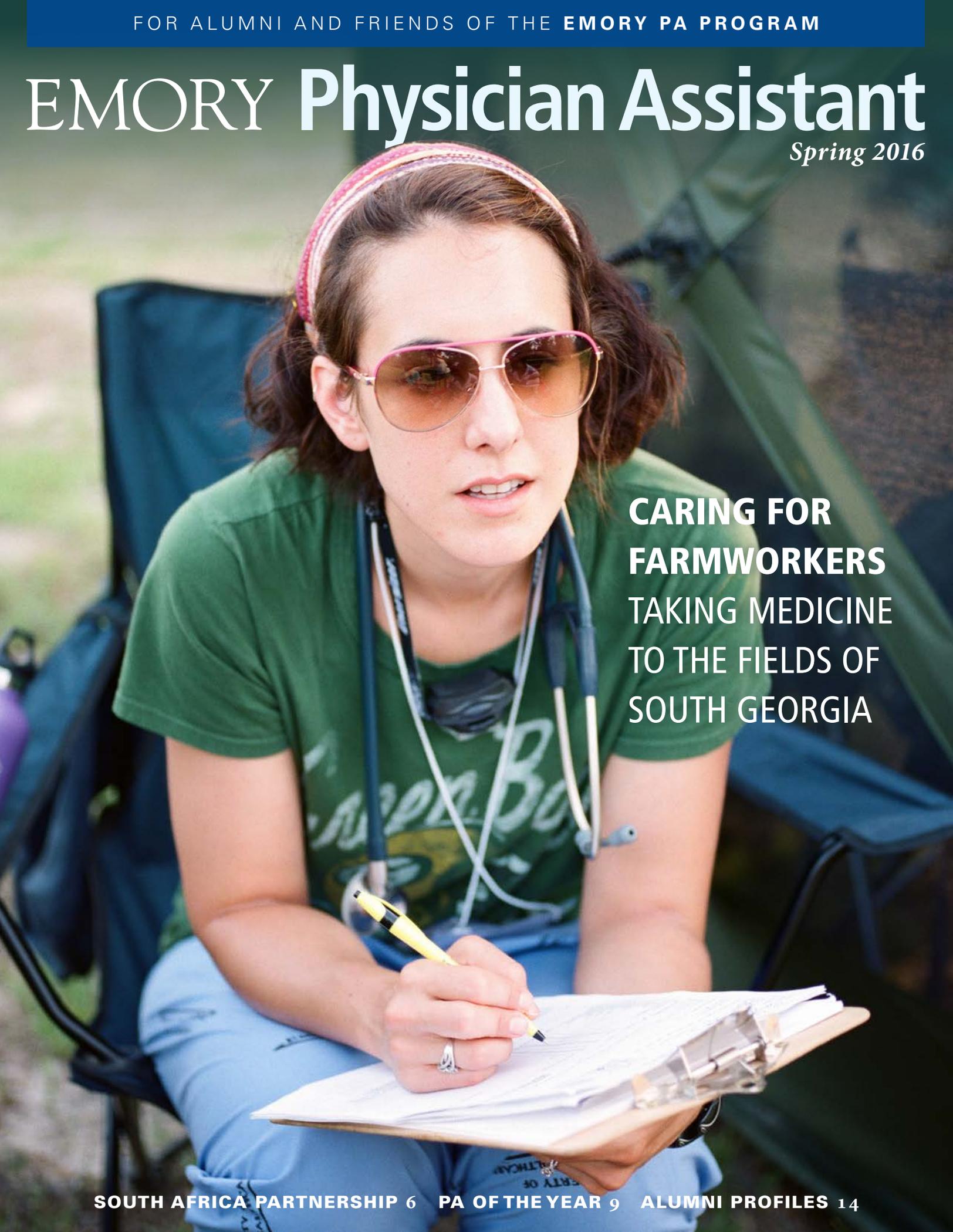


EMORY Physician Assistant

Spring 2016



**CARING FOR
FARMWORKERS
TAKING MEDICINE
TO THE FIELDS OF
SOUTH GEORGIA**

Director's Update



WELCOME TO THE FIRST ANNUAL PA ALUMNI MAGAZINE. I am pleased to report that our program continues to thrive. Just before the December holidays we celebrated the graduation of our latest outstanding class. Graduates and their families attended a breakfast where students were presented with their “long” white coats by their faculty society leaders. The commencement ceremony

took place that afternoon at the Glenn Memorial Church. The invited speaker was Dr. G. Marshall Lyon III, a member of the clinical team that treated the Ebola patients at Emory. See page 10 for photos from that day. We wish all our graduates the best as they spread their wings and join the ranks of our distinguished alumni throughout the world.

Our faculty continues to excel. In addition to teaching, they have distinguished themselves through publications, conference presentations, and grant awards. At the Annual Education Forum of the Physician Assistant Education Association in Washington, D.C., four Emory faculty members led workshops and participated on panels. The faculty was also well represented as invited speakers at the Spring Conference of the Georgia Association of Physician Assistants here in Atlanta. Emory continues to be recognized as a national leader in PA education and was ranked No. 3 in the most recent *US News & World Report* national ratings.

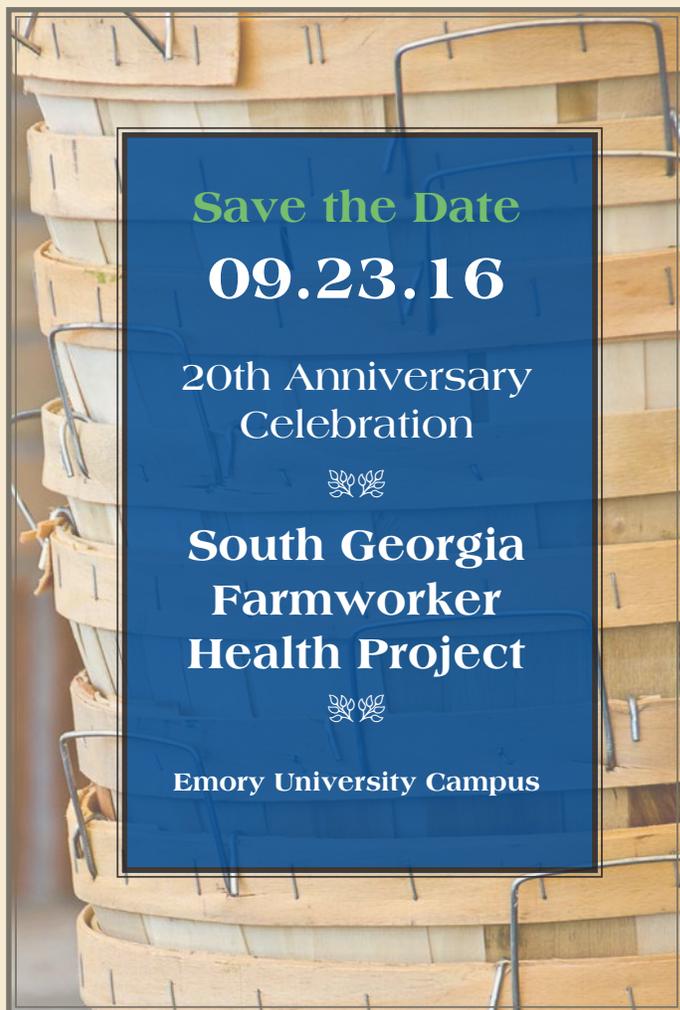
We are maintaining our tradition of community outreach and service. This year will bring more exciting adventures, including the 20th anniversary of our South Georgia Farmworker Health Project. I invite all who have participated over the years to send me your most memorable farmworker project experiences to be included in a bound collection. (See page 5 for an example.) We hope you will be able to join us either in South Georgia this summer or for the anniversary celebration planned for Friday, September 23, 2016, during our annual Board Review in Atlanta.

We could not accomplish all that we do without your support. Thank you and best wishes for 2016.

MAHA B. LUND, DHSC, PA-C

Program Director

maha.lund@emory.edu



Emory Physician Assistant Magazine

Editor **Elizabeth Rothschild**
Art Director **Peta Westmaas**
Production Manager **Carol Pinto**
Web Specialist **Wendy Darling**
Exec Dir, Health Sciences Creative Services **Karon Schindler**
Associate VP, Health Sciences Communications **Vincent Dollard**

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Physician Assistant Program
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The SGFHP team waiting for evening clinic huddles in Lake Park, GA.

On the cover:

Erin Cuomo
Chheang 15MMSc
works with farm-
workers at SGFHP
near Valdosta, GA.

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Starting in 1996 with eight students and a few donations, the program has grown to over 200 volunteers as it plans for its 20th year.

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The Emory University PA Program has played a vital role in guiding the development of the new Clinical Associate program in Johannesburg, South Africa. This program is being established to alleviate the health care provider shortages in rural areas.

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To reach broader audiences, the Board Review was first recorded in 2006, and now the 36-CME-hour video course is cloud-based. Last year was the 25th year of the live conference with PAs from 26 states in attendance.

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Randy Bundschu became the first PA at Saint Joseph's Hospital following his Emory graduation in 1978, blazing the trail for many PAs. Randy has contributed much to the PA profession and to Emory University.



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Caring For Farmworkers: *A 20-Year Perspective*

BY ERIN LEPP AND SOFIA KOUNINIS

PHOTOGRAPHERS GRACIE BLUE PHOTOGRAPHY AND RANDY BUNDSCHU



THE EMORY PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM'S South Georgia Farmworker Health Project (SGFHP) started in 1996 with eight PA students, three PA faculty, and one physician, all under the direction of project founder Tom Himelick, PA-C, an alumnus of the Emory PA Program and former faculty member. Today it has evolved into an annual multidisciplinary service learning opportunity that involves over 200 student clinicians, faculty members, and community volunteers. This summer will mark the project's 20th anniversary.

This Emory endeavor helps address the health care needs of an often overlooked population—farmworkers. While fruit and vegetable cultivation in Georgia brings more than a billion dollars a year into the state, pickers receive low pay, live largely in makeshift camps or seasonal housing, and have limited access to general health care, prenatal care,



Tom Himelick started the SGFHP in 1996. At right and on following page, Emory faculty and students during the Summer 2015 project.

or medication. The expansion of the PA Program's outreach has been made possible with the expertise of Alisha Smith-Thym, project coordinator, who works year-round to stay connected to community and clinic partners, oversee donations of clothing and supplies, recruit volunteer medical interpreters, and manage the logistics of getting over 200 volunteers to the farms, campsites, and schools where care is provided.

Over the past 20 years, SGFHP clinical teams have treated a broad range of patients, including people who have never before been seen by a provider,

women in labor, and workers with acute illnesses and serious chronic conditions. Each June, the rotating morning and afternoon clinics provide free care for 1,200 to 1,600 farmworkers and their family members over 12 days. An additional 300 seasonal workers are seen during an October weekend clinic.





During the visit, each patient receives a hygiene kit with donated items, such as a toothbrush, toothpaste, washcloths, work gloves, and protective eye wear. Long lines form well into the night as word spreads that “Emory is here.”

South Georgia locations include farms in and around Valdosta and Bainbridge. When the farmworkers arrive at the field clinic, they are matched with a volunteer interpreter (if needed) and care teams comprised of PA, PT, and medical students who collaborate to take a thorough medical history and perform their initial physical exam. Students then present their findings to physicians, PAs, PTs, and mental health counselors who help students refine their care plans and provide on-site teaching. Emily Herndon, MD, volunteer preceptor for the project and assistant professor of Family and Preventive Medicine, says of the interprofessional collaboration, “By joining forces, health professions students really begin to learn an approach to medicine from each other’s perspective.”

The SGFHP has broadened its scope and effectiveness through the use of interprofessional teams of students and

faculty from various School of Medicine programs—PA, PT, and medicine. “Last summer’s outreach was our most successful effort so far,” says Sara Pullen, PT faculty collaborator and assistant professor in the doctoral PT program. “We had this simple idea to try working truly collaboratively this year instead of in parallel. The student feedback about working with other health professions students was overwhelmingly positive.”

Maha Lund, program director, started participating in the farmworker project soon after joining the Emory PA Program in 2014. “We are excited for the role that our project has within the School of Medicine’s broader efforts to coordinate students across the health disciplines in learning and working,” she says. “This service learning project is a creative way to teach collaboration and professionalism and to promote a spirit of volunteerism within the School of Medicine.”

Erin Lepp is PA academic coordinator and director of community-engaged learning and projects. Sofia Kouninis 14C also contributed to this article.



Con Estas Manos

(With These Hands, an excerpt)

By Tom Himelick 2014

The doctors are young. They are sweating like me.
The gnats get in their eyes too.
They give me tabletas for my back
They listen to my words, my sorrow,
my fears – where is mi hermano?
What if they send me back?
I listen to their words, their Inglés.
I see a boy who looks to be my age
Or maybe the age of Diego.
I hear him speaking some español
Maybe it is the cerveza, or maybe my heart still hurts.
I approach him.
Together we try our words – English, Spanish.
Suddenly he leaves. I worry, maybe he is La Migra, but then he is back.
He hands me a book “Inglés para Latinos,” smiles, shakes my hand.
We say adiós.
Mañana I find him at the store, and give him a bag of tomatoes I picked.
From my hands to his hands.
From my heart to his.
Maybe Diego has been here with me. Maybe not.
But for un momento in this hard place, I had a friend.

10/10/10 - Bainbridge, GA

We arrive at the last clinic for the weekend. I am starving and know that it will be some time before we eat lunch. I rummage through my bag and find a stray banana and a snack pack of crackers. I tuck away the unopened snack and head over to the line.

Across from me is Guillermo, but he says he goes by “Memo”. His pants are gathered with a rope to fit his small frame. I look down at his chart and I see a blood sugar of 48.

This is his story – the one story that has stayed with me, unable to sponge away –

He has not eaten in a week.

He makes \$50 a week and \$30 goes to rent. This particular week is his daughter’s birthday. She is seven years old and her name is Isabelle. Of the \$20 he had left, he wanted to buy her a small gift. With the rest of the money he bought tortillas and soap – for the kids.

He says that they had “some” food but it is for the kids, they are hungry as well.

I am concerned and I reach down and grab my banana and snack pack. I tell him to eat. I want to recheck his blood sugar and I want it to be in normal range.

He tells me that he is embarrassed to eat in front of me and he motions to “go around the corner.” I look over at the apartment building and see Memo running down the stairs – no banana, no snack pack.

Did you eat? Si...pero mi esposa me llamo. (Yes, but my wife called me up.)

Memo sat back down and I took comfort in seeing a few banana crumbs on his dark mustache.

We talk more about other ailments and I inquire more about what he can do to get food. He tells me that many of the food banks in town require an ID card. He has tried. I fill his bag with socks, glasses, gloves and all the granola bars I can sequester from my classmates and I instruct him to eat whatever he can when he can. A temporary solution that will soon fall away. I see him grab some clothes from the picked over display and head out from the clinic area to meet his wife and daughter who are standing by the stair case. His daughter is eating a banana and snack pack of crackers.

Kristal Anguiano, IOMMSc, PA-C

Now working at a Community Health Center in Northern Texas

Emory PA Program Partnering Abroad

Fighting Health Care Disparities in South Africa



If you are lucky enough to be among the 18% of South Africans who can access private doctors and hospitals, you'll receive care that rivals or even exceeds care in European countries. But if you're among the more than 80% who must rely on the public health sector, you will face long waits, rationed care, and outdated equipment and facilities.

The Emory PA Program is working with the University of Witwatersrand (Wits) Faculty of Health in Johannesburg to try to rectify the stark inequities in the South African health care system. Specifically, Emory PA faculty, staff, and students are helping Wits develop a program to educate a new category of health care provider in South Africa—the Clinical Associate.

This new profession is modeled after physician assistants in the U.S. with the hope that this new cadre of health care providers can alleviate manpower shortages, especially in the rural district hospitals.

The seeds for this change were sown in 2001, when the Cabinet of the Ministry of Health approved training for Clinical Associates. Shortly afterward,

a delegation from South Africa visited the AAPA office and several U.S. PA programs, including Emory's, to better understand how PAs operate within the



health care system and their training.

In 2007, a National Task Force Team in South Africa developed a three-year curriculum leading to a Bachelor in Clin-

ical Medicine Practice (BCMP) degree for the training of Clinical Associates (CAs). One year later, the first training program began with 23 students at Walter Sisulu University in Eastern Cape. The University of Pretoria and Wits soon followed.

The effort received a big boost when the American International Health Alliance (AIHA) was brought in to link the new training programs with established programs in the U.S. AIHA is a nonprofit organization working to advance global health by teaming U.S. health experts with counterparts in developing countries.

With support from the CDC/South Africa, AIHA launched three university-based partnerships with the fledgling programs. The Emory PA program was selected to partner with Wits.



“The selection process was very competitive and we were honored to be chosen,” says

Marquitha Mayfield, academic coordinator. “The Emory PA Program is one of the oldest in the U.S., with over 40 years of experience training PAs. As the profession expands worldwide, it’s important that Emory supports these efforts by sharing expertise with developing programs.”

Key accomplishments of the Emory/Wits partnership include conducting faculty development workshops for teaching staff and clinical preceptors at district hospitals. Emory PA faculty served as external examiners for final examinations at Wits and helped develop the Clinical Associates National Exam.

To support these new Clinical Associates as they begin their practice in Northwest Province, experts from Emory trained district hospital managers on key supervision, evaluation, and feedback skills. Together, partners planned the recent International Academy of Physician Associate Educators meeting, an event that brought together representatives from medical training programs around

the globe to share best practices.

Wits faculty and staff attended the AAPA/SAAAPA annual conference in 2011, and Emory PA students produced a video library focused on clinical bedside skills to share with Wits students.

In addition, an Emory PA alumnae, Zukisa Tshabalala 00MMSc, is academic coordinator of the Clinical Associate program at the University of Pretoria and president of the new professional organization representing Clinical Associates,



The Emory University/Wits team (l-r): Dr. Alan Otsuki, past associate dean of Emory School of Medicine; Dr. Dana Sayre-Stanhope, former PA Program director; Dr Audrey Gibbs, Wits Clinical Associate Program coordinator; Marquitha Mayfield, PA Program academic coordinator; and Abigail Dreyer, Wits North West Clinical Associates project manager.

the Professional Association of Clinical Associates of South Africa.

To date, the Clinical Associate training programs have graduated over 100 board-certified practitioners. These graduates have gone on to provide much-needed patient care in rural hospitals.

“The Emory PA/Wits partnership is an example of collaboration at its best,” says Mayfield. “It is making a real difference in the lives of South Africans.”

The Health Care Imbalance

South Africa is a beautiful country with immense challenges in providing basic health care to its citizens. Since the fall of Apartheid, the government has worked to make health care services more equitable and provide universal access to health care. Basic primary care services are free to all, with secondary and tertiary care available on an income-based sliding scale. There are 400 provincial hospitals, 1,300 clinics, and 200 private hospitals.

Health care services in South Africa are delivered through the private and public sectors, which provide quite different levels of care. The private sector serves middle- and high-income patients who comprise 18% of the population. A high proportion of health care providers deliver care in this sector.

The public sector provides care to middle- and low-income patients, most of whom are indigenous Africans. This group accounts for 72% of the population. There is an extreme shortage of health care providers in this public sector.

Preparing for the Boards

25 Years and Beyond



Faculty speaker Virginia Joslin 83BMSc 92MPH delivers a talk at last year's conference.

THE 25TH ANNUAL Certification/Recertification Board Review Conference was held in September 2015 at the Emory Conference Center Hotel. More than 185 PAs from 26 states, including 54 students and 25 alumni of the Emory PA Program, attended. The four-day CME conference featured 36 hours of

concentrated review topics based on the NCCPA blueprint.

When the Board Review started in 1990, it was offered only to senior Emory PA students as they prepared

for the PANCE. When they learned of the course, alumni wanted to attend as well. Today practicing PAs come from all over the country to participate in this intensive board review course.

As the course evolved, Tom Himelick, former PA faculty member, and Allan Platt, academic coordinator and director of admissions, began video recording and then digitally recording the course. Today it is a cloud-based, 36-hour video course that offers video lectures, access from mobile devices, and online CME testing.

The Emory PA Program sells the Board Review recordings to PAs nationwide and military PAs serving overseas. Many other PA programs purchase the Board Review for their own students.

Proceeds from the sale of the course help fund the annual South Georgia Farmworker Health Project.

Emory's Board Review is reaching PAs across the nation and the globe with board preparation materials.

Up next...

Join us **Sept. 21-24, 2016**,
at the Emory Conference
Center for the live
Board Review Conference



Tom Himelick and Allan Platt have played key roles in making the Board Review available to PAs across the country.

Outstanding PA of the Year

Randy Bundschu

RANDY BUNDSCHU 78BMSc PA-C didn't set out to become a trailblazer when he joined the Emory PA Program in the mid-'70s. But trailblazer he was.

Upon graduating in 1978, Randy became the first PA at Saint Joseph's Hospital, opening the door for others in the profession. At Saint Joseph's, Randy worked with pioneering adult vascular surgeon Dr. Harold Harrison. He then moved on to pediatric cardiac critical care at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta at Egleston, where he has cared for some of Atlanta's youngest and most critically ill patients for the past 33 years.

During the awards breakfast for the graduating Class of 2015, Randy was honored as the Outstanding PA of the Year.

"This is the second time in his career that he has received this honor, and it is well deserved," says PA Program Director Maha Lund. "We are so appreciative of all the ways that Randy has contributed to our PA Program and to the entire PA profession."

In addition to his patient care duties, Randy has taught cardiothoracic fellows and residents how to manage the medical needs of pediatric surgical patients at Egleston and serves as a preceptor for Emory PA and medical students who rotate with his service. Randy's distinguished career includes time serving as the associate program director and director of admissions for the Emory PA Program, where he developed its "holistic" approach to interviewing potential applicants and helped implement the national Centralized Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA) at Emory. Active in the education and legislative arms of the profession at both the state and national level, Randy has represented Georgia PAs in the Amer-



Randy Bundschu, pictured here with his daughter, Natalie, became the first PA at Saint Joseph's Hospital following his Emory graduation in 1978.

ican Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) House of Delegates, ultimately serving as speaker of the House of Delegates for two terms. In addition, he spent six years on the AAPA Board of Directors. Randy still serves as a guest lecturer at the Emory PA Program, teaching on the topic of the history of the PA profession, professional development, and maintenance of certification.

One of Randy's most enduring legacies, however, will be his contributions to the Emory PA Program's South Georgia Farmworker Health Project, where he has faithfully volunteered as a clinical preceptor every summer for the past 18 years. Randy helps organize all the logistics that take place behind the scenes, such as helping lead the project's caravan to and from field sites, helping

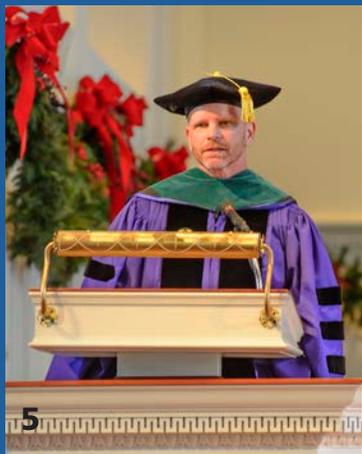
logistics volunteers set up the field clinic, and precepting student clinicians as they provide care to farmworkers.

"I couldn't have learned everything I needed to know to organize and run this growing interprofessional education initiative without Randy's mentoring and support," says PA Program faculty member Erin Lepp, who helps oversee the program's efforts to increase student participation in engaged-learning activities like the farmworker project. "Whether he was leading 50 cars down a rut-filled dusty road, or running back to his truck to find a 25 gauge needle and IV tubing that he had packed, (just in case we needed it), I don't think most students can fully appreciate all that he has done behind the scenes to keep this project going and growing all these years."

Continued on page 16

Graduation | Emory PA Class of 2015

On December 18th, the Emory PA Program graduates attended the awards breakfast at Cox Hall and the traditional cap and gown ceremony at Glenn Memorial. For the past six years, graduating students have been presented with their “long” white coats during the breakfast. This year the PA Learning Society Leaders coated each graduate.





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1. Jeremy Amayo, Cate Crenson, Carrie Bergmans. 2. Jamie Ports, Laura Pride, Elizabeth Grass. 4. Sam Vasquez-Milan. 5. Dr. Ted Johnson, Chair of Department of FPM. 6. Randy Bundschu, PA of the Year. 9. Dr. Jodie Guest with two of the four Dual Degree PA/MPH graduates: Jose Guillen, Jamie Ports. 10. Melanie Williams coated by Society Leader Greg Burke. 11. Preceptor Ron Sanders, PA-C; Rotation of the Year. 12. Society Leader Marquitha Mayfield pins Amanda Catchings. 13. Mayfield presents Cassie Frank with Academic Achievement Award. 14. Allan Platt, Didactic Teacher of the Year, presented by his daughter Melissa Platt. 15. LeAnne Martinelli and Dr. Wylie Nichols, honored for 33 years of teaching at Emory SOM. 16. Mayfield & Mize Society.

PA and NHSC | Spotlight on Scholars

The Emory PA Program has graduated many National Health Service Corps Scholars over the past 30 years, with 10 scholars in the past three years alone. This highly competitive full-tuition scholarship is awarded to students who commit to work in primary care clinics serving communities in need. Read the stories of several recent graduates from all over the country.



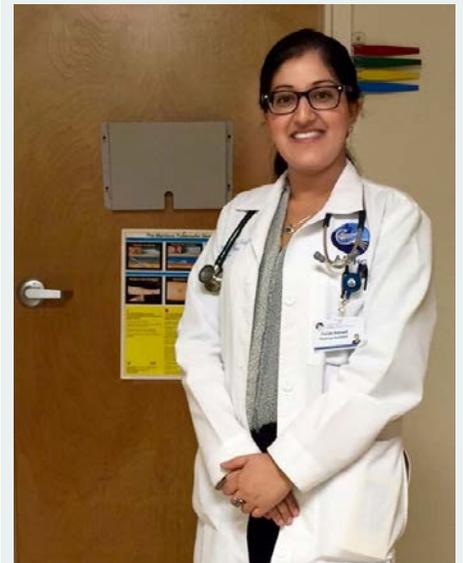
Allie Ivanowicz, Class of 2013
Location: Wenatchee, Washington

I am so thankful I was chosen for the NHSC scholarship program. I'll admit, I was a little nervous about it initially but couldn't be happier now! I am currently working as a full-time primary care provider at a federally qualified community health center, Columbia Valley Community Health, in Wenatchee, Washington. Wenatchee is in a beautiful river valley filled with cherry, pear, and apple orchards as well as numerous vineyards. This draws many migrant as well as permanent orchard workers to our valley, which is a large part of the population I serve. Wenatchee is also an outdoor paradise. I can hike or snow-

shoe out my back door. Amazing white-water, snow skiing, or rock climbing are just minutes away.

Our practice is one of the first community health centers to truly be a patient-centered medical home. This is one of my favorite parts of working here. Our patients have access to primary and urgent care, pharmacy, radiology, laboratory, diabetes and nutrition specialists, and behavioral medicine. Many of my patients only speak Spanish and have very low health literacy and experience. I love that they can come to our clinic and feel comfortable with bilingual providers, signage, and patient education.

I am so incredibly thankful for my NHSC scholarship. I'm not sure I knew how much I would love primary care and working with the underserved. If I had graduated from Emory with the normal student loans, I most likely would have chosen a more specialized position (with possibly higher pay) to pay off my loans more quickly. However, the scholarship allowed me to work in an underserved clinic with a patient demographic that I love (Spanish speaking!) and not have to worry about the loans. NHSC has given me great training and resources. It has also encouraged me to strive to be a better provider, a better listener, and a more courageous advocate for my patients.



Farida Ahmadi, Class of 2014
Location: Albany, Georgia

The NHSC scholarship has allowed me to work with a diverse, underserved population group that otherwise would have no other place to seek medical care. The NHSC scholarship helps bridge the gaps in accessibility of health care and puts providers in primary care shortage areas where their skills can be effectively used. The scholarship has allowed me the opportunity to work in a small community in which I can provide comprehensive primary care. As a provider on the front line, you learn humility toward every patient that walks into the clinic because everyone is striving to live a long and healthy life.



Dannon Martin, Class of 2014

Location: Chicago, Illinois

I was fortunate to find a family practice position that matched my background and personal goals by serving as a provider at the Christian Community Health Center. Working as a PA has given me the opportunity to give back to my community. I would not have been able to accomplish this without the support of the NHSC scholarship during my training at Emory University. In the clinic I strive to connect with my patients and be a motivational force—encouraging them to be healthy in order to accomplish their dreams and goals. Patients look forward to returning for follow-up visits and keep me abreast of their success.



Ana Maria Galvez, Class of 2014

Location: Salt Lake City, Utah

I have always been passionate about working with the underserved and NHSC has allowed me to do just that while minimizing my loan burden. Following graduation from Emory, I moved to Utah to work at a traditional family practice clinic where I see patients of all ages—from pregnant women and newborns to the elderly. Every day is a new challenge filled with many different types of clinical cases. I have a great deal of autonomy as a PA, and my current position has allowed me to learn under excellent physician mentorship and support. This has been an excellent start to my career, and I look forward to the many more years of learning I have ahead.



Takeia Horton, Class of 2014

Location: Virginia

I am currently working in a very busy family medicine clinic in rural south Virginia. I see both adults and children, and I love it. We see patients with everything from the common cold to chronic diseases. The area that I work in is very resource poor (especially in terms of specialists), and most of our patients have Medicare/Medicaid or have no insurance at all. Working at a FQHC has given me great experience and exposure to so many disease processes and outcomes. I knew going into school that I wanted to work in primary care, and the NHSC scholarship helped me not only with paying for school but has also given me great training in medicine. No matter where my career takes me, I know that I have gotten a very solid foundation due to my experiences in the NHSC scholarship program.



Courtney Smith, Class of 2013

Location: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

I am currently working in family practice at a community clinic in Milwaukee called Sixteenth Street Community Health Center. The majority of our patients are Spanish speaking without insurance. I would say the NHSC provided me with the financial freedom to pursue my desire to work in an underserved area, rather than taking a higher paying specialty job.

Alumni Profiles



Marianne Hoosier, Class of 1994

Northern Exposure: PA in Alaska,

I'm a full-time PA for ConocoPhillips, an oil and gas company with operations as far north in Alaska as possible. My location is a camp in an area of Alaska referred to as The North Slope. Geographically we are working in an arctic desert that is located over 800 air miles from our supervising physicians' hospital. I fly into the clinic and stay on the Slope for two weeks at a time. At the clinic, we provide health care for a population of about 1,800 oil industry workers. On occasion, I also work as a locum for the Native Corporations in remote Alaskan villages during my off time.

How did Emory training impact your career? As a National Health Service Corp scholar preparing to graduate from the Emory PA Program in 1994, I was eager to begin my adventure as a PA-C. Fast-forward to today and I can say what an incredible journey it has been! The Emory PA Program and staff provided me with an excellent foundation for building my career. Atlanta was my PA journey starting point, and today I work hundreds of miles from the nearest medical supervisor and hospital. My clinic is located above the Arctic Circle about as far north in America as possible without going for an icy polar bear plunge into the Beaufort Sea.

Describe a lasting memory from Emory: I recall how challenging the Emory PA Program was. The saying, "The rewards are greater when the challenges are great," applies to my experience at Emory.

Advice to current students/recent graduates: First, I want to congratulate each and every one of the Emory PA students, both current and alumni. It took me years to recognize and appreciate what a great foundation the Emory PA Program laid for us. Step back and look around, and you will notice that many of our Emory graduates are now leaders throughout our country. That's exciting! My one piece of clinical advice is always trust your gut feeling. It is one of your most valuable tools for providing exceptional medical care.

What is the most rewarding part of your job? It has been a privilege serving rural and remote communities during my career as a PA-C, including 23 Alaskan native villages, a gold mine, and multiple oil and gas industry camps throughout Alaska. The most rewarding part of my job is having the independence to travel and work with a variety of different patient populations and cultures in some of the most beautiful places on earth.

Kathy Adamson, Class of 1981

NCCPA Medical Advisor and Director of

Review and Appeals



My career has been as varied as it has been long. I absolutely adored my time at Grady. The patients were uniformly gracious, their culture was rich, and they shared their life stories without reservation. My time in the Air Force was a fascinating adventure. The Air Force gave me the opportunity to teach, an honor I had longed for, but frankly could not have afforded to do in the civilian community. I grew the most—as far as opening my mind to a whole new way of looking at the world and making decisions that impact tens of thousands of PA professionals—during my time on the NCCPA Board of Directors.

How did Emory training impact your career? My time at Emory opened my mind to the benefits of critical thinking. The concept of evidence-based medicine must be expanded to the social, political, and cultural spheres with which one is engaging.

Describe a lasting memory from Emory: I remember as a brand new second-year PA student, I was granted the honor of being the first Emory PA student allowed to attend a two-week inpatient radiology rotation. That first day in early 1981, I and several med students were given a tour of the radiology department and were privileged to view a huge machine that looked right out of an alien movie! That day we were seeing for the first time a computerized tomography (CT) machine!

Jeri Sumitani, Class of 2008 Physician Assistant in Infectious Disease



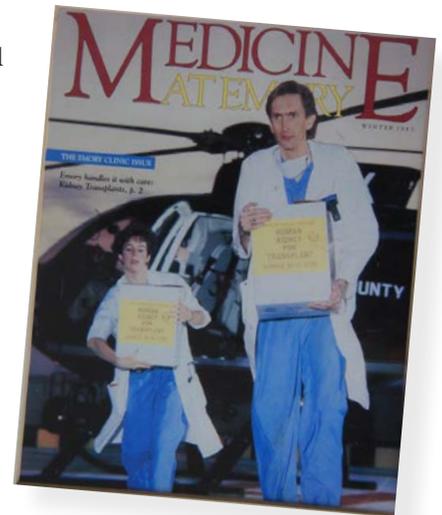
Having worked domestically as well as internationally, I continue to be amazed every time people confide their worst fears and share their most personal problems with me as a PA. I have always felt that being a health care provider is the ultimate privilege, and my seven years as a PA have been filled with such privileges.

Attending Emory solidified my desire to work with underserved populations. Participating in community service learning projects, such as the Good Samaritan Clinic and the South Georgia Farmworker Health Project, opened my eyes to the diverse needs of fragile patients. (See the next page for Jeri's blog post.)

Advice to current students: When things got rough in school, I always told myself, "I have one job right now, which is to learn and understand all that I can." I can most certainly say that we all continue to learn (and relearn) everything after graduating, but that the learning process is completely different when you're no longer a student.

Charles Bearden, Class of 1973 Organ Transplant Coordinator

How did Emory training impact your career? My training at Grady Memorial Hospital impressed upon me the critical importance of the team approach to patient care and how to successfully interact with all the various team members. This skill has been tremendously valuable as a PA organ transplant coordinator, orchestrating the organ donation and transplant process in the ICU and OR. Providing the high acuity care of the brain-dead donor on maximal support, and then coordinating the intricate sequencing of the surgical organ recovery, underscored, on every occasion, that the outcome was dependent on the team, not the individual.



Advice to current students: Pursue careers in wellness, preventive medicine, and primary care. Be flexible professionally. Find a practice you can be passionate about. Your professional integrity is your most valuable asset. Protect it at all costs. Invest heavily in yourself with high-quality CME.

What is the most rewarding part of your job? By far and away the most rewarding parts of my job as a PA in transplant have been my interactions with the families and next of kin of my patients who became organ donors. It was a singular honor and distinction to care for the donors and families.

Battling Ebola: A View From the Front Lines

Jeri Sumitani, Class of 2008

Jeri Sumitani was featured on WebMD as she chronicled her volunteer work in Sierra Leone from December 2014 to January 2015. Read excerpts from her blog:

<http://bit.ly/battling-ebola>



Jeri Sumitani, far left, with co-workers in Sierra Leone

Part 1: When the Ebola outbreak reached a critical point during the summer of 2014, I started submitting requests to volunteer in West Africa. I am a U.S.-trained PA working in HIV medicine for the past two years in South Africa. I don't have any experience managing viral hemorrhagic fevers and would never describe myself as an infectious disease "specialist." I have never been to West Africa and don't understand the cultural context under which this disease has exploded.

What I do know is that having worked and lived in Africa and other resource-limited settings, I understand what the challenges are and perhaps more important, my own limitations. I know what I cannot change and when I have reached my physical and psychological limits. Besides that, the only reason I qualified for this position is because I am willing to do whatever is asked. I am no martyr and no hero. I have no intentions of saving the world from Ebola. I volunteered simply because I can.

Part 15: Although I still struggle to make sense of this experience and where it will lead me, I am starting to articulate some things I learned.

I learned the power of human connection in the form of simple words, a smile, even eye contact. Ebola is a disease that steals every shred of humanity and dignity from those affected. It even steals physical touch, a well-known antidote for pain and suffering. Without these tools, I felt useless as a health care provider—until I realized that human connection encompasses much more than physical contact.

Despite their pain, patients smiled at me when I told them how proud I was that they had finished their bottle of rehydrating solution so quickly. They shed tears of relief when I acknowledged their pain. Just making eye contact with patients too weak to talk gave us a semblance of connection. And when patients died in the isolation unit, we would talk to the family members for as long as they needed and often cry with them.

I am not saying any of this was enough. But these little moments of human connection restored some humanity and dignity in a situation that is so devoid of both. What Sierra Leone and its people gave me is an additional piece of me—one that makes me better, a more compassionate health care provider, a more understanding human being.

Maybe one day, I will be able to repay them for this gift.

Continued from page 9



Volunteering with the project became a family affair when Randy's then 11-year-old daughter Natalie began joining her father. She was quickly put to work packing clothing and toiletry items to give away to the farmworkers. Now aged 27 and a teacher at Clairemont Elementary School in Decatur, Natalie still carves out at least a week of her summer vacation to work alongside her father and help manage the project's rudimentary dispensary.

"I've noticed how much he looks forward to participating in the project every year," says Natalie (shown above with her father). "Not only because he gets to be a part of educating the next generation of PAs in such a unique environment, but because he really believes in providing health care for people who may not normally receive it."

Emory Updates: News From the PA Program Office

Greetings from the staff of the Emory PA Program! There have been many changes to the Emory campus since the PA Program was established in 1971. We hope you can stop in for a visit next time you are in the area to see our new Education Building.

We are always available to assist with any alumni needs. Please use the quick reference guide below when you need assistance from the program.

We are so grateful for the many contributions and support we receive from alumni. Thank you!

Seated (left to right): Chandra Simmons, Ednisha Riley, Ursula Robertson, Tabitha Curtis
Standing (left to right): Alisha Smith-Thym, Felicia Mobley, Fran Willis, Kaye Johnson



Alumni Request

Completion of Enrollment Verification Forms, Credentialing and Licensure documents

Questions about the Emory Board Review

Volunteer for South Georgia Farmworker Health Project

Serve as a Preceptor

All other requests or questions

Contact Person

Felicia B. Mobley
felicia.mobley@emory.edu

Ursula Robertson
unichol@emory.edu

Alisha Smith-Thym
alisha.smith@emory.edu

Chandra Simmons
cjsimmons@emory.edu

Felicia B. Mobley, Business Manager
felicia.mobley@emory.edu



Send us your news! Submit comments, questions, and updates to the Emory PA Program, 1462 Clifton Road, Suite 280, Atlanta, GA, 30322, 404-727-7825, felicia.mobley@emory.edu.



See you in San Antonio!

Are you attending the upcoming AAPA Conference in May? Pull on your cowboy boots, grab your hat, and join us:

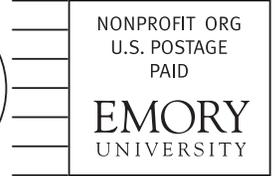
**Alumni Reception at the AAPA Conference
Grand Hyatt Hotel
Saturday, May 14, 6 pm to 8pm**



Physician Assistant Program
Emory University School of Medicine

1462 Clifton Road NE, Suite 280
Atlanta, Georgia 30322

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Congratulations Class of 2015!

