

PAEA Annual Report to the Membership

Submitted by William Kohlhepp, DHSc, PA-C and Timi Agar Barwick, MPM

We're looking forward to celebrating the 50-year anniversary of the PA profession with you at the 2017 PAEA Education Forum in Denver, Colorado.

In this year, where our community is reflecting on the culmination of 50 years of PA progress, we're proud to report that PAEA has made substantial contributions to the PA education community.

PAEA Leads the Way

To lead PAEA, we need a map to our destination and a north star to steer by. This year, we overhauled both our mission (our north star) and our strategic plan (our map).

The mission has been rewritten to represent our work better: "**Leadership, innovation, and excellence in PA education.**" These are the three core elements that PAEA exists to provide for our members and to PA education generally. The specific approaches that we use to advance this mission - faculty and program development, diversity and inclusion, leadership, and research - were moved into the strategy itself.

The updated strategy has three notable features:

1. **The strategy is focused.** Reducing the world of all possible plans to this level of focus and essentialism was an enormous challenge. As educators, we believe we can do it all - but the fact is, more is not always better. The most impactful work deserves the bulk of our time, energy, and effort, and we are bringing a laser focus to achieve them. While the plan's key results metrics are being finalized, we can share the goals we are targeting:
 - a. Goal #1: Identity diversity (race, ethnicity, gender identity, etc.) is demonstrated throughout PA education.
 - b. Goal #2: Program accreditation uses outcome measures that drive quality & innovation.
 - c. Goal #3: The clinical education system has the capacity, flexibility, and quality to prepare practice-ready graduates.

2. **The strategy is outcomes-oriented.** We are calling for an outcome focus in the accreditation standards, and we think it's imperative that PAEA model the same outcomes-oriented approach in all aspects of our operations.
3. **The strategy is ambitious.** We chose goals that address the largest and most important issues confronting the PA education community. While these goals are not within our absolute control, they are within our influence as well as our area of responsibility. Our end game is a world where PAs remain relevant for the next 50 years, and, as past leaders have said, that means we need to be bold.

In preparation for the updated strategic plan, this year we reorganized both the staffing structure and the volunteer structure to better align with PAEA's priorities. These realigned structures build a stronger partnership between the volunteers and staff, a leadership circle that can more effectively advise the Board and implement the updated strategy.

While the revised strategic plan was being crafted, debated, amended and ultimately ratified, our work to advance our core leadership continued. We had numerous wins this year, and some are worth highlighting as examples of our progress:

- PAEA President Bill Kohlhepp was invited to provide testimony targeted on the issue of clinical training before the Labor HHS subcommittee.
- PAEA President William Kohlhepp, CEO Timi Agar Barwick, and the Government Relations team met with Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) administrator Dr. George Sigounas to emphasize the need for more timely and comprehensive outcomes data and to ensure that PA educators have equitable access to the new opportunities presented by collaborative grants.
- PAEA and ARC-PA leaderships held an inaugural joint meeting to discuss trends in medical education, the Standards revision process, the evolution of accreditation, and professional issues.
- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) included a PAEA-proposed provision for preceptors of PA students. The PA education community submitted over 315 comments in support of the preceptor provision, comprising approximately 25% of the total comments submitted by all Medicare Part B stakeholders.

- PAEA awarded a scholarship to Cody Sasek (Creighton University) to attend the prestigious Harvard Macy Institute Program for Educators in Health Professions.

PAEA Demonstrates Our Commitment to Diversity

PAEA joined our health professions education colleagues to support an amicus brief, *Brief for the Association of American Medical Colleges and Others as Amici Curiae Supporting Respondents*, that was submitted to the Supreme Court this summer.

In addition, we advocated, both in coalitions and individually, on a number of federal initiatives, executive orders, and proposed legislation that would have adversely affected the health of underserved populations, the diversity of our classrooms, and educational outcomes.

PAEA recently reached out to all program directors to encourage them to promote and support the engagement of minority faculty at their programs in our volunteer structure. We've made significant strides increasing identity diversity (race, ethnicity, gender identity, etc.) on the Board and among Board candidate positions, and we'll continue our push for diversity at all levels of leadership in 2018.

Our Diversity and Inclusion Mission Advancement Commission (DIMAC) is working hard to provide the evidence, messaging, and content for a diversity standard to contribute as part of this round of accreditation standards revisions. Based on their efforts, the Board has committed to advancing a standard for consideration by the ARC-PA.

Finally, the board was proud to support DIMAC chair Shani Fleming, MS, MPH, PA-C to the Empower2 conference, which stressed the proactive leadership essential to improving the HBCU health and science applicant pool.

PAEA Supports Professional and Organizational Excellence

Since its inception over three years ago, PAEA's professional services consulting operation has worked with nearly 70 programs, both developing and accredited. Over 85% percent of those programs received positive accreditation outcomes. This service has been immensely successful,

supporting programs who have the desire and capacity to thrive, and serving as a reality check when institutions have the desire but their commitment to excellence is lacking.

PAEA's new Pathways to Professional Excellence initiative launched in early 2017. During Phase One, which focuses on enhancing and expanding professional development at an individual faculty level, the content of PAEA workshops was upgraded to ensure relevancy. In addition, a specific emphasis was placed on contemporary engagement and content delivery methods. Phase Two of Pathways to Professional Excellence, expanding our portfolio of online and blended learning offerings, will roll out in 2018. Stay tuned.

We have worked successfully with NCCPA for the past 5 years to develop and deliver our popular End of Rotation and PACKRAT exams, used by 60% and 90% of member programs respectively. In 2017 alone, we delivered over 60,000 exams to PA students nationwide, and utilization continues to grow year after year. We're currently in discussions with NCCPA to take our exam capabilities to the next level, and are in the process of developing a new product, the End of Curriculum exam, to be used as one part of a summative evaluation for PA students.

PAEA Reinforces Our Research Capabilities

In preparation for the discussion on Optimal Team Practice at the 2017 AAPA House of Delegates, PAEA administered three surveys to develop an evidence base for OTP's potential impact on PA education. These surveys engaged nearly 80% of all program directors and 34% of all medical directors. Our findings provided the crucial education perspective during the online and offline debates that followed, shaping the evolution of the OTP concept and positioning PAEA as a key influencer on the policy that was formally adopted by the House of Delegates.

It's not enough that we just collect data from our members, but that we turn that data into actionable and shareable research in the medical education community. This year, our staff presented this research in high-profile venues, including the Association of Test Publishers conference, the AAPA conference, AAMC's workforce conference, and AAMC's research journal *Academic Medicine*. In addition, our research director was appointed to AcademyHealth's workforce special interest group.

In May, PAEA and AAPA formally invited applications for the Faculty Research Fellowship program, offering three one-year-long research fellowships. In September, we awarded the fellowships to Alicia Quella (Augsburg University), Christina Hanson (Bethel University), and Virginia Valentin (University of Utah). This program provides substantial investment to strengthen the research skills and productivity for qualified PA faculty and to develop the next generation of PA researchers. The fellowship will provide up to \$25,000 to the fellow's institution to secure protected time for research as well as a travel stipend of up to \$7,500. The Fellowship will run from November 1, 2017, through October 31, 2018.

PAEA Celebrates 50 Years of PA Excellence

In conclusion, we'd like to raise our glass to toast 50 superb years of the PA profession. A special note of thanks goes to the staff and editorial board of the *Journal of Physician Assistant Education*, who published a special issue reflecting on the past and future of the PA profession.

See you at the 2017 PAEA Education Forum!