

President's Message

Colleagues,

As I reflect back on this last year, I can truly say I have never felt more humbled to be a part of this impressive group of medical professionals. I am honored to have the opportunity to serve as President of the Washington Academy of PAs.



Gabe Zecha
President

The last few months have brought many uncertainties, among them, COVID-19 followed by a focus on systemic racism and the marked disparities in health outcomes based on race. This has huge impacts on the health of our patients, friends and family. More uncertainties lie ahead but the demonstrated resilience and commitment of the PA profession is nothing short of inspiring.

Last year was a landmark year in terms of PA legislation in our state. Thanks to the heroic efforts of our Legislative committee, led by Linda Dale, PA-C, D.H.Ed and our lobbyist, Chelsea Hager, JD Senate Bill 2378 passed! Effective July 2021, this bill will move delegation agreements to the practice level, increase the MD/PA ratio to 10:1, remove remote site restrictions, and remove duplicate regulatory structures for PA working with MDs and DOs.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Across the state, PAs have observed the changing landscape for PA practice. There are many factors involved with PA employability and practice within our State. Due to the supervisory language and delegation agreement requirement, we have lost jobs in this state. This has driven our Strategic focus for 2020-2021 that we hope will reinforce the foundations of team practice and build upon our work: Increase our membership — **WE NEED YOU!** Your voice

needs to be heard and part of the way we are able to do that is with your membership.

- Become a WAPA member
[www.wapa.com/become-a-member]
- Attain recognition of the PA role within the Washington medical community and the general public
- Develop methods to promote financial sustainability for WAPA
- Provide Quality Education and CME
- Ensure we have a strong legislative voice

COMMITTEE OPPORTUNITIES

We have a number of committee opportunities—we need your fresh voices, inspiration, passion and enthusiasm on our Marketing and Public Relations Committee, Elections Committee, Finance, and Student Affairs committees. We have also established a Fundraising and Development committee so if this is your passion – please consider volunteering to Chair this committee or be a member!

This organization has always been about you, the PA in the state of Washington. I hope you will not hesitate to contact me via email [gzecha@live.com] with your thoughts, opinions, and recommendations. Most of all, I hope you will get involved. Together we are fierce and unstoppable!

Looking forward to the coming year and getting to know all of you better.

With Gratitude,
Gabrielle Zecha, PA-C, MHA, DFAAPA
President, Washington Academy of PAs

P.S. I hope you'll take a moment to review the WAPA Mission and Vision and that it will INSPIRE you to become a member! ■

WAPA Mission and Vision

I hope you'll take a moment to review the **WAPA Mission and Vision** and that it will INSPIRE you to become a member!

The Mission of WAPA is to cultivate a diverse and collaborative presence across all aspects of healthcare through advocacy, policy, and leadership. To exemplify professional growth, fortitude, and resilience in order to cultivate PA career development in WA state.

WAPA's Vision is to empower PAs to practice, without barriers, at their highest level of education and experience while fully realizing PAs as integral members and leaders of Washington's healthcare team

You and Burnout...You're Not Alone

The rapid spread of the COVID-19 created challenges for healthcare systems and forced Physician Assistants to grapple with clinical and nonclinical stressors, including shortages of personal protective equipment, mortality and morbidity associated with COVID-19, fear of bringing the virus home to family members, and the reality of losing fellow colleagues to the disease. Evidence from previous pandemic outbreaks, along with early evidence from the COVID-19 pandemic, suggests that these events have significant short- and long-term effects on the mental health of healthcare workers. All healthcare stakeholders, including PAs should create short- and long-term plans to support the mental health of colleagues during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.



Eileen Ravella
WAPA Immediate
Past President

The following videos discussing “moral injury” by ZdoggMD and a Psychiatrist specializing in mindfulness were recently shared among the WAPA board and here to our members.

<https://www.facebook.com/407504242094/posts/10156939396502095/?vh=e&d=n>

<https://www.facebook.com/ZDogMD/videos/603657890508753/>

A recent article, “Physician Burnout,” from the *New England Journal of Medicine*; June 25, 2020 also discusses this very issue.

“I agree with the author, we have lost sight of competency relatedness and autonomy. Add being a PA in this era of medicine and the stress is increased. I would add a fourth pillar off intrinsic motivation. A lack of identity and always being referred to as the “other health care professional.”

Eileen Ravella PA-C
WAPA Immediate Past President ■

WAPA Board of Directors

Are you interested in volunteering for your state society? WAPA has many committees that you can join! If you are interested in joining a WAPA committee or running for office, please contact WAPA at: wapa@wapa.com

Visit us online for board position and committee role descriptions. www.WAPA.com
Menu item: BOD Documents

Adopt a PA Student!

Adopt-A-PA-S is a ground breaking mentorship program debuting this year. A PA-S will be paired up with a WAPA member who is a PA-C. The initial target date is scheduled for this fall and currently still under development.

Our goal for the student is to assist in developing and enhancing professional skills. We find that these paired relationships allow the ability to promote networking opportunities that can provide gateways into the profession both professionally and politically, i.e. becoming members of WAPA, AAPA etc. and help foster and address the issues and needs of PAs today. We envision regular, virtual check-ins, as well as developing a “Plan of Action” together, co-author a journal article and/or provide a presentation together for a CME conference.

Other possible corroborations could be to create a fundraiser, participate in health fairs, school career days, etc. The mentor will agree to pay the students WAPA dues (\$60 for two years) understanding and agreeing to the level of commitment & guided participation needed to help grow dedicated and focused PAs into the profession.

For further information and/or interest, please contact and send email to: wapamentor@gmail.com ■

WAPA on Social Media

Twitter: @wapa_pa

Instagram: @wapa_pa1

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WAPAPAC/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6meyAlmjnaM&feature=youtu.be>

WAPA is on YouTube! Follow us and subscribe: WNN (WAPA News Network is our channel) Look for the WNN letters with a green and black slash. ■

Tei Habenicht, PA-C

WAPA Newsletter Editor

Contact me: WAPAeditor@gmail.com

WAPA's Featured PA: Joseph J. Talavera II PA-S / Seattle MEDEX class 52

I always struggled with the concept of “when I grow up.” I would have rather been capricious and free to change directions at a moment’s notice but as you might imagine, that mentality did not lend itself to a spectacular showing in college. Immediately after graduating with a double major in History and Ocean Geography, I immersed myself in the juicy job of video game testing! Following that, I spent 6 years as a SCUBA instructor, traveling from the coral reefs of the Philippines and the Red Sea to the flooded parking lots at a reservoir in Folsom, CA, and an alpine lake at 14,000 ft in the Rockies. I thought I had achieved the life that I had always wanted.

However, I started noticing an empty feeling tugging at my soul. I had more or less succeeded in my goals; I had no mortgage, no responsibilities, and I could wear flip-flops every day of the year. While I worked hard to help people enjoy their leisure time, I realized that I wanted and needed to do more for humanity.

As I began to reflect on the path I had strewn, I pieced together the things that I wanted from a career. I wanted



something that would: a) offer financial stability, b) serve my community, and c) to have an impact on the people to whom I served. I also decided it had to be dynamic, interesting, and involve as much experienced-based learning as possible. So, in 2005, I made the decision to become a Physician Assistant. I would become an EMT initially, then a paramedic, and in 2018, I was accepted into MEDEX PA program, just a few years shy of my 10-year goal.

I have characterized my 20’s and 30’s of “ne’er-THAT-bad” but those times taught me the most about relating to my patients. Prior to starting an EMT, my time was spent learning to listen, connect, and refocusing individuals. Humor, being my most powerful tool. These valuable skills have lended me to be a more proficient clinician, one that can quickly adapt and relate, easing fears and building trust.

I’m thrilled to be a Physician Assistant and to have a profession that allows me to use every bit of my life experience, from my time spent sucking down pizza in front of a video game, to my time spent making frantic hand signals underwater, to my time in the back of an ambulance making small talk on a transport, to my time mixing a Salty Dog at the neighborhood bar (oh, I was a bartender too). And what is truly surprising is that I may have finally grown up, and on the cusp of being a PA, it’s much, more empowering than I thought it would be. ■

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WAPA CME's

Save the date: October 28-30, 2020

Join WAPA this fall in Cle Elum at Suncadia Resort. Registration is open and a brochure schedule is available online. Register today at: www.WAPA.com

Need 28 hours of category I CME and want to do it on your time? Our Spring 2020 Conference is available at a daily rate of \$125.00 or \$375.00 for 5 days and 28 hours! The video’s and category I CME is available to claim by March 22, 2021.

Register today!

www.wapa.memberclicks.net/2020-zoom-registration ■

Visit us online at: www.WAPA.com