

Bowman's Capsule

For alumni, students, faculty & friends of PA Studies

Spring 2013

PA students connect within the community

In this issue

VA residency program for PAs	3
New faculty & staff	4, 6
Class of 2014 community service events	5
PA Studies professor is new SGEA chair	5
Alumni profile: Karen Hills	6
Elledge commissioned into the Air Force	7
PA Studies chair wins 40 under 40 award	8
PA students take Washington!	8
McDaniel honored by PAEA	9

Preparing Future Professionals, a course taken by each first-year PA student in Class of 2014, not only teaches students how to work as a team within the workplace but also provides the opportunity to work in unique groups within the community.

At the beginning of the year, students were individually assigned to a community service site where they were responsible for fulfilling 12 hours of community service during each 8-week unit. Students could choose to volunteer at one of four community sites, each of which offered a different type of experience and a different culture of people.

"I hope students will become aware of various perspectives on current health and social issues and begin to understand that community agencies and members have much to add to these conversations," said Jennifer Bailey, director of the Preparing Future Professionals course. "I also hope students will learn how to build a collaborative partnership with someone in our community with a goal of changing the conditions and environments in which people live, work, and/or play."

One of the community sites is Prodigals, which is a 12-month residential recovery program for men struggling with addiction who have a history of chronic relapse. The program focuses on the 12-step model, therapeutic community models, and key Christian principles.

First-year PA student Jessica Vyas chose Prodigals as her community site and really enjoyed her time interacting with the men and listening to their stories. "The greatest part about being a volunteer at Prodigals Community was having the opportunity to work with, support, and learn from a team that I otherwise may not have," said Vyas. "The experience made me a more understanding

person overall, which will most definitely carry over into my career.”

Another community site is the Downtown Health Plaza (DHP), whose mission is to serve as the medical home to over 25,000 community members. DHP provides services such as General Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, and Ob/Gyn. It is a provider-based clinic giving the uninsured population a place for their medical care. First-year student Beth Bowman volunteered at DHP in the Ob/Gyn clinic, as a part of the Centering Pregnancy Program, which provides prenatal care and support to low-income pregnant women. “Volunteering with these women was a weekly reminder of why I decided to become a PA—to help low-income women have healthy pregnancies, learn about birth control, and become advocates for their own health,” said Bowman. “Participating in group has helped me learn about the cultural differences between me and the women in the group, and helps me learn how to relate to people from different backgrounds and see other people’s perspectives.”

First-year student Courtney Wharton volunteered at the SECU Family House, which was established to



Courtney Wharton at SECU Family House

provide lodging for more than 400 out-of-area patients who receive long-term treatment and their families at medical centers in Winston-Salem. “Each day after working at the SECU Family House, I learned more that this is truly what I am meant to do with my life,” said Wharton.

“As much as I love talking to people, sometimes it is uncomfortable for me to approach people who are dealing with something really life-altering that I haven’t experienced. The more I sought out conversations at the family house, the more I learned that I don’t have to fix the problem. Sometimes it’s just enough to listen to their story.”

Getting involved with the community has given Wake Forest PA students a great perspective on the patients they one day will be treating. Jessica Milligan is a first-year student who completed her community site volunteering at Goodwill. She was involved with the Work First Program, which provides job readiness training for people who have children and are receiving government aid.

“I learned about how different people’s life experiences are,” said Milligan. “Many of the participants have backgrounds and life experiences very different from mine. Working at Goodwill has exposed me to a different population of people than I had previously interacted with.”

While students are dedicating their time to making their community sites better places, they are also taking away some great life experiences that will provide them with exposure to diverse communities of people that they may one day be treating.

“I am amazed at some of the insights students have offered, and I know that positive changes are being made to improve the environment for patients at several sites because of the efforts of PA students,” said Bailey. “I believe the community engagement experiences will provide each student with unique experiences to draw upon when working as a PA. I hope that the experience has broadened each student’s perspective and understanding of health care, patient care, and the social issues that can impact health.

Bowman’s Capsule written and edited by

Katie Nelson, PA-S, Class of 2014

Tanya Gregory, PhD

Department of Physician Assistant Studies Faculty and Staff

Chair: Reamer L. Bushardt, PharmD, PA-C

Vice chair: L. Gail Curtis, PA-C, MPAS

Medical director: K. Patrick Ober, MD

Jennifer Bailey, MEd
Sonia Crandall, PhD, MS
Josh Geiple, MMS, PA-C
Erich Grant, MMS, PA-C
Jill Grant, PA-C, MMS, MS
Tanya Gregory, PhD
Tiffany Hiatt, MMS, PA-C

Janie McDaniel, MLS(ASCP)SC
Suzanne Reich, PA-C, MPAS
Samantha Rogers, MMS, PA-C
Catherine Shull, PA-C, MPAS
Ian Smith, MMS, PA-C
David White, MPAS, PA-C
Robert Wooten, PA-C

Dorothy Carter
Elise Gmuca
Nicole Hafemeister
Carol Hildebrandt
Camille Jones
Jennifer Keller
Marguerite Rodgers

VA residency program for PAs offers leadership training

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Physician Assistant (PA) Residency Program is the first PA residency program to be offered to recent PA graduates that is designed to foster leadership in patient-centered medical care. This program was established in 2012 through a competitive funding mechanism, and the first of three cohorts of PA residents are currently in training.

“The VA’s Patient Aligned Care Teams have changed the way providers typically manage a day in clinic,” said Dr. Reamer Bushardt, chair of Wake Forest’s Department of Physician Assistant Studies. “The day is deconstructed away from a traditionally sequenced ambulatory clinic schedule to allow for a more innovative model of care.



They have time reserved for team coordination, focused care for patients with chronic disease, mechanisms to respond to urgent care needs, and novel means to connect with patients, such as through telecommunications.

They are caring for adult patients in a very different way, with the goal of providing the right care, at the right time, in the right way for patients.”

Dr. Bushardt reports that the PA residents spend ample time in the PACT clinic learning the art of primary care, but they are also learning management and quality improvement skills necessary to advance patient-centered care. The ultimate goal is delivering excellent care to veterans and their families in a way that focuses on their needs, promotes optimal health for all, and helps patients learn to care for themselves.

The Patient Aligned Care Team is a new plan to implement a patient-centered medical home design for the VA primary care foundations around the country. This PACT design enforces the plan to remodel VA health care. “PACT allows patients to have a more active role in their health care and is associated with increased quality improvement, patient satisfaction, and a decrease in hospital costs due to fewer hospital visits and readmissions,” reports the US Department of Veterans Affairs.

“The residents will learn leadership skills, get an in-depth look at how to impact patients with the most common diagnoses in VA settings, and gain extra training on how to best serve the unique needs of veterans,” said Dr. Bushardt. “Some subspecialty areas face difficulty in managing all the referrals in

a timely manner. This is common inside and outside the VA. We are designing programs to help our residents practice to the top of their licenses to help avoid unnecessary referrals.”

Six VA medical centers received funding through the competitive grant process after the national call for proposals. Each resident trains for one year, and the VA funded three cohorts of residents for each site. The joint program between Salisbury VAMC and Wake Forest School of Medicine is accepting two residents per year for the three years. The inaugural residents here are Kerry O’Bric, PA-C (pictured left), and Christopher Killen, PA-C (pictured below). Both were graduated from the Duke University PA program in 2012.

“I wanted more experience and a better foundation in medicine in general, and I felt like this residency could provide me that opportunity to do more specialty work that I wouldn’t have gotten if I went right into a work setting,” said O’Bric. “I wanted to have my skill set a little more full.”

The Wake Forest VA residents spend four days a week at Salisbury VA Medical Center; the other day each week is spent at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in a variety of academic, clinical and leadership electives. Key areas for didactic and elective training at Wake Forest focus on mental illness, cardiovascular disease, chronic neurologic conditions, drug safety issues among older adults, medical decision making, and leadership skills that are targeted at helping physicians find ways to overcome practice barriers in implementing a patient-centered medical home. The residents also learn the art of training PA students under the supervision of seasoned faculty members in the Wake Forest PA program.



Resident Christopher Killen has served in the Army National Guard for the past 13 years and says that while serving he developed a passion for giving out knowledge to the people who need it. “I really love working with the first-year PA students. I enjoy how focused the program is on giving the best education possible to the students,” he said. “I really enjoy giving what I’ve learned back to the students. This residency is a great opportunity for me to get a good basis for primary care, and I especially appreciate the opportunity it gives me to work in academia.”

Continued on page 4

The residency is available to new PA graduates who are interested in taking a year to refine their clinical skills in primary care and advance key leadership skills before entering the PA workforce. An “intentional transition” between graduation and a full-time PA career can afford residents a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in electives, experience what it means to be a PA in the VA health system, and be on the cutting edge of redesigning the way patients are cared for.

“The VA employs more PAs than any other employer in the country,” said Dr. Bushardt. “There is enormous momentum and support for PAs as leaders within the VA. Most new PAs are likely not interested in a primary care residency, because our

generalist training model prepares us very well for primary care upon graduation. The strength of our residency is the opportunity to be exposed to and help craft a new model of care that will be critical to the future success of VA medical centers all over the country.” The VA will want to recruit and retain the best talent, including PAs who complete these residencies, to move the PACT initiative forward. This is a great opportunity for PAs interested in leadership careers.

To obtain more information about the VA Residency, visit the [home page](#) for the Department of Physician Assistant Studies and click on the Post-Graduate Programs link.

New faces at PA Studies



Carol Hildebrandt

Carol Hildebrandt has been with Wake Forest School of Medicine since 2001. She was with the Department of Family and Community Medicine for 10 years. She began as a research assistant on a CDC-funded project on racial and ethnic disparities in diabetes care and then worked for five years as a clinical trial coordinator on diabetes drug trials. Since 2006, she has been a project manager on various educational grants for medical students and residents. In 2013, she joined the Department of Physician Assistant Studies as an academic coordinator working primarily in research and scholarship and helping in certain areas of the pre-clinical and clinical years.



David White at Camp Taji, Iraq

David White is assistant professor and co-director of clinical education. He has a BS in kinesiology/sports medicine from the University of Maryland and spent five years as an athletic trainer for professional ice hockey teams. His PA training was at the Medical University of South Carolina and the University of Nebraska. After PA school, David accepted direct commission into the Army National Guard, attended the U.S. Army flight surgeon course, served in Iraq and Kuwait, and now practices aviation medicine as a reservist. His clinical experience includes orthopedic surgery; he currently practices in trauma and critical care surgery. David lives in Advance, North Carolina, with his wife and two children and describes himself as an “avid golfer.”

Community service events for the class of 2014

First-year PA students Kelsey Norkett and Ally Petrilli head up the community service committee for the Class of 2014. Norkett and Petrilli have been working hard this year to get students involved in various events within the community, such as volunteering at the United Way Midnight Madness 5K, participating in an American Red Cross



Allison Petrilli (left) & Kelsey Norkett

blood drive, putting on a holiday show at the SECU Family House, and handing out teddy bears to pediatric patients at Wake Forest Baptist Hospital.

“I love seeing our class come together for a greater cause that benefits both us and the community,” said Petrilli. “I was overwhelmed by the enthusiasm and support our classmates showed for the American Red Cross blood drive. Our goal was 28 donors, and we met our goal by 138%!”

The involvement of other PA students has been a great help to the community service committee. Getting involved not only helps the patients receiving blood or the children receiving a teddy bear, but the students really enjoy taking a break from studying to get out into the community.

“I have always felt that the volunteers participating in community service are touched just as much or more than the people who are helped,” said Norkett. “When we handed out teddy bears to children at Brenner Children’s Hospital, this was especially true because there is nothing better than putting a smile on a child’s face!”

Handing out teddy bears and singing Christmas carols seemed to be especially enjoyable, as students were nearing the end of an academic unit and testing week was approaching. “I think we learned the importance of how one smile can turn someone’s day around,” said Petrilli. “These volunteer experiences gave us perspective and were truly a light in the midst of a stressful week.”

PA Studies professor named Chair-Elect of SGEA

Dr. Sonia Crandall was named Chair-Elect of the Southern Group on Educational Affairs (SGEA) at the annual Spring Meeting in Savannah, Georgia, April 18-20, 2013. She will serve as Vice Chair and Treasurer for 2 years, Chair for 2 years, and Past Chair for 2 years.



Dr. Crandall is a Professor in the Departments of Physician Assistant Studies and Family & Community Medicine; Director of Scholarship and Research for PA Studies; and Director of the Office of Women in Medicine and Science’s Leadership and Mentoring Program. She is affiliate faculty in the Maya Angelou Center for Health Equity and the WFU Translational Science Institute. She has a PhD in adult education and a MS in epidemiology. Her areas of expertise include curriculum development, program evaluation, adult

learning theory, and designing cultural competence curricula for health professions learners.

The Southern Group on Educational Affairs, which includes 46 Southern medical schools, is one of four regions of the Group on Educational Affairs (GEA) affiliated with the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). The Chair of the SGEA serves on the AAMC GEA Steering Committee.

According to their Web site, “The SGEA fosters educational excellence along the continuum of medical education—undergraduate medical education, graduate medical education, and continuing medical education—by providing a forum for discussing the concerns of the medical education profession, serving as a resource, and acting in an advisory capacity to the GEA and AAMC. This mission is accomplished through communication, cooperation and shared respect among its members.”

Alumni profile: Karen Hills, MS, PA-C

Karen Hills graduated from the Wake Forest PA program in 1999 and is currently serving as the program director for the PA program at Duke University. She is also an associate professor at Duke.

Hills went to Duke in 2001 as a one-year teaching fellow and then joined the faculty as a clinical coordinator. In 2005, she became associate program director, and in January 2013 she was promoted to program director.

“I am fortunate to work at the top PA program in the country with an outstanding faculty and top-notch students who are excited by all the opportunities and potential that a career as a PA holds,” said Hills. “Being part of the birthplace of the profession comes with great responsibility to carry on traditions, while also being bold and innovative in how future health care providers are educated.”

While Hills is very excited about her new opportunity at Duke, she still remembers her roots.

“I have always been well-served by my Wake Forest education,” said Hills. “The emphasis that the University places on critical thinking and taking personal responsibility for lifelong learning is something I have carried with me throughout my

career. The supportive faculty and staff who were invested in our success as students prepared me to join the ranks of PA education.”

As director of Duke’s PA program, Hills has given considerable thought to how PAs and PA students can help influence the future of the profession.

“Physician assistants can help to meet the challenges facing America’s health care system. But to do that, our profession needs to continue to grow,” said Hills. “As leaders in PA education, we need to be open to developing new models of education that maximize our team-based approach to patient-centered care. As PAs, we are always representing the profession with each patient we care for, within the communities we live in and the organizations of which we are a part.”

Hills recently expanded her role in PA education beyond Duke when she was chosen president-elect of the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA). In 2014, she will serve as president of the organization.

“I really enjoy the opportunity to represent PA education on a national level and to work with so many wonderful faculty members from PA programs around the country,” said Hills.



New faces at PA Studies



Tanya Gregory is the newest member of the PA program faculty, having started at Wake Forest in mid-January 2013. She has a PhD in English and American literature and taught literature and writing at Rutgers

University. She then spent nearly 24 years in medical publishing, the past 12 of them as the editor of *JAAPA*. After living in the metropolitan New York City-area for close to 35 years, Tanya is extremely happy to have moved to Winston-Salem, which she describes as “very livable.” She directs the graduate project, assists faculty with scholarly projects, and is investigating how to integrate more medical humanities into the PA program curriculum.



Nicole Hafemeister moved from Dallas, Texas, to Winston-Salem and Wake Forest in the fall of 2012. While her husband began a gastroenterology fellowship at Wake Forest Baptist

Health, she became the clinical year program coordinator for the PA Studies. She creates the clinical year schedules for students and is the main contact for preceptors. Nicole grew up in San Antonio; attended Texas A&M as an undergraduate; and earned a Masters in Health Care Administration from Texas Women’s University in Houston. Before coming to Wake, she worked in pediatric resident education at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas.

First-year student Stephen Elledge is commissioned into the U.S. Air Force

In January 2013, first-year PA student Stephen Elledge was commissioned into the United States Air Force. Taking part in the commissioning was Major David White, PA-C, who serves as an Aeromedical Physician Assistant in the South Carolina Army National Guard and teaches in the Wake Forest PA program.



David White and Stephen Elledge at the commissioning

Elledge is a first-year PA student who attended the University of Utah for his bachelor's degree. He decided to apply for the Health Professions Scholarship Program through the Air Force after hearing about the scholarship a year and a half ago.

"I had considered enlisting in the Air Force early on in my life," said Elledge. "I heard about the HPSP and decided that it would be an awesome opportunity to improve my financial situation after graduation, as well as to serve my country in a way that I've wanted to do for a long time."

The commissioning took place in the main PA classroom at Victoria Hall. Students, staff, and family packed the classroom to watch the commissioning. White prepared a slide show for Elledge to give him an insight into what the next few years will be like.

"Stephen can expect not only the normal steep learning curve that all new-grad PAs face medically, but also a steep learning curve regarding military life," said White. "It can be an intimidating world with its own language, customs, and traditions. Most importantly, he can be proud to care for the servicemen and women who make up the greatest military in the world."

Elledge is very excited about the opportunity that the Air Force is going to bring into his life.

"It will be difficult at times, especially if I end up being deployed," said Elledge. "On the other hand, I will have very regular hours and time to spend with my family in the evenings. It will also be a new experience to adopt the culture of military life, namely being an officer and how that changes my relationship with my patients."

White says he has developed leadership skills from both his military and civilian careers and his favorite part of being a military PA is the honor and privilege of doing his small part to serve his country.

"My advice to Stephen is to enjoy the experience and make the most out of it. There will be opportunities to do things that most folks will never have the chance to do, but he'll have to be proactive in seeking these opportunities out," said White. "Stephen will be a great fit for the military – he's mature and flexible, and anyone who has the discipline and work ethic to be successful in PA school has the tools needed for a successful military career."



Elledge with his family and Major White

As Elledge's first year of PA school comes to a close in May 2013, he has many exciting changes coming his way.

"My classmates and the staff have been more than supportive of my decision, and I am very appreciative of the support," said Elledge. "I am immensely grateful for my opportunity to serve this country and for the support I have received from all of my friends and family."

PA Studies chair wins 40 Leaders Under Forty award

Department of Physician Assistant Studies chair Reamer Bushardt, PharmD, PA-C, has been named one of the Piedmont Triad's 40 Leaders Under Forty for 2013. Each year, *The Business Journal* honors what it describes as "the best and brightest young leaders in the Triad" for their "accomplishments and contributions ... as well as their potential in the years to come." A February 7 story in *The Business Journal* announced this year's list.

Dr. Bushardt was nominated by L. Gail Curtis, PA-C, MPAS, who is associate professor and vice chair of the PA program. "I nominated him because he amazes me," said Curtis. "For someone so young, he has accomplished so much. He excels at teaching, administration, leadership, and mentoring. He does all this with kindness and humor, wanting only for those around him to be the best they can be. He holds himself to the highest standards, and everyone sees his 'light' and wants him to be involved with what they are doing and to share his expertise."



Dr. Bushardt and his wife, Christin, at the ceremony

When asked how he felt about winning this award, Dr. Bushardt responded in a way that is typical of his character. "The best part of the experience," he reported, "was

that everyone at the awards ceremony got to hear about the Wake Forest physician assistant program."

The award winners were honored at a cocktail reception and awards presentation on February 28 at the Elliott University Center on the UNC-Greensboro campus and featured in a special report in the March 1 print edition of *The Business Journal*.

PA students take Washington!

Last fall, first-year and second-year Wake Forest PA students attended the CORE conference in Washington, DC. CORE is AAPA's leadership forum. Students who attended had the chance to meet PA students from other schools and attended talks focused on a variety of topics about the PA profession.

"There is so much to being a PA, and PA school can only teach you so much," said first-year student and SAAAPA Representative Mary Jean Leonardi. "The conference is a great way to learn a lot in a short time, and to learn from PAs who are currently practicing."

During CORE, students had a day at Capitol Hill where they were introduced to legislation that AAPA is working to have passed. Students met with staff members for North Carolina Senators Burr and Hagen as well as the representative from North Carolina for Winston-Salem's district.

"My favorite part about being in Washington was the day at Capitol Hill," said first-year student Anna Hamon. "It was great to be surrounded by so many people who have the power to change health care for the better."

AAPA's annual conference (IMPACT) is coming up in the spring, and students are looking forward to another opportunity to meet PAs from across the country.

"I am looking forward to so many things about the national conference," said Leonardi. "I want to spend time with classmates and the second years. I think it will be great to meet students from other programs, and to cheer on our Challenge Bowl team!"

IMPACT '13 takes place May 25-29 in Washington, and the theme this year is PAs TAKE WASHINGTON. The conference provides students with interactive training, teaching, and, like CORE, the opportunity to impact their futures in health care by interacting with Congress and learning about legislative issues that affect PA practice.

"It is easy to get caught up in the day-to-day stresses of PA school, but attending conference helps us to remember what it's really all about: providing quality medical care to our patients and helping those in need," said second-year PA student and SAAAPA Representative Andrea Posh. "It is so refreshing to see thousands of PAs uniting for a common goal, especially on the Hill."

PA Studies faculty member Janie McDaniel receives Outstanding Achievement Award

Janie McDaniel, BSMT, MLS(ASCP)SC, was awarded the Outstanding Achievement Award on November 8, 2012 at the Annual Awards Luncheon held during PAEA's Annual Education Forum in Seattle.

The award honors an individual who has provided sustained, exceptional service or leadership to PAEA (the Physician Assistant Education Association) or who contributed to the advancement of the physician assistant profession in other ways (such as scholarly activity or teaching).

McDaniel joined the Wake Forest PA program faculty in 1995. She has been the director of admissions for the program since 2003 and also teaches Diagnostic Medical Sciences. In 2005, McDaniel accepted a position working for the Central Application Service of Physician Assistants (CASPA) Admission Committee, and in 2007 she was named the chair of CASPA board.

McDaniel was nominated for the Outstanding Achievement Award in June 2012 by PA program Chair Reamer Bushardt and Vice Chair Gail Curtis.

"Professor McDaniel gives her all, all the time, for the PA profession and particularly for Wake PAs," said Curtis. "She has a stellar scholarly, teaching, and educational record. She is nationally known for her work with CASPA and AAPA. There was no one who more deserved this award than Professor McDaniel. Remarkably, though not a PA herself, she embodies all the best characteristics that make a great PA. Professor McDaniel is truly a star, and we are glad she is in our galaxy!"

McDaniel began her career in the medical field working in hospital laboratories for 30 years. After starting in PA Studies at Wake Forest as an adjunct faculty member and having added so many more projects to her workload, McDaniel has really

enjoyed the transformation. "I feel like this is my chosen career," said McDaniel. "I have kicked myself many times for not becoming a PA. Being able to say that I made a difference in the PA profession is the most important thing to me."

Having dedicated her career to helping build the PA profession, McDaniel was very excited to bring recognition to the programs that she has dedicated so much time to.

"I was extremely honored to be nominated," said McDaniel. "Receiving this award has shown me that my colleagues respect my commitment and

enthusiasm for PA admissions and PA education, which means so much and reinforces my dedication to the PA profession."

McDaniel never thought that she would be teaching but admits that being around students is one of the favorite parts of her career.

"My favorite part is getting to interact with students," said McDaniel. "My husband can always tell when I come home after a day of teaching, not because I am tired but because I am so energized! Teaching is another way I can contribute to the profession."

This year will be McDaniel's last as the Chair of the CASPA Admission Committee, as she

wraps up 6 years of work with CASPA in December 2013. She is excited to remain the head of admissions with the Wake Forest PA program and is getting her master's in Medical Education Leadership beginning this summer.

"If I didn't love my job, I couldn't do it," said McDaniel. "I am so honored to have received this award, and I hope that it will not only bring recognition to my accomplishments, but also to the accomplishments of Wake Forest PA program and CASPA."



Janie McDaniel