



Department of Nurse Anesthesia

Newsletter 2010-11



Chairman's Update: State of the department

It is my pleasure to share with you some of the ongoing activities in the Department of Nurse Anesthesia in the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Allied Health Professions, and to thank you for your continuous support. The department is able to thrive during these difficult economic times due to the generous contributions of friends and partners like you.

This past year has been another remarkable one for our department. We have three strong cohorts of students at our Abingdon, Roanoke and Richmond campuses. We also have opened a campus in Northern Virginia to improve access for our students in that region. As the demand for CRNAs has leveled off, we have decided to voluntarily reduce our enrollment by 20 percent, while still focusing on quality students over quantity.

In October 2010 we had our on-site review from the Council on Accreditation. After this intense evaluation of our department, the reviewers' summary included no citations or revisions. This was extremely exciting for us and helps confirm that we are offering a great education to our students. In May, the council granted our department continued accreditation for a 10-year term, the maximum number of years the council can award.

In March, I visited the People's Republic of China and Tibet to learn more about Eastern medical practices and to promote the specialty of nurse anesthesia. The main goal of my visit to China was to encourage international cooperation in anesthesia training and continuing education with hospitals and universities in that country. I was successful in signing letters of intent to develop collaboration with China-Japan Friendship Hospital in Beijing and the School of Nursing at Shanxi

Medical University in Tiayuan. While in Tibet, I had the opportunity to visit a traditional Tibetan medical hospital in Lhasa. The trip was very successful and my hope is that this collaboration will open opportunities for student training and exchange, as well as continuing education for CRNAs.

I report with great pleasure that in April 2011, the department received notice once again that we have the nation's No. 1 nurse anesthesia program as ranked by U.S. News & World Report. We have been honored to hold this ranking for eight years in a row!

Currently, our department is undergoing renovations and expansion. We are moving our fourth floor laboratory down to the south wing of the second floor in West Hospital. We are excited to have all of our classrooms, faculty offices and laboratory space on one floor.

These are just a few highlights from 2010-11. On the following pages, you will find information on other departmental activities, as well as many exciting pursuits for the year to come. We hope you will mark your calendars for our preceptor workshops or for one of our Nurse Anesthesiology Faculty Associates continuing education meetings. As an alumnus, you are eligible for discounts at many of these events.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for your past support and in turn offer our departmental resources should you ever require assistance. I also would like to invite you to visit the school at your convenience. Please call ahead to Marjorie Goodwin at (804) 828-9808 to arrange a time when I can greet you and give you a tour.

Michael D. Fallacaro, DNS, CRNA
Chairman, VCU Department of Nurse Anesthesia

U.S. News & World Report awarded the nurse anesthesia program in the VCU Department of Nurse Anesthesia the No. 1 ranking in the nation for the eighth straight year.

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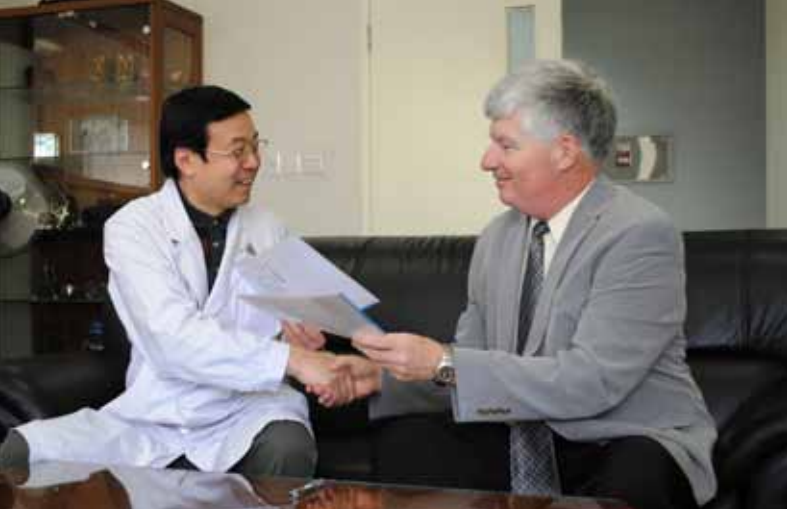
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Michael D. Fallacaro, DNS, CRNA, department chair, meets with a university official in China.

Department chair visits Asia in spring 2011

In March 2011, Michael D. Fallacaro, DNS, CRNA, chairman of the VCU Department of Nurse Anesthesia, traveled to the People's Republic of China and Tibet. The trip's purpose was to promote international cooperation in anesthesia training and continuing education with hospitals and universities in China. Fallacaro received signed letters of intent to develop collaborations with China-Japan Friendship Hospital in Beijing and the School of Nursing at Shanxi Medical University in Tiayuan. While in Tibet, he visited a traditional Tibetan medical hospital in Lhasa. He described the trip as successful and hopes this collaboration will open opportunities for student training and exchange, as well as continuing education for CRNAs.

Graduates participate in nursing symposium

Three graduates of the VCU Department of Nurse Anesthesia, Lukeythia Bastardi, Annie Deza and Jessica Juarez-Pillai, participated in an information session for future nurse anesthesia students hosted by the University of Maryland School of Nursing in Baltimore, Md. The Minority Students in Nursing Symposium was part of the Diversity in Nurse Anesthesia Mentorship Program. Juarez-Pillai and Bastardi spoke on the topics of nurse anesthesia admissions and managing stress while in the nurse anesthesia program.



Graduates (from left) Annie Deza, Jessica Juarez-Pillai and Lukeythia Bastardi with symposium organizer John Bing.

Duke University honors program alumnus

James (Frank) F. Titch, DNP, CRNA, R.N., assistant professor at the Duke University School of Nursing, received the school's Outstanding Master of Science in Nursing Faculty Award. The award honors a faculty member who is an excellent teacher and mentor vested in seeing each student succeed. Titch's interests focus on curriculum development for nurse anesthesia education and techniques of regional anesthesia. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from the University of Texas at Austin, completed a certificate in nurse anesthesia from the nurse anesthesia program at Wilford Hall U.S. Air Force Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, and earned a Master of Science in Nurse Anesthesia degree from the VCU School of Allied Health Professions.

Assistant professor previews future study

Suzanne Wright, Ph.D., CRNA, assistant professor, director of doctoral education and director of the Center for Research in Human Simulation in the VCU Department of Nurse Anesthesia, published information about a future research study in the April 2011 issue of the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists NewsBulletin. The summary of the study, "Improving Transfer of Care Events in Nurse Anesthesia," appeared in the "Discoveries of Distinction" section of the bulletin as follows:

"While it is ideal to have the same anesthetist care for a patient throughout the perioperative period, the unpredictable nature of operating room activities and schedules mandates that an incoming anesthetist must relieve an outgoing anesthetist for circumstances such as breaks, meals, and the end of a scheduled work shift. The transfer of care, sometimes referred to as the patient hand-off, is a transfer of responsibility event (TRE) and poses a significant threat to patient safety in the operating room, largely due to the lack of awareness on the part of the incoming anesthetist regarding the current patient, surgical, and operating room conditions. To minimize potential crises attributed to the transfer of care process, it is prudent to develop and put into place a mechanism which systematically facilitates swift communication and requests action, if necessary, between providers thereby promoting situation awareness and creating an opportunity for improved patient safety.

The purpose of this research is to 1) examine current transfer of care practices of Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists as they manage patients undergoing general anesthesia, and 2) design, implement, and evaluate a communication tool, grounded in an algorithmic framework, with a goal to improve the quality and effectiveness of the anesthesia transfer of care event."

Assistant professor earns doctoral degree

In May 2011, Corey Davis, Ph.D., CRNA, assistant professor and director of clinical education in the VCU Department of Nurse Anesthesia, earned his Ph.D. in Health Related Sciences from VCU. His dissertation is entitled "Anesthesia Recordkeeping: Accuracy of Recall with Computerized and Manual Entry Recordkeeping."



Since 1894, anesthesia providers have used documentation to better enable the safe delivery of anesthetics. As early as 1934, E.I. McKesson, M.D., expressed that it was difficult for one anesthesia provider to adequately monitor the patient, deliver the anesthetic and accurately and timely record events. His electronic record-keeping device proved to be decades ahead of its time. Since the late 1970s computerized record-keeping systems have grown, but many anesthesia providers have expressed misgivings that computerization would disconnect the practitioner from patient trends in the course of the procedure.

This study measured the accuracy of practitioners' ability to remember vital signs and parameters recorded about their patient over a 30-minute period during anesthesia delivery. From four clinical sites across Central and Northern Virginia, 214 subjects were asked to remember 10 specific vital signs and parameters during the course of anesthesia delivery. These responses were compared with the actual patient data from the monitors over the same period. An educational program on the benefits and limitations of each form of record keeping was presented to two of the four sites in an attempt to assess whether education would influence recall accuracy. Results indicated no significant statistical difference in the accuracy of practitioners' recall of these vital signs and parameters based upon the method of record keeping.



VCU DEPARTMENT OF NURSE ANESTHESIA CONGRATULATES ITS MOST RECENT GRADUATES



Class of 2010

Master of Science in Nurse Anesthesia

First row (from left): Jessica Juarez-Pillai, Ansley Snapp, Emilie Wyble, Robin Umphlet, Lukeythia Bastardi, Elizabeth Talley, Antoinette Deza, Melanie Sears, Jaclyn Battista, Charlene Bendeck, Chrissy Salts, Sherri Eure, Jennifer DeForest, Cecil B. Drain, Ph.D., CRNA, FAAN, FASAHP. **Second row (from left):** Beverly George-Gay, M.S.N., CCRN*, Elizabeth Howell, M.S.N.A., CRNA*, Jason Pineda, Jessica Hammond, Jennifer Oakes, Ernest Estep, Robin Fowlkes-Edmonds, Alicia Cairns, Melissa Sherrod, K.C. Bishop, Felix Savellano, Chuck Biddle, Ph.D., CRNA*, Corey Davis, Ph.D., CRNA*. **Third row (from left):** Nickie Damico, M.S.N.A., CRNA*, Mario Grasso, M.S.N.A., M.S.H.A.*, Suzanne Wright, Ph.D., CRNA*, Deneen Meade, Brandon Patterson, Kaitlin Hurley, Jill Schroeder, Meghan Dexter, Gregory Smith, Herbert T. Watson, M.Ed., CRNA*, William Hartland Jr., Ph.D., CRNA*. **Fourth row (from left):** Michael D. Fallacaro, DNS, CRNA**, Darby Neshat, Stephanie Pollard, John Meadows, Reggie Elam, Johnny Estep, David Arrowood

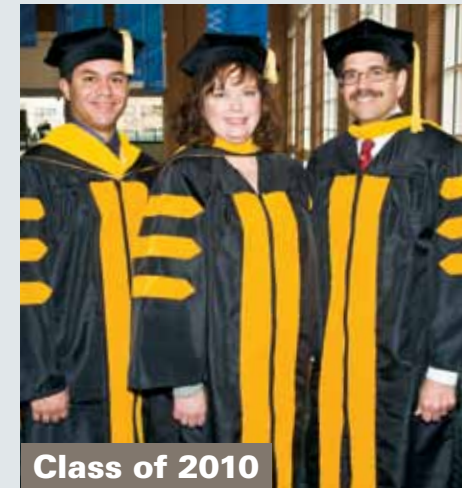
*Faculty **Chairman *Dean, VCU School of Allied Health Professions ♦Emeritus



Class of 2011

Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia Practice

First row (from left): Jennifer DeForest, Carolyn Inman, Amanda Faircloth, Karen Bishop, Hamid Mahmood, Kaitlin Hurley, Andrea Yates, Charles Elam, Melanie Sears, Brandon Patterson, Luxanne Lai, Robin Fowlkes-Edmonds, Tanya Smith, Gregory Smith. **Back row (from left):** Johnny Estep, Jason Pineda, Jessica Hammond, Marianne Cosgrove, Jaclyn Battista, Ansley Snapp, Elizabeth Talley, Alicia Cairns, Melissa Sherrod, Sherri Eure, Jessica Juarez-Pillai, Emilie Wyble. **Not pictured:** Lukeythia Bastardi, Kristie Wade, Jennifer Oakes



Class of 2010

Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia Practice

From left: Manuel Tolosa, Maria Hirsch, Danny Frasca. **Not pictured:** Rodney Hoover, Anthony Johnson, Crystal Odle, Tiffany McCoy

2010 VCU DEPARTMENT OF NURSE ANESTHESIA GRADUATION AWARD WINNERS

Agatha Hodgins CRNA Memorial Award

David Arrowood
Jaclyn Battista
Megan Dexter
Anthony Estep
Jessica Hammond
Kaitlin Hurley
John Meadows
Darby Neshat
Jason Pineda
Ansley Snapp
Elizabeth Talley

C. Paul Boyan Clinical Excellence Award

David Arrowood
Megan Dexter

Thomas C. Barker Professional Excellence Award

Charles Elam IV

Nurse Anesthesia Research Award

Charles Elam IV
Honorable mention:
Lukeythia Bastardi and Jill Schroeder

Instructor of the Year Award

Diane Howell
Patton Speak

Herbert T. Watson Faculty Award

Elizabeth Howell

Upcoming NAFA events



Oct. 31-Nov. 3, 2011
35th Annual
Anesthesia
Conference
Williamsburg, Va.

Nov. 28-Dec. 1, 2011
30th Annual
Anesthesia Meeting
Walt Disney World
Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

Feb. 29-March 3, 2012
Summit at
Snowshoe Mountain
Snowshoe, W. Va.

May 30-June 2, 2012
26th Annual
Anesthesia Seminar
Hilton Head, S.C.

June 16-23, 2012
Eastern Caribbean
Cruise Seminar
Royal Caribbean Cruise
Lines, Oasis of the Seas



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Department receives donation from Virginia association

The Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetists and the VANA District 5 Winter Workshop Committee presented the VCU Department of Nurse Anesthesia and its chairman, Michael D. Fallacaro, DNS, CRNA, with a \$15,000 check at the 2011 VANA District 5 Winter Workshop. The donation began the District 5/VANA Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia Practice (DNAP) Scholarship. The scholarship will be awarded to students in the D.N.A.P. clinical doctorate nurse anesthesia program who are either CRNAs or SRNAs, and who are accepting a job in Virginia upon graduation. The scholarship recipient will be required to attend the VANA midyear assembly and/or VANA Lobby Day and will be required to speak at a VANA meeting or write an article in the Monitor, the VANA newsletter.

In addition to this founding donation, the VANA District 5 Winter Workshop committee has pledged to contribute a portion of the annual meeting's proceeds to perpetuate this scholarship. The first scholarship will be awarded at the 2012 VANA District 5 Winter Workshop. The VCU Department of Nurse Anesthesia would like to extend a sincere thank you to the VANA and the VANA District 5 Winter Workshop Committee. We truly appreciate your dedication to supporting the next generation of CRNA leaders!



Front row (from left): Michael D. Fallacaro, chairman, VCU Department of Nurse Anesthesia; Danny Frasca, VANA District 5 Winter Workshop chairman; Jan Setnor, VANA president 2010-11 **Second row (from left):** Elizabeth Howell; Tom Kinnehan; Sharon Richardson **Third row (from left):** Suzanne Wright; Steve Laubacher; Kevin Baker; Nino Bianchi

Department welcomes two new faculty members



Nickie Damico, M.S.N.A., CRNA, joined our faculty as director of professional practice in October 2010. She is a proud alumna of our program, Class of 1999. Damico holds Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Master of Science in Nurse Anesthesia

degrees, both from VCU. She is a practicing anesthetist with Commonwealth Anesthesia Associates, providing anesthesia services at CJW Medical Center, St. Francis Medical Center of Bon Secours Health System and the Virginia Eye Institute. Damico's research interests include patient safety, human simulation and the use of technology in didactic education.



Charles D. Anderson, Ph.D., joined the faculty as assistant director of distance education in summer 2011. He received his Bachelor of Science in Physics from the University of Richmond and his Master of Science in Biomedical Engineering and his

doctorate in physiology from VCU. During his doctoral studies, Anderson was heavily involved in teaching physiology to graduate students, including many members of the nurse anesthesia program. His dissertation research investigated the regulatory differences of longitudinal and circular layers of intestinal muscle. Anderson continues to extend his knowledge and skill set to determine similar regulation pathways of smooth muscle of the airway and the vasculature. He enjoys his role in distance education because it provides close contact with people, adventurous destinations and a chance to be in the classroom, all a great departure from his lab work.



Send us your news!

The Department of Nurse Anesthesia newsletter welcomes your input. If you have an item you'd like to include in the next issue, contact Elizabeth Howell at howelleg@vcu.edu.