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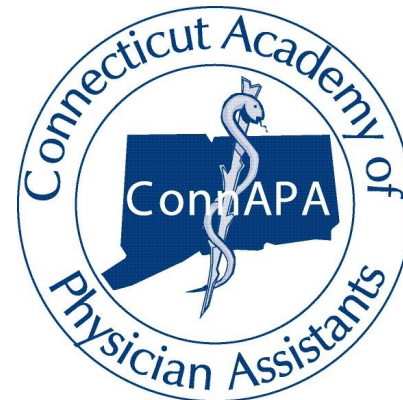


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Issue

VOLUME 8, NO 1.

Spring 2018



Deanna J.C. Zimkus, MHS, PA-C
ConnAPA President

Greetings to all! It's been a busy winter season for the ConnAPA Board. Like I mentioned in the previous newsletter, the legislative committee has been very busy this session. We seek to replace the antiquated supervision/delegation language with collaboration. We were able to have our bill, SB 300 An Act Concerning Collaborative Arrangements between Physician Assistants and Physicians, raised in the Public Health Committee during this short session. PAs Dan Mussen, Jonathan Weber and I testified in support of the bill at the public hearing on March 16. Unfortunately, our bill did not go forward this session. We will continue to work tirelessly towards modernization of the PA Practice Act. If you are a PA who is experiencing any barriers to your practice, please contact us at connapasurvey@outlook.com.

President's Message

Please also see the legislative update from our lobbyist, Linda Kowalski, included in this newsletter.

I'm happy to report that this year's Charter Oak Conference was a huge success. We had a great lineup of PA and MD speakers and all were well reviewed. Thirty hours of CME were offered. Stay tuned, as we will soon be announcing the dates and new venue for 2019's Charter Oak Conference.

Mark Turczak PA-C, Director at Large, and I attended this year's AAPA Leadership and Advocacy Summit on behalf of ConnAPA. Unlike last year, we returned to Capitol Hill to speak with legislators from Connecticut. The main themes this year were advocating for changes to Medicare laws to allow PAs to prescribe diabetic shoes and home health care for Medicare patients. These topics were well received by the staffers we met with for Representative Larson, Senator Murphy and Senator Blumenthal. Both Mark and I were able to speak with AAPA staff at Thursday evening's reception. Students from Sacred Heart University, Yale University as well as Yale PA program faculty joined us.

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Friday and Saturday brought us back to the conference rooms to partake in multiple discussions regarding Perspectives on Constituent Organization Leadership, Implementing Communications Strategies to Increase Awareness of the PA Profession and Advance State Legislative Agendas among others.

Membership numbers unfortunately continue to be suboptimal, and I can't stress how important membership is to help support our lobbyist and association management firm. If you or any colleagues want to join or renew your membership, please visit our website at www.connapa.org.

This will be my last report to all of you as President, and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of the members of ConnAPA for their continued support of our organization. I would also especially like to thank our Board Members who are an exceptionally dedicated group of professionals whom I have had the privilege of working alongside. I would also like to thank Linda Kowalski, our lobbyist and her team for all of the hard work they have done for us this year. It is amazing to see all of them in action in Hartford. Last but not least, I would like to thank Mark Schuman, our

Executive Director and Kirsten Longley, our Assistant Executive Director for all of their hard work and dedication at all hours of the day and night. Thank you for the opportunity to serve all of you in this capacity. I look forward to continuing to volunteer my time with ConnAPA in the future.

Best,



NEW MEMBERS

Angel Castro
Nicholas Chasse
Steven Conlin
Charlene Criss
Brian Fillmore
Kelsey Goode
Lauren Griska
Brita Guirguis
Allister Hirschman
Jaime Holder
Carolyn Madden
David Malchman
Maureen McCarthy
Hope Menninger
Marybeth Moore
Glenell Morris
Michael Myslenski
Sheri Orr
Felicia Otoo
Russell Otto
Courtney Peck
Kerry Phelan
Daniela Pratt
Ashley Prouix
Melissa Ramirez
Jeanne Reed
Rebecca Richard
Robin Rose
Thomas Schwaner
Matthew Sheeks
Kathryn Smith
Caroline St. Claire
Veronica Stanek
Christopher Tagliavini

Charter Oak Conference: Another Success



Mark Turczak, MHS, PA-C
Conference Co-Chair

ConnAPA held its 31st Annual Charter Oak Conference March 25th through the 28th. The COC returned to the Mystic Marriott Hotel & Spa in Groton for the third consecutive year, where we welcomed over 220 PAs and PA students over the course of the conference. This year's event featured a variety of speakers covering a wide range of topics, from primary care, surgery, emergency medicine, oncology and more. Each year we structure our presentations on the NCCPA blueprint, so PAs can use this opportunity to review topics for their PANRE.

We were fortunate to bring in many nationally recognized Physician and PA speakers with diverse backgrounds to broaden the discussion — something our membership has asked for. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive from the group of returning attendees and others joining us for the first time. In addition to our attendees from Connecticut we also welcomed professionals from across the Northeast including New York, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, and even as far as North Carolina.

The Charter Oak Conference is also a great opportunity to gain membership. This year we were able to welcome 12 new members. We even had PAs from New York State joining our organization, complimenting ConnAPA on the conference and the legislative work we fight for throughout the year.

MEETING CHALLENGES, CREATING CONNECTIONS & MAKING A DIFFERENCE

On Sunday evening we hosted a welcome reception for all attendees. The Marriott provided an elegant backdrop for a night of networking with colleagues. We also hosted a student poster presentation with several students from Quinnipiac, Sacred Heart and Yale University sharing their experiences from clinical rotations. The students also had the opportunity to network with their PA peers.

An exciting addition to this year's conference was a full working DaVinci Robot. The robot was transported all the way from California to join us in Groton. Many attendees took advantage of hands-on practice with this device. DaVinci representatives educated attendees and students on the impressive technical advantages of these devices and how they are improving patient care on the front lines of medicine.

ConnAPA also welcomed our keynote speaker Dr. Jansen during our annual business luncheon. Dr. Jansen presented on the underground world of child sex trafficking. He spoke of the many useful tools available for PAs to identify high risk individuals and the proper care and resources available for them.

During the business luncheon ConnAPA President Deanna Zimkus shared a legislative update regarding our efforts at the Capitol over the past year. She also gave an update on what challenges PAs face and the work that will continue over the next several years. There was also an Exhibit Hall with over 30 sponsors including large healthcare networks,

pharmaceutical companies, branches of the military, and many more. Attendees had the opportunity to participate in exhibitor bingo, with over 15 prizes including Amazon Echos, Hotel Getaways, a 1-year ConnAPA membership, medical equipment, and much more.

The conference concluded with a panel discussion presented by the AAPA. The panel was comprised of past AAPA presidents and current board members. They presented on clinical cases focusing on the care of sexual minorities.

We are pleased with the positive feedback received from attendees, and we strive to work diligently on your behalf to provide the best, most relevant educational experiences. Stay tuned for upcoming learning opportunities, including our Fall CME Event on Friday, October 12 at the Wallingford Hilton Garden Inn. We also look forward to seeing you at the 2019 Charter Oak Conference next Spring.



Linda Kowalski
The Kowalski Group

The major legislative priority of the Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants this session has been to pursue establishment of a collaborative arrangement structure between Physician Assistants and Physicians.

Although our proposal, Senate Bill 300, will not be voted on this session, we have made solid progress on the issue and have set the stage for passage of it in the not-so-distant future.

Change takes time. And a change like this, a major one to the healthcare system, needs to be carefully vetted and endorsed on a widespread basis by many stakeholders. Many professions

Collaborative Arrangements and Key Legislation in the 2018 Session

have gone five, ten or even more years before they succeed in enhancing their scope of practice.

Here is a little background and history on the issue. Last summer, and in the summer of 2016, ConnAPA developed a proposal to change your practice act from one of supervision by a physician to one that involves a collaborative arrangement with a physician. This proposal was submitted last August, both years, to the Department of Public Health as part of the "Scope of Practice Committee Review." Under this process, which started in 2011, healthcare professions seeking to change their practice act can submit a written proposal to the Department of Public Health. The DPH commissioner reviews the various submissions and decides in the fall which ones will be advanced to a full committee review. Ultimately, our proposal

was not selected.

Yet, I would note the quality of the submission as well as the fact a number of key legislators wrote to the DPH commissioner requesting that he move it forward.

With adversity comes opportunity: we then decided to pursue the issue in the 2018 session and convinced the Public Health Committee to let ConnAPA make its case for collaborative arrangements at a public hearing. Senate Bill 300, An Act Concerning Collaborative Arrangements Between Physician Assistants and Physicians, was heard for over an hour by the committee in the early evening of Friday, March 16.

I want to thank our testifiers from ConnAPA, all of whom did a great job in laying out the case. Deanna Zimkus opened our testimony by telling the committee how

members of the PA profession already work as part of the medical team, collaborating with physicians with a high degree of professionalism. (I have to say there was something very refreshing about ConnAPA being represented by a dynamic young professional woman who successfully balances her career and care for patients with all of the responsibilities of being a mother to her young child.)

Deanna followed Dr. Peter Herbert, clinical professor of medicine, Yale-New Haven Hospital. Dr. Herbert has overseen Physician Assistant for several decades in the hospitalist setting and reiterated the fact that SB 300 would simply reflect the reality of how PA's currently practice in this day and age. Having a Medical Doctor publicly support SB 300 was very significant and we thank Dr. Herbert for taking many hours out of his day to help us. Rounding out the ConnAPA team were Jonathan Weber and Dan Mussen. Both made effective points to the committee and both rebutted some of the criticism of the bill that had been made by testifiers from other medical professions. We spent several hours that afternoon sitting with Deanna, Jonathan and Dan in the cafeteria of the Legislative Office Building prepping for their testimony and gaming out possible questions from the committee. Overall, ConnAPA made a very good case for the change and we placed key points on the official legislative record. This will only benefit us as we pursue the issue further. But before I leave the hearing recap, let me say that several members of ConnAPA's leadership team who spent many hours on this issue were not able to attend the hearing. Special thanks go to Andrew Turczak, Jason Prevelige, Mick Devanney and Tricia Marriott. (Cont'd on Page 5)

CTPAF UPDATE

The CTPAF hosted our annual Bowl-a-Rama event at TGI Fridays and Johnson's Duckpin Lanes in Hamden, CT on Friday February 23, 2018. Thank you to all of those who came out for a fun night of food and bowling. The CTPAF would like to thank ConnAPA for hosting this year's scholarship presentation at the Charter Oak Conference Annual Business Luncheon on Tuesday, March 27, 2018. Since 1980, CTPAF has awarded over \$140,000.00 in scholarships to deserving PA students who either attend PA school within the state, or are from Connecticut and attend PA school elsewhere. This year, we received 36 applications and awarded a total of \$8,750.00 to 10 students from 4 different schools. Congratulations to all of the recipients and thank you to all of the students who applied!



Scholarship recipients at the Charter Oak Conference



Yale PA first and second year students enjoying the Bowl A Rama

From Around the PA Programs



AAPA Leadership and Advocacy Summit in Washington DC
Our program’s representatives at the AAPA annual summit had a fantastic time fighting for important legislation to help our patients and our profession during the AAPA Leadership and Advocacy Summit in Washington DC. They focused on campaigning for two bills on Capitol Hill, The Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act and The Promoting Access to Diabetic Shoes Act, which will both help to change outdated measures. They also enjoyed meeting with other PA students, PAs and government representatives and had a wonderful time in DC.

Volunteering
Some of our first year class volunteered this week in the local soup kitchen in New Haven. It was a very rewarding experience for our students and we hope to start volunteering there regularly as a way to give back to our community. Both first and second year students continue to volunteer at HAVEN, the free student-run clinic. Other students have started to volunteer doing “midnight rounds” at homeless shelters and warming centers.

Interprofessional Longitudinal Clinical Experience (ILCE)
The first year students are finishing up our Interprofessional Longitudinal Clinical Experiences (ILCE), which we have been participating in since September. Through ILCE, we have worked closely within a team consisting of nurse practitioner students, medical students, and our clinical coaches to learn history taking, physical exam, and presentation skills. We’ve learned so much

through this program and will be sad to have it end soon!

Students Honored
On March 27th, four Yale Physician Associate students were honored at the annual ConnAPA Charter Oak Conference as Physician Assistant Foundation (PAF) Student Scholarship Recipients. The PAF is the philanthropic arm of ConnAPA that provides scholarship money to qualified students who are enrolled in a Connecticut Physician Assistant program or are Connecticut residents attending an out of state Physician Assistant program. The four Yale PA students honored for exemplifying leadership and community service included Matthew Gueble, Jose Arciniega, Matthew Drause, and Corrine Morrison.



Yale Students at the AAPA Summit



Volunteering at the soup kitchen



CTPAF Scholarship recipients from



At Quinnipiac University, the Class of 2019 is in their last semester of didactic year, with clinical rotations beginning in June. The Class of 2018 is finishing up their last few rotations of clinical year, and are preparing for the final semester of their PA education. In January, five members of the class of 2019 embarked on a trip to the Dominican Republic in order to aid the underserved. QU PA Students continued the tradition of teaming up with Health Horizons International on one of their three annual medical mission trips. Our students have shared this partnership with Health Horizons International

since 2009. The team provided primary care services, treatment for infectious diseases, and chronic condition management. Our students loved having the opportunity to apply what they have been learning in the classroom in order to make a difference in the Puerto Plata province.

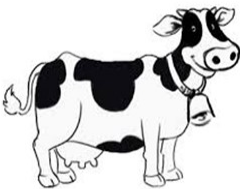
The Spring marks an important time for the Quinnipiac Physician Assistant Student Society as the 19th annual Cow Chip Bingo event quickly approaches. Students from The Class of 2019 are selling tickets for the event, which is scheduled for April 21, 2018 on the North Haven Campus. Tickets are being sold for \$10.00 each in order to benefit the Quinnipiac University Physician Assistant Student Society, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, and the South Park Homeless Shelter. For those interested in helping our

fundraising effort by purchasing tickets please contact Neville Graham at Neville.Graham@quinnipiac.edu

Why join ConnAPA as a PA Student?
Quinnipiac University Physician Assistant-Students
As a PA student, it can be challenging to focus on what is going on in the world in the didactic year or clinical year. It may be difficult to see the benefit of joining a professional organization such as the Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistant (ConnAPA) organization as a student, when the majority of our time is spent at school. However, we believe that the first day of Physician Assistant (PA) school is the first day of your career, and it is important to prioritize your membership for professional



Left to right: Alexandra Villaiba, Lindsay Palma, Sara Boudreau, Stephanie Schmitt, and Nicholas Mulligan



Ultimately, the Public Health Committee did not advance our bill out to the Senate. One of the barriers we faced was a belief by many people that, as good as the proposal was, it still needed to go through the DPH Scope of Practice Committee Review process. That was a difficult argument to overcome. DPH Commissioner Raul Pino, MD, stated in his written testimony that “DPH is unable to provide a formal opinion on the scope of practice changes proposed in Senate Bill 300 without the benefit of a formal scope of practice review process.”

Notably, the commissioner’s statement also said that lifting the 6:1 physician to PA supervisory ratio cap would not constitute a scope of practice change and that DPH would support doing that. The committee leadership has agreed and it is likely legislation to make the change will be enacted this session. As ConnAPA members know, lifting the arbitrary 6:1 ratio has been a priority of the organization for several years.

So where do we go from here? This is a decision that will be made by your Board of Directors. However, it is clear that our chances of passage of a collaborative arrangement is enhanced if the proposal goes through the full scope review process at the Department of Public Health prior to the 2019 legislative session. A proposal from ConnAPA would be due to DPH in August 2018. If it is selected by the DPH commissioner for a full review, a committee is then established that would include representatives from ConnAPA, DPH and other medical professions to review and discuss it. A report by DPH summarizing the work of the committee is sent to the Public Health Committee in January 2019, opening the way for legislation to then proceed. Let me close this issue by thanking those ConnAPA members who contacted their state Senator and Representative in support of Senate Bill 300. These contacts from legislators’ constituents really can have a positive impact. We will need to have even more grassroots involvement by ConnAPA members next year.

In the meantime, the 2018 session is grappling with a number of important healthcare and insurance matters, and I want to outline them briefly.

House Bill 5207 would permit individual and group health plans to be sold in the state that do not meet the requirements of Chapter 700c mandates. If passed, the bill would mean state-regulated insurers could sell products that do not cover Physician Assistant services. We focused on this bill from the start—Andrew Turczak came to the Legislative Office Building on March 1 and offered effective testimony in opposition to it to the Insurance and Real Estate Committee. Ultimately, the committee held the bill, a win for ConnAPA and your patients.

House Bill 5210 would enshrine the package of essential health benefits in state statute in response to the efforts in Congress last year to repeal the Affordable Care Act. In essence, even if the ACA was no longer in effect, state law would guarantee policyholders categories of services such as emergency, hospital, physician and laboratory services. The bill is pending in the House.

House Bill 5463 creates a study to look at the possibility of residents “buying into” the Medicaid program if they find the cost of private insurance is prohibitive at the same time they do not qualify for subsidies under the Affordable Care Act. There is a strong possibility that this would require a federal waiver. The bill is pending in the House.

Senate Bill 378 offers a novel idea on the payment of claims. The legislation would require insurers to pay medical providers their contracted rate and then pursue the policyholder for reimbursement of any deductible or co-payment, in essence turning current billing practices on their head. Like many ideas, this one will take some time to build support and take hold. Look for it to reappear in the 2019 session.

Budget and Taxes will be the major focus of the remaining weeks of the session. As you may have seen in the media, projections are that the fiscal 2019 budget has a deficit of hundreds of millions of dollars. If this is the case, there will likely be additional spending cuts this year and one program that could be targeted is Medicaid. Our priority will remain in protecting services in this program that serves vulnerable low-income residents, as well as the participation in it by Physician Assistants. If new revenues are placed on the table, we will continue to oppose the so-called “medical provider tax,” which is little other than a sales or income tax on a small segment of the Connecticut population.



CHARTER OAK CONFERENCE 2019

Plans are already underway for next year’s COC. Please mark you calendars and plan to join us for COC 2019!

March 24-28, 2019
At the
Mystic Hilton

We are excited to bring the COC to a **new** location.

Watch your email for all the upcoming details!

The COC Committee will be reviewing suggested topics. If you have a topic you’d like to present, please visit our speaker submission portal by clicking [here](#)



organizations like ConnAPA that will benefit you during school, and throughout your career as a PA.

What are the benefits of joining ConnAPA as a student?

Show employers that you are serious about a successful career as a PA. The ability to show that you are an active member for a professional organization such as ConnAPA on a curriculum vitae (CV) can go a long way in making you stand out as a job applicant.

Helps secure the future of our profession.
Networking.
Scholarships.
Access to job postings in CT

We urge students, faculty members, and practicing PAs to share this article not only with students, but also other members of the profession in an effort to grow the membership of ConnAPA. To those students that are graduating, we not only congratulate you, but we sincerely hope that you will continue or renew your membership as you are the future of the profession.



Spring marks and celebrates the halfway point of didactic training for the Class of 2019. In addition to putting in long hours of studying, the class has been busy volunteering and staying active in the community. Some members of the class had the opportunity to speak to Stamford High School students about what is a Physician Assistant and the path of becoming a PA, increasing awareness of the PA profession. It is a privilege to continue the legacy of the PA profession and inspire others along the way.

The Class of 2019 has also established a tradition of volunteering at Stamford Mobile Food Pantry every month. Taking a break from studying, the students help distribute

variety of fresh food to individuals and families who are struggling to provide food on the table.

The Class of 2019 is also excited to participate in a Walk & Run the city of Stamford has been putting together for the past 20 years to fundraise for the Bennett Cancer Center at Stamford Hospital. "Hope in Motion" will take place on National Cancer Survivor's Day, Sunday, June 3rd in Downtown Stamford. The funds raised through this event will go to the Bennet Cancer Center, which provides services that directly benefit cancer patients and their families. This is a wonderful event that the entire class will be participating in as the SHU PA team.

Members of the Class of 2018 are on their sixth clinical rotation. It has been very interesting and inspiring to hear their stories about applying the knowledge from didactic year on everyday basis. Sacred Heart University PA Program has established an excellent rotation site at Makerere University in Uganda. The first four students had an opportunity to have their Global Health rotation there earlier in the year. Here is Nicole's story:

"One of the most memorable experiences during my PA education was my clinical rotation in Kampala, Uganda. After 24 hours of flying across the Atlantic, followed by several hours of driving, my classmate and I arrived to the Luboga Family's homestay, nestled on a quiet hill in the Mpererwe district of Kampala, and our home for the next four weeks.

Each day the students and I would take a 12- capacity taxi ride through Kampala, a vibrant city full of life and culture. During our journey, we would pass by numerous people, watch boda boda (motorcycles) drivers weave in and out of traffic, and observe vendors selling goods on the side of the road. The fertile Uganda land provides an abundance of vegetation and no matter where you go, you can buy the most delicious, quality, organic fruit I have ever tasted. Our days would end at the homestay, consisting of a home cooked meal with the family

and shared stories about medicine, culture, and tradition.

The majority of the trip was spent at Mulago Hospital and St. Stephen's Hospital, both in the city of Kampala. My days started off with morning rounds with the team, consisting of the attending physician, residents, and students. We would see each and every patient on the ward, do a full history and physical, and come up with a treatment plan. During this process, the attending would ask us questions about the case or disease, and it was our job to know every detail about the patient and their illness. One of the biggest challenges for everyone on the team was when the patient or the patient's family couldn't afford treatment, which often times would be an antibiotic that was less than \$10 in value. It was important to tailor our plan based on patient needs and availability of resources while still providing the highest quality of care. This was an eye-opening experience, something that changed my outlook on healthcare systems and patient care. This experience has led me to continue on a journey in global health and inspired me to work with underserved populations."

Upcoming Events

ConnAPA Annual Meeting Tuesday, June 12, 2018 Artisan Restaurant West Hartford

Cocktail reception begins at 6:30.
Program and Dinner at 7:00 PM
Dr. Robert Krug will present
Adult Upper Limb Spasticity

Annual Meeting and Awards at 8:00 PM

Members Only.
Limited space is available. Guests/Students and Walk-in Registrations cannot be accommodated.
Online registration:

Fall CME Program Friday, October 12, 2018 Hilton Garden Inn, Wallingford

A full day of educational programming including a presentation from Judge Jodi Debbrecht-Switalski from the Stutman Switalski Group.

Watch your email for more info on the full program/speakers and registration.

SCENES FROM CHARTER OAK 2018



DaVinci Robot on display



Student poster display during reception



Catching up at the Welcome Reception



Members of the ConnAPA Board



Exhibit Hall



Dr. William Yorns speaks on Pediatric seizures



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