

HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS

NEWSLETTER OF THE PA HISTORY SOCIETY



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Stephen D. Wilson, PA-C



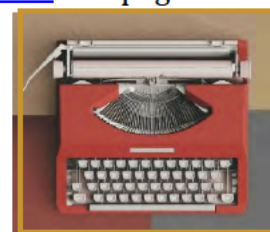
I hope this message finds everyone well and enjoying the boundless pleasures of summer. For some of us, the threat of a smoke-filled sky or flooded property has certainly made the summer a little less enjoyable. If you, members of your family or your patients have suffered from these natural disasters, I hope you have received all the aid and care available. If there are some unmet needs, be sure to reach out to the larger PA community in your area. Historically, PAs tend to be a very caring and responsive group of professionals. Do you have some great stories of our colleagues going above and beyond? Please email the PAHx (contactus@pahx.org), so that we can record these good deeds!

The PA History Society continues its presence at the AAPA meetings. Our book, *“Physician Assistants as Social Innovators in Healthcare”* brought a lot of traffic to our booth this year. It is a tremendous resource for recognizing the complete history of the profession and the people who made it happen. It is also a real study of how innovation becomes the standard of care. The six stages of successful social innovation are referenced within the writings. The lessons learned within the book can easily be applicable today in this changing environment of PA practice.

(President’s Message, continued on page 2)

Share Your PA Story

Make time for PA history and share your special PA story with the PAHx! An interesting and engaging story about your PA career, PA volunteerism, etc., could become a part of history by being featured on our [PA Historical Perspectives](#) webpage or as an article in our quarterly newsletter. Start writing your special piece of PA history today, which could inspire the next generation of PAs tomorrow! For questions, or to submit your PA story, please email the PAHx office at: contactus@pahx.org.



(President's Message, continued from page 2)

The Society Trustees are in the middle of revising our long-range strategic plan. This in-depth reflection of what we have done and what is in our future to propel the organization forward occurs every three years. Currently, the emphasis is geared toward developing strategies to meet our goals, which will better connect us with the PA community to capture the history of the profession that is being made today. Work is wrapping up on our website refresh and the relaunch will occur later this month. In addition, Historian Tricia Marriott and staff will begin updating the "Educational Learning Modules" next month, which are available to our PA Program Associates.

I want to encourage you to visit our website for the latest posting of ["Making History by Making a Difference"](#), as this special feature changes each month. The stories are always inspiring and provide great examples of our capabilities to do good things and also reach beyond what we think is possible.

Need a break from reading? Visit our collection of [oral histories](#). There are 248 interviews available on our website, where I am sure you can find a topic or person of interest presented by those uniquely qualified PAs to tell you the story in their own words. Until our next quarterly newsletter, wishing you all the best!

PA History Society's

Mission: To share the history of the development of the PA profession and illustrate how PAs continue to make a difference in our society.

Vision: The PA History Society brings PA history to life by inspiring the next generation of PAs, patients, and policymakers.

PA Volunteer Opportunity!

Do you ...

- ✓ **love PA history?**
- ✓ **enjoy writing about PA history?**
- ✓ **appreciate volunteerism?**
- ✓ **want to get involved?**

If you answered 'yes' to any of these questions, then the PA History Society has an opportunity for you! We are searching for a **Trustee to join our Board in 2024** to serve a three-year term; with an optional second three-year term available after successfully completing a first term. **Applications will be accepted through September 8, 2023.**

The PAHx Nominating Committee will review all applications and conduct telephone interviews with the finalists by early October. Per PAHx Bylaws, the NCCPA Board of Directors must vote to approve the PAHx Nominating Committee's recommendation during their annual board meeting in November, and **candidates will be notified of the results by early December.**

Please [CLICK HERE](#) for the **Trustee Application Packet**, which includes the requirements and expectations for members of the PAHx Board of Trustees and writing sample prompt. Please read the information completely before applying. Interested candidates should **email** a Letter of Interest, a CV or resume and the mock 'Jane Doe' biography writing sample to: PAHx Nominating Committee, c/o Lori Konopka-Sauer at LoriK@nccpa.net.



The PA History Society is looking for an energetic PA Student to serve on the PAHx Board!

The Board of Trustees has a position available for a one-year **Student Trustee** term in 2024. **Applications will be accepted through September 8, 2023.**

The PAHx Nominating Committee will review all applications and conduct telephone interviews with the finalists by early October. Per PAHx Bylaws, the NCCPA Board of Directors will review and vote on the PAHx Nominating Committee’s recommendation during their annual board meeting in November. **Candidates will be notified of the results by early December.**

Please [CLICK HERE](#) for the **Student Trustee Application Packet**, the requirements and the expectations for a Student Trustee to serve on the PAHx Board of Trustees. Please read the information completely before applying.

Interested students should **email** a Letter of Interest, CV or resume, and their signed Program Director Acknowledgement Form to: PAHx Nominating Committee, c/o Lori Konopka-Sauer at LoriK@nccpa.net.

POP QUIZ:

DO YOU KNOW YOUR PA HISTORY?

Which country launched a successful pilot PA program in 2001 that would eventually lead to the establishment of five PA programs and over 1,600 practicing PAs within the country in the span of only 20 years?

- A. the Netherlands
- B. South Africa
- C. New Zealand
- D. Canada

The answer can be found on page 5 of this newsletter.

**In Her Own Words:
Sophi Scarnewman, PA-S,
PAHx 2024 Student Trustee**

Bruna Varalli-Claypool, BBA, MHS, PA-C, DFAAPA

Why PA?

Being able to serve other people at this most basic level of their health is the highest purpose to which I can imagine putting myself. I am an ardent advocate for teams and improved access to healthcare, and I believe being a PA uniquely positions me to embody those values.



What will be the title of the first book you write?

“Mistakes I’m Glad I Made” (but not in reference to patient care!). Other contenders include “15 Dumb Fights with my Husband” and a parenting advice book called “It’s Impossible to Make Anybody Sleep Unless You’re an Anesthesiologist”.

If you could have a superpower, what would it be? Why?

I’d love to be able to be in two places at once. I hate missing events for my son, but I have to prioritize my training.



Beach or mountains?

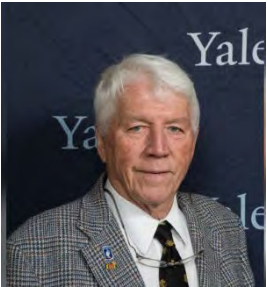
I’m a huge fan of the moody, chilly beaches we have here in Northern California. Walking barefoot in the cool surf, bundled up in my favorite fleece is perfection.

(In Her Own Words, continued on page 7)

The Passing of a PA Champion: A Personal Remembrance

Tricia Marriott, PA-C, MPAS, MJ, CHC, DFAAPA
PAHx Historian

Dr. Kristaps J. Keggi (1934-2023) passed away on Independence Day, July 4, 2023. Much has been



written about his legacy as a pioneer in the field of orthopaedics by his [colleagues at Yale](#), with many social media testimonials from medical trainees, patients and the community he served. A life well-lived as the saying goes, Dr.

Keggi was also a PA champion who had a hand in the development of the first PA program in the State of Connecticut.

In 1965-66, Dr. Keggi participated in the Vietnam War as a military physician stationed with the 173rd Airborne as Chief of surgery at the 3rd Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) in Biên Hòa, Vietnam. Upon his return, Dr. Keggi joined the Yale School of Medicine Faculty as an Assistant Professor. The story of the return of the medics from Vietnam and the evolution of the PA profession is very familiar to anyone who has studied PA history. Turns out that Dr. Keggi provided input from his experience with those medics as a surgeon in the MASH unit in Vietnam to a Trauma Grant proposal submitted by the Yale Department of Surgery that eventually led to the launch of the [Yale Physician Associate Program](#). He told me that story the very first day we met.

As a 1986 graduate of the Yale PA Program, I had the privilege of joining Dr. Keggi's team at Waterbury Hospital. I worked with him for a total of 18 years between Waterbury and Yale until his retirement at the age of 82 in 2016. I remember the things he taught me fondly; the time he spent sketching diagrams and planning complex revision cases, using his red wax pencil to draw on x-rays, his tremendous ability to navigate some incredibly difficult surgical cases, and his patience with orthopaedic residents as they attempted to impress their professor. Dr. Keggi

valued the PAs as integral team members, supporting the PA model to the administration and fellow physicians in the community. He included PAs in weekly grand rounds and Total Joint Conferences, exemplifying how it should be done, when at the time, PAs were not widely accepted in the hospital. He also set high standards for himself and the team, all for the benefit of the patient.

Dr. Keggi's passing, and the enormous influence he had on the PA that I have become, has led me to consider the others that have contributed to my career and practice of medicine as a PA. In the earlier days of the profession, PAs were largely reliant on physicians for mentorship - and still are today - although there are many more PAs training new PAs. The notion of "negotiated performance autonomy"¹ was, and still is, the mainstay of the competency - based practice of medicine as a PA. In the early days, before PAs were licensed, PA scope was determined by the physicians with whom they worked. PAs were shown how, then demonstrated they knew how, then sent off to do the things that the physicians trusted them to do. My first time closing by myself in the OR while the surgeon left the room to see our next patient, my first fracture reduction alone in the middle of the night while on trauma call, my first attempt at counter-balanced tibial pin traction (also in the middle of the night) were all performed by a PA because a physician took the time to teach and to trust.

I hope every PA has had such good fortune to work with and learn from physicians such as Dr. Keggi. As I now spend most of my days developing future PAs, my hope is that they all can be mentored, taught and trusted by other fine practitioners, and that they recognize those opportunities when they arise.

If you want to know more about his story, including his journey escaping Eastern Europe during WWII, Dr. Keggi published an autobiography in 2022 entitled [My Century: A memoir of war, peace and pioneering in the operating room](#).

¹ Eugene S. Schneller, PhD in *Physician Assistants as Social Innovators in Healthcare*, Physician Assistant History Society (2022)

Doug Barker: Five Decades as a Global PA

Don Pedersen, PhD, PA

Doug Barker entered the 8th class of the University of Utah Physician Assistant Program (UPAP), formerly the Utah MEDEX Demonstration Project, in 1977. I was fortunate to be in the same class. Doug came to the U with a wealth of clinical experience, I came with degrees but no practical clinical experience. I benefited greatly from his knowledge and skills with impromptu sessions on suturing, casting, lab testing, etc. gained from his time as an EMT in the busy ER of one of our local Salt Lake City Hospitals. Several of the ER physicians at Holy Cross Hospital convinced Doug that his next career choice should be to attend the new MEDEX program at the U and further his medical education by becoming a primary care PA. As a friend and colleague, I have followed Doug's career over nearly five decades. Doug's clinical year was spent in Moab, Utah with Dr. Paul Mayberry, a dedicated family physician and surgeon. Placing clinical year students with "full service" family physicians in an apprenticeship model was the norm for the eight MEDEX programs across the country. We both survived the gauntlet of PA education and were hired on with our respective precepting physicians – Doug in Moab and me in Blackfoot, Idaho. I moved from Blackfoot to Salt Lake City to become PA program faculty at the University of Utah and Doug went on to the Peace Corps – a dream of his for many years. This is where Doug's remarkable story as a "global PA" begins. He initially was posted to Nakuru, Kenya on the banks of Lake Nakuru with its remarkable flocks of pink flamingos. He began teaching registered clinical officers (RCOs) as a Peace Corps "Medical Education Tutor". Doug's specialty became OB/GYN out of necessity due to the overwhelming demand for obstetrical care in this resource-poor country. Through his teaching and clinical care in OB, Doug spent two memorable years teaching and being "adopted" by a Kikuyu family. On a trip with Doug and Noi, his wife, to Kenya and Tanzania in the early 2000s, we met many individuals at the training facility that remembered Doug and the time he spent teaching there in the 1980s.



Peace Corps volunteer Doug Barker, PA training Clinical Officers in Nakuru, Kenya in the late 1970s.

After his early African Peace Corps experience, Doug moved on to refugee camps and became one of the main health and safety professionals for some 70,000 Khmer and Afghan refugees - first along the Thai/Cambodian border and then the Afghanistan/Pakistan border. This is where Doug learned the importance of the basic public health issues of safe water and sanitation in resource-poor countries. This is also where he met Noi who was helping as a Thai pharmacy technician at the MSF (Doctors Without Borders) refugee hospital in the Thailand camp.

Doug went on to work for multinational corporations around the world – including Chad, Sudan, Niger, Guinea, Mozambique, American Samoa, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Papua New Guinea, Canada, and Kazakhstan. In these work situations, he oversaw the health and safety of the indigenous and expatriate workforce at the various project sites, most often in very remote (and sometimes dangerous) settings.



PA Doug Barker on duty inside the tribal territories, Hangu Refugee camp on the Pakistan/Afghanistan border.

You may read the entirety of this feature about the extraordinary career of PA Doug Barker and view more photographs on the PAHx webpage ["Historical Perspectives."](#)

(Pop Quiz, continued from page 3)

Correct Answer - PA History Pop Quiz: A

Feedback:

In less than twenty years, the Netherlands has developed a profession that has made a tremendous impact on the country's health care policy, access, and delivery. You may learn more about the formation of the PA profession in the Netherlands from the PA History Society's oral history interview project and the article below.

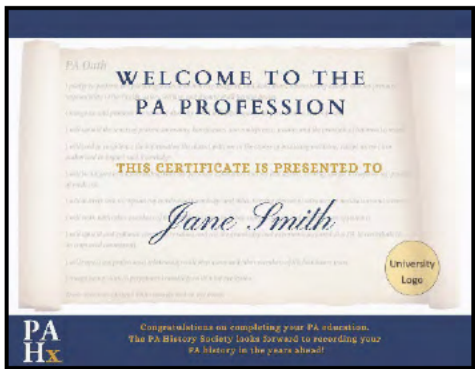
References:

Article: [The Establishment of the PA Profession in the Netherlands](#)

Oral History Interview Collection: [The PA Profession in the Netherlands](#)

Next Generation of PAs

A new benefit has been established for the Society's annual PAHx Associates - a **Welcome to the PA Profession Certificate**. The certificate is available on the [PAHx Associate Only webpage](#) for those members to download and customize with the PA graduate's name and university logo. The certificate is a great way for PA programs and the PAHx to welcome the next generation of PAs to the profession. The certificate is suitable for framing and the background includes the PA Oath.



Interested in becoming PAHx Associate?

Annual sponsorship of the Society is open to PA Educational Programs, PA Student Organizations, PA State Chapters, PA Caucuses, PA Specialty Groups, and corporate, philanthropic, and governmental sponsors desirous of furthering the Society's mission and goals. **Associate Benefits include:**

- ✓ Educational Learning Modules, Instructor's Manual, and Test Questions for each of the five modules
- ✓ Historian Toolkit and Class Historian Checklist
- ✓ Welcome to the PA Profession Certificate
- ✓ Anniversary & Celebration Planner
- ✓ Access to PAHx Speaker's Bureau
- ✓ Provide Digital Images free of charge
- ✓ Featured on PAHx Website: Homepage Feature Box, First Class Picture Page, and PAHx Associates Page

The PAHx Associate benefits are effective annually from July 1 – June 30. For more information on becoming a PAHx Associate, please visit the Society's website at <https://pahx.org/how-to-support-us/> or email us at contactus@pahx.org.

From the Archives: Special Donations from Bubba Gwinn's Family

Lt. Col. [ret] [David "Bubba" Gwinn](#), PA (1939-2017), is well remembered within the AAPA Veterans Caucus for his advocacy for the PA profession, the Caucus, and the Society of Air Force PAs. A Vietnam War veteran, he served in the Air Force for over 40 years, visited 180 countries, and every US state (except Vermont). As is the story with most of the early PAs, he started his career in healthcare as a medic. After returning from Vietnam, he attended the Air Force PA program, graduating in 1974. In 1978, he took on the role of Associate Corps Chief for PAs which entailed acting as an advisor to the US Air Force Surgeon General. He later worked in the White House Medical Unit until 1986.

In April of this year [2023], Gwinn's stepdaughters reached out to the Society to donate two artifacts that were very dear to him.

The first item is an AAPA Veterans Caucus wristwatch. Gwinn is the only one to have received such a watch and it was given to him by the Caucus as a show of appreciation for his dedication to the group the other item is a coffee mug.



from his time working in the White House Medical Unit.

The mug features the US Air Force Medical Service's insignia and Gwinn's rank while he was with the Unit. The PA History Society is honored to be entrusted with these testaments to Gwinn's life and achievements.

If you have specific items, papers such as correspondence related to your PA career, or library materials, and would like to donate them to the PA History Society to make sure they are preserved and available for researchers, please contact: contactus@pahx.org.

(In Her Own Words, continued from page 3)

How many languages do you speak?

Two, English and Spanish.

What makes you laugh?

Puns, kids, gentle sarcasm.

Who's your favorite superhero? Why?

Elasti-Girl from *The Incredibles*. It's just such an on-the-nose, on-the-money description of what it's like to be a working mom.



Dogs or cats?

Don't tell my dog, but I'm a total cat person – just dreadfully allergic.

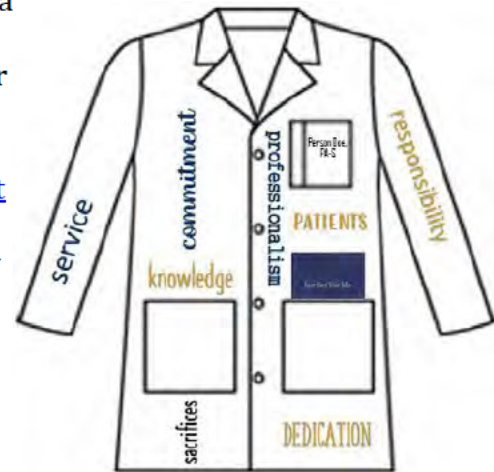
**Stay in Touch with PAHx
thru Social Media!**

Please be sure to “like” PA History Society on [Facebook](#) to receive updates and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

Not Just a Lab Coat

The white coat is a garment symbolizing the commitment a PA student makes to the medical profession and to the patients they will serve. A special ceremony takes place in front of colleagues and family as a rite of passage. The students recite an oath/pledge and are adorned with a short white coat as they begin their journey into advanced studies to prepare for life as a certified PA.

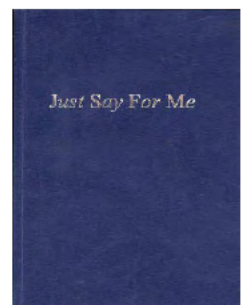
Please email your own white coat ceremony photos to conniem@nccpa.net and share your own walk down memory lane. Photos will be posted as a special feature page on our PAHx website.



Just Say for Me

The perfect gift for a White Coat Ceremony or PA Graduation

Just Say for Me, the little blue book of “Steadisms”, is a collection of inspiring thoughts by Dr. Eugene A. Stead, Jr., founder of the PA profession. This small booklet is packed with 342 quotes from Dr. Stead regarding his philosophies about health care, medical education, patient care, and much more! This little booklet *fits perfectly in a white coat pocket* to make it a great gift for students during their white coat ceremony or PA graduation! For more information please visit the [PAHx book webpage here](#).



The Origin of the PA Oath

Michelle N. Schabowski, MSIS, CA,
PAHx Senior Archivist

Nearly all medical schools and many PA educational programs incorporate some form of professional medical oath into their graduation ceremonies. The oldest and most popular of these oaths is the Hippocratic Oath, composed more than 2,400 years ago. The modern Hippocratic Oath is an oath or declaration taken by many graduating medical students or physicians stating their intentions to practice medicine justly and ethically.¹ PA education programs traditionally follow the medical model of education and clinical training such that the incorporation of an oath of professional practice is consistent.

The PA Oath was not formally recognized by the AAPA for more than two decades. In 1999, there was a motion before the AAPA House of Delegates to have the Association of PA Programs (APAP, now known as the PA Education Association) to work on modifying the Hippocratic Oath to make it appropriate for PAs and to encourage PA programs to have their students take this oath upon graduation.² The House of Delegates rejected this motion, with the reasoning that the matter was best left to the Student Academy and the APAP itself to decide. The APAP formally accepted the Oath (allowing for variations depending on PA program preference) later that year. AAPA House of Delegates revised and officially adopted the PA Oath as noted below in 2021:

“I Pledge to perform the following duties with honesty, integrity, and dedication, remembering always that my primary responsibility is to the health, safety, welfare, and dignity of all human beings:

I recognize and promote the value of diversity and I will treat equally all persons who seek my care.

I will uphold the tenets of patient autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice, and the principle of informed consent.

I will hold in confidence information shared with me in the course of practicing medicine, except where I am authorized to impart such knowledge.

I will be diligent in understanding both my personal capabilities and my limitations, striving always to improve my practice of medicine.

I will actively seek to expand my intellectual knowledge and skills, keeping abreast of advances in medical art and science.

I will work with other members of the healthcare team to assure compassionate and effective care of patients.

I will uphold and enhance community values and use the knowledge and experience acquired as a PA to contribute to an improved community.

I will respect my professional relationship with the physician and other members of the healthcare team.

I recognize my duty to perpetuate knowledge within the profession.

These duties are pledged with sincerity and on my honor.”

But where did the original PA Oath come from?

According to “legend”, the PA Professional Oath was written in the mid-1990s by the father of a PA student. The University of Southern California student’s father was a physician and he felt that PAs should have an Oath, similar to the Hippocratic Oath that physicians have to take upon graduation. Using the Hippocratic Oath as a starting point, he made changes to it to better apply to the PA profession.

References:

¹ Hulkower, R. (2010) *The History of the Hippocratic Oath: Outdated, Inauthentic, and Yet Still Relevant Commentary* 44 EJB, Copyright © 2010

² American Academy of PAs (1999) *Summary of Actions of the AAPA House of Delegates*. Physician Assistant History Society Library Collection.

All things PA History can be found on our website at www.pahx.org!

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Join the PA History Society's "Lifetime Circle of Friends"

You can help preserve PA history by becoming a *Lifetime Friend* of the Society.

"Lifetime" Circle of Friends Levels:

A one-time donation of \$1,000 or more for individuals aged 65 years and older or retired.

OR

A one-time donation of \$2,000 or more for individuals under the age 65 years.

Your **one-time donation** will assist the PA History Society with:

- ❖ Preserving the Archives collection
- ❖ Developing educational materials (history books, learning modules, workshops and more)
- ❖ Scanning materials for digital use
- ❖ Expanding our biography and oral history collection
- ❖ Maintaining the PAHx robust website.

Please visit www.pahx.org to make your donation by credit card or mail your check to:

PA History Society
12000 Findley Road, Suite 100
Johns Creek, GA 30097

Upon receipt of your donation, you will receive a letter of receipt for tax purposes, a special certificate, and your name will be featured on the Society's *Lifetime Friends webpage*.

If you do *not* wish for your name to appear on the Society's *Lifetime Friends* webpage or *Lifetime Friends* tree plaque, please let us know.

Your support of PA history will be appreciated!



The PA History Society thanks the following PA Program Associates for their support:

2023-2024

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THANK YOU!

List current as of 8/7/23

If your PA Program would like to become an Associate for 2023-2024, please visit our website at www.pahx.org or email: ContactUs@pahx.org

The Physician Assistant History Society's most recent educational publication:

Physician Assistants as Social Innovators in Healthcare

shipping +
\$35.00 -website
\$39.95 -Amazon



- Learn about the PA profession as a transformative social innovation in healthcare.
- An excellent resource for faculty and students!
- **Kirkus Review** April 2023 excerpt: "This illuminating history of physician assistants in the United States show how a novel medical profession took root and blossomed. "
- The book content may help address the ARC-PA curricular components such as B2.14(d) and B2.17 (b),(c),(e),(f) & (g) to help aid in teaching the history of the PA profession.

<https://pahx.org/pa-history-book/>

PA History Society 678-417-8682