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Co-Directors' Message...

**APP Career Ladder  
WorkGroup Making  
Significant Progress**

*From Basia Adams, APRN  
and Garry Lapidus, PA-C*

The APP Career Ladder workgroup is making significant progress in its effort to develop, implement, and evaluate an institution wide initiative that will strengthen APP practice at Connecticut Children's.

The workgroup which has meeting since May 2022, includes HR team members (Leah Haggerty, Lyndsay Cuomo, Rav Thomas, Elizabeth Murtha) as well as Matt Farr, and your APP Co-Directors.

The competency based template for our APP Career Ladder was established by drawing on information included in the UConn Pediatric Residency Manual. Department specific privileges and procedures were provided by the Medical Staff Office which were reviewed and then assigned by the APP Team Leads and Department Medical Directors into the four step APP Career Ladder (Novice I, Developing II, Mastery III, and Expert/Coach IV). Salary compensation is an integral component of the APP Career Ladder. All APPs will be assigned into the ladder by their APP Team Lead and/or

*(Continued Next Page)*



Welcome to the Summer  
Newsletter

By Pam Fanning PA-C

In the month of June, we experience the summer solstice- the day with longest daylight hours of the year, marking the start of summer. We also celebrate Father's day, and many celebrate graduations, weddings, birthdays and anniversaries. Amongst all the celebrating, it can be disarming to experience negative feelings – depression, anxiety, exhaustion. In this issue we are introducing a new column on self care. Each issue we will explore an aspect of mental health and mindfulness, and offer a tip to incorporate into your daily life. We are also working to keep the newsletter succinct so it is easier to read in one sitting, with links to articles should you desire more in-depth information on a given topic. And we are injecting some light humor, so happy reading!

**Directors' Message** *(Continued from previous page)*

department Medical Director. Promotion opportunities within the ladder will be aligned with quarterly check-ins that are conducted by the APP Team Lead and/or department Medical Director. This initiative has the endorsement and support from our EMT and the CCSG board. (See Career Ladder Chart accompanying email of newsletter.)



*Members of the OAPP council met with Dr. James Moore for an evening of informal conversation and bonding. Back row(left to right): Garry Lapidus, PA-C, Pam Fanning, PA-C, Taryn Hamre, APRN, Jim Moore, MD. Front row (left to right): Keri Curtis, PA-C, Sabrina Colangelo, PA-C, Whitney Fairchild, APRN, Basia Adams, APRN.*

**Passages...**

**Susanne Johnson, APRN, Devoted Pediatric Nurse Working In Danbury**

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our colleague Susanne Johnson, APRN on Tuesday May 30, 2023 after a valiant battle against cancer. She was 62 years old.

Sue was born on February 18, 1961, in Norwalk, CT, daughter of the late Willard I. and Mary (Barnes) Staples. She graduated from Wilton High School and received her bachelor's degree from Ohio Wesleyan University. Sue continued her education at Columbia University receiving her Masters of Science in Nursing. Her education led her to a career as a pediatric nurse practitioner that she cherished.

Sue was married to Neil Johnson after an encounter at a skiing club function. They were married on April 8, 1989. Neil predeceased his wife on May 22, 2021. Susanne was a nurse practitioner at many hospitals throughout the state of CT, but most recently worked for Connecticut Children's in our Division of Nephrology and Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders. She was an integral part of our Danbury Community. Susanne loved her job and helping children. She proudly worked as the first nursing director for The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp for 12 years. She loved the outdoors and recently became an avid hiker, joining a hiking club when she moved to Danbury where she made many new friends. Sue enjoyed her time spent with family and friends, and will be remembered for her unceasing energy, devotion, and nurturing nature.

Sue is survived by her children; Sara Moffa and her husband Austin of Vienna, VA, her son Daniel Johnson of Quincy, MA, her brothers; William and his wife Linda, Robert and his wife Sandy and Ricky, her nieces; Catherine and Courtney, her nephews; Ryan, Christopher, and Andrew. A celebration of Sue's life will be announced at a later date. In lieu of flowers please consider making a donation in her memory to Hole In the Wall Gang Camp, or Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center.

News....

## May 19 Symposium Stimulating and Informative

The third annual APP summit was held on May 19, and proved to be stimulating and over-flowing with useful information.

Tony Ferraiolo, CPC kicked off the symposium with a discussion on creating a welcoming environment for our transgender and non-binary patients, including terminology and misconceptions, and what these patients really want us to know, as well as how we can make them feel safe in our care.

Laura Lissner, APRN gave an enlightening talk on the NICU CLABSI (central line associated bacterial sepsis/infection) task force initiative for infection preventative practice changes. While this was a NICU specific study, the practice changes can be applied in many disciplines to reduce hospital associated infections secondary to procedures.

Nella Stoltz, DNP, APRN, ACNP, discussed concussion symptoms and varying presentations, red flags, comorbidities associated with a protracted recovery and treatment/return to play and to learning.

Sonal Fisco, DNP gave a succinct discussion on identifying pediatric hypertension, and who needs earlier and more frequent monitoring of blood pressure.

“The students are our future” was presented by Kara Fluck, PA-C, and shared how the Covid pandemic affected student precepting. She also discussed the incentives and barriers to precepting students.

Dana Eisenberg, MA, MSN, PNP and Laura Careira APRN, MSN, PNP gave a fascinating case study presentation on Caregiver Fabricated Illness Presenting as Autism, which provided insight into both CFI and autism, and discussed resources for providers in addressing both.

“Case studies of acute abdominal pain in children and adolescents” was presented by Molly Schulman, DNP, CPNP-PC/AC, CPEN, PNP. She discussed clinical features and evaluation for the differential diagnosis of acute appendicitis in children. Additionally, the risk factors, clinical and laboratory findings of symptomatic c. difficile infection was discussed.

The meeting closed with Francine Bono-Nevi, NP, RN, APRN, PNP discussing “Targeted healthcare response for a potential victim of Human Trafficking.” She gave an eye-opening presentation on recognizing and responding to this public health crisis, including mandated reporting is cases of a minor.

There is still time to experience the Summit remotely and earn CME.

Here is the link for the enduring materials which is available through 12/31/2023 -

[https://www.eeds.com/portal\\_enduring\\_materials.aspx?Portal\\_SIN=230174](https://www.eeds.com/portal_enduring_materials.aspx?Portal_SIN=230174)

Here is a link to the REDcap survey about the APP summit? **Everyone** is encouraged to complete it- whether or not you attended the summit (in fact, especially if you didn't attend!).

<https://redcap.connecticutchildrens.org/surveys/?s=KAHRHEETDMTPLT3R>

## September Speaker On Research



Katie Hinderer will be speaking for our APP grand rounds on Wednesday 9/6 at 12pm. She will be speaking on “Read What? - Approaches for Reading and Critiquing Research Papers.” Please support Katie, and earn free CME by attending!

It is not known who coined the term “grand rounds.” Traditionally they were a “well-organized, decorous, stately, and punctual exercise” conducted by residents. Patients were present during the resident's presentation or immediately after, according to the National Institutes of Health. Nursing Grand Rounds provides a forum for nurses to share clinical expertise and experiences, nursing best practices and other topics of interest that help improve patient outcomes and enhance the patient experience.

# NEW to the CREW

## Meet Your New Colleagues Around Connecticut Children's

Victoria Greco, PA-C, Emergency Medicine

Alexandra Dube, APRN, Endocrinology

Margaret Reilly, APRN, Psych

Grace Clark, PA-C, Heme/Onc

Christina Augusto, APRN, ENT

Kristi Zuniga-Aguilar, PA-C, NICU

Rubi Ruiz-Bruzos, APRN, NICU

Lindsey Watkins, APRN, Pulmonary

Tiffany Henry, APRN, ED

Victoria Pryputniewicz, APRN, NICU

Victoria Thomson, PA-C, PHM

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## Walking Meditation Brings Awareness and Helps to Sync Body, Mind, Spirits

Where does your mind go when you walk around the hospital?

Do you think about all the things you have to do?

You're not alone, and actually you're likely in the majority. When our minds wander they often wander to to-do lists and unpleasant experiences in the past, or worries about the future—all things that can be stressful.



Next time you're walking around at the hospital (or anywhere for that matter), try a simple walking "meditation." This style of meditation aims to help you bring your awareness to the present, syncing your body and your mind. People report being happiest when present in the moment.

Focus on your five senses while you walk to wherever you are going. Really look around--what do you see? Then transition by taking a deep breath and focusing on any smells. Next, what do you hear around you? Notice the sounds without engaging in them. Do you hear your footsteps? Do you also feel your feet in your shoes as you walk? What else do you feel? The smooth papers in your hands? The ridges on your pen? Focusing on your senses may help you to remain in the moment and can be very calming.

For questions or comments about this wellness topic, please feel free to reach out to Kim Roche APRN, at [KRoch01@connecticutchildrens.org](mailto:KRoch01@connecticutchildrens.org).



## Samantha Lee Talks About Her interest in Sea Turtles, Marine Biology and Pediatrics

Pediatric liver disease won over sea turtles for Samantha Lee's career interest.

By Bill Seymour

A transplant and hepatology nurse practitioner in the Division of Digestive Diseases, Hepatology & Nutrition, the 40-year-old said that working with children always attract-

ed her more than marine biology. She studied marine sciences for one year during her undergraduate years just to make sure.

"I always thought that I would want to do pediatrics, but that was solidified during my first year of nursing school. I loved working with children," she said about her career decisions that eventually brought her to Connecticut Children's.

A biology major and environmental science minor at Trinity College in Hartford, her senior year brought the decision that her career would be in medicine. Next came graduate school at Columbia University in New York City. She graduated in 2008 as a pediatric nurse practitioner.

"My first job after graduating was as a transplant coordinator in the Pediatric Liver/Liver Transplant Program of the Recanati/Miller Transplantation Institute at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York," she said

She spent four years there until she and her husband, Breton Boudreaux, 41, relocated to Connecticut.

"I would have liked to stay in pediatric liver disease, but there wasn't such a position for me here. I joined the (then) Inpatient Management Team now Pediatric Hospital Medicine at Connecticut Children's," she said.

Lee worked in that unit from 2012 and until 2016 when an opportunity arose for her to return to her developing specialty in liver disease.

"I currently work with Dr. Karan Emerick, who is the transplant hepatologist, taking care of chil-



*Samantha Lee, APRN, looks at a sea turtle in an earlier picture during her days in marine biology that was a stepping stone to a career in medicine.*

dren and adolescents with liver disease. We manage the care of patients pre- and post-transplant, and one of my roles is coordinating care with the transplant institutions at Boston, Yale and Pittsburgh," she said.

Lee's specialties and interests are liver transplant, nonalcoholic fatty liver disease and Hepatitis C.

It is a career that every day she is happy she entered, even if it's not treating sea turtles with liver disease or any other ailment. Getting to know about both kinds of careers helped with her decision and anchors the advice for others thinking about a profession to enter.

"The advice I would give someone considering this career path is to shadow a provider - whether a physician's assistant or nurse practitioner - to get a good idea of what the day-to-day is like, what the work-life balance is like, etc.," she said.

"I was lucky enough to have that opportunity while I was between undergraduate and graduate school, and that helped lead me down this career path," Lee added.

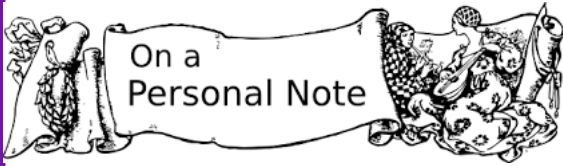
That was underscored nearly three years ago during Nurse Practitioner Week with a comment she made for Connecticut Children's Facebook social media site.

"I love the connections I make with the patient and their family, and to be able to watch them grow. Working in pediatric liver disease and transplant, I am in a unique position to be involved in a child's care from the very beginning - from diagnosis to transplant, and beyond," she said.

# This n' That, Odds and Ends

## Name Our Newsletter

The communications committee of the OAPP would like to put out a call for suggestions for naming our future newsletters! Please email your suggestions to [PFanning@connecticutchildrens.org](mailto:PFanning@connecticutchildrens.org) by July 21, 2023. Voting will be held by the OAPP council at their July meeting. Winner will receive a gift basket from the OAPP, and will have the honor of seeing their suggestion on future newsletters!!



### In the Hem/Onc department:

- Morgan McCarthy APRN, is expecting a baby in November.
- Megan Coco PhD, APRN, graduated this May with her PhD.

### Nuvance Health:

- Beth Cross PA-C celebrated the graduation of her daughter from UConn in May 2023.

## Tell Us About Your Hobbies

Pam Fanning, PA-C, enjoys spending time outdoors with her honey bees during her free time.



How do you spend your free time? We would enjoy sharing photos of our APPs participating in their favorite activities, hobbies, etc. Please submit a photo with explanation to [PFanning@connecticutchildrens.org](mailto:PFanning@connecticutchildrens.org) we will include it in a future newsletter!



## On The Fighter Side



"I tried, believe me, but the nicotine patch was never enough for me. I had to get the nicotine patchwork quilt."

What is a hematologist's favorite Taylor Swift song? "Bad Blood!"

If you're going to tell jokes about eyes, the cornea the better.

My wife said I have two major faults. I don't listen....and something else.