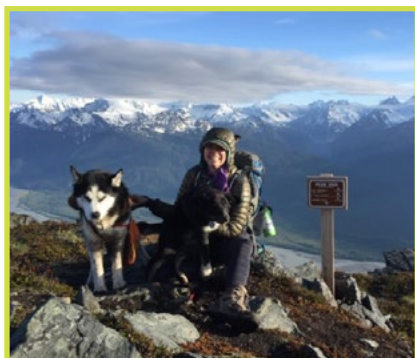
What advice or insight do you have for our newest graduates and students who are entering the program?

► Don't be afraid to try something and fail. Failure is the best medicine to teach us how to accomplish our goal the next time around. The most successful people in this world have a story that involves failure because it means they tried, and then tried again. Never give up.

What does the future look like for you?

► These days, I am very interested in Integrative Medicine in my practice, as I feel that this is more and more where primary care medicine is headed.

...But bright. Always.



Students Gain Clinical International Experience

► Recent gradates Ashley Welch, MPAS '19, and Sirena Mason, MPAS '19, went to Tanzania for an elective international rotation partnered with Child Family Health International (CFHI) during their clinical year. During their 4-week stay, they had the opportunity to observe and assist in four different inpatient and outpatient settings within the Tanzanian healthcare system including ER, OB/GYN, surgery, pediatrics, primary care and internal medicine. This gave them the opportunity to gain additional knowledge and exposure to diseases uncommonly seen in the U.S. They also saw different techniques and medical practices used when resources are limited. In addition to their clinical participation, they collaborated with a non-governmental organization and became involved with the local community and familiar with East African culture. Overall, the experience demonstrated that formal medical knowledge is similar, even across the world. However, the means of treating patients can vary immensely depending on culture, language barriers, and availability of resources.

Ashley said of this rotation, "I am very grateful that Chatham provided this opportunity, as I came back with a new perspective and appreciation. I have the deepest respect for medical providers in developing countries who do so much on physical exam alone."



Graduating Class of 2019!

► Congratulations to the PA Class of 2019!
Chatham faculty and staff wish you the best in
your future endeavors!



PSPA Challenge Bowl

► Four PA students from the Class of 2020 participated in the 20th Annual PSPA Challenge Bowl in Lancaster this past fall. PA students currently enrolled in an accredited PA program in the state of Pennsylvania take on the challenge and demonstrate their vast medical knowledge. Great job Michael Abbott, Sophie Fekete, Lauren Colacicco, and Josh Weitholder! You make Chatham proud!



Welcome PA Class of 2021!

► The PA Class of 2021 is in “knee deep” in their didactic year! The students’ days are filled with Problem-Based Learning, lectures, and studying! First-year students completed their first patient simulation at STAR (Simulation, Teaching, and Academic Research at Allegheny Health Network). To the class—work hard, believe in yourself, and TRUST THE PROCESS!



“I’m not telling you it’s going to be easy. I’m telling you it’s going to be worth it.”

—Art Williams



Thank You to All Chatham PA Preceptors!

► The Chatham PA program wants to thank all of our preceptors for teaching our students on rotations! We have so many alumni that precept and we are so grateful for their continued support of the program.

For over 20 years, Coastal OB/GYN in Panama City, Florida, has precepted for our program, but due to the devastation caused by Hurricane Michael, they will be closing this year. Fortunately, Dr. Edgeworth has just announced that she will be opening a new practice and will be able to continue accepting students for outpatient women’s health, including prenatal visits. Thank you to Dr. Edgeworth who has precepted over 350 Chatham PA students since the program started in 1997!

The clinical team welcomes three new members this year, including Brenda Ealey, PA-C, who has over 20 years’ experience in pediatrics and Kerri Jack, PA-C, who has over 20 years’ experience in medical oncology and family practice. Also joining the clinical team this fall is Kubra Bahcivanci, our new graduate assistant, who is currently working on her MBA with a health care concentration. Denise Devlin is still our clinical program assistant and has been working hard for over ten years now to keep all the rotations organized. Lea O’Keefe, PA-C, started in April 2013 and has recently transitioned into the role of associate director of clinical education.



From left to right:
Kubra Bahcivanci,
Brenda Ealey, Denise
Devlin, Lea O’Keefe,
Kerri Jack

Please contact us with any questions or if you are interested in precepting!

- Lea O’Keefe, MPA, PA-C, *associate director of clinical education, assistant professor*
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- Brenda Ealey, MPA, PA-C, *clinical coordinator, assistant professor*
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- Kerri Jack, MHS, PA-C, *clinical coordinator, assistant professor*
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- Denise M. Devlin, *clinical coordinator program assistant*
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Interprofessional Education

► The Chatham University Interprofessional Education (IPE) curriculum works to enhance interprofessional collaborative practice by enhancing student understanding and application of the Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) competencies relating to teamwork, communication, values & ethics, and roles & responsibilities. All professions within the School of Health Sciences participate (PA, PT, OT, psychology, and nursing). The curriculum includes active learning activities in small groups, a PBL case scenario, and a keynote speaker who discusses a global healthcare topic.



Magee Womens Research Initiative

► In the fall of 2018, faculty and first-year PA students participated in Magee Womens Research Initiative in Pittsburgh. This event welcomed students from minority and disadvantaged neighborhoods to participate in healthcare activities and learn how they can be the next generation of scientists who can make a difference in healthcare. The PA students instructed high school students how to auscultate heart sounds, tie surgical knots, and much more!



Professor Susan Hawkins Retires

► Professor Susan Hawkins is retiring after 24 years of teaching and service in Chatham's PA program! Susan was a founding member of the program and was instrumental in developing and writing the problem-based learning (PBL) curriculum. When one thinks of PBL, invariably one thinks of Susan's central role as PBL coordinator who crafted the guidelines, facilitated over one thousand students, and trained more than one hundred facilitators. She has a national reputation for expertise in PBL as evidenced by 15 peer-reviewed publications, 25 state and national presentations, and 35 PBL training sessions throughout the country. The University recognized this by promoting Susan to a full professor this year. Her legacy of PBL continues beyond Chatham as she currently initiates an online PBL program in coordination with Dr. Deqo Mohamed for healthcare workers in Somalia.

Susan is highly regarded for her commitment to student success. She received the Jane Burger Advisor of the Year award in 2018 out of all the University's faculty for her excellence in advising. Those who have known Susan over the years know that she transformed her life with a rigorous fitness and wellness program. She has been a strong advocate for incorporating student wellness into the PA program with a wellness module included in the Essentials course.

Susan's service to the PA profession has been exemplary. She moderated the PSPA Student Challenge Bowl for 17 years, was a member of the National Test Writing Committee for the PANCE and PANRE for eight years, and has been an ARC-PA accreditation site visitor for the past four years.

Susan has been a mentor to the PA faculty who provided guidance for the many iterations of the curriculum, developed supportive strategies for student success, and helped to develop Chatham's national reputation for PBL. She will be missed! We wish her a fun and wonder filled retirement.



From the Dean, *continued from page 1*

the physical therapy and counseling psychology programs are moving forward with their own self-study for accreditation processes while the occupational therapy program has been granted candidacy to transition to the entry-level doctorate degree. We are also very excited to be matriculating the inaugural athletic training class this fall. In addition, we have completed year two (of four) of our federal HSRA grant that focuses on Integrative care and we are completing our final year of the Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral for Treatment grant from SAMHSA.

Finally, I would like to recognize and thank Dr. Susan Hawkins who retired from the physician assistant program this summer. Susan and I have been colleagues for about 25 years and she will be missed by the program, the School, and the University. I wish Susan the best.

Warm regards,

Patricia A. Jowsey

Director's Corner, *continued from page 1*

Ealey and Kerri Jack joined our clinical team as assistant professors and clinical coordinators. Both come to us with over 20 years of clinical PA experience. We are pleased to have them with us. We also welcomed Victor Capone as our new program assistant and Kubra Bahcivanci as a graduate assistant for the clinical team.

The 18-19 academic year marked the final year of Susan Hawkins' tenure in the program. In early May we celebrated her retirement with the kickoff of our new PA Student Award. Thank you to the many of you who contributed to this award. This award will be presented to the student who best demonstrates change as a result of attendance in the Chatham PA Program and progress toward becoming an excellent, compassionate healthcare provider. We are excited to have raised over \$4,000 in this first year and look forward to your support as we continue in years to come. We will present the first student the award on Monday, December 16 here at Chatham Eastside. If you would like to come, please let us know. We'd love to have you here.

As we said goodbye to Susan, we reflected on her time here at Chatham. As a founding faculty member, Susan chose to "trust the process" and championed problem-based learning as a program philosophy. She became a nationally-known expert

in PBL and continues to train new facilitators here at Chatham and beyond. She has an impressive resume of accomplishments demonstrating expertise in PBL, scholarship, service to her community, university, and school. But, I'd venture to say that her greatest accomplishments occurred in the classroom setting or when working one-on-one with students. She has worked with students who had been very successful from the get-go and some others who needed a lot of encouragement to be successful. But, all have turned into great PAs. We will miss her humor, mentorship, and collegiality.

A few other items that I am proud to announce. As of June 1, 2019, Paige Cendroski and Natalie Schirato became the PBL co-coordinators. They have jumped right into their roles and have started the year off with a bang, providing clear and efficient leadership to a large group of full-time and adjunct faculty! Also, in the beginning of April, Lea O'Keefe became the associate director of clinical education. She quickly established herself as a knowledgeable and innovative role model and leader to her team of clinical coordinators and staff.



Judy Truscott, MPAS, PA-C

Stay connected

Please keep the PA program updated with your achievements! E-mail Paige Cendroski, alumni coordinator, at p.cendroski@chatham.edu with any updates including e-mail address, address, news, publications, accomplishments etc.



Chatham University Physician Assistant Program



@MPASChatham

Stay connected and get involved with the Office of Alumni Relations! We offer numerous volunteer and networking opportunities as well as alumni receptions at professional conferences and exclusive events at local Pittsburgh attractions. Interested? Please send us an e-mail at alumni@chatham.edu or visit us at chatham.edu/alumni. Stay connected with the Alumni Association via Facebook.