The Class of 2018 James K. Tolton Student Society has been very active—engaging in activities that promote service, advocacy, and leadership among their classmates. Leading up to PA Week 2016, the GW PA Program students, faculty and staff attended a Washington Nationals game. PA Week 2016 events included a reception with GW alumni and community preceptors and a very successful bake sale fundraising event to benefit Miriam’s Kitchen and the DC homeless population. The students served as volunteers for the Out of the Darkness Walk for suicide prevention again this year and also raised over $1000 for the cause. Things got a little “hairy” around Ross Hall during the month of November when the class participated in the Movember Foundation’s annual moustache fundraiser to raise awareness of men’s health issues. Holiday service activities included preparation of “basic necessity” boxes filled with toiletry items, socks, undergarments, hats and gloves which were delivered to So Others Might Eat, a community organization serving DC’s poor and homeless. This spring, plans are in the works for additional service projects as well as fundraising projects for breast cancer awareness and research.

Our students are also involved with several activities that are in keeping with the program’s mission to recruit and train a diverse healthcare workforce that is committed to health equity and quality care for all. The PA students continue to be valued volunteer providers at The Healing Clinic, a volunteer clinic operated by GW’s medical, physician assistant, and public health students that provides health care access to vulnerable residents of the Washington DC area. Our students have teamed up with the GWU School of Medicine and Health Sciences Office of Diversity and Inclusion to promote the “DC Health and Academic Prep Program” (DC HAPP). DC HAPP is a program that seeks to identify, recruit and nurture talented District of Columbia public school students from backgrounds underrepresented in medicine who have an interest in pursuing careers in the health professions. The Class of 2018 has visited 35 District of Columbia high schools to discuss and promote the DC HAPP program. Additionally, our students are working to promote PAs by speaking at local high schools that have requested presentations about the PA profession for their students interested in science and the medical field.

After a one year hiatus, the GW PA Program will again be represented in the National Medical Challenge Bowl, which will be held on Wednesday, May 17th during the AAPA conference in Las Vegas. Please come out and cheer for your alma mater! The GW PA Students strive to demonstrate excellence in scholarship, service, and leadership and represent the GW PA Program well. We know our alumni would be proud!
Spotlight on Class of 2018
Students Who Served

The GW PA Program has the honor of educating a number of student veterans, whose experiences enrich both the program and the PA profession at large. We thank our students for their service and for choosing to continue their education at GW.

Todd Koch
In 1999, I graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point, NY with a degree in mechanical engineering, and then completed Quartermaster Basic Officer Leaders Course at Fort Lee, VA. I was stationed at Fort Sill, OK with the 588th Maintenance Company where I served as Automotive Platoon Leader, Supply Support Activity Platoon Leader, Company Executive Officer and Interim Company Commander. Later I served as Battalion Logistics Officer for the 19th Maintenance Battalion and in 2003 was deployed as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. I was honorably discharged in 2004, and most recently celebrated the long overdue Army Black Knights victory over the Navy Midshipmen.

Timothy Neuzil
I joined the Army National Guard in 2006 as a medic. I was mobilized to the Sinai Peninsula, Egypt from 2008-2009 where I worked in a clinic providing care to the Multinational Force and Observers. Shortly after that I deployed to Paktia, Afghanistan from 2010-2011. During both tours I worked alongside some fantastic PAs, as well as some great medics who went on to become PAs. These experiences provided me with countless opportunities to see patients in a variety of unique settings, from low-resource outposts to point-of-injury combat trauma. I remained in the Iowa National Guard as an Area Support Medical Company medic, and later as medic instructor, until I separated in 2016 to begin PA school.

Shannon Watts
I have been serving as a medic in the Army National Guard since 2008. Shortly after boot camp and medic training, I deployed with the Utah Army National Guard 144th ASMC to Afghanistan for a year. While in Kabul, we provided medical services to Army, Navy, Marine, and Air Force personnel, as well as coalition forces from other countries. I currently serve in the Maryland Army National Guard State Medical Detachment, which involves a commitment of about one weekend per month and two weeks in the summer. I enjoy being in the National Guard because I am able to pursue civilian goals while still responding to both state and national emergencies and missions. Perhaps the greatest benefit of the Guard is the opportunity to serve alongside talented people from various backgrounds. I have met some amazing people from all over the world throughout my career, and I am looking forward to commissioning as a PA in the Army National Guard after I graduate.

We would also like to recognize and thank the Class of 2017 student veterans, who were featured in our 2015-2016 Alumni Newsletter.

Alumnus Spotlight: Randall Owen, PA-C
Randall Owen (’13) has been appointed a Research Fellow in Global Health and Social Medicine at the Harvard Medical School for 2016-2017. A former HMS clinical instructor at NASA Johnson Space Center, his research interests include the ethical and policy challenges surrounding the medical and surgical care delivery systems being developed to support long duration and exploration space missions. Most of these systems are based on existing terrestrial telemedicine and robotic surgical systems and will therefore encompass many of the same ethical issues and challenges. Randall completed his PA surgical residency at the Norwalk Hospital/Yale School of Medicine in September 2015.
Joel Wenger Receives Alumni Scholarship Award

At the annual PA Week Alumni Reception held in October, the Program was honored to present a number of awards (see page 6). The student award is a special one because it is named for one of our very special clinical preceptors who is no longer with us.

The Terrence E. Barr Memorial Scholarship is a celebration of Barr who, after serving in the Marine Corps Battalion during Vietnam, enrolled at the University of Florida to become a PA. He later became a devoted preceptor for the GW PA Program. The award is presented annually by John Colletta, Ph.D., Barr’s partner of nine years.

This year, the student recipient was Joel Wenger, a joint degree PA/MPH student. Joel served as the PA representative to the Steering Committee of the student run Healing Clinic during the 2014-16 academic years. During that time he not only galvanized the participation of PA students in all clinic activities, but was the essential glue that held together the expansion of the clinic in Prince George's county. During a transition period where the entire steering committee "turned over" with new student leadership, Joel remained actively loyal to the patients and new student volunteers. He helped ease the transition and with his collaborative and selfless contributions, there was minimal upheaval or loss of service to our patients. In addition, his willingness to help with Spanish translation services was also a significant anxiety reducer for students and patients alike! Joel is a model servant leader who embodies hard work, excellence, and service to our society’s most vulnerable. Congratulations Joel!

Alumnus Joins Inaugural Doctoral Program

In the fall of 2016, the School of Medicine and Health Sciences accepted the first cohort of students for the new Ph.D. in Translational Health Sciences program. One of our alumni, Stephen Robie, PA/MPHer Class of 2012, was one of the few students selected for this new and exciting program.

The Ph.D. in Translational Health Sciences is designed to help future healthcare leaders, educators, and researchers close the gap between evidence generation and implementation. The program focuses on developing:

- Healthcare leaders who can apply evidence from clinical research to everyday practice in a range of health care settings,
- Healthcare researchers who can use the translational framework to generate knowledge resulting in broad, practical solutions to health problems, and
- Health educators who can teach the next generation of health care professionals to effectively address the complex needs of the public in a shifting healthcare landscape.

Steve became interested in pursuing an advanced degree while obtaining his MPH degree at GWU. His clinical work in cardiology with the GW Medical Faculty Associates further confirmed his passion for research, leadership, and education. This is Steve's second semester in the Ph.D. program and he says that, other than balancing the demands of full-time clinical practice, family, and doctoral level school work, everything is going well and he is enjoying the program. He is especially fond of the program’s faculty and the diverse clinical background of his cohort peers. Dr. Mary Corcoran, the program director of the Ph.D. in Translational Health Sciences, says they are thrilled to have Steve in the first student cohort and look forward to having other Physician Assistants in future classes. Both Dr. Corcoran and Steve say that the Ph.D. in Translational Health Sciences is particularly well-suited for PAs looking to advance their skills in research, leadership, and education.

For those interested in learning more about the Ph.D. in Translational Health Sciences, please visit http://smhs.gwu.edu/translational-health-sciences/.

How to Stay Involved with the GW PA Program

We want you to stay connected! This year, our alumni volunteered with the program to share their clinical experiences with students, interview prospective students, connect with recent graduates in their areas, and celebrate the PA profession. Help us strengthen our GW PA community! If you are interested in getting involved as an alumni volunteer or preceptor, please visit go.gwu.edu/PAalumni or contact Sarah Klein, our alumni relations representative, at smklein@gwu.edu with any questions.

In May 2016, our GW PA community gathered for our annual Alumni/Student Reception at AAPA in San Antonio! Alumni, students, faculty, and friends attended to reconnect and celebrate (see pictures below!). We hope to see you at this year's reception on Tuesday, May 16, 2017 from 6-7:30pm in Las Vegas (Mandalay Bay South Convention - Level 2 in Lagoon J)! Registration will go live in mid-March!
On June 24, 2016, the GW Physician Assistant (PA) Program welcomed its incoming Class of 2018 into medicine by the historic Convocation and White Coat Ceremony. The ceremony represents a rite of passage and reminder to PA students of the importance of their role as compassionate, empathetic healers. Michael C. Doll, MSHS, PA-C, GW Class of ’88 alumnus and recipient of the Public Service Award (2015), delivered an impassioned keynote address, sharing his clinical experiences while stressing the importance of service to the profession. Class of 2017 students and Tolton Society officers Evan Bale and Sandy Fulkerson Schaeffer provided student reflections and advice on the journey ahead. They discussed the importance of humility as a student learner and advocacy through involvement in student organizations. Program faculty member Susan LeLacheur, DrPH, PA-C, reminded us of the significance of the white coat in her address. The Class of 2018 PA students were proudly coated by the clinical year students; the faculty then led them in reciting the Physician Assistant Student Pledge. A reception followed where faculty personally congratulated students and their loved ones.

Pictured:
Top: Check out the Class of 2018!
Left: Keynote Speaker, Mike Doll (’88) shares stories of his clinical experiences and the importance of service
Right: Members of the Class of 2017 coat the Class of 2018
Bottom: The Class of 2018 donning their short white coats and colonial wigs in tribute to George Washington
The Class of 2016 Commencement weekend kicked off with the annual White Coat Ceremony on Friday, May 13, 2016 in the Dorothy Betts Marvin Theatre. Maureen Wernet was selected by her graduating peers to provide class reflections. Bryan Walker, MSHS, PA-C, former GW PA Program faculty now at Duke University Medical Center, was selected by the Class of 2016 as the guest speaker. The VALOR Excellence Award, which recognizes a veteran’s excellence in learning and service was awarded to Lutfullah Almos and Jared Castro. The GW PA Program Outstanding Student Award was presented to Erica Millett and Emily Arcand for their academic and clinical achievements and for service to their class and the PA Program. Erica Millett also received the Ozgur Ekmekci Interprofessional Leadership Award for her dedication and service to the GW Healing Clinic. Thirteen graduates were inducted into the Alpha Eta Honor Society. Inductees included: Yasmin Al-Atrache, Sarah Bogese, Selin Cronkrite, Pierre Dazé, Taylor Jensen, Leah Lee, Bridget Leineweber, Amanda Mariano, Erica Millett, Christopher Palacios, Gabriella Smith, Annie Stavros, and Maureen Wernet. After the awards were handed out, sixty-seven graduating PAs were coated by their faculty advisor and then recited the Physician Assistant Oath. The PA Program congratulates the Class of 2016 and wishes them the best of luck on their future endeavors.

The PA Program also offers a sincere thank you to alumni who donate to this annual celebration. Their contribution makes this event possible.

Your Chance to Support the GW PA Program

There are several ways for our alumni to support the GW PA Program as we work to educate the next generation of Physician Assistants. Alumni can act as clinical preceptors, volunteer as interviewers during our admissions cycle, or make a financial contribution to support our students. Donations to the program provide student scholarships and funding for the PA White Coat Initiative. A gift to the PA White Coat Initiative provides a long white coat for our graduating students and is a symbol of initiation into both the PA Profession and the GW PA alumni community.

If you are interested in supporting the GW PA program and its students, please visit go.gwu.edu/SupportGWPA or call the SMHS Development and Alumni Relations Office at (202) 994-7420 for more information. We thank you for your time and support!
Third Annual PA Week Reception

PA Program alumni, students, faculty, staff and friends celebrated PA week with our third annual reception hosted by the School of Medicine and Health Sciences Office of Development and Alumni Relations. The event provided an opportunity to relax and enjoy each other’s company, as well as to acknowledge the achievements of some of our distinguished colleagues.

GW PA Program Distinguished Public Service Award

Howard Straker, MPH, PA-C received the Distinguished Public Service Award for his long history of professional and community service. With his leadership, the DC Academy of PAs was able to make significant gains in allowing PAs to practice to their full potential, providing increased access to qualify care for patients in the District. He has also served in multiple leadership roles both in the American Academy of PAs and in the PA Education Association, where he currently serves on the Board of Directors.

DR. JULES CAHAN DISTINGUISHED TEACHING AWARD

Surinderpal Sodhi, M.D. received the Dr. Jules Cahan Distinguished Teaching Award for his nearly 25 years of service as a preceptor for GW PA students in the ICU, Medical Service and Respiratory Unit at the Perry Point VA Medical Center. Dr. Sodhi, who is board certified in internal medicine, pulmonary medicine and critical care, has been a tireless advocate and patient teacher, much beloved by students who have had the privilege of studying with him.

TERRENCE E. BARR MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

The Terrence E. Barr Memorial Scholarship was established by John Colletta, PhD and is awarded annually to an outstanding GW PA student. This year’s recipient was Joel Wenger, who provided leadership to his class in their community service work through the HEALing Clinic, through which students in medicine and health sciences provide care to the medically under-served in the District and in Prince Georges County MD. Learn more about the scholarship and this year’s winner on page 3.

Alumni Volunteer for Multiple Mini Interviews

Selecting a qualified cohort of students to successfully complete a rigorous program of study can be both exciting and challenging. We are tasked to select qualified applicants with the highest potential who we believe match the mission of the program and will contribute to the profession. This year we received over 1400 applications. From those applications, only 240 applicants are invited for an interview. In order to pull off this feat, the faculty and staff rely on our alumni and students’ participation in the interview process. As you can imagine, this day requires the coordination of many moving parts.

Our didactic and clinical year students played a significant role during interviews. Student involvement included hosting applicants from outside the DC metropolitan area, participating in 1st and 2nd year panels, planning and attending the Friday night social, serving as tour guides, and participating in the multiple mini interviews.

This year 25 dedicated alumni, some of whom participated on more than one date (see list below), assisted us with interviews. Additionally, this year we added an alumni panel to the interview schedule. Alumni shared their career paths since graduating from the program, which gave applicants insight into the flexibility of our profession. Feedback was very positive, so we will definitely offer this again in the future.

If you are interested in participating in the alumni panel or multiple mini interviews during the interview season later this year (September through November), please contact Erin McKan Thomas at emckan@gwu.edu. We welcome your support! Thanks again to those alumni who made this year’s event successful! We could not do it without you.

September 17

Interviewers
Mark Chou ('09)
Teri DeMille ('16)
Debra Diaz ('14)
Elise Ferre ('13)
Tiffany Little ('16)
Leslie Prado ('16)*
Brinton Robison ('12)*
Panelists
Aziza Hull ('11)
Alek Kimbouris ('08)
Stephen Robie ('12)

October 1

Interviewers
Jennifer Lai ('15)
Jacqueline Lloyd ('15)*
Leslie Prado ('16)
Alexandra Rheaueme ('16)
Panelists
Christi DeGesero ('15)
Russ Fleischer ('83)*

October 29

Interviewers
Russ Fleischer ('83)
Tim Lentz ('78)
Paul Marino ('79)
Tamarah Thompson ('16)
Marie White ('09)
Panelists
Steven Cohen ('83)
Rachel Erzen ('16)
Liz Lindahl ('12)

November 19

Interviewers
Russ Fleischer ('83)
Francis Kelleher ('77)
Jacqueline Lloyd ('15)
Irene Vangsness ('82)
Panelists
Steph Berry ('08)
Leslie Prado ('16)
Brinton Robison ('12)

* Loved the experience so much, they volunteered more than once!
Program Faculty Updates

In April 2016 we were excited to bring in our most recent addition to the faculty, Erika Bramlette, MBA, PA-C. Her clinical expertise is in Women’s Health, and she has worked for Planned Parenthood for nearly 20 years. She has been a physician assistant educator for five years. She served as a faculty member most recently at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore and Weill Cornell Graduate School of Medical Sciences from 2011-2015. She chaired the Diversity Committee for the New York State Society of Physician Assistants from 2013-2015. Erika has both didactic and clinical year duties within the PA curriculum.

Continuing in the spirit of life-long learners in the PA Profession, we honor our faculty members who are currently in pursuit of completing their higher education degrees. Tamara Ritsema is working towards her PhD in Health Workforce Research from the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Nicole Mortier is also on track to gain her PhD from the University of Chicago in Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology. Debra Herrmann is expected to complete a Doctorate of Health Sciences from A.T. Still University this year. Jennifer Wall is enrolled here at The George Washington University in the MPH, Global Health Design, Management and Evaluation program, and at times in class with our very own joint degree PA/MPH students!

Congratulations to Lisa Mustone Alexander, Professor of Physician Assistant Studies at the GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences, upon being elected president of the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) and also to Howard Straker, Assistant Professor of Physician Assistant Studies and Prevention and Community Health at GW SMHS and Milken Institute School of Public Health, respectively, who was elected to a second term as secretary of the PAEA. We are fortunate to have two faculty members seated on the PAEA board assisting to support faculty development and education innovation.

Welcome to a New Senior Associate Dean and Adieu to Dr. Bocchino

We are happy to announce that the new Senior Associate Dean for Health Sciences is one of us! After an exhaustive search for the ideal candidate, Reamer L. Bushardt, Pharm.D., PA-C, DFAAPA began his tenure as Senior Associate Dean in January. Dr. Bushardt joins us from Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center’s School of Medicine where he served as tenured professor and chair of the Department of Physician Assistant (PA) Studies. In addition to his role as chair, Dr. Bushardt was a professor in the Department of Internal Medicine at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, professor and a program leader in Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center’s Clinical Translational Science Institute, and professor in the W.G. Hefner VA Medical Center. Dr. Bushardt also serves as editor-in-chief for the Journal of the American Academy of Physician Assistants. In addition to his exceptional leadership experiences, Dr. Bushardt is an active researcher and has published extensively. We look forward to his leadership and vision for the School of Medicine and Health Sciences and contributions to the success of the Department of PA Studies.

Joseph Bocchino, EdD, MBA stepped down from his position as Senior Associate Dean at the end of December 2016. Dr. Bocchino served in this capacity for over four years during which he made significant strategic contributions to the growth of the Health Sciences programs both at the Foggy Bottom and the Virginia Science and Technology campuses. He is enjoying a one year sabbatical and will remain on the faculty in both a teaching and research capacity. We are thankful for his leadership and service to the School of Medicine and Health Sciences and his advocacy of the PA Program.

New Clinical Affiliations

It would be impossible to provide our students with strong clinical experiences without the help and support from our preceptors. To all our preceptors and the administrators who coordinate student schedules – we send our sincere thanks and appreciation.

The Program has a significant need for new preceptors in all disciplines, but especially in pediatrics, primary care (family practice) and women’s health. Please take a moment to think back to when you were a student and how important your clinical preceptors were to your development as a health care provider. Now we need your help! If you, or someone you know of (MD, DO, PA or NP), would like to serve as a clinical preceptor, please contact Jessica O’Connell at joconnel@gwu.edu or 202-994-8463.

(Continued on page 8)
New Clinical Affiliations

We would like to welcome our new clinical preceptors, administrators, and coordinators:

**Inpatient Medicine**
Dr. Greg Stamnas, Medical Director of the Hospitalist Program and Teana Tyler, Administrative Assistant at Atlantic General Hospital in Berlin, MD.
Tara J. Boynton is the new clinical coordinator at Northwest Hospital Center in Randallstown, MD.

**Primary Care**
Ashley R. Cristler, Captain, USAF, BSC, PA-C at Andrews Air Force Base Malcolm Grow Medical Clinic, Joint Base Andrews in Clinton, MD.
Dr. Maximillian Oshalim in NW Washington, DC.
Dr. Stephen Chang, Dr. Oluwatobi Yerokun, Colleen Kelly, PA-C and Hiral Jobanputra, CNP at Synergy Immediate Care in Vienna, VA.
Kelly Krawczyk, PA-C at Mary’s Center, NW Washington, DC.
Dr. John Molaity at Clinica Familiar De Arlington in Arlington, VA.
Dr. Ray Martins and Ms. Barbara Lewis, PA-C at Whitman Walker Health in NW Washington, DC.
Antoinette “Tina” Martin is the new Clinical Program Coordinator at GWU Department of Primary Care.
Dr. Chavon Onumah is the new primary preceptor at GWU Department of Medicine in NW Washington, DC.

**Pediatrics**
Kelly Krawczyk, PA-C at Mary’s Center, Georgia Avenue in NW Washington, DC.
Dr. Lowell Scott at Scotts Pediatrics in Milton, DE.

**Women’s Health**
Dr. Ghazaleh Hafizi at Metropolitan Women’s Center in Annandale, VA.
Dr. Deborah Bushrod at Capital Women’s Care in Clinton, MD.
Dr. Terry-Ann Dawes-James, Susana Vega, CNM, MSN and Melissa Klausman, CNP are new preceptors at Millennium Gynecology in Alexandria, Annandale and Woodbridge, VA.

**Surgery**
Audrey Grant-Dickerson, PA-C is a new preceptor at Sibley Memorial Hospital in NW Washington, DC.
Weldemariam Mezghebe, PA-C is a new preceptor at Washington Adventist Hospital in Takoma Park, MD.
Thomas Sorenson is the new Surgery Clerkship Coordinator at the GW MFA.

**Emergency Medicine**
Vonnie Brown is the new Emergency Medicine Department Administrator at Providence Hospital in NW Washington, DC.

**Behavioral Medicine**
Dr. Navid Rashid is our new primary preceptor at Northern Virginia Mental Health Institute in Falls Church, VA.
Dr. Afia Hussain at INOVA Kellar Center in Fairfax, VA.
Dr. Maciej Chodynicki is our new primary preceptor at Good Samaritan Hospital in Baltimore, MD.

**Electives**
Dr. Marie Borum, Gastroenterology at GWU MFA in NW Washington, DC.
Paul Bowling, PA-C, ICU/CCU at Prince George’s Hospital Center in Cheverly MD.
Jami Fano, PA-C, Orthopedics at OrthoVirginia in Fair Oaks, VA.

We want to thank those who open their homes and provide housing for our students at away/distant rotation sites:
Mike Shoemaker in California, MD
Ree Thomas in New Cumberland, PA
Joan Williams in Elkins, WV
Stephanie Zoltewicz in Manchester, CT

The PA Program Faculty and Staff wish all a healthy and prosperous 2017!