



# GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY<sup>®</sup>

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## PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES

GVSU Physician Assistant Studies Alumni Newsletter



## WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR



Andrew Booth, PA-C  
Program Director

### PAS Faculty

Theresa Bacon-Baguley, Ph.D.  
Professor, Assistant Dean of Research  
\*\*\*

Andrew Booth, MS, PA-C  
Assistant Professor, Department Chair  
\*\*\*

Charlene Dubois, MPA, R.D.  
Clinical Affiliate Faculty  
\*\*\*

Jill Ellis, PA-C  
Assistant Professor  
\*\*\*

David Geenen, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
\*\*\*

Steffen Genthe, M.D.  
Medical Director  
\*\*\*

Mandy German, PA-C  
Clinical Affiliate Faculty  
\*\*\*

Nicholus Kopacki, PA-C  
Clinical Affiliate Faculty  
\*\*\*

M. Lisa Pagnucco PharmD  
Associate Professor  
\*\*\*

Molly Paulson, MS, PA-C  
Assistant Professor  
\*\*\*

Susan Raaymakers, MPAS, PA-C  
Assistant Professor  
\*\*\*

Martina Reinhold, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
\*\*\*

Amanda Ross, PA-C  
Clinical Affiliate Faculty

As our wonderful Michigan weather throws us curve balls this winter/spring, the GVSU PAS program continues to hit home runs when it comes to students and PA education (Can you tell we are getting close to spring training!)

The state of the GVSU PAS program is strong and getting stronger. This past December, we added yet another class of graduates to the PA workforce! Congratulations to the Class of 2015! At the time of this writing, the Class of 2015 has 100% pass rate on the boards and are finding gainful employment, throughout Michigan and the Midwest.

A huge thank you to all of our alumni and preceptors that are active either teaching, interviewing, advising, and importantly, educating GVSU PAS students. This program would not be the same if it weren't for your time, talent, and commitment to our program and students. Thank you! Another way we are saying thank you, is to host an Alumni/Preceptor CME event on March 24<sup>th</sup>, at 630 pm in the GVSU Cook DeVos Center for Health Science Building! Your very own Dr. Terri Bacon-Baguley will give a 1-hour presentation (worth 1.0 AAPA approved CME credit!) on coagulation and you know that will be great! Additionally, wine and beer will be served as well as a chance to get back in touch with classmates, friends, and faculty. We hope to see you there.

It has been one year since we lost our student Stephanie Urbanawiz to breast cancer. We continue to honor her and make sure she is still a part

of our program. Please consider donating to the Stephanie A. Urbanawiz PA scholarship, through GVSU. We are getting closer to our goal, but still could use your support. Go to <http://www.gvsu.edu/giving/funds.htm> to donate. Thank you in advance!

The program continues to make strides at the Traverse City distant site, with a strong first cohort of 9 students. The students are tremendous and the faculty there have really done a fantastic job at adjusting to 2 campuses and the use of new technology (which we will show you at our Alumni/Preceptor event on March 24<sup>th</sup>!).

Lastly, the program has added a new faculty member! We are excited to introduce Dr. Lisa Pagnucco! Dr. Pagnucco is a PharmD and has been a great addition to our faculty! Read more about Lisa and her background later in this newsletter.

During interviews last fall and in conversations I have with prospective GVSU PAS students, I will often ask, "*Why Grand Valley's PA program?*" Overwhelmingly, the theme of the responses is that GV has an outstanding reputation in the community because of such great alumni that are making a difference in the health of their communities. Thank you all for representing our program so well! You all are part of the reason this program continues to be so successful!

See you on March 24<sup>th</sup>!

**Andrew Booth, PA-C**

# GVSU PAS PROGRAM WELCOMES M. LISA PAGNUCCO, PHARM D

Dr. M. Lisa Pagnucco arrived into Grand Rapids from Portland, ME a few days before the beginning of the winter semester and jumped into the department by giving her first lecture in Clinical Therapeutics on the very first day. The week before she was completing obligations at the University of New England College of Pharmacy.

Dr. Pagnucco was born and raised in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. After high school she took a wonderful job as a buyer for cancer research laboratories in Toronto, Ontario. Six years later, she returned home to be near her family and began college at Lake Superior State University. Her original goal was to pursue a degree in medicine. A trip with her LSSU chemistry partner to Ferris State University's pharmacy program convinced her that a pharmacy degree was a better option for her. After completing pre-requisites, she transferred to Ferris in 1991 and graduated in 1994. She then obtained her post-graduate PharmD at the University of Cincinnati in Cincinnati OH and completed her residency training at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN.

After graduation, Dr. Pagnucco moved to Anchorage, AK where she practiced as an inpatient clinical pharmacist at Providence Alaska Medical Center and as an ambulatory care pharmacist at the Alaska Native Medical Center. After five years in Alaska, she decided to move back to the 'lower 48' to be somewhat closer to family who continued to reside in Sault Ste. Marie.

Dr. Pagnucco's academic career began as an adjunct clinical assistant professor at Ferris State University. While working as an administrator for a hospital pharmacy department, she precepted pharmacy students for FSU. She accepted a full-time faculty position six years ago at the University of New England, College of Pharmacy, in Portland, ME. She taught in the didactic program as well as maintained a practice site in primary care for students to train at in their clinical year. The possibility to return to Michigan and teach in the GVSU PAS program was an opportunity that was "too good to turn down".

Dr. Pagnucco loves to travel, often visiting areas around this country and Mexico. She has also traveled to Ireland and Italy and has plans to return. She enjoys time with friends and family, movies, hiking, cross-country skiing and snow shoeing. She enjoyed the sport of curling many years ago and was excited to learn that a curling club recently opened in Kalamazoo.

In addition to over twenty years of inpatient and outpatient clinical experience, Dr. Pagnucco brings her warmth, sense of humor, energy, and passion for patient care to GVSU. We are delighted to have her join the team of faculty who teach in the PAS program here at GVSU. Welcome Lisa!



Lisa Pagnucco, PharmD

# GVSU PAS Alumni and Preceptor Event

## Updates on Coagulation

**Date:** Thursday, March 24, 2016  
**Time:** 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM  
**Price:** \$10.00 per person  
**RSVP:** Online at [gvsu.edu/pas](http://gvsu.edu/pas)  
**Location:** Center for Health Sciences Room 119

The GVSU PAS Program would like to show our appreciation for our alumni and preceptors. Please join us for a cocktail reception with wine, beer, and hors d'oeuvres followed by a presentation entitled "Updates on Coagulation" by the esteemed Dr. Theresa Bacon-Baguley. This presentation will discuss limitations of anticoagulants and specific reversal agents for the new anticoagulants.

*This program has been reviewed and is approved for a maximum of 1.00 hours of AAPA Category 1 CME credit by the Physician Assistant Review Panel. Physician assistants should claim only those hours actually spent participating in the CME activity.*

*This program was planned in accordance with AAPA's CME Standards for Live Programs and for Commercial Support of Live Programs.*

### Contact

For further information about the event, please contact Cathy Tomek at [tomekc@gvsu.edu](mailto:tomekc@gvsu.edu) or 616-331-5577.



Theresa Bacon-Baguley, Ph.D. BSN



## Upcoming GVSU PAS Faculty Lectures

**April 27, 2016**

"Sustainability of improved perceptions of health care professions by Physician Assistant students one year after inter-professional experiences."

GRMEP Research Day

**Martina I. Reinhold, Ph.D.**  
**Theresa Bacon-Baguley, Ph.D.**

**May 14, 2016**

"Individualized Management of Patients with T2DM via Combination Therapy: What You Need to Know."

2016 AAPA Conference

**Jill Ellis PA-C**

**May 23-24, 2016**

"Implementation of a Distant Learning Physician Assistant Program in Northern Michigan to Address Health Care Provider Shortage: Importance of Evaluation."

ICHE 2016: International Conference on Higher Education

**Martina I. Reinhold, Ph.D.**  
**Theresa Bacon-Baguley, Ph.D.**  
**BSN**



# Student Spotlight

## Andrew Mepham

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I remember the afternoon when Andrew came into my office to tell me that he had just found out that the work he did a couple of years ago as an undergraduate had been published and he was a co-author on a peer review article. He was so excited and simply needed to tell somebody. I was honored and thrilled that he chose to come to my office to share the news.

Andrew, now in the clinical phase of his PA education, received his undergraduate degree from GVSU in 2012. During his undergraduate education, he had the opportunity to do an independent study in the laboratory of Dr. Moses Lee, Professor and Dean of the department of natural sciences at Hope College. Dr. Moses's lab focuses on cancer research and is centered on DNA sequence recognition and anti-angiogenesis. Mathew worked on a project that investigated DNA binding molecules that bind very specific DNA sequences. These agents have a broad range of applications, including the modulation of gene expression and the development of DNA-based medicines. The group investigated the specific binding activity of *AzaHx*, a novel fluorescent, DNA binding element that can have implications in DNA replication. Their studies found that the affinity for the DNA binding was high enough to allow for future studies where the molecule could be attached to certain cancer fighting medications as a tracer and be used against metastatic cells. In addition, its fluorescent characteristics will be valuable in a variety of biological studies. Andrew's role in the project was to synthesize the molecule from start to finish.

Andrew is married to Jessica and has a 3-year-old son, Gabriel. In his free time he loves to write and record music (electric guitar and piano) and spend time with his family and friends. His professional interests include family medicine, neurology, and orthopedics.



Andrew Mepham PA-S2

#### Published Work:

Satam V, Babu B, Patil P, Brien KA, Olson K, Savagian M, Lee M, Mepham A, Jobe LB, Bingham JP, Pett L, Wang S, Ferrara M, Bruce CD, Wilson WD, Lee M, Hartley JA, Kiakos K. **AzaHx, a novel fluorescent, DNA minor groove and G-C recognition element: Synthesis and DNA binding properties of a p-anisyl-4-azabenzimidazole-pyrrole-imidazole (azaHx-PI) polyamide.** *Bioorg Med Chem Lett.* 2015; 25(17):3681-5.

Martina Reinhold, Ph.D.  
Research Coordinator

## PANOPOULOS SCHOLARSHIP

### Blake Geschke

This past summer, the Physician Assistant Studies Program had the distinct privilege of announcing the establishment of an endowed scholarship entitled “Christos T. and Joan A. Panopoulos Physician Assistant Studies Scholarship”. Both Christos and Joan are proud advocates of health care in West Michigan. Christos serves as a member of the Board of the Grand Valley University Foundation.

The scholarship was established to assist students in the program during their clinical phase. The Class of 2016 submitted 15 applications to be considered by the scholarship committee. The selection criteria used by the committee included program leadership/professionalism, academic performance, and financial need. We are proud to announce that Blake Geschke is the 2015 recipient of the Christos T. and Joan A. Panopoulos Physician Assistant Scholarship! We are extremely fortunate to have received this wonderful gift from the Panopoulos family and are excited to review the applications from the Class of 2017.



Blake Geschke PA-S2

## 2016 Admissions Update

The GVSU PAS Admissions Committee wrapped up another successful admission cycle this past fall semester. There were approximately 350 applicants, and applicants more than doubled for the Traverse City campus this year. Approximately 120 candidates were invited for interviews at the GVSU College of Health Science Building in Grand Rapids, MI. A huge thanks Dr. Karlin Sevensma, Jill Talman PA-C, Austin Kuipers PA-C, Amy Werling PA-C, Tim Gawronski PA-C, Kelly Teft PA-C, Jen James PA-C, Erika Yonker PA-C, Ginger Biesbrock PA-C, Christine Khamis PA-C, Emily Sydloski PA-C, and Kevin Wolf PA-C for helping to make the interview days a success! Acceptance letters were emailed at the end of the fall semester and we have 52 candidates scheduled to begin the program this coming August! We are now accepting applications for the next admission cycle. Applications are due September 15, 2016. Please visit <http://www.gvsu.edu/pas/admissions-criteria-91.htm> for more details. Contact Jill Ellis PA-C ([ellisji@gvsu.edu](mailto:ellisji@gvsu.edu)) if you would like to become involved in the admissions process next year!

# PA CLASS OF 2016 NEWS

Clinical rotations are officially underway for the Class of 2016. For a while it seemed that we were prisoners of the classroom forever, but this exciting new phase of our education is finally upon us. Watching the textbooks come to life on a daily basis is truly thrilling, and putting a face to medicine allows us to become better practitioners. For example, once you treat one patient (or ten) with COPD exacerbations, you become familiar with what to do, what to look for, and how to best approach the case. As a wise Professor (Dr. Sevensma) once said, "Repetition is the mother of learning," and clinical creates the perfect environment for this.

We came back together as a class at the end of the first interval and the classroom was absolutely buzzing. After only that

one month, each student had numerous "cool cases" or important clinical pearls he or she had learned. We are finding that the classroom cannot always represent what real life has in store. Current events have their role in medicine as we experience the impact of the Zika virus and the water crisis in Flint. Seeing and sharing these experiences with each other is what makes medicine so thrilling and dynamic. The wealth of knowledge that we will acquire after eleven more months of clinical practice will prepare us to soon treat our *own* patients.

Understanding the personal side of medicine has been a valuable lesson for us during rotations. A student treated a patient with a chief concern of increased blood pressure despite medications and a negative review of sys-

tems. The student took extra time to discuss the patient's personal life, enabling her to discover the root of the problem: anxiety about a sick grandson. The take home messages are that medicine is more than what is taught in the textbook, the key to a diagnosis and effective treatment is not always a pill and a follow up appointment.

Each week presents an opportunity for us to learn and further develop our skills. We were told this year will fly by, and so far this has been proven to be correct. The late nights, long shifts, fountains of coffee, and test anxiety will soon be one stressful yet happy memory as our careers as PA-C's finally begin.

Madeline Vaughn PA-S2  
Class of 2016



## *PA Class of 2017 News*

We have survived our first semester of PA school and are now on to the next one! Not only have we mastered late nights studying , but also it is safe to say we have all become barista connoisseurs, developing a whole new appreciation for coffee! As second semester commences we are beginning to transition from those anxious first semester PA students into more adaptable clinical learners. Our class is working well together, helping one another (from both campuses) by sharing various study tools to help pass our weekly exams. Although there is a division by miles between the two campuses, we still value the fact that we are ONE cohort and work hard to communicate between each campus via our group Facebook page.

Our RPC group is currently working on putting together a March Madness fundraiser- as we work on our differential diagnosis to complete our NCAA Men's Basketball Brackets. Prizes will go to the top three winners and further profits will be going towards our plans for our white coat ceremony and graduation (yes we are already looking forward to the end of the road!).

Although our second semester schedule is full with lots of lecture hours, we are able to get out of the classroom to observe various medical occupations during our Hospital Community Experience Course on Wednesday mornings. Every student is gaining inter-professional experience, as we are able to see something new each week. Some of our favorites thus far include cardiothoracic surgery, ride-a-longs with EMS, endoscopy, and working with our assigned long-term care patients.

We are all excited to be a part of such an amazing profession and are working hard to get to the end, taking it one week at a time! As much as we love learning new procedures in our Clinical Applications class, it is safe to say we are counting down the days until Spring Break so we can catch up on some sleep.

Lindsey Pettit PA-S1  
Class 2017



Christina Ricci PA-S1 and Susan Herman PA-S1  
Class of 2017 Practicing Physical Examination Skills

# 2016 Preceptors of the Year

Every year the faculty of our program vote on our Preceptor of the Year award, and the names that came to the top this year were Dr. Marian Fuller and Dr. Stephanie Fitzgerald, who practice Women's Health at West Shore Medical Center in Manistee.

Dr. Fuller and Dr. Fitzgerald have been precepting with the GVSU PAS Program for 4 years and they precept about 8 students per year. As a faculty, we love working with them and the students feel the same way. Students have continuously commented on how Dr. Fitzgerald and Dr. Fuller continually push students to expand their knowledge base and allow students to participate in procedures and physical examinations. Their style of teaching demands a hard work ethic from the students, but they payoff is an exceptional rotation giving students a wealth of knowledge in obstetrics and gynecological care.

It is a pleasure to work with Dr. Fuller, Dr. Fitzgerald and their office staff, and an honor to award them as the 2015 Faculty nominated preceptor of the year.



Dr. Marian Fuller



David Barney, PA-C

The Class of 2015 has chosen their Preceptor of the Year, David Barney, PA-C, who has precepted many students in Family Practice over the years. This isn't the first time that Dave has received the award, and we are grateful for his continuing service to our Grand Valley PA students.

The students give Dave high praise, describing him as an "exceptional teacher" who gives positive feedback, answers questions, demonstrates things, but also gives students freedom to work on their skills. "He valued my learning," commented a student.

Congratulations, Dave! The program and future students thank you for continuing to share your expertise.

# Two Travel to Tanzania

Emily Wiest and I decided to do an elective rotation in Kigoma, Tanzania. We worked with Dr. Pepper, a missionary doctor who works at Kigoma Baptist Hospital. We do not speak Swahili and were limited by the language barrier, but we worked relatively autonomously while we were there. We completed hospital rounds with Dr. Pepper four days a week and we also helped with outpatient diabetes management. We saw a lot of TB, HIV, sickle cell disease and liver cirrhosis while we were there. The lab tests that were available were MRDT (for malaria), PITC (for HIV), UA, stool analysis and hemoglobin. CBC, CMP or other lab tests were not available. Ultrasound and xray were the only imaging studies available. Our physical exam skills improved significantly due to the lack of resources available. We learned so much about how to practice medicine in an undeserved area of the world. The patients in Kigoma were very receptive to us even though we were limited in our ability to communicate with them. We are very thankful that Grand Valley provided an opportunity for us to go abroad and see a whole new side of healthcare.

Julie Vandermale



Emily Weist and Julie Vandermale Class of 2015

# GVSU PAS PROGRAM WELCOMES STEFFEN GENTHE, MD



Steffen Genthe, MD

In continuing efforts to provide the highest level of education, we are excited to announce the appointment of Steffen Genthe, MD, as the GVSU Physician Assistant Studies Program Medical Director. His role began on August 1, 2015 and succeeds Charles DuBose, MD, who has stepped down as medical director of GVSU Physician Assistant Studies to pursue new opportunities.

Proud to be a native Michigan resident, Dr. Genthe holds a bachelor degree from Grand Valley State University and earned his doctorate at Michigan State University College Of Human Medicine. He joins us with ten years of extensive emergency medicine experience.

In addition to his new role as medical director of the GVSU PAS program, Dr. Genthe serves as a practicing emergency medicine physician for Emergency Care Specialists, PC, and as a mentor to GVSU PA students. He also serves as Director of Advanced Practice Provider Services and Chair of Emergency Department Executive Committee. Sharing his skills globally, he served as a Haiti Earthquake Relief Physician in 2010. When not saving lives and training future healthcare providers he keeps physically fit and impressively participated as a two-time Ironman triathlete in 2013 and 2014.

## Get Involved in a Pre-PA Club!

The GVSU Pre-PA club in Allendale and the NMC Pre-PA Club in Traverse City are always looking for PA students, representatives of PA schools, and practicing PA's to present at their meetings.

For more information email:

GVSU Pre-PA Club [gvsuprepaclub@gmail.com](mailto:gvsuprepaclub@gmail.com)

NMC Pre-PA Club [nmcprepasociety@gmail.com](mailto:nmcprepasociety@gmail.com)

# A STEM Approach to Respiratory Function: Organ System to Cells

The diagnosis and treatment of respiratory disorders, such as asthma, require all of the STEM components: science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. As part of the 'Fall in Love with STEM' event sponsored by the Association for Women in Sciences, West Michigan held on February 13, 2016 at the College of Health Professions, faculty and students in the Kirkhof College of Nursing, College of Health Professions, and Department of Cell and Molecular Biology developed an experience for middle school and high school students, which involves all of the components of STEM into the clinical scenario of asthma. Using computer programs and simulation, students had hands-on opportunities to explore the components of the respiratory system, and the dysfunction associated with asthma. Moving from the organ system to the cellular level, genetic causes of lung disorders were discussed along with the opportunity for students to isolate DNA from a banana. Through exploration of lung function, disorders, treatment, and causes, students were able to identify multiple areas of opportunity to explore in their future education.

Martina Reinhold, Ph. D.



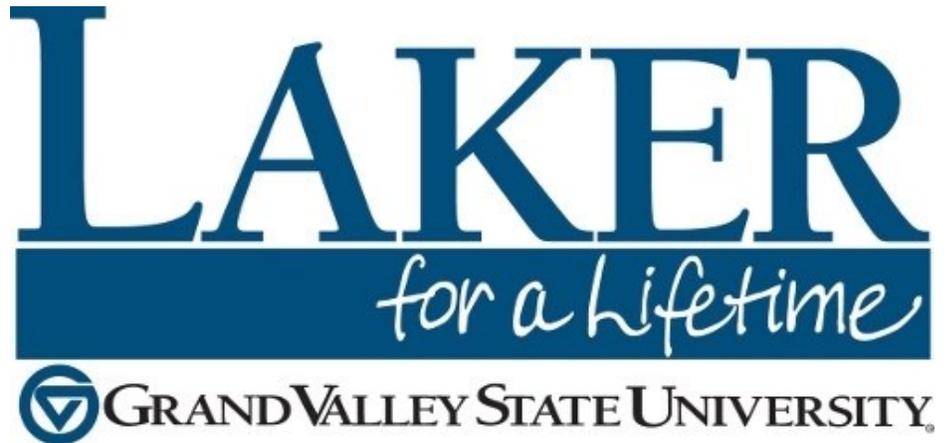
Kaitlin Dennis PA-S1, Martina Reinhold Ph.D., Rachael Wagner PA-S1, Brooke Janke PA-S1, Beckie Van Zanen PA-S1, and Theresa Bacon-Baguley Ph.D.

Grand Valley State University  
Physician Assistant Studies

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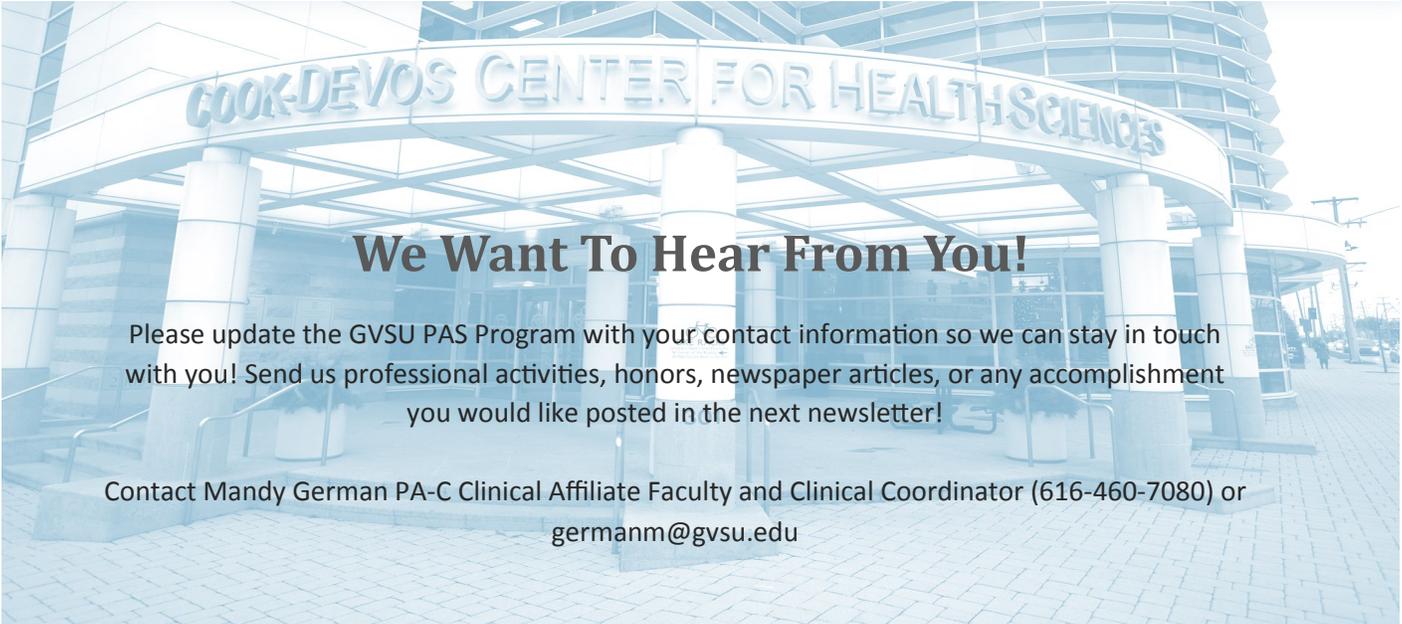
*The mission of the program is to educate individuals to become competent  
Physician Assistants*

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Grand Valley's Physician's Assistant program is one of the most rigorous in the country. To continue to attract and retain the best and brightest students, and graduate them with the best preparation for clinical practice, private funds are increasingly needed. You can help by giving today to the Physician's Assistant Development Fund. Your gift of any size counts and builds this fund to help our students continue our tradition of excellence.

Please consider giving online ([www.gvsu.edu/give](http://www.gvsu.edu/give)), by phone 616-331-6000, or via mail.

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The background image shows the exterior of the Cook-Devos Center for Health Sciences. The building has a modern, curved facade with large glass windows and a prominent entrance canopy. The name "COOK-DEVOS CENTER FOR HEALTH SCIENCES" is visible on the canopy. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

## **We Want To Hear From You!**

Please update the GVSU PAS Program with your contact information so we can stay in touch with you! Send us professional activities, honors, newspaper articles, or any accomplishment you would like posted in the next newsletter!

Contact Mandy German PA-C Clinical Affiliate Faculty and Clinical Coordinator (616-460-7080) or [germanm@gvsu.edu](mailto:germanm@gvsu.edu)