

Director's Corner



Hello Chatham PA Alumni,

Another exciting year for us in the PA program! Here are a few highlights:

First, I'd like to welcome a new faculty member to our program, Nicole Brown! Nicole is a 2011 graduate of the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) PA program and her specialties include general and OB emergency medicine. She has quickly learned the skills of

facilitation in PBL and very involved in test writing and analysis for the course. She is also the Community Outreach Coordinator and assists students with community-based activities like the Salk and Schweitzer fellowships. We're so glad you joined our team, Nicole and we look forward to our future together!

In terms of program successes, our PANCE pass rate for the last two years has been 99% and 100% respectively! Congratulations to our hard-working students and faculty! We work hard to maintain our accreditation through the ARC-PA and we have Continuing Accreditation through 2021!

In 2015, I was elected as Treasurer to the Board of Directors of the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) for a three-year period. Over the past two years as Director At Large, PAEA has forged a partnership with the American Academy of Medical Colleges (AAMC) and has moved to the AAMC building in Washington DC. This new relationship and location have facilitated collaborative work with AAMC and other like-minded associations to continue moving our profession forward and giving PAs a bigger voice in Washington! The PAEA has organized numerous visits to Capitol Hill with many members of PA programs across

continued on page 5

20TH ANNIVERSARY for Chatham Physician Assistant Program

Chatham University's physician assistant studies program will be celebrating its 20th year anniversary in 2017 and we are planning an awesome celebration! Look for more information to be sent in the near future.

From the Dean



► Chatham University is undergoing a significant leadership transition this summer. Dr. Esther Barazzone, the president of Chatham is retiring at the end of June after 24 years of remarkable leadership in this position. The Board of Trustees has announced that Dr. David L. Finegold will succeed her as the 19th president in our

institution's 147-year history.

President Barazzone, who joined Chatham in 1992, has led a remarkable transformation from a small, financially struggling, undergraduate women's college to a fully coed, internationally recognized university with three distinctive schools including the School of Health Sciences; the School of Arts, Science & Business; and the Falk School of Sustainability. The School of Health Sciences has significantly evolved from Dr. Barazzone's initial vision dating back to 1994/95 when she started the physician assistant studies, physical therapy, and occupational therapy programs. It was also under her leadership that Chatham acquired the Eastside location in 2008, where the physician assistant program now resides. (www.chatham.edu/barazzone2016)

On July 1, the University welcomed Dr. David Finegold, a renowned scholar and educational innovator who has dedicated his career to education reform, the design of high-performance organizations, and research on education and skill-creation systems around the world. Dr. Finegold graduated from Harvard University and was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University where he received his DPhil in Politics. (www.chatham.edu/president-elect)

We wish Dr. Barazzone the best on her continued journey as we welcome our new president, Dr. Finegold.

My best to you all,

FACULTY AND STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Alyssa Abebe, MPAS '06, PA-C

Assistant Professor

Alyssa is a 2006 graduate of Chatham's PA program and still work one day a week in HIV clinical research. Though she loves Pittsburgh sports, she is an Ohio State Buckeye fan first and foremost! In her spare time, she like to read and try new restaurants with her husband and hang out with her two children. Alyssa says it has been great to be back at Chatham teaching and facilitating PBL!



Stacie Agnesi, MPAS '00, PA-C

Skills Coordinator, Assistant Professor

Stacie Agnesi is a 2000 graduate of Chatham University's PA program. After graduating from Chatham she worked at UPMC Mercy in cardiothoracic surgery for four years followed by six and a half years in general surgery. She worked part-time as an adjunct faculty in Chatham's PA program since January 2012. In June 2014, Stacie joined Chatham on a full-time basis as the Skills Coordinator.



Jessica Anderson, MPAS '10, PA-C

Associate Director of Clinical Education (Clinical Coordinator), Assistant Professor

As a 2010 alumna, former preceptor and adjunct, Jessica has been with Chatham's PA program as the Associate Director of Clinical Education since January 2015. Her initiatives over the past year have included successful PANRE recertification, faculty research, serving since the summer of 2015 as faculty advisor and facilitator to Chatham's Pre-PA club, and revising physician assistant students' clinical year exams with assistance of her colleagues. She devotes her time outside of Chatham to her family. Along with her husband of ten years and their 2-year-old son, Jessica welcomed a daughter into the family this spring.



Nicole Brown, MPAS, PA-C

Assistant Professor

Nicole is a 2011 graduate of the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) PA program. After graduation she worked clinically as a hospitalist PA for a year prior to moving to Pittsburgh. Since 2012, Nicole has worked in emergency medicine and continues to work clinically in this setting at Magee Women's Hospital. In August 2015, she accepted an assistant professor position at Chatham University and is a full-time PBL facilitator. In her spare time Nicole enjoys spending time with her husband, Bill, reading and traveling.



Denise Devlin

Clinical Coordinator Program Assistant

Denise has been working with the Chatham PA program since 2008 to help coordinate the students' clinical rotations. She takes pride in ensuring that our students have the best possible clinical experience. Her personal interests include gardening, vegetarian food, movies and her volunteer work for Foster Cat, Inc.



Kelly Donkers, MPA, PA-C

Academic Coordinator, Assistant Professor

Kelly began working for the PA program in August 2008 as a full time PBL facilitator, and since then has also served as the Skills Coordinator before taking the position as Academic Coordinator. She serves as the liaison for simulation studies to the STAR Center at West Penn for the PA Program. She has served an AAPA Delegate for the states of Maryland and Pennsylvania. Kelly resides with her husband, Jason and daughter Keira.



Susan Hawkins, MS ED, PA-C

PBL Coordinator, Associate Professor

Susan continues to tend and nurture PBL at Chatham. She is the first PA faculty to be granted a sabbatical from March-August 2016. Her motto during her sabbatical is "publication, exploration, and relaxation." Her research is on inter-professional education, measuring how to develop a scale for PBL readiness, test anxiety, and PBL supervision.



Janet Kuzora

Program Assistant

Janet began her employment at Chatham in September 2009 after an extensive administrative career, working mainly at Duquesne Light for 25 years. After spending some time at home to raise her daughter, she began here as a part-time administrative assistant in the interior architecture program. Janet was always interested in becoming a part of the PA team, as she found the subject matter of extreme interest. Janet is married with one teenage daughter. In her spare time, she enjoys swimming, beach vacationing, shopping, experiencing restaurants and spending time with her family and friends.



John Laird, ND

Admissions Coordinator, Associate Professor

John Laird earned his Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine degree from John Bastyr College of Naturopathic Medicine in Seattle, Washington. He has been a faculty member in the PA program for 20 years, and currently teaches Clinical Application of the Basic Sciences. Dr. Laird also coordinates an undergraduate major in integrative health studies, and practices one day a week as a naturopathic counselor at the UPMC-Shadyside Center for Integrative Medicine. On summer days, he can be found enjoying rural life at the Datta Retreat Center, a yoga and meditation center north of Pittsburgh.



Lea O'Keefe, MPA, PA-C

Clinical Coordinator, Assistant Professor

Lea O'Keefe is a 2002 graduate of the Duquesne University PA program. Lea was a part-time clinical coordinator at Chatham University from 2006-2007. She rejoined Chatham in 2013 as full time faculty and clinical coordinator for the physician assistant program. She has worked clinically in surgery and gastroenterology since graduating. Lea enjoys spending time with her husband and two children.



Gabrielle Strong, MBA

SBIRT Grant Manager

Gabrielle Strong is the Grant Manager for the PA program. Gabrielle coordinates day-to-day operations for the SBIRT grant and lectures on health care disparities for the PA program. Additional resources including Poverty Simulations are available for SHS use.



Judy Truscott, MPAS, PA-C

Associate Program Director, Assistant Professor

Judy has been with the program since April 2012. She began as a full-time PBL facilitator and then became the associate program director in 2013. Judy continue to be a facilitator in PBL, has enjoys teaching program to practice and the final evaluative course prior to students completing the program. She also is involved with guiding the class officers, helping the students plan events, and helping to plan the White Coat Ceremony. This position with Chatham has made her a more well-rounded physician assistant, but has also allowed her to develop relationships with the great faculty, staff, and students. Judy practices clinically one day per week in pediatrics. Outside of work, she is busy at home with two teenage daughters and a great husband. Her family recently hosted a foreign exchange student from Spain for the 2015-2016 school year, and they look forward to visiting her sometime in the near future.



Victoria Yann, MS Ed.

Assistant Director of Education

Victoria Yann holds a bachelor of science degree in biology from Allegheny College and a Master of Science in Education from Duquesne University. After working in brain research and cancer research for seven years, she moved into the field of education where she has been employed since. She was a full-time instructor at several post-secondary schools then served as the Health Career Coordinator for Southwest PA Area Health Education Center. At Chatham, she acts as the assistant director of clinical education

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Dee Soltes, MPAS '97



► Dolores “Dee” Soltes is a 1997 graduate of the Chatham University physician assistant studies program and was a student in Chatham’s first PA class. This past year, Dee received the Michael J. Habeck Lifetime Achievement award on October 23, 2015 at the Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants (PSPA) conference in Erie, PA. Soltes was the only recipient of the statewide award for 2015. This award is given to a PSPA member that

has given sustained and exceptional service and leadership to the PSPA society for at least ten years. Dee has served the PSPA in various roles. She began helping PSPA as a PA student with planning on the conference planning committee. Dee has served as Conference Chair, Director at Large for the Board of Directors, and Chair of the Bylaws Review Committee. Dee has also been a delegate to the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) Houses of Delegates for many years. She has reviewed PSPA and AAPA bylaws.

Susan Hawkins, PBL coordinator and associate professor at Chatham University, remembers teaching Dee in the first Chatham’s class. “Dee was one of the only PA students who was a nurse prior to starting PA school,” Susan said. Soltes had started her career in medicine as a nurse, working first in Pennsylvania, then in Florida. She moved back to Pittsburgh and sought a new challenge to become a physician assistant. Susan Hawkins stated “Dee has always been a leader in the PA state community.”

Dee has always been interested in internal medicine for adults. Dee currently works for LIFE (Living Independence for the Elderly) in Beaver County. She is as dedicated at work, as she is for PSPA. Dee also sings with two ensembles – Sweet Adelines and the Renaissance Rhythm Chorus. Congratulations Dee on all of your hard work and accomplishments!

SBIRT Grant

In September 2015, Chatham’s School of Health Sciences was awarded a 3-year grant by the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) titled Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) Health Professions Student Training.

As healthcare providers in a variety of settings will encounter patients with unhealthy substance use issues, the goal is to give all of Chatham’s SHS students:

- Fact based information regarding alcohol, tobacco and substance use
- Exposure to the widely applicable tool of motivational interviewing and brief intervention
- Confidence building exercises for addressing complex and discomforting issues and situations
- Evidence based tools to use both on clinical rotations and in post-graduation clinical settings.
- Pocket sized resource materials to assist them with SBIRT application while in clinical settings

To date, 169 students have been trained in six programs: MPAS, DTP, OTD, MOT, BSN, and PsyD.

If you are interested in this topic, a brief CME training (1.75 credit hours) regarding SBIRT may be found at www.medscape.org/viewarticle/830331 titled Substance Use in Adults and Adolescents: Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) CME/CE. To access the course, you will need to sign up for a free account. If this peaks your interest and you would like additional information, please contact Gabrielle Strong (gstrong@chatham.edu) for additional resources and/or access to the training materials the students have received (non-CME).

From the Medical Director

► Dear Chatham PA Alumni,

I am thrilled to be entering my third year as medical director of the Chatham PA Studies program. As I have grown into this job, my focus has been on building relationships with the students and growing in my own understanding of the partnership between PAs, physicians, and other professionals in the team environment where most of us now work. In my own clinical work, I have had the opportunity to build a strong relationship with two first-rate PAs over the past year, and that experience has helped me recognize both what our students already bring to the table, and what other tools I might be able to provide them to foster confidence, independence and excellence when they step into the clinic themselves.



Toward that end I will be expanding my involvement with the first-year class, both as a guest lecturer on topics including social and family history, diabetes, hypertension, vaccination, and end-of-life care, and now as the instructor for the Critical Reading of the Literature course. This role began with in-home journal clubs that I hosted this past year as an opportunity to get to know the students face-to-face. These groups were a huge success from both the students' perspective and mine, and I look forward to building on that success as I take on the full course.

In building this relationship, I hope to pass on the message, even as we read heavily data-driven papers and study biostatistics, that medicine is not about the numbers, or the process – it's about the people, patients, and providers alike.

Jonathan Weinkle, MD, FAAP

Director's Corner *continued*

the country to support and advocate for PA legislation advancing our profession.

Chatham has recently instituted an Integrated Degree Program for highly qualified first year (undergraduate) applicants to Chatham University who may be eligible for guaranteed or preferred admission to Chatham's integrated undergraduate and graduate degree programs. These health science programs include Master of Physician Assistant Studies, Doctor of Physical Therapy, Master of Occupational Therapy, Master of Science in Counseling Psychology, and Master of Arts in Psychology. This is an exciting and new approach to careers in health science. Learn more at www.chatham.edu/IDP.

Our PA program will be 20 years old in 2017! That's 20 years from our first graduating class of 1997! We will be celebrating our successes next year with a day of commemoration and festive activities so watch for important news from us in the coming months! We hope to see everyone there to help us celebrate our honored past and our exciting future!

Please read on for more information about our staff and faculty and exciting updates in our program! If you have news you would like to share with us, please send it to me at cgarrubba@chatham.edu. We enjoy staying in touch with you!

Best,

Handwritten signature of Carl Garrubba in black ink.

Carl Garrubba, MPA, PA-C, *program director, associate professor*

Graduating Class of 2016!

► Congratulations to the Class of 2016! Chatham faculty and staff wishes you the best in your future endeavors!



Pre-PA Undergraduate Club Updates

► During the 2015-2016 academic year, the Pre-PA club has been very active on campus. Currently, the undergraduate club has 11 members in good standing. Many additional students have expressed interest in the club and physician assistant profession, and attend club activities intermittently. The club's activities serve to provide knowledge regarding the PA profession internally and in the community at large. Furthermore, they better prepare undergraduate students for the application process and ultimate study in physician assistant graduate programs. Several members have applied or will be entering Chatham's physician assistant studies program in upcoming years.

The club held 3-4 meetings each during the fall and spring terms, covering many PA-education

related topics. Physician assistant and faculty advisor to the club, Jessica Anderson, also assisted the club in facilitating three Eastside meetings over the course of the year, in which Pre-PA club students went to the PA-lab at Chatham Eastside to learn and practice basic history-taking and physical exam skills. In the fall, a Saturday PBL-retreat was held, in which Jessica facilitated a mock problem-based learning session for Pre-PA club members in attendance.

The Pre-PA club coordinated two major campus community events over the last year. In the fall, during Physician Assistant Week in October, they conducted a Physician Assistant Awareness Bingo Night in Café Rachel. In the spring, they coordinated the campus-wide

Annual Health Symposium, this year with the aid of the newly-formed undergraduate Pre-Med club. The event coordinated providers from the community from many different health disciplines, including physicians, physician assistants, nurses, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and exercise science providers. Each provider was given a few minutes to discuss their profession and the path taken to get there, after which a breakaway session for students to ask different providers their specific questions.

The Pre-PA club is looking forward to reconvening in the fall to elect new officers and continue to organize worthwhile events for those curious about or interested in the physician assistant profession.

Chatham University Alumni Events

Thanks to all alumni who joined us for the Chatham University Physician Assistant Alumni Reception at the Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants in Erie! **Please join Chatham for an upcoming event at the Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants (PSPA) conference in Pittsburgh, PA at the Doubletree Hotel Greentree on Wednesday October 19, 2016 from 6:00-7:00 p.m.** More details to follow. A special thanks to Chatham University's Graduate Alumni Relations for their help and support with these events!

Precepting

The Chatham University physician assistant studies program is seeking new preceptors in any geographic location in women's health, psychiatry, emergency medicine, pediatrics, internal medicine, general surgery, and electives. Please contact the program's clinical coordinators (Jessica Anderson at janderson1@chatham.edu or Lea O'Keefe at lokeefe@chatham.edu) for specifics.

Do you have professional news? Are you interested in accessing the online directory? In order to get the most up to date information from your alma mater, please be sure to keep your contact information updated with the Office of Alumni Relations.

Keep in touch with Chatham and your classmates by visiting chatham.edu/alumni. There you can become a member of the alumni directory, view and share classnotes, as well as register and pay for events online! Contact alumni@chatham.edu for your unique ID needed to login!