



physician assistant SPOTLIGHT

For alumni and friends of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Physician Assistant Program

WINTER 2022

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KEEP IN TOUCH!

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Student Applies Life-Saving Addiction Medicine Training

Just before leaving for vacation, second-year student Anne Mills, PA-S x'22, completed the first-year addiction medicine unit, newly offered by the School of Medicine and Public Health Physician Assistant (PA) Program. Below, she recounts putting that training to use.

By Anne Mills, PA-S, x'22

In May of 2021 I was visiting my best friend who lives in Las Vegas, Nevada. We had just gotten out of her car near Fremont Street when we heard people yelling and crying. We hurried over to where the yelling was coming from and found two people, unmoving and pale, on the ground. One woman and one man.

A woman was doing compressions on the male while a crowd, including about 15 police officers, watched. Paramedics had also just arrived. I ran over to the man who was receiving compressions and talked to the woman. I asked her to stop compressions and checked the man's pulse – it was extremely faint but I could feel one.



Anne Mills, right, with her friend in Las Vegas

I figured it was very unlikely that two people had managed to pass out at the same place and the same time so I asked the woman if they had taken any drugs or medications. Without hesitation, she told me that they had done heroin.

I immediately told a paramedic passing by to get Narcan. He asked me why.

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LIFE-SAVING TRAINING

(Continued from page 1)

I remember being so confused why no one else had asked what happened yet, and why no one had thought of getting Narcan before this. I told him that they had done heroin and needed Narcan. The ambulance only had a couple of doses so I started yelling to all of the police officers who were standing around us asking if they carried Narcan on them or if they could get any.

While they were trying to find Narcan I began helping the paramedics start an IV, oxygenate the male patient and hold him on his side. The woman received a couple of doses of Narcan and was semi-arousable by the time she was taken away in the ambulance. By the time the man left in the ambulance, I had given him three doses of Narcan and he still wasn't arousable. When we first put a

pulse ox on, his O2 saturation was dangerously low. After the doses of Narcan, his stats had improved and we could visibly see his chest rising and falling for the first time since being there.

"I remember being so confused why no one else had thought of getting Narcan."

After they both had left in the ambulance the woman who I had originally talked to ran over to my friend and me and thanked us profusely.

She said that she was the man's wife and that before we had gotten there, no one had done anything to help. A police officer also came over to us before we left and thanked me for quick thinking and

for jumping in to help.

This happened about a week after we had completed our addiction medicine unit that spring. I'm so glad that I had the knowledge and the confidence to be able to help in this situation, largely thanks to that unit and Amy Parins who teaches it.

Faculty member Amy E. Parins, MPAS '15, PA-C '08, teaches both didactic and clinical year students. Thanks to a recent Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant she has worked with addiction specialists to create curriculum that trains students to effectively screen, diagnose and treat substance and opioid use disorders. Parins says she finds this work particularly meaningful because her brother, Adam, lost his battle with opioid use disorder in April 2019. (See our Spring 2020 newsletter.)

Student Receives Inaugural WAPA Scholarship



Ashley Crawford

Last October the Wisconsin Academy of Physician Assistants (WAPA) awarded its first Diversity Student Scholarship to Ashley Crawford, PA-S '22.

Crawford served as a Diversity and Community Outreach Co-Representative on the PA Program's student government in 2020-2021. Last year, she and another student created and facilitated "PAss the Mic" sessions for students to explore difficult issues on race and equity, including what it means to be an anti-racist healthcare provider. (See our Winter 2021 newsletter.)

Crawford's passion to dismantle systems that reinforce widening health disparities between white and underrepresented Black and Indigenous persons of color (BIPOC) inspires her to work in underserved and under-resourced urban communities. She hopes to use her community health background to guide the implementation of anti-racist practices at a policy and systems level.

Each year WAPA and the WAPA Legacy Committee bestows awards upon qualified individuals for excellence in academic accomplishment, leadership, community involvement and creativity. The Diversity Student Scholarship comes with a \$1000 stipend and is awarded to a member of racial or ethnic groups that are traditionally underrepresented in the PA profession.



Students say "thanks" with STETHOSCOPE SELFIES

Each year, every incoming student receives a stethoscope and congratulatory note from a PA Program donor. In turn, they have found some creative ways to say "thanks." Learn more about the "Gift a Stethoscope, Welcome a Student" initiative at: <https://jumpstart.supportuw.org/campaigns/pa-stethoscope-3#/>

Top row: Maya Botomani-Mposi, Tasneem Amro, Tj Lewin, Anh Tran, Noah Kieffer. Middle row: Maureen Nwozo, Amelia Flocchini, Demitra Philosophos, Aisha Ahmed, Gabby Henshue. Bottom row: Jamie Cummings

Alum Gifts Stethoscopes in Memory of Sister

Julie Nelsen, PA-C '85, has made a particularly fitting gift in honor of her late sister Pamela Frangipane (maiden name Nelsen), a graduate of UW-Madison and avid runner. "My sister died of cardiac arrest while running due to a fatal arrhythmia," Julie explains. "The stethoscope is a primary and vital tool to evaluate a patient's heart."



Julie Nelsen, right, with her sister

Having previously worked with the general surgery department at Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, FL and with cardiac surgeons in Austin, TX, Julie currently travels throughout the U.S. teaching fellow PAs how to perform endoscopic saphenous vein harvesting and "playing sideline coach" for PAs during surgical procedures. (The saphenous vein is a conduit used for coronary bypass surgery and vascular bypass surgery.)

To current PA students, Julie says: "Study hard, absorb all you can from your clinical rotations and enjoy the journey. Don't get discouraged when times are tough, as the rewards of a PA degree are worth the efforts."

In a growing profession with many opportunities throughout the country, she says, "PAs have the ability to change clinical subspecialties along their career paths and, most importantly, the ability to serve patients and make a difference."



Physician Assistant Program

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THREE GREAT WAYS to stay connected with the UW-Madison PA Program

1



SHARE AN ALUMNI REFLECTION

Where are you practicing now?
Any big accomplishments to
announce? Great memories from
PA school to share?

We'd love to print your news and
photos in a future newsletter.

Contact us at:
go.wisc.edu/657684

2



BECOME A VOLUNTEER PRECEPTOR

Share your knowledge and
help educate future PAs.

You'll pay it forward and receive
benefits of an UW-Madison
appointment, including campus
access and potential CME credit.

Learn more at:
<http://www.med.wisc.edu/pa-preceptor>

3



GIVE A STETHOSCOPE

Welcome an incoming PA student
to the world of medicine with a
stethoscope.

Learn more at:
<https://jumpstart.supportuw.org/campaigns/pa-stethoscope-3#/>