Dear Class of 2018,

Congratulations and welcome to Wake Forest School of Medicine Physician Assistant program! We can’t wait to have you, our next class of leaders and practitioners, join the Demon Deacon family in June.

At Wake Forest we are fortunate to have two cohorts, one in Winston-Salem and one in Boone. The Winston Campus is nestled in the newly renovated Innovation Quarter at 525@Vine in downtown Winston-Salem. We are lucky to see the continuous growth and the opportunities this area has to offer to our program. There is new development underway for the Bailey Power Plant building, with their iconic chimney stacks and a promise to bring more entertainment and retail opportunities to the Innovation Quarter. Along with that, a 20 mile loop hiking trail will soon run along an unused railroad track and allow for individuals to walk, run, and bike between the beautiful Salem Lake and downtown Winston-Salem. Construction is also underway next door for the new Wake Forest School of Medicine facilities that should be finished later this summer. This will allow for more interprofessional activities between the PA Program, Medical School, and Nurse Anesthesia program. The area is thriving with new developments in this historic area of Winston-Salem and it is such a privilege for the PA school campus to be in the center of it all!

The Boone campus in University Hall at Appalachian State University has become more integrated with the High Country community in its second year of establishment. The Boone cohort has loved the opportunity to be part of that process. We have had various activities throughout the year to enhance the presence of Wake Forest in the area through interprofessional panels with ASU, local fundraisers, and community service events. The students, staff, and faculty have continued to improve the technological aspects of communication between the two cohorts in order to optimize the learning experience for all. The students from the Boone cohort have done an amazing job this past year in enhancing the cohort experience and taking advantage of the beautiful surroundings with class activities. We know that your class will only continue to expand the positive contributions and awareness we bring to the High Country community.

As the President of the Winston-Salem cohort (Tyler Leaphart) and the President of the Boone cohort (Katherine Ness) we are confident that you have made the right choice to come to Wake Forest and are excited that you are on your way towards an extremely rewarding career. This is a respected program in the PA community that is centered around clinical reasoning skills developed through the inquiry based learning process, which has continually proven to be beneficial not only during clinical rotations, but for your careers as future PAs. Technology plays a huge role in this process by expanding the ways in which we learn, communicate, and interact with one another. It is truly an amazing asset to Wake Forest and a progressive move in the right direction. Throughout this past year each student has acquired an impressive amount of knowledge through various aspects in our curriculum. Clinical rotations are quickly approaching for the class of 2017, but with our training here at Wake Forest we are undoubtedly prepared for our next steps in the journey to become PAs. As you will soon experience, this program requires a lot of hard work and dedication, but should absolutely pay off and be worth every experience.

We know that you are probably feeling a whirlwind of emotions, mostly comprised of anxiety and excitement, as you approach the beginning of school in June. We can’t guarantee that there won’t be
difficult moments ahead and times where you doubt your capabilities, but we can tell you that it is important to remember you are here because you deserve it and have been recognized by Wake Forest as having the accomplishments and qualities that comprise excellent PAs. We ask that you reach out to your Big Brother/Big Sister for any questions you have in the upcoming year, as they will be happy to provide any answers, guidance, or reassurance that may be helpful. Additionally, please remember to rest and enjoy your time before starting school. Once June arrives, classes will pick up speed and you will appreciate the time you took beforehand to relax!

Finally, we would like to give you a brief introduction to our local student government, the Katherine H. Anderson Society (KAS). KAS serves as the representative body for the WFSM PA Program. The student society was named in honor of Dr. Katherine Anderson, our first Program Director and an advocate of PA education and leadership. KAS is only a portion of Wake Forest’s involvement in the local, regional, and national levels of PA leadership. Part of the programs’ mission statement is to “produce highly capable, compassionate physician assistants who deliver patient-centered care, make significant contributions to the healthcare community, and continually advance the PA profession”. Over the next two years, you will have all the resources and tools you need to fulfill these tasks. We will stop by at some point in June to provide more details about KAS and the elected positions. It is a rewarding experience and great way to be involved in leadership roles and opportunities at Wake Forest, so we encourage you to get involved. If you have any questions before then, please let us know.

We look forward to meeting you all and wish you the best of luck!

Sincerely,

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