



# GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY®

## PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES



*Meet the Newest PAS Alumni and Colleagues  
Class of 2017*

## WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR



Andrew Booth, DHEd, PA-C

2018 is starting off as one of the most productive years in recent memory! This is due in no small part to the dedicated faculty in this program. I know I have highlighted them in the past, but ultimately, the success of any PA program rests in the faculty themselves. More than the director, Deans, and staff, it is the faculty, which includes didactic principal faculty and clinical instructional faculty/preceptors is where the rubber hits the road. And based on this, the GVSU PAS program at GVSU is very fortunate to have some of the best in the country!

*Class of 2017.* As I write this, the GVSU PA program has successfully graduated yet another cohort of outstanding PAs. Forty three graduates have successfully completed the requirements set forth by this rigorous program and 100% of them have passed the PANCE! Congratulations to the Class of 2017, and we wish you continued success as you venture into your future in this remarkable profession! We send you out knowing you are well qualified and capable of the demands of being a PA and are confident you will represent GVSU well!

*Accreditation update.* The program is hard at work completing the modified Self-Study Report (SSR) that is due to the accrediting body in June of this year. The hard work of the chairs of the various program committees, administration, faculty, and especially Dr. Martina Reinhold, has been nothing short of amazing. While this probationary period has been a struggle, I can honestly say that the program is becoming better with every decision we make and in every new process that is developed.

*New program positions.* Based on our review of the program self-study, we have been able to add new administrative positions to the program. We now have two Assistant Department Chairs for the program. The Assistant Dept. Chair for Traverse City is an administrative function for items specific to the Traverse City site. The Assistant Department Chair for Assessment, is an administrative position and this person will have the focus on program self-assessment. Both of these roles will bring added dedication to the various aspects of our program that we have determined to be vital for the continued development and advancement of the program. The Assistant Dept. Chair for Traverse City has been filled by Nicholas Kopacki and the Assistant Department Chair for Assessment has been filled by Dr. Martina Reinhold. Both of these faculty have continued their faculty teaching but adjusted their workloads to fill these important positions.

*Faculty.* In addition to these new faculty positions, I am also happy to report that we now have three additional PA faculty that have completed doctorates in higher education! These faculty have committed time and resources to the advancement of knowledge in order to support and enhance the education delivered in our program! Congratulations to Dr. Paulson, Dr. Ellis and Dr. Raaymakers!

Thank you all again for being outstanding agents of positive change in the health of your patients and for being proud GVSU Lakers!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Booth'.

Andrew Booth, Chair and Program Director

## **FACULTY CHOICE: 2017 PRECEPTOR OF THE YEAR**



A long time preceptor for Grand Valley State University Physician Assistant program was awarded the 2017 faculty Preceptor of the Year award. William Heath PA-C provides both a family medicine and rural/underserved clinical rotation for our PA students in Lakeview Michigan. Mr. Heath is able to provide a unique experience for students as he practices in the outpatient family care setting at Spectrum Health Lakeview Family Medicine, as well as provides care in the inpatient general medicine floor at Spectrum Health Kelsey Hospital in Lakeview. Students have remarked about the excellent teaching abilities of Mr. Heath, the copious amounts of clinical pearls that he provides and the hands on learning experience that they are able to experience while on their clinical rotation. Mr. Heath has taken multiple students each year for several years now as a preceptor. He is often very willing to work with the faculty if a student is in need of a last minute clinical rotation placement. We are honored to have William Heath, PA-C as a clinical preceptor and congratulate him on this award.

## **STUDENT CHOICE: 2017 PRECEPTOR OF THE YEAR**

Every year the students of the Physician Assistant Studies program vote on our Student Preceptor of the Year award, and the name that came to the top this year was Dr. Ryan Marin, who practices Psychiatry with the Spectrum Health Psychiatry Consult Service. He has been precepting with us for 4 years, and as a faculty, we love working with him. The students feel the same way, commenting that Dr. Marin shows how much he cares about psychiatry and teaching. He and the other clinicians create a great learning environment for students, who have the opportunity to experience the collaborative work of the interprofessional team. Students are challenged to become better students and competent providers. As one student commented, "I feel as though he has played a big part in the practitioner that I will become."



*Thank you • Thank you • Thank you*



## GVSU PAS IN TRAVERSE CITY

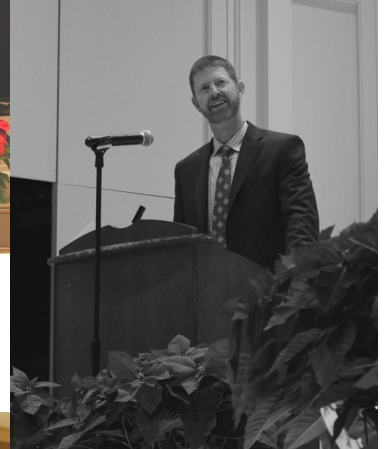
Grand Valley State University's (GVSU) Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) program has been providing high quality medical education for more than 25 years. The program is well respected throughout Michigan and beyond for the quality Physician Assistants that graduate from the program. Over the years the MPAS program developed a passion to extend this education beyond the Grand Rapids campus. In 2012, GVSU's Physician Assistant program started the process of expanding the Physician Assistant program to Traverse City Michigan. The mission: To train, educate and graduate future Physician Assistants in rural communities in an effort to increase access to patient care in northern Michigan. To help accomplish this goal, GVSU's PA program wrote and was awarded a federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant to fund the project. An advanced Independent Television System (ITV) was installed to deliver real time lecture content to both campuses simultaneously to ensure equivalent education was being delivered to both campuses. In the fall of 2015, the Traverse City campus accepted their inaugural class. The program, faculty, and students all were embarking on unfamiliar territory that was sure to have its challenges along the way. In December 2017, those challenges were met with the greatest of rewards as the GVSU's MPAS program honored the first graduating class of the Traverse City campus! These eight students were not just "traditional" graduates from our program. As the first graduating class, they developed new learning techniques to adjust to learning through ITV, aided the program with suggestions for improvement in delivery methods, and developed new relationships in northern Michigan communities in which they now hold jobs. These students have worked very hard and have now earned the right to be certified Physician Assistants and truly embody what it means to be a "Laker for a Lifetime".

### Class of 2017 Traverse City Graduates



Pictured: Susan Herman, Rachael Farrell, Christina Ricci, Dr. Booth, Allie Nave, Lindsay Banktson, Julie Stewart, and Luke Holly. Not pictured: Heath Meir

## CLASS OF 2017 GRADUATION





# PA CLASS OF 2018 NEWS

Just three short months ago, GVSU PAS Class of 2018 was nearing the end of our didactic phase with no small amount of excitement that a light at the end of the tunnel was in sight. The transition to becoming clinical students was quickly approaching, and with that came the lifting of the constant studying for the next exam that was a major stress for the last 16 months of our lives. But with that excitement came a certain amount of apprehension, as we knew we were about to enter another transitional period to clinical students.

The motto for this clinical year is "Everyone has something to teach me." At the beginning of this clinical year, this seemed like an obvious statement. After all, we are students. We are going out to our various clinical sites to learn. But it's been important to remember that this motto extends past our phenomenal preceptors who have agreed to teach us directly. This motto also extends to each member of the patient care team, from nursing staff to other clinical support staff to the patients themselves. Regardless of training or background, each person we have contact with has the potential to teach us something new about medicine or the patient encounter. We are discovering that getting the most out of each interaction in our rotations can be just as tiring as studying for a Clin Med exam, although it requires a different sort of learning.

Beyond our clinical sites, we have also transitioned into the new social dynamic that life outside the classroom presents. Not seeing the same people in our cohort four to seven days per week has been a change and at the first EOR exam, it felt like it had been much longer than one month since we had all sat in the same room. Regardless of the exam part of the day, it was wonderful to see our classmates again and hear about their experiences in the first month. We may have been spread out a little more than we were in didactic year, but it was clear that everyone had been doing their best to make the most of their first rotation.

Another challenge for some of our class has been relearning a healthy work/life balance. As important as having some relaxation during didactic was, some weeks simply did not leave much room for that. The slightly looser schedule that clinical year provides has been allowing some of our classmates the opportunity to resume some activities beyond studying and school. Some of us have been skiing, sledding, hiking, and in general enjoying the winter outdoors. Some have traveled north for weekends away or gone to the occasional concert. And some have taken on the enormous challenge of wedding planning over the next year or so. Regardless of the activity, it has been a more relaxed lesson to learn.

Now only two months after finishing didactic, we are halfway through our second month of rotations and are adjusting to this new period in our education. Our preceptors have been and continue to be excellent teachers. Our patients show us something new each day. And the rest of the patient care team continues to support us and show us the ropes of working as an advanced practice provider. Everyone has something to teach us and we will continue to learn and be open to the lessons offered at our clinical sites. We continue to strive for excellence each day, and I am proud to say I am part of the GVSU PAS Class of 2018, coming soon to a clinic near you!



Dan DeVries, PA-S Class of 2018

# PA CLASS OF 2019 NEWS

Excited, nervous, and eager is how most of us would describe how we feel entering into the second semester of PA school. Finally having a taste of what it is all about, we are enthused to dive in further into medicine but also a little nervous with the intensity of the material. The sheer volume alone is a bit intimidating but after seeing how far we've come in just one semester, we are amped up and ready for the challenge!

Perhaps due to the accomplishments achieved in first semester, we feel exceptionally confident in each other and our abilities to succeed. Now having brushed up on our academia, we are now leaping forward with a solid foundation. This is not only with medicine, but with each other. We pick each other up when the work seems too demanding but also know how to kick back to reward ourselves for our hard work. More than the academic side of our growth, our relationship between the two campuses is much stronger now too. Things such as group chats, sharing information/notes/charts/etc., sending goofy memes for much needed laughter, and visiting during holidays/special occasions has really brought the two campuses much closer together than any of us would have imagined. It has provided a portal for constant learning, commiserating, and most importantly, support.

In addition to the closeness of our class, the previous class has passed down the new tradition of a "mentor/mentee" relationship. It consists of each 2nd year PA student taking on one of the incoming first year students to give them tips, suggestions, and advice. This was created in hopes to prepare the students for what was to come in their near future. It has allowed our class to prepare ourselves financially, emotionally, and academically. Questions ranging from housing options and local restaurants to textbooks and medical equipment were addressed on a personal level. Once classes began, the mentor/mentee relationship shifted into more of what felt like a friendship. It still involved plentiful questions, but it meant more talking with someone who knows exactly what you're going through.

Other ways we have been promoting our relationships with each other and the community has been volunteering at local charities, organizations, and events. In Grand Rapids we have been volunteering at a Veterans home, engaging in Buddy-Up Tennis (an organization for individuals with Down Syndrome), working at the Fifth Third River Bank Run and more. Most recently two of our PA students, along with our director, hosted several dozen people from the Leadership Grand Rapids group at our simulation center. During this event they promoted our profession, program, and school to the up-and-coming business leaders in Grand Rapids. With no surprise, this organization was impressed by what great success our program has had and wanted to remain in touch.

As for the Traverse City campus, we too have been volunteering in the community at places such as at the Great Lakes Children's Museum, participating in the Alzheimer's walk, and collecting goods for victims of Hurricane Harvey. We are looking forward to the upcoming seasons for other opportunities such as planting trees with the city and volunteering at the Bijou. In other news, things have been rapidly evolving at our campus as we establish ourselves as a self-sufficient satellite campus. We no longer travel to Grand Rapids for exams, simulations, practicals, or any other events (thus far). We even hosted interviews for the incoming 2020 Traverse City PA class at our own facility and also hosted an inter-professional day.



All-in-all we are up to our neck with new material, but feel quite confident in our abilities to tackle the work load due to the constant support from our professors and each other. We are ecstatic with the cohort we've been placed into and look forward to calling each other colleagues soon enough!

Kristen Struble, PA-S Class of 2019





## ELECTIVE—INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

### Joseph Shepherd

My name is Joseph Shepherd, a recent GVSU Physician Assistant program graduate. My classmates Jessica Heron, Pilar Roldan, and I had the opportunity this past November to do a clinical rotation in Arequipa, Peru. We were extremely fortunate that Pilar's family offered to host the three of us for our entire 4 weeks abroad.

Our experiences varied from week to week in Clinica Paz Holandesa, a children's hospital that recently opened its doors to the general public and those with little or no insurance. Our first week, we had the privilege of working alongside a surgical team from Holland. This team, which encompassed a surgeon, anesthesiologist, and multiple scrub technicians, perform week-long volunteer missions in Peru several times a year. The bulk of the surgeries were fixation of cleft lips and palates, which are fairly prominent in the area due to a lack of prenatal care and young maternal age. Oftentimes, the three of us took turns watching general surgeries, which were also going on simultaneously. In addition to surgery, we also helped round and obtain vitals on the floor, perform venous and arterial blood draws, take histories and perform physical exams, and shadow an excellent pediatric neurologist. We also experienced an interesting social medicine case, which involved an 18 month old boy who was diagnosed with congenital toxoplasmosis, which subsequently resulted in significant physical and mental delay, as well as immune compromised status. The boy was currently living in the hospital and continues to receive care from the hospital staff, as his family has maintained only little contact over the last year. Throughout this time, Dr. Talivera (the neurologist) assigned to us presentations on this boy's case, as well as other relevant medical topics that we were witnessing in the hospital. After our days in the hospital, Jessica and I took Spanish lessons to further our vocabulary and facilitate encounters with patients. However, most of the time we were very fortunate to have Pilar around to help translate for us.



This rotation also helped me learn about the culture of medicine, and how medical care varies from that of the United States. Though we were only students, both patients and their families looked up to us with so much respect and gratitude for our presence, which extended even during unfortunate circumstances like terminal cancer and end of life care. The phrase "muchas gracias" was uttered abundantly throughout our 4 weeks in the hospital. I think I can speak for the group and say that we were beyond humbled to have this experience in such an incredible part of the world. It was a wonderful bonus that we were rotating in a region that enabled us to see Machu Picchu and other breathtaking ruins in our free time.

This experience helped solidify my interest in working with the underserved, and provided a Spanish-speaking foundation that I will utilize in my daily care of patients. I thank my family (especially my PA role model sister), friends, classmates, and GVSU staff for the support throughout my years at Grand Valley, which have facilitated my employment as a physician assistant in the beautiful city of Campo, California.



### Post Graduate Physician Assistant Training Programs

Did you know there are two existing post-graduate training programs for PAs in the West Michigan area and one program that is in development? Pine Rest currently offers a 12-month psychiatry post-graduate training program and Mercy Health Muskegon Campus offers an 18-month Internal Medicine Fellowship program. The Hematology and Cancer Center of West Michigan is also in the process of developing a post-graduate training program to provide specialty training in the field of hematology and oncology. In addition to the training programs in West Michigan, there are three other post-graduate PA training programs in Michigan: DMC Orthopedic Surgery and Sports Medicine PA fellowship in Warren, MI, Saint Joseph Mercy Health System PA residency program in cardiothoracic surgery, and Saint Joseph Mercy Health System PA residency in cardiothoracic critical care.

Megan Systma, a recent GVSU PAS program alumnus, completed the psychiatry training program at Pine Rest immediately following graduation. She reported that the greatest benefit of the training program was the “opportunity to expand your knowledge while building a patient caseload.” The program at Pine Rest trains PAs to manage patients with psychiatric illness in both inpatient and outpatient settings. The curriculum of the training program includes lectures, continuing medical education sessions, and regular meetings with physicians. Following completion of the training program, the PA trainees transition to work independently with the patient population of their choice.

The Association of Postgraduate PA programs (APPAP) is the resource for post-graduate education for PAs. APPAP acknowledges that there are both advantages and disadvantages to post-graduate PA training programs. Advantages of the programs include the opportunity for specialty training with a wide variety of experiences in a condensed timeframe, the potential to start a career with more responsibilities and/or additional salary, and the opportunity to change specialties after a career has already been established. Disadvantages include the additional expense for training, delays in qualified PAs entering the health care work force, and lack of defined roles and responsibilities for PAs following completion of a training program. Megan states she would recommend a post-graduate training program to a new PA graduate who has a desire to work in a specialty area. She also notes, however, that some hospital groups provide similar structures for their new PA employees without a specific residency program, so it is important to evaluate each individual situation to determine how you can best obtain the assistance you need to be successful in your career.

Application processes for the training programs are similar to job applications and entry into the programs is competitive. APPAP states there are typically 10-30 applicants for each open position in a training program.

If you are interested in a post-graduate training program, visit the APPAP website (<http://appap.org/>) for additional information and resources.

### Pre-PA Club

The pre-PA Club meets biweekly on Wednesday evenings in Loutit Lecture Hall 102 of the GVSU Allendale campus. Nearly 60 undergraduate students gather to hear from guest speakers including PAs, PA program directors, PA students, local volunteer and employment recruiters, and many more. In the past year, the pre-PA club has organized volunteer trips with Love INC of Allendale, Kids' Food Basket, Relay for Life, and International Service Learning (ISL). We recently sponsored a blood drive with American Red Cross and collected 55 pints of blood in a single afternoon! We also host a phlebotomy training course once per semester, giving students the opportunity to gain experience in an accelerated weekend of training. We have been so fortunate to network with each other and our greater community. We are always welcoming speakers to come share their journey through the PA profession with us.

Jordan Wilson  
President, GVSU Pre-PA Club  
[wilsojor@mail.gvsu.edu](mailto:wilsojor@mail.gvsu.edu)

## IN OTHER NEWS ....

### Construction and Parking at CHS

Raleigh J. Finkelstein Hall on the Pew Grand Rapids Campus:

- The new five-story, 84,000-square-foot facility is nearing finalization at the corner of Lafayette and Hastings streets, across I-196 and just north of CHS. Finkelstein Hall (RFH) will include four classrooms, 15 teaching laboratories, a computer lab and 90 faculty and staff offices and parking spaces. It will also have student study spaces and student organization space. Completion will be May 2018.

GVSU/Spectrum Health Parking Ramp

- Construction will begin in May on a six-level parking deck that will provide 1,220 spaces for GVSU and Spectrum Health students & employees. The ramp will replace existing surface parking lots owned by GVSU or Spectrum Health. It will be east of the CHS building and adjacent to the health building approved for construction at 333 Michigan Street. Construction is scheduled to be completed May of 2021.



Parking at CHS during construction:

- May 1, 2018
  - ◇ Upper level parking of CHS closes until 333 Michigan opens in 2021.
  - ◇ Prospect lot closes
  - ◇ RFH parking lot opens (125 spaces)
- August 27, 2018
  - ◇ Open the expanded Standale park and ride lot at Kinney/Lake Michigan Drive

Road work that may impact your commute:

- Lafayette will be reconstructed from Hastings to Bradford Streets. The Lafayette construction will begin 4/2 completed 7/10.
- Michigan Street will have lanes closed College to East of Lafayette 4/2 to 5/10. It will have one travel lane each direction. It has been suggested to exit on Ottawa instead of College.



### GVSU Physician Assistant Scholarship Recipients for 2017-2018

#### **Stephanie Urbanawiz Physician Assistant Endowed Scholarship**

Audrey Droge

#### **Steven and Kathryn '83 Bandstra Clinical Placement Scholarship**

Lindsey Banktson

Beccalynne Gray

Susan Herman

Taylor Hotz

#### **Steven and Kathryn '83 Bandstra Health Sciences Scholarship**

Rachel Kwapik

Kimberly Johnson

Rebecca Van Zanen

Erin Ward

#### **Christos and Joan Panopoulos Physician Assistant Students Endowed Scholarship**

Savannah Micunek

### Non GVSU Physician Assistant Scholarship Recipients for 2017-2018

#### **MIPAF Scholarship**

Susan Herman

#### **Ann Mapes Scholarship**

Christina Ricci

## PA\$ FACULTY

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

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

**Charlene Dubois, MPA, R.D.**  
Co-Chair of Clinical Education, Affiliate Faculty  
\*\*\*

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

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

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

**Mandy German, PA-C**  
Co-Chair of Clinical Education, Affiliate Faculty  
\*\*\*

**Nicholus Kopacki, PA-C**  
Assistant Program Director for Traverse City,  
Affiliate Faculty  
\*\*\*

**M. Lisa Pagnucco PharmD, BCACP, BCGP**  
Associate Professor  
\*\*\*

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

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

**Amanda Reddy, PA-C**  
Affiliate Faculty  
\*\*\*

**Martina Reinhold, Ph.D.**  
Assistant Department Chair for Assessment,  
Associate Professor  
\*\*\*

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

The Physician Assistant Program at Grand Valley State University 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 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.

MAIL

University Development  
Grand Valley State University  
L.V. Eberhard Center, 9th Floor  
301 Fulton St. West  
P.O. Box 2005  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49501-2005

The background image for the bottom section is a photograph of the Cook-Devos Center for Health Sciences building. The building is a modern, multi-story structure with a curved facade and large glass windows. The name "COOK-DEVOS CENTER FOR HEALTH SCIENCES" is prominently displayed in large, white, curved letters above the entrance. The entrance area is covered by a glass and steel canopy. The foreground shows a paved plaza with some greenery and a few people walking.

## 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 Co-Director of Clinical Education  
(616-460-7080) or [germanm@gvsu.edu](mailto:germanm@gvsu.edu)

You can update your email online at the following link:  
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