Ready? Set? Go!

Boot camps prepare PA students for their clinical year

The clinical year can be daunting for many physician assistant (PA) students. It’s the year they build on their skills, training to care for actual patients in real-world clinical rotations.

To increase their confidence, the UW–Madison PA Program recently created a series of required “boot camps” that students complete before each of those core rotations.

Four Hands-on Sessions

First launched in the fall of 2016, the boot camps focus on surgery, family medicine, emergency medicine and internal medicine.

In each three-hour session, students practice skills such as gowning and gloving, pelvic examination, pediatric development, casting and splinting, suturing, advanced cardiac life support, x-ray review and chronic disease management.

“We surveyed our faculty to determine the best skills to include in each boot camp,” explains Beverly Speece, MTS, PA-C, the PA Program’s director of clinical education. “We assign students to the boot camp that’s specific to their next rotation, and ask them to provide feedback after each one.”

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Long-Time Faculty Member Honorie Coté Retires

Honorie Coté, MS, PA-C, a 22-year member of the PA Program faculty, retired in August. A 1979 alumna of the UW–Madison PA Program, Coté was a PA at Physicians Plus Medical Group’s immediate care department for 10 years before joining the PA Program faculty in 1995.

In 2001, she became the program’s director of clinical education, a role in which she developed, administered and evaluated the program’s clinical year—and served on the admissions and curriculum committees. In 2010, Coté received a master’s degree in educational leadership and policy analysis from UW–Madison. In 2013, she became a part-time program instructor, teaching in the physical assessment, professional issues, prevention and population health and capstone project courses. Most recently, Coté oversaw the master’s completion program.

“What Honorie contributed to the PA program is immeasurable,” reflects PA Program Director Virginia Snyder, PhD, PA-C. “She was an energetic, hard-working, dedicated and loyal faculty member, and we can’t thank her enough for all she invested in the program. Her contributions are longstanding and she is missed in every way. We are a better program because of you, Honorie!”

Bootcamp, continued

The surgery boot camp takes place at the UW Health Clinical Simulation Program, a state-of-the-art facility that provides students with realistic educational opportunities.

A Confidence Booster

Overall, students are positive about the boot camp experience, and are particularly grateful for the chance to practice key skills before starting clinical rotations.

“You remember more than you think you do.”

“I think the boot camps in general have been anxiety-relieving, because you review things you may not be that confident on, but also realize that you remember more than you think you do,” said one student.

Students have said they are most anxious about starting their surgery rotation. That boot camp’s review of sterile technique, scrubbing in, gowning and gloving, and suturing has boosted their confidence the most.

“Regardless of the surgery or specialty of surgery, these are tasks and concepts that are absolutely necessary to know and practice,” comments another. “Alissa, Lauren and Joel did a fantastic job!”

The surgery boot camp helps students refresh their skills before entering the operating room during clinical rotations.
Wyne received this national honor for his substantial contributions in teaching, professional service and scholarship. His work focuses on global health, medical student and interprofessional education, small grant programs and fellowship planning.

**WAPA Honors Three Students**

Three students received scholarship awards at the Wisconsin Academy of Physician Assistants (WAPA) annual meeting in October.

Kelsey Henriquez, who won the Norine Friell Service Award, is a Spanish–English medical interpreter who has extensive international volunteer experience and is her class’s representative for MEDiC, the UW School of Medicine and Public Health’s student-run free-clinic program.

Jourdyn Mootz, who won the Paul S. Robinson Leadership Award, is a student in our wisPACT program, which trains PAs for northern Wisconsin. Passionate about rural health, she led her class’s service-learning trip to Belize.

Lauren Feierstein, who won the Future Wisconsin PA Award, is a MEDiC volunteer and fluent Spanish speaker committed to caring for medically underserved, Spanish speaking communities in Wisconsin.

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**Heather Hart (1982)**

I have been working in Bozeman, Montana, for the last 20 years—primarily in internal medicine. I have been very involved in the community by being on community boards, nonprofits in environmental education and the Bozeman School Board. I’ve been president of the Montana Academy of Physician Assistants for the last few years.

**Jane (Sharenbroch) Jumes (1982)**

I graduated from the Master’s Degree Completion Program in August 2017—35 years after graduation!

**Scott Holliday (1991)**

I received a direct commission in the United States Air Force (USAF) upon graduation, and retired from active duty on July 1st, 2017. I practiced in family medicine before branching off to aerospace and operational physiology; was a medical squadron commander at Aviano Air Base, Italy; and served on the Surgeon General’s staff in Texas, Germany, and Virginia. I had two deployments, with time in Iraq, Afghanistan and Africa. I now work as a hospitalist PA in Virginia, New Mexico and (soon) Texas—and also work in a local urgent care setting to maintain primary care skills.

**Joel Vallier (2012)**

I’m employed at Froedtert Hospital/Medical College of Wisconsin in a high-flow emergency department. We have a “fast-track” area where about 40 percent of patients are treated that’s almost entirely run by advanced practice providers. Our diligence and hard work has been recognized with a nomination for a hospital Award of Excellence. I feel very privileged to be a part of such a hardworking and team-based department, and can’t imagine practicing anywhere else.
THREE GREAT WAYS
to stay connected with the UW–Madison PA Program

1. **Share an alumni reflection**
   Did your address change? Have any big accomplishments? Got great memories from PA school?
   We’d love to hear from you and share your stories 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: go.wisc.edu/4bi5k4

3. **Join our Facebook group**
   Keep in touch with us in real time on social media!
   You’ll find job opportunities, program news, student and alumni stories, and more.
   Visit Facebook and search for: UW–Madison Physician Assistant Program