



# Connecticut PA

*A Publication of the Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*By: Danielle Tabaka, PA-C*

I would first like to thank ConnAPA leaders- both past and present. Our predecessors have paved the way for PA practice in the state and have made CT a great state for PAs. Our current Board of Directors and Committee Chairs are a dedicated group of individuals who volunteer much of their personal time to carry on the mission of ConnAPA and work towards further improving practice for PAs. I look forward to working with them this year to accomplish the following goals:

- **Legislative:** CT currently has three out of the six key elements of PA practice outlined by the AAPA (please visit [www.aapa.org](http://www.aapa.org) for more information). Our legislative team has been steadily working on a plan to try and attain the remaining 3 elements: 1) eliminating the ratio restriction of PAs to supervising physicians, 2) deleting language that requires physicians to review PAs practice "at least weekly or more frequently," and 3) revising the requirement for all schedule II and III prescriptions to be co-signed.
- **Communication:** In addition to our quarterly newsletters, we will be sending e-blasts out on a more frequent basis so that we can ensure that our membership is aware of issues affecting PA practice in the state.
- **Membership:** Our membership committee continues to work on the development of member-only benefits. They also continue to strategize about how to increase our membership.
- **PA Awareness:** We are working on PA Week events, including a dinner event in the New Haven area for which we have applied for 2 credits of Category I CME. Watch your e-mails for more to come about our upcoming plans!
- **Education:** We will be holding our 25th Annual Charter Oak Conference in April at the Mystic Marriott. In addition to the conference, our regional directors continue to work on dinner programs for their respective regions- we will let you know of these events as they are finalized.

As you can see, we have many goals outlined for the year, and we need your membership to help us reach them. To all of our members, thank you for your ongoing support. For those that are not members, I hope you will take time to read  
*(Continued on page 2)*



*Danielle Tabaka, PA-C*

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**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (*continued*)**

this complimentary newsletter so you can better understand the successes and goals of ConnAPA. We look forward to your membership!

In closing, as healthcare reform continues to impact all members of the healthcare system, it is more important than ever that PAs in the state have a unified voice. Membership dues are imperative for us to maintain our lobbyist who ensures that we are at the table when healthcare changes are being discussed.

Please contact us at any time with questions or concerns- we would love to hear from you!

Warm Regards,  
Danielle Tabaka, PA-C

**HARD TO SWALLOW**

*By: Brian T. Maurer*

"Does your child still take liquid medicine off a spoon, or can he swallow pills now?" I ask the mother seated before me.

Waiting for her response, I think: Is there any other medical specialty besides pediatrics that requires clinicians to pose such a question routinely when prescribing treatment for their patients? I mean, I can't imagine a cardiologist asking a 45-year-old if she would prefer her beta-blocker in liquid, chewable or fast-melt form.

Then there's the matter of taste, of course. When I was a boy, I remember choking down a spoonful of elixir of terpin hydrate without blinking an eye. (Okay, so I made a face instead—but I still swallowed it.) Nowadays, kids won't take medicine unless it tastes like Baked Alaska or Turkish Delight.

When branded antibiotic suspensions enjoyed a sizeable portion of market share, the Pediatric Infectious Disease Journal used to publish an annual taste preference poll. A cohort of children was asked to rate antibiotic preparations according to their palatability. As I recall, the strawberry-cream suspension came out on top for several years running; whereas the lemon-crème concoction, with its unbelievably bitter aftertaste, invariably finished last.

Remember back in PA school when we were admonished to match the drug with the bug and prescribe the antibiotic with the narrowest spectrum that would still do the job? Nowadays, when confronted by demanding parents, some clinicians have been known to prescribe antibiotic suspensions on the merit of taste alone.

"He doesn't like bubble-gum; can't you give him something grape-flavored?"

"Certainly," I want to say. "We can give him, let's see, Orapred—that's grape-flavored. Of course, because it's a steroid, it won't do anything to curtail the infection in his ear, which is festering as we speak."

Many pharmacies offer to add artificial flavoring to any liquid prescription medication to make it more palatable for the child—anything from tutti-frutti to watermelon to root beer malt. Some kids still turn up their noses and refuse to take it; a few will even vomit if forced to swallow it.

Over years of practice, I've encouraged parents to introduce their children to the concept of swallowing a pill early on. I tell them to practice with Tic-Tacs or those tiny red cinnamon

*(Continued on page 3)*



## HARD TO SWALLOW (*continued*)

hearts you can buy around Valentine's Day. "Have her put it on her tongue and give her a glass of water or juice with a straw," I instruct them. "Tell her to put the straw on her tongue directly in front of the piece of candy. As she draws the fluid into her mouth, the straw will act like a tiny hose and wash the candy down her throat."

Swallowing a pill is all psychological, of course. Adolescents, who can easily wolf down a partially-chewed hotdog garnished with sauerkraut and mustard, will gag on junior-strength Tylenol tablets. Bite a grape twice, and it disappears down the gullet; but ask a 9-year-old to swallow a BB-sized DDAVP tablet to control his night-time wetting, and he might pee his pants on the spot.

We live in a child-centered culture. Parents are prone to cater to their kids from infancy. But at some point, children have to move beyond their tender years and learn to master those survival skills necessary to cope in a grown-up's world.

One time an adolescent girl requested a prescription for contraception. I launched into an explanation of the options available to prevent pregnancy and protect against sexually transmitted disease.

"I'm not worried about STDs," she told me. "My boyfriend and I have been together for a long time. I'd just like something so I won't have to worry about getting pregnant."

"So you're interested in the birth-control pill?" I asked her.

"Not exactly," she said. "I can't swallow pills." She hesitated, then timidly whispered: "Doesn't it come as a syrup?"

## JOIN CONNAPA TODAY!

*By Danielle Tabaka*

Dear Colleagues,

If you are already a member of ConnAPA, thank you! If not, we hope that you will enjoy this complimentary newsletter and gain some better understanding of what ConnAPA has accomplished over this past year. Membership dues allow us to maintain our lobbyist and association staff which are vital to ensuring that our interests are well represented at the state capital. Some examples of what we did this year:

- We developed a strategic plan, outlining goals we hope to achieve over the next several years. These plans include growing our membership and increasing awareness about the PA profession in the state.
- This year's legislative efforts can be found in our legislative summary in this newsletter.
- We continued to grow our relationships with other healthcare organizations. We have a strong relationship with the CT State Medical Society and continue to have representatives of ConnAPA involved in the CT Primary Care Coalition, Health Assistance InterVention Education Network (HAVEN), National Kidney Foundation Serving CT, CT Academy of Family Physicians and the CT Orthopaedic Society.
- On the educational front, we held another successful Charter Oak Conference that drew over 200 attendees from across New England and provided over 30 quality CME credits. We also held our first student seminar, providing a panel of PAs to answer student questions as they are nearing graduation.
- We made progress on members-only benefits by limiting our job postings to members only.

We need your membership to accomplish even greater goals this year. Please see the President's Message for an outline of these goals.

If you are a member and haven't already done so, please renew your membership today! If you are not a member, please JOIN US today! You can easily renew or join by visiting us at [www.connapa.org](http://www.connapa.org).



**Want to do more to  
support your  
profession?**

**JOIN A COMMITTEE!**

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group.php?gid=57194311075](https://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=57194311075)

Interesting in  
contributing to  
*Connecticut PA?*

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## PA FOCUS - DANIEL CERVONKA, PA-C, DHSC.

**The thing that really motivated me to become a PA was...** When I was 16 I was a volunteer in the Emergency Department at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia. I was exposed to many doctors and nurses and technicians in the department. I saw everything. An ER technician who took me around and showed me the interesting things in the department from complicated lacerations to Barbie shoe removal from a child's ear. He was a great guy and told me he was going to be a PA. Later that year he was going to Hahnemann Medical College PA Program. It was then and after several physicians convinced me that medicine was changing and consider PA as a career because it was "Up and coming." I might add that nursing steered me away from nursing; they were not happy either. Without PA role models so early in the profession, I was willing to take a look.



While in college, I began to look at PA as a serious career choice. I investigated those schools in the New England area, made an appointment to meet with Dean Elaine Grant. Elaine was great and really helped me to make the decision, filling in the gaps of information where there was no other person to talk to about the profession. I applied to one school, Yale and the rest is history.

**I am currently working...** Fulltime as the director of the Physician Assistant Institute of the University of Bridgeport the third program in Connecticut. Additionally I am practicing Internal Medicine at Yale for patients who are dually diagnosed with psychiatric and substance dependent patients and a emergency medicine on the side.

**If I wasn't a PA I would be a...** High School Science teacher

**When I am not at work I like to...** spend time at my house on the Maine coast

**What I would tell someone who wanted to become a PA is...** Medicine is a calling and a privilege, not a job and we are held to a higher standard. I have never regretted the choice I made for my career. I have been afforded the opportunity to blend my love for teaching, mentoring and nurturing my up and coming colleagues with my love for working with patients and caring for them. It is a blessing everyday to do what I do.

## ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

*By: Michael Thompson, Executive Director*



On June 22, 2011, ConnAPA held its Annual Meeting and Awards Presentation at Max Fish in Glastonbury. The event, sponsored by Pfizer, opened with a cocktail reception, giving attendees an opportunity to network and socialize with their colleagues. Following the reception, attendees sat down for dinner and a presentation on "Arthritis and Acute Pain" by John Magaldi, MD. Dr. Magaldi's presentation was informative and well researched and he answered a number of related questions following his presentation.

At the conclusion of dinner and the presentation was the business meeting. An overview of activity was shared by several Board members and Committee chairs, and the new slate of officers and directors were elected as follows: Danielle Tabaka, President; Sarah Fountain, Vice President; Jennifer Violette, Secretary; Terry O'Donnell, Treasurer; Kathy Voss, Region 1 Director; Peter Juergensen, Region 2 Director; Jonathan Pinto, Region 3 Director; Andrew Barlow, Region 4 Director; and Andrew Turczak, Region 5 Director. Representing Connecticut at the AAPA House of Delegates in 2012 will be Danielle Tabaka, Cindy Lord, Joe Varano, and Jonathan Weber.

Finally, the following are deserving recipients who were recognized for their ongoing dedication to the Academy in furthering our mission:

**President's Award** – Bill Kohlhepp

**Service Award** – Terry O'Donnell

**Leadership Award** – Andrew Turczak

**Service Recognition** - David Ashner, Asst. Director, State Advocacy and Outreach, AAPA



# IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON FLUOROSCOPY FOR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS IN CONNECTICUT

*By: Justin Champagne, PA-C*

As many of you know, ConnAPA worked very diligently in 2008-2009 to get a fluoroscopy bill passed in the spring of 2009 allowing PAs to continue to be able to use fluoroscopy. This legislation was successful, but we had to go back to the legislature this year to request an extension of the exam deadline. Originally, the law set a deadline of October 1, 2011, in which all PAs in the state would have had to have taken and passed the fluoroscopy exam in order to continue using fluoroscopy. Despite the best efforts of all the stakeholders involved, the process of creating a curriculum, course, and exam in time for this deadline proved arduous and took longer than initially expected. After monitoring this situation carefully over the past couple of years, ConnAPA came to the conclusion that the deadline would not be able to be met. Given this, ConnAPA sought the help of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), the Connecticut State Medical Society, the Connecticut Hospital Association, and the Radiological Society of Connecticut. Together, these organizations discussed our rationalization for the deadline extension with the Department of Public Health (DPH), the Public Health Committee, and the Connecticut Society of Radiologic Technologists. Ultimately, ConnAPA was successful in getting a nine-month extension to move the deadline from October 1, 2011 to July 1, 2012.

If you are a PA who works in Connecticut and uses (or will use) fluoroscopy you NEED to know the following information!! The deadline for next year is coming fast; there will not be any additional extensions. If you use fluoroscopy, or plan on doing so in the future, you must take the course and examination and pass both by July 1, 2012.

Fluoroscopy Law – See page 57 of the document found here:

<http://www.cga.ct.gov/2011/ACT/Pa/pdf/2011PA-00242-RooHB-06618-PA.pdf>

Key changes to the law were, obviously, the deadline being moved from October 1, 2011 to July 1, 2012 but also the requirement that PAs have to complete the course prior to sitting for the exam and that PAs need to document 40 hours of supervised clinical time in a fluoroscopic suite. PAs who are currently using fluoroscopy prior to October 1, 2011 can continue to do so but will still need to take the course and pass the exam by July 1, 2012. Please note that PAs who haven't been using fluoroscopy prior to Oct. 1, 2011 or graduates of a PA program after that time will not be able to engage in the use of fluoroscopy until they have taken the course and passed the exam.

Fluoroscopy Curriculum – The AAPA and the American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT) developed a curriculum for PAs to sufficiently train them to safely use fluoroscopy and to understand the effects of radiation. This AAPA/ASRT project was a national endeavor; that is, it wasn't created specifically to satisfy CT statute because the two organizations knew that the fluoroscopy issue was pertinent to many other states as well. This curriculum also describes the required 40-hr clinical component (including a fluoroscopic device orientation check-off list) that our state based its law on. Plan ahead and start documenting these clinical hours now! You don't need to wait to take the course in order to start accruing and documenting these hours and filling out the paper work. You can access the curriculum here:

[http://www.aapa.org/images/stories/Advocacy-state-summaries/fluoroscopy\\_educational\\_framework\\_ASRT\\_AAPA\\_12-09.pdf](http://www.aapa.org/images/stories/Advocacy-state-summaries/fluoroscopy_educational_framework_ASRT_AAPA_12-09.pdf)

Fluoroscopy Course – This is still being worked on by the AAPA, but the anticipated date of availability for this 8-week online course is October 1, 2011. This will need to be completed prior to sitting for the exam. For further updates regarding the course: <http://www.aapa.org/advocacy-and-practice-resources/trends/1562>

Fluoroscopy Exam – The test has been created and was approved by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) in March 2011. The DPH will be approving the exam for use in CT. This will need to be taken and passed prior to July 1, 2012 in order for PAs to continue using fluoroscopy.

Any further questions regarding the fluoroscopy issue can certainly be answered by ConnAPA.



*If you use fluoroscopy or plan on doing so in the future, **must** take the course and examination and pass both by July 1, 2012.*

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

R. Elaine Bolton

Johanna Chelcun

David Cosenza

Patrick Dougherty

Lisa Erskine

Kevin Fitzsimmons

Reynold Jaglal

Nanci Jenkins

Ryan Kissane

Olivia Kousky

Lauryn Maloney-Feiler



**Legislation was passed that levels the playing field with managed care organizations in three key areas:**

- 1) they must pay claims filed electronically within 20 days
- 2) they may not deny payment for any treatment they previously issued a prior authorization for
- 3) they must permit providers 30 days in which to opt-out of offering any new product

*ConnAPA strongly supported these changes.*



*As always, we'd like to thank all of those ConnAPA members who took the time to contact their state legislators on issues of importance. Please let us know if you have any questions.*

**Linda Kowalski**

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## LEGISLATIVE REPORT

*By: Linda Kowalski and Jonathan Weber, MA, PA-C*

The 2011 session is history, having adjourned at midnight on Wednesday, June 8. In this report you'll see a number of bills that ConnAPA tracked and commented on during the session as well as an update on significant developments that have occurred since that time. The legislature has taken a break for much of the summer but will be back in special session this fall to act on a number of job creation proposals put forth by Governor Dannel Malloy.

PA Fluoroscopy Fix—our major initiative passed the House and Senate and has been signed into law by the Governor. This legislation provides Physician Assistants with an additional nine months in which to meet the requirements for performing Fluoroscopy. The new deadline is July 1, 2012 for completing a 40 hour course, demonstrating 40 hours of hands-on experience with the procedure and passing the examination. This is an important issue and ConnAPA's central office will be providing members with detailed information in the coming weeks about the course and examination. We have scheduled a meeting with ConnAPA representatives and DPH Commissioner Dr. Mullen in September to discuss the progress being made on this, and other issues of concern, to the Physician Assistant community. (HB 6618, Public Act 11-242)

Health Insurance Exchange—important legislation to authorize the creation of a health insurance exchange in 2014 was passed. This is the result of the 2010 federal healthcare reform legislation, Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, PPACA, that mandates individuals be able to shop and compare health insurance plans on an internet site overseen by each state. We are pleased to report that ConnAPA succeeded with our effort to write specific language into the bill that requires all plans to meet state mandates. This was a significant win that will guarantee consumers can receive treatment by a Physician Assistant. A working group has been established by the state to develop all of the policies and procedures of the exchange and we will be tracking their work and providing updates as needed to ConnAPA members. (SB 92, Public Act 11-53)

Standards and Contracts—legislation was passed that levels the playing field with managed care organizations in three key areas: 1) they must pay claims filed electronically within 20 days; 2) they may not deny payment for any treatment they previously issued a prior authorization for, and 3) they must permit providers 30 days in which to opt-out of offering any new product. ConnAPA strongly supported these changes. (HB 6308, Public Act 11-58) Another positive bill passed that bans MCOs from requiring a provider to accept or decline a competitor's contracts or fees, a so-called "most favored nation" provision. (HB 6471, Public Act 11-132)

PA Testimony to the Public Health Committee—ConnAPA offered testimony on two bills this session. We asked the committee to make three changes to the PA practice act to enhance patient care. These included deleting the limit on the number of PAs who can be supervised by a physician, deleting the requirement for a weekly meeting with the supervising physician, and repealing the requirement that a physician countersign a PA script within 24 hours. Although a good case was made for the changes, the Public Health Committee generally held practice act revisions in anticipation of enacting a new process to review scope of practice changes. That legislation was passed and is discussed in the next section of this update. The second bill ConnAPA testified on would have revised the membership of the Connecticut Medical Examining Board. The slots allocated to a physician assistant and a physician supervising a PA would have been eliminated under the proposal. We would note other changes were made as well to the CMEB's membership and that the legislation was not aimed at the profession. Fortunately, the bill was not advanced out of committee. (HB 6374)

Scope of Practice—legislation was enacted to create a new structure for "vetting" scope of practice applications by professions prior to the issue being submitted to the legislature. ConnAPA has filed a scope of change application with the Department of Public Health in accordance with the new law. As mentioned above, we are seeking to modernize the PA act in three respects.

## LEGISLATIVE REPORT

ConnAPA completed and submitted a scope of practice application to the Department of Public Health by the August 15<sup>th</sup> deadline as outlined in Public Act 11-209. It is an impressive document that makes a cogent case for the policy changes. Preparing the document was a real team effort that followed weeks of preparation. I want to thank all of the members and members of the government relations team who assisted in drafting sections of the response.

DPH confirmed that they received the application on Monday, August 15<sup>th</sup>. ConnAPA submitted both an electronic, pdf document, and paper copy as requested. The final proposal was a very substantive and impressive document, with attachments and supporting materials that were bound in hard copy for DPH. We will now wait until the final list of all applications and requests for exemptions is published by DPH and forwarded to the Public Health Committee. This should occur by September 15<sup>th</sup>. All scope applications and supporting documents will be posted on the DPH website; we will notify the membership as soon as this goes live. We expect agency officials will then make a final decision as to the specific applications that will be considered for further review under the committee process that is outlined in the 2011 law, Public Act 11-209.

In terms of the timeline, anyone who wishes to intervene in favor of or in opposition to a scope proposal has until October 1<sup>st</sup> to submit their intention in writing to DPH with substantive comments. ConnAPA will then have until October 15<sup>th</sup> to respond to any such comments. The members of the scope of practice review committee will be appointed by November 1<sup>st</sup> and final recommendations are due to the Public Health Committee by February 1, 2012.

In conclusion, thank you again for everyone's work on this. The ConnAPA executive board and their government relations consultants will keep you posted as developments occur. (*HB 6549, Public Act 11-209*)

**Written Orders**—Licensed Practical Nurses will take written orders from Physician Assistants as a result of a new provision contained in the omnibus Department of Public Health legislation. (*HB 6618, Public Act 11-242*)

**Certificates of Merit**—legislation that would relax the standards for a “certificate of merit” in medical malpractice lawsuits was not passed. The legislation would have had the effect of making it easier for such lawsuits to advance by permitting a “qualified” medical professional rather than a “similar” professional (as is required now) to certify as to the merits of the action. (*HB 6487*)

**Patient Records**—a bill was passed to provide easier access to patients of lab test results that are in the possession of a provider, including those tests not conducted in-house. (*SB 1201, Public Act 11-76*)

**Certificate of Need**—legislation was passed to require a CON for the termination of inpatient or outpatient services by a hospital as well as a termination of surgical services by an outpatient surgical facility. (*HB 5048*)

**Bills of interest that did not pass**—proposals that were not enacted into law include expanding the scope of practice of athletic trainers to non-sport injuries. ConnAPA monitored this issue closely and participated in discussions and meetings with various stakeholders and the Public Health Committee co-chairs on it. (*SB 1051*) A bill to permit individuals with a defined debilitating illness to grow their own marijuana plants for personal medicinal use also did not pass. (*SB 1015*)

**Budget and Tax Package**—the Governor and 2011 session acted decisively to close a projected \$3.5 billion budget deficit over the next two years. The package of changes include new and higher taxes, hundreds of millions in spending cuts and \$1.6 billion in state employee concessions in the areas of compensation, healthcare and pensions. With the acceptance of the concession package by the unions just this week, the gap was closed on the biennial budget. As to taxes, income tax rates were increased for higher earners, business taxes were hiked and the sales tax was raised from 6.0 percent to 6.35 percent. In addition, many exemptions to the sales tax were eliminated—including cosmetic surgery, nonprescription medications, vitamins and supplements. Finally, a new tax on hospital revenues was enacted for the purpose of leveraging additional federal Medicaid matching funds. Some hospitals gain while others lose under this deal. (*SB 1239, Public Act 11-6*)



**National  
Kidney  
Foundation™**

## Volunteers Needed!

**Saturday, October 1 -  
Sunday, October 2  
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
CT Convention Center,  
Hartford**

The **CT Academy of PAs** will be working in conjunction with the **National Kidney Foundation (NKF)** at the **NBC 30 Health & Wellness Festival**. We will share a booth with the NKF to help educate the public about risk factors for kidney disease (diabetes and hypertension). It will be a great opportunity to educate the public about physician assistants. We will need PA volunteers to help staff the booth.

If you are interested in volunteering for a portion or entire day, please contact us at [connapa@ssmgt.com](mailto:connapa@ssmgt.com).





## UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT; ADIUWARE, MEDERI, COMMUNITER

*By Erin E. Carey PA-S1, Director of External Integrative Affairs*

Bridgeport's Physician Assistant students are concluding their second academic term and have been working diligently at both school and developing activities within our program and community. This past March we had our White Coat ceremony formally marking the time when we are officially welcomed into the PA profession. Our ceremony was presided by UB PAI Director, Dr. Daniel Cervonka, as well as our Academic Director, Martha Petersen and other faculty and University administration. The students wore their coats with pride; fully appreciating the significance they behold and were eager to wear them out during clinical experiences. At the ceremony, our student society was named in honor of Bruce Fichandler

PA-C, a well-known advocate and trailblazer in the PA profession. Mr. Fichandler's extensive commitment to Connecticut PAs and the American Academy of Physician Assistants matches his dedication to teaching students during his long career. He is an excellent role model for our students and we are honored to serve in his name.

The Bruce Fichandler Student Society has been organizing public outreach and health education activities and participating in the local community. We have been enthusiastically promoting the PA profession and the University of Bridgeport PAI. Class Historian Mike Moi and class Treasurer Rafaela Penarreta participated in the PAF Walk/Ride Fundraiser for scholarships on June 25th and 26th through which they raised money to fund future PA student scholarships and enjoyed the beautiful day with other ConnAPA members.

Fellow classmate, Letizia Lettieri-Morales, the Director of Outreach and Development, organized the PAI's participation in Bridgeport Arts-Fest, an annual art event in Bridgeport that brings in hundreds of people from the community and surrounding towns. UB PA students set up a booth to promote and fund-raise for our Student Society through a raffle with donations made by attendees. The raffle prizes were two framed professional photographs and a child's bicycle donated by Wal-Mart. The students, along with Professor Don Solimini, measured greater than one hundred blood pressures and educated all participants about healthy life-style habits.

Students Brittany Eaton and Gillian Hepburn participated in the Connecticut Challenge Bike for Cancer, ride through Southern CT. The event focuses on empowering cancer survivors as well as fundraising to support survivorship programs, research, and events throughout CT. Some of our classmates also attended the Rheumatology dinner in New Haven, which is an opportunity to sit down with PA students from Yale and Quinnipiac and learn more about up-to-date treatment for rheumatologic conditions.

Classmate Tadecher Ellis, the Director of External Affairs, has developed a Healthy Habits curriculum for Bridgeport Primary Schools scheduled to begin this fall. The goal is to teach the elementary students healthy eating habits, exercising, and instilling the importance of hand washing, hygiene, and keeping up with doctor/dental appointments. We will share more of our experiences implementing the curriculum in the next ConnAPA newsletter. Finally, UB students helped

*"This past March we had our White Coat ceremony formally marking the time when we are officially welcomed into the PA profession."*



*(Continued on page 12)*



## YALE PA PROGRAM REPORT

*By: Dan McNamara PA-S and Tia Ferrarotti PA-S*



*Yale Students attending the AAPA Conference*

The summer semester has flown by for the PA class of 2012. The 35 students have successfully completed the daunting didactic phase of the program, finishing the year off with a brunch with the faculty, followed by a well-deserved 2-week break. The beginning of the second year then begins with a two-week "Transition Period," which is primarily procedure-based training. Following those 2 weeks, the students will begin the first of fourteen rotations!! Many in the class plan to do primary care rotations out of state, in rural sites such as Kentucky, Maine, and Texas.

Additionally, the second year of the Yale PA Program also involves the Thesis Project. This is a hypothesis-driven proposal in a topic relevant to the practice of clinical or behavioral medicine and/or health policy. The class of 2012 has initiated the search for individual advisors for each student's thesis. School of Medicine faculty then mentor each student during the construction of the project. Students also consult with fellows of the Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar Program regarding their project methodology. Highly motivated students have had their theses funded and published. Towards the end of the second year, the theses are evaluated by members of the Thesis Committee and the students with the highest scores are invited to present at the Honors Thesis presentation in December 2012 at the end of the clinical phase of the program.

This year's AAPA conference, held in Las Vegas, was a blast for the many Yale PA students who attended. Held at the Las Vegas Hilton, the conference featured a myriad of stellar CME presentations, networking opportunities, and, of course, product theaters with plenty of free stuff. First year PA student SAAPA and AOR representatives Vanessa Meiser and Jeremy Takahashi had the chance to participate in the student academy's legislative process while Dan McNamara, Kaitlin Jensen, Jessica DiStefano, Evie Rodriguez, and Caroline Dudley represented Yale in the National Medical Challenge Bowl. The conference was a valuable opportunity for all students involved to connect with PAs and students from across the nation and observe the inner workings of the AAPA.

Planning for Yale's celebration of this year's PA Week has begun as well. This is the second year that students will be organizing events between October 6th through 12th to celebrate the PA profession. Similar to last year, the week at Yale will include a 5K race, held this year at Sleeping Giant State Park on October 8th, as well as a PA joint Class Potluck, where students from all three Yale PA classes bring food and get together with the faculty to show gratitude to the faculty of the Yale PA Program. A speaker panel is also scheduled again as part of the week, this year for October 11th. The theme of this year's panel will be geared more toward community outreach, with invitations also extended to high school and college students. The goal is to inform people about the PA career and how to prepare academically for PA school. Members of the class of 2012 also plan to visit a local high school to speak with interested students about the PA field. In addition to the 5K, speaker Panel, and potluck with faculty, the students plan to hold a bake sale to raise money for the Hunger & Homelessness Auction held every fall, as well as a movie night and happy hour at BAR in New Haven for PA students.



*From left to right: Kaitlin Jensen, PA-S II, Dan McNamara, PA-S I, & Jessica DiStefano, PA-S I participating in the National Medical Challenge Bowl*



*Yale Students participating in the OR scrub training session*



**Three of the QU students attending the AAPA's annual IMPACT conference are members of the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender PA Caucus and took part in awareness and social events throughout the week.**



*"Attending the Paragon Awards Dinner was an honor and a privilege to recognize the selfless work of these PAs."*

## QUINNIPIAC PA PROGRAM UPDATE

*By: Rob Pandolfe PA-S*

The summer kicked off with a bang as 28 second year students, 11 third year students, and many QU faculty members attended the AAPA's annual IMPACT conference in Las Vegas. One of the highlights of the week was that many of the students were able to see working PAs being honored for their service to their patients, the community, and the PA profession when they attended to Annual Paragon Awards Dinner. An astonished 2nd year QU PA student, Mindy Busby, reflected on the night by saying "Attending the Paragon Awards Dinner was an honor and a privilege to recognize the selfless work of these PAs. Their dedication to underserved communities and the innovative solutions that they utilize to overcome some of our many healthcare challenges is awe-inspiring." Also, three of the QU students are members of the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender PA Caucus and took part in awareness and social events sponsored by the caucus throughout the week.

Third year student, Ryan Narcisco, received the LBGT PA Caucus Leadership Award this year for his dedication to furthering awareness of LBGT healthcare needs. Over the past year Ryan has volunteered his time to help in quarterly meetings with caucus as well as extensive help at last year's conference. He gave a presentation about the healthcare needs of LBGT

adolescents at his pediatric rotation site at a faith-based hospital and created pamphlets to give LBGT youth. Also, he did an elective rotation at Fenway Health in Boston which is a community clinic that also caters to the healthcare needs of the LBGT community. Quinnipiac is truly proud of the work Ryan continues to do for this underserved population in the healthcare community. Another outstanding third year QU student Christina Cheng has been the Physician Assistant Foundation Student Representative to SAAAPA. She dedicated the entire year to help raising funds for the PAF and was very busy during the week of the conference attending the AOR and the PAF dinner. Another highlight of the week was the medical challenge bowl. QU made it to the second round after surviving some intense buzzer malfunctions in the first round. Six QU students did an excellent job representing the program by participating in the annual poster presentations. To finish out the week there was a nice gathering of old and new faces at the QU PA Alumni Event.



### Third Year Students

As the third year Quinnipiac University PA students prepare to move forward as practicing PAs; let's take a moment to look back! With seven core and two elective rotations under their belts, the class of 2011 said goodbye to their clinical year and hello to their 3rd and final semester. Back on the North Haven grounds the third year students picked up right where they left off from their first year with organizing and operating all of the program's regular community service events. Also, the 3rd year students got to participate in some activities that are unique opportunities reserved for them during their last summer; Migrant Farm Clinic and the Connecticut Special Olympics. Hosted by Southern Connecticut University, QU students provided acute care for Connecticut's Special Olympic athletes participating in

*(Continued on page 11)*



## QUINNIPIAC PA PROGRAM UPDATE (CONTINUED)

activities such as swimming, track and field, soccer and cycling. These hard working students also provided medical care and taught English to migrant farm workers in the state of Connecticut. Each year between 10,000 and 20,000 workers come from other countries (mainly Spanish speaking) to help in harvesting crops in the state. None of the workers have insurance and between 200 and 400 of them use these student based clinics to get medical care throughout the season. The English literacy program is new this year and is something that we are all very excited about. PA students from QU go to the farm after harvesting hours are over to give these workers an opportunity to learn English. The Class of 2011 Banquet will be held on Thursday August 11, 2011 at Cascade. The Banquet offers the opportunity for presentation of awards, dedication of the class gift, and some well deserved dancing and celebration. The Certificate Ceremony will be held at TD Bank Sports Center on August 13 from 11am-1pm.

### Community Service

All three classes have been participating in the ongoing community service work that is a valued cornerstone of the program. Throughout the summer students have been participating in Loaves and Fishes, a food bank in New Haven. Every weekend students go to the Episcopal Church of St. Paul & St. James and help to organize and distribute groceries to people in need.

The third year students have especially been dedicated to the reading program at the Hospital of St. Raphael. Every week they spend time reading to children that are in the waiting room at the ED. It has really helped to ease the anxiety of many of the children there and gives them the invaluable experience of being read to.

Another summer activity is the help given at Casa Otanal, a residential housing center for Latino senior citizens. Each year third year students spend a few days helping to update the medical records and documents of the people that reside there.

QU student Mumbi Ngugi joined in the fun this year at the PAF Bike CT for Education event. She rode her bike along other supporters to help raise funds for PA scholarships.

### Exciting News

The QU PA Program has some exciting news to report. Thanks to the diligent work and generous donations of the second and third year students, faculty and alumni, QU won the Texting



Campaign sponsored by the PAF. The contest involved schools competing to get people to donate money to the PAF on their behalf. QU had the most money donated out of all programs that participated. As a result, the PAF has awarded the QU PA Program with a grant of \$5,000 to use toward the literacy projects at ACES and The Hospital of St. Raphael. It is great to be a part of a program where people give back in all kinds of ways.

This year the QU PA Dominican Republic medical service students received the R.K. Pedersen Global Outreach endowment to benefit the ongoing sustainable healthcare initiative in the Dominican Republic. The grant was written for \$14,100. The QU PA Program works with Heath Horizons International which focuses its efforts to provide healthcare to the people of the Puerto Plat region of the country. QU students travel there at least once a year to assist with medical care in the makeshift clinics in the area.

## DONATE TO PAF

[http://ssman3.ssmgt.com/ssm/CAPA/members\\_online/members/donations.asp](http://ssman3.ssmgt.com/ssm/CAPA/members_online/members/donations.asp)

## Quinnipiac University Hosts Second Annual Job Fair

Aiming to build upon the success of last year's job fair, ConnAPA worked with Cindy Lord and the PA faculty at the Quinnipiac PA Program to once again offer the opportunity to PA students, graduates, and working PAs, to meet face-to-face with potential employers and find out about what opportunities are available.

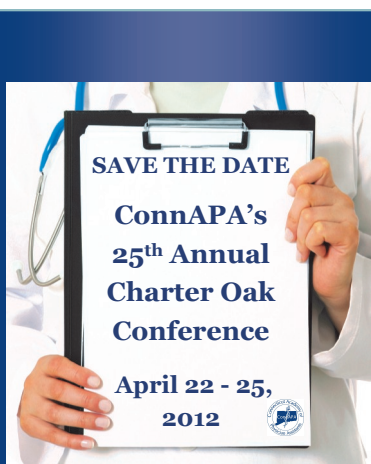
The event lasted from 3pm to 6pm in the Quinnipiac cafeteria and a dozen employers exhibited, representing both hospitals and private practices. Many valuable connections were made and several recently graduated PAs left with strong prospects for employment.



The University of Bridgeport PA Institute has offered to host the event in 2012. We hope to see even more employers and participants next year as we plan to move the event to October to promote PA Week.

Remember that employment opportunities are always being updated on our website, so if you are looking for a new career or a needed change, visit us at [www.connapa.org](http://www.connapa.org) and click on "Employment."





**Donate today!**  
See link on page 11



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## UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT (CONTINUED)

out WEBE 108 with their school backpack initiative, filling over 400 backpacks with school supplies for disadvantaged children in the area's public schools. The bags will be distributed to the kids for the beginning of their school year in September. We look forward to further collaboration with WEBE 108 for future events supporting the Bridgeport community.

Kirsten Lanpher and Zach Lueders, the ConnAPA representatives for our class, attend the quarterly board meetings and continue to keep us informed of ConnAPA events and communicate UB's developing activities and accomplishments. Next on our agenda is organizing for National PA week October 6th -12th when we join fellow Connecticut PAs in promoting the profession nationwide.

## CT PAF BIKE/WALK/RUN CT FOR EDUCATION

*By: Rick Pope*

The CT PA Foundation sponsored its second Bike/Walk/ and now Run/CT for CT in late June. Fifteen to twenty participants ascended the state over a two day period from Yale to the Mass border. Included were students from the University of Bridgeport, and Quinnipiac along with several graduate PAs hailing from various parts of the state including the Danbury, Hartford and New Haven. Two physicians rode with us on second day excursion from Farmington CT to our final destination in Southwick MA.

At the time of this article over \$3,000 was raised from the event with donations directly from the event and from monies raised from the website at [www.connapa.org](http://www.connapa.org). The monies raised are awarded to PA students who apply for scholarships through the CT PAF. In 2011 \$6,000 was awarded to five students who either attended CT PA schools, or CT PA students who attended schools outside the state of CT but maintain CT residency.

A big thank you to the leaders and participants of the Bike Walk and now Run. We are looking forward to our next event in the spring on 2012. Last year we had a BOWLARAMA in March in Hamden CT. It was well received and likely will be our next event. Stay tuned and again thank you to all who came and donated to the event.

