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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



As we enter a new chapter as the Massachusetts Association of Physician Associates, I am filled with gratitude and optimism. It has been a privilege to serve as your president, especially during

these transformative times in healthcare. Reflecting on our past achievements and challenges, I am reminded of the strength and resilience of our community during these first 50 years, and I am confident the next 50 will be even stronger!

Our membership has continued to grow and we hope to hit 900 members by this summer! I applaud Chelsea Dwyer for this record-breaking outreach and all the continued efforts to keep our membership active and engaged.

We had a successful Spring CME conference in Northampton and look forward to our Fall CME conference in Salem, MA this upcoming October. Under the leadership of Jillian Joseph, our dynamic CME Chair, we continue to organize up-to-date topics, compelling speakers, and an enriching program guided by membership feedback. We were excited to have our inaugural MAPA Awards and MAPA hopes to continue our effort to honor PAs and highlight our legislative allies in our state. Congratulations to Leah Kenney, PA-C for PA of the Year, Representative Christine Barber for Legislator of the Year, and Duncan Daviau, PA-C for the President's Award for Outstanding and Distinguished Service. We cannot wait to meet and honor more PAs at subsequent events!

With MAPA's launch of the PA Leadership Council in 2023, we aim to further the shared missions and communities of visionary PA leaders across different Massachusetts institutions. We will continue to leverage Slack, Google Groups, and WhatsApp to connect and unify our membership. The official MAPA Online Store hopes to provide a way for PAs to fashionably show their PA pride as we work to provide new designs and services. We also look forward to the establishment of our MAPA Pre-PA Society with the help of Pre-PA coordinator Katherine Lagasse, MOT. We appreciate her efforts in joining our team and she has already established a network of Pre-PAs through Facebook and Google Groups! Please look out for our first MAPA Podcast episode coming this summer! We look forward to growing these efforts and we are committed to elevating all the work PAs are doing throughout the state.

Another vital role of MAPA is advocacy on behalf of all PAs in Massachusetts and we are optimistic of the ongoing efforts of our Executive Board and Co-Chairs of our Legislative committee, Josh Merson and Cole Turno. We are also thankful to Charles Group Consulting for the immense dedication, patience, and time they have spent on advocacy on behalf of our profession. Despite the late arrival of a nor'easter, we were proud and grateful of the over 200 PAs and PA students across the state who attended Lobby Day on April 4, 2024 and braved the weather to advocate for our profession at the State house! We continue to fight to pass S.1345, *An Act Relative to Removing Barriers to Care for Physician Assistants*, especially with the ongoing concerns of the Steward Health crisis and workforce shortages. Thank you to those who answered the call to action in which over 8,000 emails were sent by over 400 PAs in the state to ask legislators for their support over a 24 hour period! Our voices were heard! Please read through all the legislative updates and the incredible and hard earned work that has been achieved.

On the national front, our House of Delegates representatives Cathy Hamel, Harrison Keyes, Kim Tighe, Sarita Fage, Carey Barry, Thea Nolan, and Duncan Daviau attended the AAPA Conference in May 2024 in Houston. They braved tornado warnings and we look forward to hearing about the discussions with AAPA on all the spirited topics that are rumored to have caused plenty of mic drops!

Congratulations and welcome this year's graduating PA students to this extraordinary profession. We welcome new members as well as appreciate our membership for all the continued support. Thank you to all the board members to your unwavering commitment and willingness to volunteer your time despite our busy lives. I am humbled and extremely thankful to work with such incredible PAs! As I end my tenure as acting President, I am excited for the future of MAPA and look forward to continuing to build a meaningful and impactful community of PAs in our wonderful Commonwealth. It has been a privilege to serve our profession at the state level. I am thrilled that MAPA will be in capable hands of Thea Nolan, PA-C, as she leads MAPA to new heights in July 2024. I will continue to support MAPA going forward from the sidelines, cheering on our community, seeing my fellow PAs continue to make headlines and showing how we can all go beyond!

Warmly,  
CC Morone, MHS, PA-C

# HOUSE OF DELEGATES (HOD) UPDATE

Six MAPA representatives attended the May AAPA House of Delegates this year in Houston, Texas. We will present key policy changes or important actions and national updates on the MAPA website in June.

Thanks to the five HOD PA volunteers who take time out of their busy schedules to attend and vote on national issues important to ALL PAs.

**YOU can be a delegate!** No special experience or training. All PAs who are MAPA and AAPA members are eligible to be a delegate. Please contact us at the MAPA website for more information.



## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2024 HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Our delegates represent academic and clinical leaders as well as leaders in administration and senior clinicians. Our incoming President, Thea Nolan, participated as well.

Highlights of 3 days of discussion and debate on policy review, new policies and statements included:

- support of patients seeking care across state lines and opposing criminal penalties for seeking such care
- support clinicians providing care to patients who have crossed state lines; opposing criminal penalties for such provision of care

- stating climate change is a major health issue
- recognition of Artificial Intelligence is upon us and stating support of data driven use of AI to enhance clinical care

Our own MAPA President-Elect, Thea Nolan, was featured in a video shown at the Opening Presentation!



Cathy Hamel PA-C  
Chief Delegate HOD

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

We've arrived at the final three months of the State Legislature's 2023-2024 legislative session, a busy time when legislation is still being analyzed, negotiations are taking place between the branches, and a flurry of bills are voted on (or not) before the clock strikes midnight on July 31 (or more likely, several hours later). For MAPA, our priority Optimal Team Practice bill (S.1354) is still in play, having received a favorable report from the Joint Public Health Committee and been referred to the Joint Health Care Financing Committee, where it received an extension to July 3. We've been hard at work garnering support for our OTP bill and countering opposition from the Mass. Medical Society. MAPA is grateful to have secured the support of Mass. General Brigham, among others, and continues to engage in conversations with healthcare institutions on OTP. Please let us know if you can help connect us to your employer or other organization you're affiliated with about endorsing the OTP bill.

MAPA Lobby Day on April 4th was a great opportunity to bring nearly 200 PA students and practicing PAs to the State House to hear inspirational speeches and to speak with their legislators and staff about the importance of passing the OTP bill this session, especially in light of the chaos to the state's hospital systems caused by the Steward crisis. We had productive meetings with the staff of the Health

Care Financing Committee during Lobby Day as well, advocating for a favorable report from their committee on our OTP bill.

MAPA also continues to advocate in support of updating the Section 12 statute to include PAs, through our standalone bill and language that is part of a broader behavioral healthcare bill.

Josh Merson, DMSc, MS-HPed, PA-C, NHDP-BC  
MAPA Director-at-Large, Legislative Committee Chair

Cole Turno, MS, PA-C  
MAPA Director-at-Large, Legislative Committee Co-Chair



## 2024 SPRING CME CONFERENCE

The MAPA Spring Conference and Annual Board Meeting was held on March 23, 2024 at the historic Hotel Northampton. We had a great agenda including sessions on gender-affirming care, medical uses of marijuana, and primary care for patients with HIV. This conference also saw the inaugural MAPA Awards Ceremony, which we look forward to continuing next year. Congratulations to our winners:

**2024 PA of the Year: Leah Kenney, PA-C**

**2024 Legislator of the Year: Representative Christine P. Barber**

**2024 President's Award for Outstanding Distinguished Service: Duncan Daviau, PA-C**

The Fall Conference and Student Challenge Bowl will be held in Salem, MA at the Salem Waterfront Hotel on Saturday, October 5. Be sure to register early to save your spot and plan for a fun weekend! Registration opening in June!



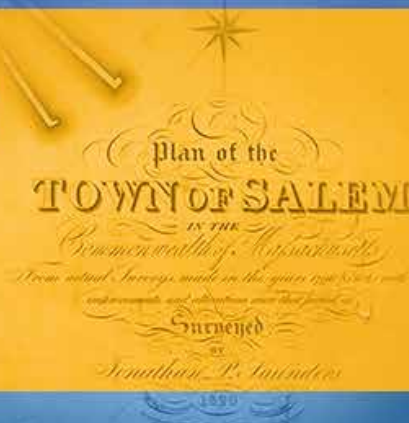
Jillian Joseph, PA-C  
CME Chair



# 2024

**MAPA**  
MASSACHUSETTS  
ASSOCIATION of PAs

**FALL  
CME  
CONFERENCE**



Saturday

October 5

SALEM  
WATERFRONT  
HOTEL - SUITES

**SAVE THE DATE**

## PODCAST UPDATE

### Podcast Name: PA Perspectives: A Massachusetts PA Podcast

#### Podcast Structure

We will be discussing a variety of important updates and advancements for PAs both nationally and in Massachusetts with a focus on highlighting PAs and their many perspectives. The podcast will dive into many professional practice topics such as legislative updates, leadership insights, PA Professional practice trends, updates in diabetes management, disaster medicine, career advancement strategies, non-clinical careers for PAs, amongst others. As an organization, we offer Continuing Medical Education (CME) opportunities at our spring and fall conferences each year that also includes an exhibitor hall. We aim to be the go-to resource for PAs seeking professional growth and development.

PA Perspectives is a podcast dedicated to the vibrant community of Physician Assistants/Associates (PAs) in the state of Massachusetts. With an extensive reach of over 4,550 PAs within the state and the ability to project to the over 168,000 PAs in the US and beyond, our podcast serves as a unique platform to connect, engage, and inspire this dynamic group of healthcare professionals.

As the official podcast of the Massachusetts Association of Physician Associates (MAPA), we are proud to represent a state organization committed to championing the interests of PAs. Beyond our state borders, the potential impact is immense, with the opportunity to reach pre-PA students but also over 168,000 PAs across the United States.

#### We are seeking sponsors!

Sponsors of the podcast will not only benefit from exposure to a dedicated and engaged audience of healthcare professionals but will also align themselves with an organization that actively supports PAs in their journey towards excellence in patient care. Join us in fostering a community that values knowledge, leadership, and the collective advancement of the PA profession.

**Technology:** We will be using some of the newest advancements in remote podcasting technology as we pilot episodes throughout 2024.

**Sponsorship:** Support our mission through sponsorship where we will either provide a scripted or live read 2 times throughout the episode - up to 30 seconds in duration for your company.

**Contact:** Christopher Cannell DMSc, MPAS, PA-C at [massphysicianassistants@gmail.com](mailto:massphysicianassistants@gmail.com) or at (339) 933-1952



Christopher Cannell DMSc,  
MPAS, PA-C



Michael Stewart, DMSc,  
MMS, PA-C

*Introducing*



# ONLINE STORE

**MAPA'S NEW ONLINE STORE IS NOW OPEN!**

*Gear up with all your basics branded with MAPA, from t-shirts and hats to bags and drinkwear.*



## DEI COMMITTEE UPDATE

The DEI committee has been actively involved over the past year, participating in numerous events both within local communities and nationwide. We have engaged in virtual fairs through the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) and various local colleges, as well as multiple career fairs for high school students. One such career fair, hosted by Baystate Health Systems, provided us with a table to demonstrate the roles and capabilities of Physician Assistants (PAs). This was an excellent opportunity to connect with students, offer insights into the career, and allow them to ask questions and perform different skills, sparking their interest in becoming PAs.



Jamie Moore,  
PA-C

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Happy Spring (soon to be summer)! This past year we've been working hard to increase our memberships. Membership fees allow us to continue our advocacy and lobbying efforts, provide continuing education conferences, and much more. Every member counts! Please talk to your colleagues about their MAPA membership, encourage new members to join, and remind old members to renew their membership. If you get your whole department to sign up together, we can offer a discount! We have also recently started a pre-PA society, so please encourage any shadowers to join and get involved, as well! We appreciate all of your help in spreading the word.



Chelsea Dwyer,  
PA-C

## OH, THE PLACES YOU'LL GO!

The Massachusetts Association of PAs along with our global health partner FNE International took part in our fourth medical mission trip to Peru on April 6th -14th. Our participants met up in Lima Peru to enjoy a tapestry of cultures, traditions, and cuisine before heading to the Cusco region to work alongside local physicians and gain insight into global healthcare delivery and healthcare access in the developing world.

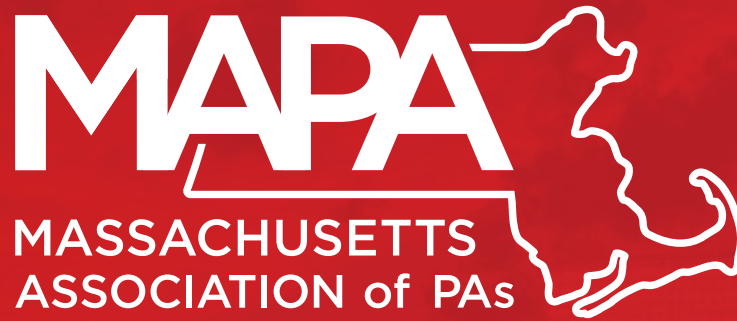
For our interdisciplinary team of physician assistants, nurses, and pharmacists embarking on a medical mission trip to these regions offered not just a journey of healing, but also one of cultural exchange and personal growth. Language barriers dissolved as interpreters helped to bridge the gap between our team and patients, ensuring effective communication and understanding. We treated patients with different ailments ranging from respiratory infections, orthopedic issues wrought on by repetitive agricultural work, and chronic conditions exacerbated by poverty. Our team performed dozens of cervical cancer screenings, provided screening for chronic diseases and offered treatments for common ailments. We also work hard to fundraise prior to ensure that our departure does not create a vacuum and to ensure that the patients in our clinics are able to get adequate follow up within the Peruvian Healthcare system. The monies raised help provide for transportation to clinics, fund treatments, and even surgeries that are required but inaccessible due to societal and geographic barriers.

Throughout our journey we witnessed the resilience and spirit of the Peruvian people, who greet us with warmth and open arms despite their numerous hardships. We were treated by local villagers and the Mayor's Office within Quelleno Peru at the conclusion of our clinic in this community with locally grown coffee beans and chocolate as a memento of their gratitude for our care.

In addition to providing medical care within medical team ventures into the ancient city of Cusco, once the capital of the Inca Empire and were privileged enough to take in a guided tour through the ruins of Machu Picchu. Other participants took part in other sightseeing opportunities and hiked Rainbow Mountains and the Incan trail.

MAPA regularly schedules international medical mission trips throughout the year and our participants are eligible to claim up to 10 CME credits for their service. If you would like to travel with us email us at [info@mass-pa.com](mailto:info@mass-pa.com) for more information and upcoming dates.





# ★ NIGHT AT THE ★ ★ RED SOX ★ ★

**Join MAPA members to watch the  
Red Sox take on the Texas Rangers!**

*All tickets are digital via the MLB Ballpark app.  
They will be transferred to all paid participants closer to the game.*

**Wednesday, August 14<sup>th</sup>  
6:10 PM**

**Reserve Your  
Ticket(s) Now**



**\$49**  
**per ticket**  
*(upper bleachers)*

[mass-pa.com/event/RedSox2024](https://mass-pa.com/event/RedSox2024)

# STUDENT UPDATES

## Boston University

The class of 2024 is finishing their last three clinical rotations this summer and completing their thesis projects, the end is in sight! The class of 2026 has just started their Hematology block, the final block of the spring semester. This semester has been a tough one, covering Pulmonary, Renal, Endocrinology, and Reproduction, so they are looking forward to a lighter course load this summer! Class of '26 also began preceptor sessions at BMC this semester, getting great practice taking patient histories and conducting physical exams. Members of the class are excited to attend the upcoming MAPA conference!



## Northeastern University

First year Northeastern PA students are starting to approach the end of the didactic year, marking the start of clinical rotations in early August. This summer we will be completing our final body systems, Ortho/Rheum, OBGYN, Urology, and Hematology, along with some supplemental courses like nutrition. Over the past few months our class has grown to become a close-knit family. We depend on each other for difficult times during the semester and gather to celebrate our accomplishments. We have completed over 60 exams, partook in cadaver dissection, organized a blood drive, advocated for the PA profession at the State House, and practiced our clinical skills such as IO insertion, NG tubes, and suturing! We have just been introduced to the incoming class, and we are looking forward to becoming mentors, learning more clinical skills, and using all our knowledge we have gained over the coming weeks

## Springfield College

The Springfield College PA program class of 2025 is just finishing up their didactic year and are getting ready for clinical rotations! They are currently working hard in their Ortho and Rheumatology block and are learning a lot of valuable skills in lab such as suturing, scrubbing in, splinting and giving injections. Outside of the classroom, we have been giving back to the community by collecting donations of candy and creating Easter goody bags to donate to local children's hospitals.

A small group of our students will be attending the AAPA conference this May in Houston and are excited to participate in the challenge bowl as well as make new connections and immerse ourselves further in the world of being a PA!

The PA class of 2024 just finished up their last clinical rotation and are preparing to take the PANCE!



# STUDENT UPDATES CONT.

## TUFTS University

Tufts University physician assistant students in the class of 2026 have recently concluded their first semester of the didactic year. Over the past three months, students engaged in rigorous curriculum, delving into a spectrum of medical disciplines ranging from dermatology to infectious disease. Students spent time in the cadaver lab where they were able to see clinical correlations and anatomical anomalies they learned about in class. Additionally, they had the opportunity to apply their learning in practical scenarios at the simulation center, refining their abilities across a range of clinical skills, from fundoscopic examinations to cardiac assessments.

Tufts' PA program takes pride in its representation by Anisa Dahir, who has been chosen for the National Health Service Corps Scholarship. This recognition demonstrates her dedication to serving underserved communities, reflecting the program's values of community engagement and healthcare equity.



Professor Mike Otte teaches class of 2026 students how to perform a fundoscopic exam.



Tufts PA student Anisa Dahir class of 2025 was selected for National Health Service Corps Scholarship.



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# STUDENT UPDATES CONT.

## Westfield State

Excitement is in the air as Westfield State's Physician Assistant Program ends 2023 and enters 2024. The program graduated its fifth cohort and held the white coat ceremony for its sixth cohort in December, and welcomed its seventh cohort in January.

In addition to academic accomplishments, students engaged with local communities. Toward the end of 2023, the sixth cohort (class of 2024) taught in a Westfield Papermill Elementary School about various health initiatives including coping mechanisms for anxiety, healthy eating and nutrition, and engaging stations on hand hygiene. For students from kindergarten to fourth grade, the Westfield PA students had to find ways to teach and adapt their education skills. This review of the stages of childhood development prepared them well for their upcoming rotations! The program hopes to continue building these bridges with the community.

Westfield State's PA Program received grant funding from the State of Massachusetts for students' participation in Addiction Medicine and Psychiatry. The new DMH Behavioral Health Paid Internship Grant program, for the classes of 2024 and 2025, is designed to pay and support students participating in internships at outpatient and community-based public sector behavioral health service settings in Massachusetts. The overarching goal of this initiative is to promote the growth and stability of the Massachusetts public sector behavioral health workforce. Another important goal is to ensure that this workforce represents the diversity of resident populations in the Commonwealth.

At the beginning of 2024, Westfield State's Student Society worked tirelessly to improve the mentor and mentee program. This program works to match a second year PA student with a first year PA student. Through a survey, each student was matched by a common interest. The goal of the program is to help ease the anxieties of a challenging,

rigorous graduate program and provide an opportunity to build community among the two cohorts. At the end of first year, the mentor will place the mentee's white coat on as a way to pass on the baton.

Four of the second year PA students attended MAPA lobby day in Boston to advocate on behalf of the physician assistant profession at a statewide level. The students sat down with their state senators and representatives to share their clinical experience and to persuade and encourage these key players' support on multiple bills concerning the PA profession and accessibility to the healthcare system. Lobby day allowed for a chance to speak to professionals and PA students from other programs. Westfield State's PA program always encourages students' support and participation in these events.

In continued efforts to promote mental health awareness, students participated in Fresh Check Day. This event is on campus promoting mental health, wellness, and suicide prevention. Westfield's clinical year students volunteered to coordinate "Know Your Limit" providing education to community members and Westfield State undergraduates about alcohol abuse and intoxication. Didactic year students attended as participants in this interactive event.

The program is excited to be sending over half of the class of 2024 to the AAPA Conference in Houston, Texas in May. Westfield will be having three students participate in the Challenge Bowl! The student society is planning a fundraiser to support Alzheimer's during the fall of this year as well.

The program looks forward to future endeavors and opportunities in 2024. Thank you to all the hardworking future PAs and best of luck!

