

Director's Corner



Hello Alumni of the Chatham PA program,
I am thrilled to be writing to you for the first time as program director and to share with you all of the happenings within our PA program over the past year. In January 2017, I was selected to take over the role of program director after having acted as associate program director for the past 3.5 years.

Carl Garrubba, our former program director, has moved to San Francisco to follow a lifetime dream of living in California. Thanks to his leadership, the transition has been smooth, and we continue to strengthen the program and graduate amazing physician assistants. The position of associate program director has been filled by Alyssa Abebe, assistant professor, whose organizational skills and leadership make her a great fit. Other program changes include the resignation of Stacie Agnesi who had worked as a PBL facilitator and physical diagnosis instructor.

In light of these changes, we welcomed two new faculty members Paige Cendroski, MPAS '00 and Natalie Schirato, MPAS '06 this spring. Paige comes to us with 17 years of experience in orthopedic surgery and has worked as a Chatham adjunct faculty member teaching clinical lab methods in the past. Natalie has worked in urology for the past 11 years, has been a preceptor for Chatham PA students, and a regular special topics speaker. We value their extensive clinical experience and look forward to many years of working together.

In April 2017, we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the PA program. Thanks to Lea O'Keefe, alumni affairs coordinator; Stephanie Adamczyk, director of graduate alumni relations; and the team of Vicki Yann, Nicole Brown, Jessica Anderson, John Laird, and Kelly Donkers, a fantastic celebration was planned. The celebration was held at the PPG Aquarium at the Pittsburgh Zoo. The event was sold out with 150 total guests representing nearly every graduating class. Chatham president, Dr. David Finegold, attended the event and was thrilled to meet so many Chatham grads in one room.

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From the Dean

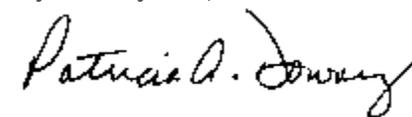


► Chatham University's School of Health Sciences has spent the past year getting to know our new president, Dr. David L. Finegold. Dr. Finegold has brought a wealth of knowledge, ideas and energy to Chatham and it has been an exciting year working with him. In addition, his wife, Sue Finegold, has generously been sharing her time and expertise in leading a weekly yoga class at Chatham Eastside to help keep us focused on our own personal health and wellness.

I would like to personally congratulate Judy Truscott on becoming the director of the physician assistant program on January 1, 2017. I have had the pleasure of working with Judy for about the past six months and have full confidence that the program will continue to thrive under her thoughtful and collaborative leadership. In addition, I would like to congratulate Alyssa Abebe who has been recently appointed associate director of the program. Finally, I would like to thank the PA faculty and staff for the wonderful 20th Anniversary event that they hosted at the Pittsburgh Zoo and Aquarium in April. I enjoyed seeing many of you who were able to join us that evening.

Other highlights from the School of Health Sciences during this past year include the successful start of the fully online Masters in Healthcare Informatics (www.chatham.edu/mhi) and the approval to begin a 5-year master's degree in athletic training. This degree will start in the fall of 2017 and will combine an undergraduate degree in exercise science with a Master of Science in Athletic Training (www.chatham.edu/athletic-training). The graduate psychology program has moved from Woodland Road to Chatham Eastside so we now have PA, OT, PT and psych all in the same building. The occupational therapy program sponsored a very successful "Out of the Darkness Campus Walk" in collaboration with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, and the physical therapy program initiated the "Go Baby Go" Program that adapts electric cars for children who have mobility impairments.

My best to you all,



FACULTY AND STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Alyssa Abebe, MPAS, PA-C

Associate Program Director, 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 likes 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!



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. She worked previously for over four years in family practice and occupational medicine. She oversees clinical coursework and works in collaboration with clinical faculty and staff to recruit and maintain quality clinical sites for student rotations. She serves on various University and program committees, and also serves as the faculty advisor for the Pre-PA club. She devotes her time outside of Chatham to spending quality time with her husband and their two young children.



Nicole Brown, MPAS, PA-C

Skills Coordinator, 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 prior to moving to Pittsburgh. Since 2012, Nicole has worked in emergency medicine and continues to work clinically in this setting at Magee-Womens Hospital. Nicole accepted an assistant professor position at Chatham University in August 2015 and served as a full-time PBL facilitator prior to taking on her current role as the Skills Coordinator this past January. Nicole and her husband, Bill, welcomed their first child in March and are enjoying the adventures of parenthood!



Paige Cendroski, MPAS '00, PA-C

Assistant Professor

Paige joined the PA program this year and is a full-time PBL facilitator. A 2000 Chatham graduate, she is happy to be back to work with the graduate students as they become qualified, competent physician assistants that make a positive impact in our communities and throughout our country. Paige has worked with Greater Pittsburgh Orthopaedic Associates for 17 years and continues to work clinically part-time. Paige is married to her wonderful husband Dave and has three incredible children—Ava, Adam, and Peri. As the best times are with her family, she can be found on the sidelines at the soccer fields, bundled up in the ice rinks, or courtside at basketball games.



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 has been with the Chatham PA Program since its inception in 1995. She continues to tend and nurture PBL at Chatham. She is participating in research on a scale for PBL readiness, test anxiety, facilitator experience and PBL supervision. She continues to give workshops at the annual

PSPA Education Conference and she is an accreditation site visitor for ARC-PA. She enjoys hiking, biking, movies and watching the lives of her adult daughters unfold.



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 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. Lea also serves as the alumni coordinator for the PA program. She has worked clinically in surgery and gastroenterology since graduating. Lea enjoys spending time with her husband and two children.



Natalie Schirato, MPAS '06

Assistant Professor

Natalie is a 2006 graduate of Chatham's PA program. After graduating, she went to work for Triangle Urological Group where she practiced as a full time then part time PA for over ten years, the PA coordinator for six years, and still sees patients on a casual basis. She remained active with Chatham's PA program over those ten years as a preceptor, special lecturer, and interviewer of incoming students. In March 2017, she accepted a position as an assistant professor at Chatham, and is a full time PBL facilitator. Outside of work, Natalie spends time with her husband and two children, and hopes to add a dog to the mix soon!



Gabrielle Strong, MBA

SBIRT Grant Manager

Gabrielle Strong, MBA, is the Grant Manager for the PA program. She 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.



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 degree 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.

20th Anniversary for Chatham Physician Assistant Studies Program

Chatham University's Physician Assistant Studies program celebrated its 20th year anniversary in 2017. A celebration was held at the Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium on April 22, 2017. This was a sold out event with over 150 people in attendance. A special thanks to Chatham University's Graduate Alumni Relations for their help and support with this event! Thank you to all alumni who attended! It was great to see all of you!



20th Anniversary celebration (cont)



IN MEMORIAM

Evelyn Gilbert

Susan Hawkins, MS ED, PA-C, PBL coordinator, associate professor



► The Chatham PA Program and the city of Pittsburgh lost a long-time PA advocate in Evelyn Gilbert in January of this year. Those of you from the early years of the PA program will remember her as a preceptor at the Women's Health Center, and she often participated in admissions interviewing. She was one of our first preceptors when the program began and served as a mentor to students.

Evelyn was a medical technologist, and I remember meeting her when I was a second-year PA student, in a class largely composed of military corpsmen and nurses. She was working as a medical technologist and wondered if she could handle PA school academically. As a graduate of Pitt with medical experience, I assured her that she could.

She was the PSPA Humanitarian Physician Assistant of the Year in 1995, and won an award from the Southwestern PA Area Health Education Center (AHEC), Inc. for "Outstanding and Dedicated Service to the Teaching of Health Professional Students." Evelyn was passionate about patient education, women's rights and health care equity. She brought her husband Gil to many Chatham events, and I remember him sitting patiently in a lobby while Evelyn took part in admissions interviews. They were married for 42 years when he died. She took part in the Mt. Ararat Baptist Church's Health and Wellness Ministry until her health began to fail.

Please take a moment to remember Evelyn and her contributions to the Chatham PA program.

Graduating Class of 2017!

Congratulations to the Class of 2017! Chatham faculty and staff wishes you the best in your future endeavors!



Director's Corner, *continued from page 1*

The spring of 2017 brought about another change for the program with a large renovation project at Chatham Eastside. In order to accommodate increasing undergraduate enrollment, Dilworth Hall is being converted back to undergraduate housing, thus displacing Dilworth faculty. With that conversion, new offices, classroom space, a cadaver lab, and a large auditorium space are being created at Eastside. We would love to tour you around the new space, so come to visit!

As the class of 2017 is in its final preparation to become certified PAs, we are excited to be graduating our 1000th student. Other accomplishments that we are proud of include student participation in the Jewish Healthcare Foundation - Death & Dying Fellowship, the VA Health Professionals Scholarship Program, the Whiteside Schilling Scholarship, and the Society of PAs in Otorhinolaryngology and Head & Neck Surgery Student Scholarship. Faculty accomplishments include publications in JPAE, JAAPA and others. And Susan Hawkins has provided service to the profession by acting as a site visitor for ARC-PA and providing PBL training to other educational institutions.

We have maintained an impressive PANCE pass rate over the past two years with a 100% and 99% pass rate. Over the past five years, the pass rate is 97% which is better than the national average five-year pass rate of 95%. This pass rate is a direct reflection of the students' and faculty's hard work.

Throughout the newsletter you can read more about our students, faculty, and staff. I would love to hear about all of you as well. Contact me with anything you would like to share - jtruscott@chatham.edu. Or, better yet, come to visit at Chatham Eastside.

I look forward to hearing from you or seeing you at our next alumni event!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy".

Judy Truscott, MPAS, PA-C

From the Medical Director

► Dear Chatham PA Alumni,

I am thrilled to be entering my fourth year as medical director of the Chatham PAS 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. I have been afforded the

opportunity to get to know our new president, Dr. David Finegold, be a part of the amazingly smooth transition from Carl's leadership to Judy's, and have breakfast with the inspiring and impressive Dr. Deqo Mohamed, the Somali physician and social activist who honored Chatham as our graduation speaker this spring. I have also been touched at the outpouring of love I witnessed at the 20th anniversary alumni event in the shadow of the shark tank (**#notametaphor**) at the Aquarium in April. 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 continuing 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 as the instructor for the Critical Reading of the Literature course. In the age of evidence-based medicine, understanding cutting edge research and being able to assess its quality and relevance is a crucial clinical skill. I look forward to learning together in class, online, and in the small-group journal club sessions that I host at my house each year to make sure that we each meet personally. Finally, as of June 6 of this year, my health center has begun what we hope will be a long and fruitful teaching relationship with the second-year PA students as a clinical site for the Family Medicine rotation.

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



Giving Students Tools to Address At-risk Alcohol and Substance Use

This fall, Chatham School of Health Sciences will enter the final year of the Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) training grant. SBIRT is a method of addressing substance use in the at risk phase. The process is evidence-based and works in collaboration with patients using motivational interviewing techniques. Though this training is highly relevant to the current opioid crisis, the skills the students have acquired may be used to address any health or lifestyle change.

To date 431 students and 16 faculty have been trained in six programs across the School of Health Sciences. This number includes 160 PA students cumulatively. Notably, in a survey of student and graduate use of their new SBIRT skills, 15 PA students completed 186 informal screens, 15 formal screens, performed 55 brief interventions and 15 referrals to treatment, all over a 30-day period of time!

Student exposure has been expanded from the initial on-line based training in ICEll to case based practice in PBL and PD. During the rotation year, students screen and, complete brief interventions on at least 3 patients, then assess themselves via open and closed ended questions. The goal is to build student competence and confidence levels in addressing at-risk substance use in all patient populations.

If you are interested in this topic, a brief CME training (1.75 credit hours) regarding SBIRT may be found at <http://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, other continuing education opportunities, and/or access to the training materials the students have received (non-CME).

Funding for SBIRT programs at Chatham University is made possible via grant funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT).

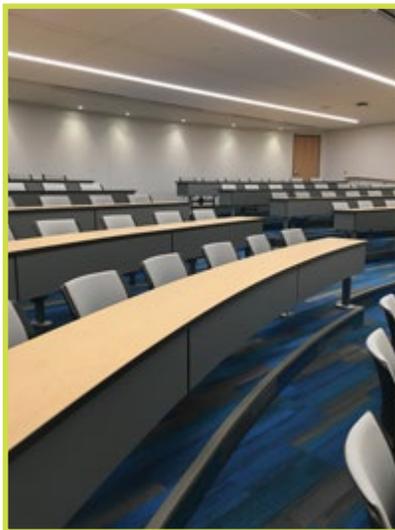
Renovated Space at Chatham Eastside

Chatham University has expanded at Chatham Eastside this summer. The graduate psychology program has moved from the Woodland Road to Chatham Eastside. At this time, the physician assistant, occupational therapy, physical therapy and psychology programs are all located at Chatham Eastside of Chatham University. Come and visit to see the new space!

Left: Lecture hall

Top: Open space

Bottom: Classroom



VA Scholarship

► Olivia Bull, a second-year student, and Nicolina Boretti, a first-year student, in the Chatham University Physician Assistant (PA) program have received Health Professional Scholarships from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). PA students can now participate in the Health Professional Scholarship Program (HPSP) through the VA. The VA awards scholarships to students receiving education or training to become a health professional. To officially accept the scholarship, selected applicants must agree to at least two years at a VA healthcare facility after graduating and obtaining necessary certification. Congratulations to both Olivia and Nicolina!

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!

Precepting

► The Chatham University physician assistant program is seeking new preceptors in any geographic location in emergency medicine, family practice, internal medicine, pediatrics, psychiatry, surgery, women's health 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.