A transition to the next generation of leadership

Suzanne Wright, Ph.D., CRNA
“This was definitely one of the best conferences I’ve attended in recent years. Helpful engaging staff, current topics, and pleasant accommodations all added to an overall great seminar.”

—Gerard Zappa, CRNA

CE FOR CRNAs
2019 MEETINGS

April 13, 2019
Richmond, VA
Ultrasound Guided Vascular Access Workshop

May 4-5, 2019
Richmond, VA
Faculty & Administrator Workshop

May 29 - June 1, 2019
Hilton Head, South Carolina
33rd Annual Anesthesia Seminar

September 28-29, 2019
Richmond, VA
5th Annual Anesthesia Crisis Resource Management

October 5, 2019
Richmond, VA
Ultrasound Guided Vascular Access Workshop

October 28-31, 2019
Williamsburg, Virginia
43rd Annual Anesthesia Conference

December 2-5, 2019
Orlando, Florida
38th Annual Anesthesia Meeting

Locations and dates are subject to change.

VCU Alumni receive a 10% discount for NAFA conferences
Just use discount code, “VCUALUM” (non case sensitive) when registering online for a 10% alumni discount.

Register online at www.nafa-va.org
Our Passion is Making Patient Safety Real

Dear alumni and friends,

As most of you know, Dr. Michael Fallacaro, DNS, CRNA, FAAN stepped down as Chair of the Department of Nurse Anesthesia after 20 years of exemplary leadership. Under Mike’s leadership, the Center for Research in Human Simulation was established, a distance learning program serving the citizens of the Commonwealth was developed, a continuing education division was initiated, and the program has remained a top ranked program. We are grateful to Mike for his tireless efforts; these have resulted in a solid foundation for the department to grow. Please know that as we move forward together, I am committed to furthering our mission of patient safety and high quality education through a focus on graduate student success, faculty and alumni development and service to the anesthesia and health care communities.

Since the beginning of the year, our team has already enjoyed many exciting accomplishments. The Department graduated its last master’s degree class in December 2018, and welcomed the third entry-to-practice DNAP cohort in January 2019 with 45 graduate students. The College of Health Professions celebrated the new building with a ribbon cutting ceremony on March 18 and several of the College’s departments will move into the new building over the course of a few months with our department moving in early June 2019. We invite you to join us at VCU’s alumni weekend when the department will celebrate its 50th anniversary on Friday, April 5, 2019 and new building tours will be held on Saturday, April 6 beginning at 1:00 p.m. Please contact Heather E. Millar at hemillar@vcu.edu with any questions.

The new year has also ushered in a new website for our continuing education division, Nurse Anesthesiology Faculty Associates (NAFA). The website highlights conferences and new workshops for the upcoming year. NAFA is offering two ultrasound-guided vascular access workshops in April and October, as well as a brand new faculty and administrator workshop in May. The faculty and administrator workshop is designed for professionals working in academia who seek to grow their teaching, research, and leadership capabilities. We are also excited to announce new titles for CE on NAFA Now, our online continuing education platform.

We continue to welcome CRNAs into our Post-Master’s DNAP program who wish to pursue doctoral education. I encourage you to read about Nilu Patel, DNAP, CRNA, on page 7 who completed our Post-Master’s DNAP program all the way from California. This program is designed for full-time working CRNAs with one- to three-year completion options.

A special congratulations to Gary Hahn, CRNA (1978), our 2018 Most Outstanding Alumni Award recipient! See page 8 and learn why he is most deserving of this honor. Congratulations are also in order for several faculty and staff promotions (see page 9)!

We look forward to celebrating with you for many years to come. Thank you for your continued support, and unwavering dedication to supporting the department, and “Making Patient Safety Real.” We could not reach our full potential without each and every one of you.

Suzanne Wright, Ph.D., CRNA
Professor and Chair
The Department of Nurse Anesthesia’s Alumni Advisory Council (AAC) held its bi-annual meeting in January 2019. The council listened to remarks from Dr. Suzanne Wright including updates about the new building, the vision for the department, global outreach, information on the Council on Accreditation, NAFA meetings, and the new NAFA Now online platform for continuing education. A few former council members rolled off the council in June 2018 allowing the opportunity for several new council members to join. Thank you to those who submitted nominations for new council members. And thank you to those council members who rolled off: Greg Bonifant, Ellen Dean, Geoff Early, Andrew Lamar, Jody Lyle, and Ann Winer.

The Council is pleased to report that several alumni have supported the new building fundraising efforts (see page 5). Donations to the department also support research efforts, anatomy camp, professional development for faculty and students, simulation equipment, distance technology needs, etc. Donations from alumni are often the only financial assistance provided to graduate students.

We are excited to see you and celebrate the department’s 50th anniversary on April 5, 2019 at the Boathouse, Rocketts Landing during VCU’s Reunion weekend! Please remember to RSVP by March 29th by either returning the RSVP card by mail or by registering online.

If you have any questions about the AAC, please contact Heather E. Millar at hemillar@vcu.edu or 804-628-3787.

Alumni Advisory Council

Melissa Sherrod (Chair)
Faresha Sims (Vice Chair)
Tiffany Yhip (Secretary)
Ellen Dean
Donna Fiaschetti
Kristin Friedline
Geoff Early
Greg Bonifant
Gary Hahn
Harold Barnwell
Elizabeth Howell

Andrew Lamar
Jody Lyle
Mary Elizabeth Cheatham
Tim Newell
Danny Phillips
Ann Winer

Honorary members:
Marianne S. Cosgrove
Martin Safo

Endowment:
APEX Anesthesia Review Fund

“Thank you” to Danny Frasca and Kevin Baker for fully endowing the department’s largest scholarship, the APEX Anesthesia Review Fund. The APEX Anesthesia Review fund will be made available for departmental expenditures at the discretion of the chairman to support student scholarships, faculty development, and equipment needs that directly support graduate student education in the College of Health Professions Department of Nurse Anesthesia.

Endowment funds never stop giving. The principal of the gift is invested and grows over time while a percentage of the income growth is distributed annually to support the purpose the donor has specified. Endowments provide long-term financial stability, regardless of government funding and changes in the economy. Endowments also provide the donor with a legacy at VCU in perpetuity. The minimum endowment level at VCU is $25,000 and can be paid for over multiple years. If you are interested in learning more about endowments to support the future of the department and generations to come, please contact Heather E. Millar, Development, Marketing and Communications at 804-628-3787 or hemillar@vcu.edu.
Bricks and Benches for Building Campaign

Add your name to the new College of Health Professions building!

The first installment of purchased bricks happened in time for the new building ribbon cutting ceremony on March 18, 2019; however, there is still time to purchase a brick before the end of the campaign on June 30, 2020. Our brick drive provides a great opportunity to make an impact during the VCU Make It Real campaign. Your brick can memorialize your years at the college, congratulate a graduate, recognize a faculty member who made a difference, or choose to honor a loved one. A personalized brick is a wonderful idea for holidays, graduations, birthdays or any special occasion. Each brick can include up to three lines of text and up to 18 characters per line. These bricks will pave the main entrance to the new building and are a permanent part of the College’s history. Bricks are $150.00 and you can purchase these online at www.support.vcu.edu/chpbrick

Another Way to Give

There is another opportunity to support the new building by featuring your name on the “donor wall” on the first floor when you enter the new building. All donors who make a gift or a five-year pledge of $5,000 towards this effort by June 30, 2020, will receive recognition on our donor wall. Any donations already made towards the new building (either by purchasing a brick or bench) are counted towards the $5,000. Please contact Heather E. Millar for more information on this effort.

Special thank you to Mary Hove, DNAP, CRNA (‘15/’16), and Dr. Nickie Damico, CRNA and Kevin Damico for their support and adding their name to the wall!

Buy a brick online!

http://www.support.vcu.edu/chpbrick

For more information on ways you can support the new building, please contact Heather E. Millar, Director of Development, Marketing and Communications in the Department of Nurse Anesthesia at hemillar@vcu.edu or 804-628-3787.

A big thank you to our alumni and friends who are already supporting the new building campaign effort!

We are proud to report that out of ten benches that were available for the new building, six of those were purchased by nurse anesthesia alumni! Thank you!

Bench

Jody Lyle (‘09/DNAP ’10)
Hamid Mahmood (‘09/DNAP ’10) and Maritza Gallegos-Mahmood (‘09/DNAP ’10)
Elizabeth Howell (‘04) and Emily Lanning (‘04)
Howard Goodwin (DNAP ’14) and Jean Snyder (DNAP ’16)

Members of MSNA Class of 1999 who purchased a “class bench”:
Jeremy Cushing, Rebekah Carmel, Wilbur Bice, Deborah Blizman Nicole Damico, Belinda Cook, Michael Wray, Deborah Salley, Patty Cash, Renee Greenfield Nichole Fogleman, Stephen Joseph Blanchard Raymond Lindsay, Thomas Dainty

Bricks

Karen Barnes ’08
Jane Belcher ’05
Virginia Bertani ’78
Kristin Cain ’13/’14
William Chisholm ’85
Marianne S. Cosgrove ’11
Nicole K Damico ’99/’14
Michael D. Fallacaro, DNS, CRNA, FAAN and Nadine Fallacaro, MSN, CRNA
Mary Fitzgerald ’77
Gary Hahn ’78
Nancy Harrison ’89
Janice J Izlar ’09
Kyu T Kim ’17
Loren Krause ’03/’13
Emily Lanning ’04
Noreen McCartan ’88
James McLaughlin ’81
Mary Mlotzick ’98
Daniel Noffsinger
Carrie Reavis ’72
Daniel Reside ’90
Kaitlin H Rodgers ’10/’11
Edward M Salkind ’11
Michael Santantonio ’87
Ann Schwartz ’15
Darla R. Soles ’94
Cheryl Spulecki ’15
Judy Thompson ’10

VCU COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS DEPARTMENT OF NURSE ANESTHESIA

SPRING 2019 | 5
Faculty Serve Five States and 60 Clinical Sites

Clinical faculty give back of their time, experience, and expertise out of a desire to see their specialty continue to improve, and to develop future generations of CRNAs who will provide the highest quality healthcare to their patients for years to come. The Department is growing with close to 60 clinical sites spread over five states! Close to 75% of our clinical faculty are also alumni. The hard work and dedication of our clinical faculty does not go unnoticed. Responsibilities include:

- Serving as student coordinators (1-2 at each facility)
- Providing mentorship and orientation to each nurse anesthesia graduate student who rotates through his/her facility
- Coordinating/assigning graduate students to clinical cases on a daily basis
- Collecting formative progress reports/evaluations in a private location
- Fielding/managing subjective evaluations of graduate student learners from other clinical faculty on site
- Providing both individual and group feedback to each graduate student upon request and as needed
- Serving as a liaison between their respective site and the nurse anesthesia program (via the Department’s Vice Chair of Clinical Affairs)

Clinical faculty share expertise and training with graduate students in the clinical setting, advocate for student opportunities to experience regional anesthesia, invasive line placement, specialty cases, etc., all while protecting the patients from inadvertent harm. Clinical faculty advocate and support the clinical education of graduate nurse anesthesia students in all aspects of their learning, in support of the mission and philosophy of their group, facility, profession and specialty. They provide thoughtful and respectful feedback to each graduate student to improve skills and practice. There is no financial compensation from the department for their service, receiving only a few opportunities for discounts on continuing education, and the unending and overwhelming gratitude of the program and our faculty. Overall, they give far more than they receive, in the hope of making a positive influence in the lives of the graduate students they instruct, to the betterment of the anesthesia care provided to the thousands of patients who will benefit from the services of these graduates for generations to come. Help us acknowledge and say thank you to those who support the department as clinical faculty!
In high school, Nilu Patel dreamed of being a nurse. She could picture herself at her patients’ bedsides, helping them manage their recovery and feel better.

When she finally made it to her first hospital rotation, as a nursing undergraduate, she was surprised to discover that she didn’t really like it. She was assigned to help care for an older woman, and “it wasn’t what I thought it would be,” Patel said. “I don’t like seeing patients in pain.”

Fortunately, that opened another door as she learned about nurse anesthesia – and she quickly continued her education to earn her master’s degree. Patel found nurse anesthesia was the perfect match because, “I relieve people’s pain in my own environment, which is the operating room.”

As soon as she earned her master’s, she set yet another goal for herself: Earn her DNAP degree within 10 years. Married with two young sons, she started on the doctoral program at VCU with just one year before her self-imposed deadline.

“VCU appealed to me because of its patient safety focus,” said Patel, a senior CRNA with the UC Irvine Medical Center. As part of the surgical team, she plays a pivotal role in ensuring that each action taken in the operating room is done with the patient’s best outcome in mind.

Completing the doctoral program through distance learning and scheduled trips to Richmond, Patel found that VCU empowered students both with the best and latest information to be expert practitioners – but also to be the strongest advocates for their industry.

Over time, she has deepened her outreach with patient safety, leading a UCI team to develop new communications protocols as patients move between departments in the hospital. “The care of a patient can be among many providers in a given day, especially on the day of surgery,” said Patel, who worked with the hospital’s technology team on a tool that easily integrates with the facility’s electronic medical record system. Key information – including critical medical issues (including allergies), anesthesia provided, surgical notes and more – can be extracted so that post-surgery medical providers have the information they need to best care for their patients. Previously, providers needed to log into two different databases to find information.

“This took a lot of time, and – in an emergency, when time is critical – a one-page pop-up of a patient’s pertinent medical history makes it easier and safer,” said Patel, adding that patients can’t communicate what occurred in the operating suite while under anesthesia.

Patel now splits her time between the hospital - which is a level-one trauma center that sees every possible type of surgical case - and teaching, using her DNAP degree to help train the next generation of nurse anesthetists. In fact, soon after she earned her VCU degree, she developed and managed a conference aimed at patient safety, featuring a keynote by a VCU classmate.

For several years, Patel has also been involved with the California Association of Nurse Anesthetists. She recently completed a two-year term on the board.

“The faculty and the education I received at VCU inspired me to become a leader within my profession,” Patel said. “The program prepared me to make my mark on the profession through innovation, political advocacy and teaching the next generation of CRNAs. By advocating for CRNAs and working together with other leaders in health care, we can strive to make health care delivery better for everyone.”

To learn more about the post master’s DNAP program, please visit https://nrsa.chp.vcu.edu/programs/post-masters-dnap/.

Our post-master’s DNAP program is designed for the full-time working CRNA, with one- to three-year completion options.
VCU Nurse Anesthesia’s Most Outstanding Alumni Award 2018
Gary Hahn, CRNA

The Department of Nurse Anesthesia’s Outstanding Alumni Award is presented annually to a graduate of the VCU Nurse Anesthesia program who has either become distinguished in the nurse anesthesia profession and/or has made impactful contributions to society. It is the highest honor that the VCU Nurse Anesthesia Alumni Advisory Council (AAC) can bestow. The AAC seeks nominations from all nurse anesthesia alumni (nearly 900 alumni) and presents the award during the December graduation awards ceremony. The 2018 “Most Outstanding Alumnus/a Award” was presented to Gary Hahn, a 1978 graduate from the VCU Nurse Anesthesia program.

“A local icon, and rock of the CRNA community for decades. One word to describe Gary - passionate! You won’t find a more passionate student or CRNA advocate. I stated 25 years ago, ‘I want to be just like you when I grow up, and I hope one day I will,”’ said Danny Frasca, DNAP, CRNA, when presenting Gary with his award in December.

Gary graduated from VCU in 1978, and taught in the program under Col Herbert T. Watson’s chairmanship of the Department. He clinically and didactically taught generations of SRNAs who now give safe “garyesthesia” as Danny put it, around the country. “Gary is an unmatched educator, possessing a keen intelligence, an innate love of education and an enviable flexibility in the delivery of that education. Tirelessness in his dedication to VCU’s nurse anesthesia students, his contributions to the Roanoke distance site alone were absolutely key in its inception and maintenance.”

Gary was Danny’s mentor at St. Mary’s in Richmond, Virginia when Danny began working as a CRNA 25 years ago. Gary was the beloved Chief CRNA at St. Mary’s for many years, “He had more retirement parties than anyone I can ever remember,” recalls Danny. Gary has won countless awards over the years for his continued work with the Department of Nurse Anesthesia and the students: the Agatha Hodgins Memorial award as a student for top academic honors, the Herbert T. Watson faculty award, Instructor of the Year award (two times), the Chairman’s award, and now the Most Outstanding Alumnus/a Award. Gary has also been very involved with VANA over the years, serving as Director for Districts 3, 4 and 5. Gary was the chairman and founding member of the most successful, organized VANA meeting since its inception creating the District 5 Winter Workshop. Gary has also provided countless lectures at VANA meetings, and has served on numerous committees.

Gary moved to Roanoke, Virginia after his retirement from St. Mary’s and has been instrumental in the success of our distance site in that area, “I can think of multiple occasions where I believe it was only through

We can’t thank Gary enough for all that he does!
Beverly George-Gay, Assistant Professor, VCU Department of Nurse Anesthesia

Gary’s involvement and support of our program that the cohort in Roanoke has been successful, up to and including the present day, even though he has officially retired from practice! He has taught (literally) generations of CRNAs, and I would expect that hundreds of CRNAs practicing today have been influenced by his dedication and teaching, through clinical education, classroom education, continuing education. I have said it before and will say it again - I can’t imagine a VCU program of nurse anesthesia that doesn’t have Gary Hahn associated with it,” said Dr. Corey Davis, Assistant Professor, VCU Department of Nurse Anesthesia.

Gary has served and continues to serves as a liaison between the VCU Department of Nurse Anesthesia, his department and the Carilion Clinic and all other clinical sites in Roanoke region. Gary also serves as a Roanoke Site Facilitator, assisting with the day-day activities, recruitment efforts, admissions processes, student counseling and clinical scheduling, and he also teaches in the Professional Aspects course. “It’s Gary’s nature to give of himself, although he says he is just trying to give back, he always seems to be giving ahead.

L to R: Danny Frasca ’92 honoring Gary Hahn ’78 with the VCU Department of Nurse Anesthesia’s most prestigious award, the Most Outstanding Alumni Award during our Graduation Ceremony in December 2018.
Faculty & Staff Promotions

Nicole Damico, PhD, CRNA
Assistant Professor
Vice Chair for Academic Affairs
Director of Professional Practice

Dr. Damico writes, “This year marks the beginning of a new era in our department. In the 20 years since I graduated, our program has become a premier institution in nurse anesthesia education under Dr. Fallacaro’s expert leadership. I have absolute confidence that, under Dr. Suzanne Wright, we will continue to uphold, and even exceed, the high-quality standards we have established at VCU. I am very grateful to have the opportunity to serve as Vice Chair for Academic Affairs going forward. The position will enable me to continue to teach and mentor students on a daily basis while enhancing my involvement with department leadership and administrative activities. My goal as Vice Chair is for our curricular offerings to always be one step ahead of where they need to be. I believe there are always opportunities to better serve our students and the community at large. The future of our department is bright and I am proud to be a part of the VCU team.”

T. Corey Davis, PhD, CRNA
Assistant Professor
Vice Chair of Clinical Affairs
Assistant Program Director

Dr. Davis writes, “‘Beautiful Boy,’ by John Lennon (1980) includes the line, “Life is what happens to you while you’re busy making other plans.” Entering VCU literally “just off the farm” in 1987, I would never have dreamed that, some 31 years and three degrees later, I would still be here, much less in my present position as Vice Chair of Clinical Affairs and the Assistant Program Director of the best nurse anesthesia program in the United States. My time here at VCU, in the College of Health Professions, has afforded me the opportunity to work with faculty colleagues and mentors who are legends in the field. Hand in hand with the entire faculty, particularly our new Chair, Dr. Suzanne Wright, and my fellow Vice Chair of Academic Affairs, Dr. Nickie Damico, I hope to not only maintain our national reputation for excellence, but to enhance the partnership with our clinical affiliates through the education of generations of outstanding graduates. I am eternally grateful for the opportunity to attempt to influence, in some small way, the future practice of these wonderful CRNAs, who will go on to provide comfort and safety for countless patients throughout their careers.”

Dr. Brenda Wands, Assistant Professor and Director of Interprofessional Education has been promoted to Director of the Post-Master’s DNAP Program. Dr. Wands joined the VCU Department of Nurse Anesthesia in September 2015 as the new Director of Interprofessional Education. Dr. Wands was most recently an Assistant Professor at Bloomsburg University and Program Director for the Geisinger Health System/Bloomsburg University Nurse Anesthesia Program.

Mr. Michael Kammerman has been promoted to Director of the Center for Research in Human Simulation. Mr. Kammerman joined the Department of Nurse Anesthesia in 2009 from the VCU Health Systems Emergency Department where he served as the Simulation/Weapons of Mass Destruction technician. Mr. Kammerman has been one of the primary developers of the Baricity Educational Spinal Tool (B.E.S.T.).
Calling all alumni who do not live in Virginia!

The Department is looking for alumni volunteers to exhibit at different state association meetings to help us spread the word about NAFA (our CE conferences and online continuing education opportunities), as well as our DNAP, post masters program. Please contact Heather E. Millar at 804-628-3787 or hemillar@vcu.edu if you are interested in learning more about how to help with this effort. To date, we have joined the following state associations and are looking to grow our list: Virginia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and California!

Pictured, Amanda Alley, M.S.Ed., Graduate Student Services Administrator and Adam Eddy, Business/Continuing Education Manager exhibiting together.

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES

Class of 2018

Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia Practice
August and December 2018
First row: Meghan McCready, Donovan Willis, Shantall Strozier
Second row: Connie Welch, Gretchen Ritter, Ervina Browne, Susan Singh
Nurse Anesthesia Class of 2018

First row: Holly Newbold, Rachel Moline, Michelle Jump, Joel Gill, ****Dean Drain, Chasity Huffman, Tatiana Tsareva, Donna Schwarz
Third row: Daniel Jeong, Kathleen Hallowell, Cassandra Groves, Kendal Nicely, Kathryn Esworthy, Rachel Gillman, Melissa Mitchell
Fourth row: *Dr. Corey Davis, Richard Jones, Joshua Dodson, Adam Penrose, Aaron Storsved, Jacot Fogner, Stephen Thiele, Nashon Levi, Claire Caine, Timothy Honeycutt, Amanda Acuff, Kristie Craddock, Ryan Preson, Caia LaCour, Landon Reames, **Mary Fitzgerald, ***Dr. Michael Fallacaro

*Faculty **Clinical Affiliate Faculty ***Chairman ****Dean, College of Health Professions
The annual MCV Scholarship Brunch was held on Sunday, February 17, 2018 with nearly 300 scholarship donors, recipients, family members, faculty and leaders from across the campus. Pictured here are two student scholarship recipients, Joel Gill, recipient of the Brenda Wands and Edward Woods Scholarship, and Faminda Lake, student recipient of the Marjorie T. Goodwin Scholarship Fund in Nurse Anesthesia. This year, donors accounted for 413 scholarships on the MCV Campus.