



*University of Detroit Mercy  
Physician Assistant Program*



# ***50th Anniversary Celebration***



SEPTEMBER 24, 2022







*University of Detroit Mercy Physician Assistant Program*  
**50th Anniversary Celebration**

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

COCKTAILS &  
CONVERSATION

WELCOME &  
INTRODUCTIONS

Amy Dereczyk, PhD, PA-C, DFAAPA  
*Physician Assistant Program Chairperson*

INVOCATION

Sr. Judy Mouch

OPENING REMARKS

Janet Baiardi, PhD, FNP-BC  
*Interim Dean & Professor*  
*College of Health Professions & McAuley School of Nursing*

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Pamela Zarkowski, JD, MPH  
*Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs*

Donald B. Taylor, PhD  
*President*  
*University of Detroit Mercy*

Kristine Hoover  
*Director of Development*  
*College of Health Professions & McAuley School of Nursing*

DINNER BUFFET

MUSIC & DANCING

*Live music by Brass Jar Music*





# Welcome



Dear Alumni & Friends of the  
Detroit Mercy PA Program,

It is my honor to welcome you to the 50th  
anniversary celebration.



The Detroit Mercy PA Program has a rich legacy of educating students to practice medicine. We are dedicated to the education of clinically competent medical professionals and thoroughly prepare PAs to deliver quality patient care in the context of a dynamic healthcare delivery system.

I am continually amazed by the alumni who truly live the Detroit Mercy mission through their work and in their lives. We are all part of a remarkable legacy and will continue to make a difference in our communities for the next 50 years.

**Amy Dereczyk, PhD, PA-C, DFAAPA**  
PA Program Chair

Dear Alumni & Friends of the  
Detroit Mercy PA Program,

This year marks 50 years of physician assistant education at Detroit Mercy! What a wonderful accomplishment.



Detroit Mercy's physician assistant program was one of the first PA programs in Michigan and the United States and has a distinguished history of quality education. Detroit Mercy PA graduates have been an important segment of the workforce to the Detroit metropolitan region and there are Detroit Mercy PA graduates across the country.

Detroit Mercy and the College of Health Professions remains committed to physician assistant education. In 2017, we expanded the PA program by adding a first-floor collaborative classroom and two state-of-the-art laboratories on the garden level of our building. The vision of the College of Health Professions includes a redesigned Simulation Technology and Research Center (STAR) that will expand simulation and redevelop lab spaces to create innovative flexible learning spaces and integrate virtual learning. Our future will include enhanced opportunities for simulation and interprofessional collaboration.

I invite each of you to visit the campus and stay connected to the PA program as we look to the future and the next 50 years.

Sincerely,

**Janet M. Baiardi, PhD, FNP-BC**



## IN APPRECIATION

*A special thank you to the 50th Anniversary  
Committee members who volunteered  
their time to make this celebration a success.*

Dean Janet Baiardi

Alexis Burgess

Constance Burke (Class of 1997)

Amy Dereczyk (Class of 2002)

Kelli Frost (Class of 2009)

Kristine Hoover

Lauren Paton

Timelia Davis



The College of Health Professions provides a transformative education grounded in the Mercy and Jesuit traditions. We are committed to prepare compassionate and competent health professionals, who are dedicated to serve and lead while respecting diversity and human differences, valuing social justice, and advocating for equitable healthcare within a global society.

**Community:** We commit to collaborating with others at a local, national and global level, whose mission is to improve health equity, eliminate health disparities and enhance health outcomes.

A Detroit Mercy education seeks to integrate the intellectual, spiritual, ethical and social development of our students. A diverse student body enriches PA education by increasing diverse perspectives that enhance new knowledge and promote opportunities to learn from others with a broad range of backgrounds and experiences. The University of Detroit Mercy PA program is committed to recruiting students of diverse backgrounds through recruitment, admissions and support programs that support diversity, fostering the development of competent PAs of the next generation.

The founding program director, Harriet Gales, and other members of the Mercy College of Detroit faculty and staff envisioned an educational program that would provide high quality training for future physician assistants. The University of Detroit Mercy archives contain many original documents from the developmental stages of the Mercy College of Detroit PA program. Included in these documents are the 1972 program application, the endorsement from the Wayne County Medical Society, and the notice of Provisional Approval from the American Medical Association. The over 1,400 graduates of the Mercy College of Detroit and University of Detroit Mercy Physician Assistant programs owe a debt of gratitude for the exceptional work done to develop and establish this wonderful program.

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF AN  
FOR THE ASSISTANT TO THE PRIN

this application is to be prepared in triplicate  
director, and chief administrative officer of the  
the application are to be returned to the Depart  
Services, American Medical Association, 535 North  
one copy is to be retained by the program filin

INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION

1. Official name of sponsoring institution.  
Wayne College of Detroit  
Address 8200 W. Outer Drive  
City Detroit State Michigan  
Phone: (Area Code 313) 531-7820

2. Type of Institution:  
☐ Hospital  
☐ Junior College  
☒ Senior College/University  
☐ Other

3. Chief Administrative Officer (Administrator)  
Name Sister Agnes Mary Mansour, R.N.  
4. Coordinator of allied health education  
Name Harriet Gates, B.S.

5. Institutional Accreditation (Regional  
by National League for Nursing  
by North Central Association of  
Secondary Schools  
by Council on Hospitals and Health  
American Medical Association)

6. Types of allied health educational  
units to Primary Care Physician  
☒ Dietitian  
☒ Certified Laboratory Asst.  
☐ Cytotechnologist  
☐ Diagnostic Technician  
☐ Medical Assistant  
\*\* ☐ Medical Laboratory Technician  
☐ Medical Record Administrator  
☐ Medical Record Technician  
☐ Medical Radiologist  
☐ Nuclear Medicine Technician  
☐ Nuclear Medicine Therapist  
☐ Occupational Physician's Assistant  
☐ Orthopedic Physician's Assistant  
☐ Physical Therapist  
☐ Respiratory Therapist  
☐ Therapist  
See Appendix I  
\*\* See Appendix I for details





## Faculty & Staff

**Walid Harb, MD**  
Medical Director

**Amy Dereczyk, PhD, PA-C, DFAAPA**  
Program Director

**Rachel DeWitt, MS, PA-C**  
Associate Professor

**Yolonda Freeman-Hildreth, PhD, PA-C**  
Assistant Professor

**Kelli Frost, MS, PA-C**  
Assistant Professor

**Amy Kaufman, MS, PA-C**  
Assistant Professor

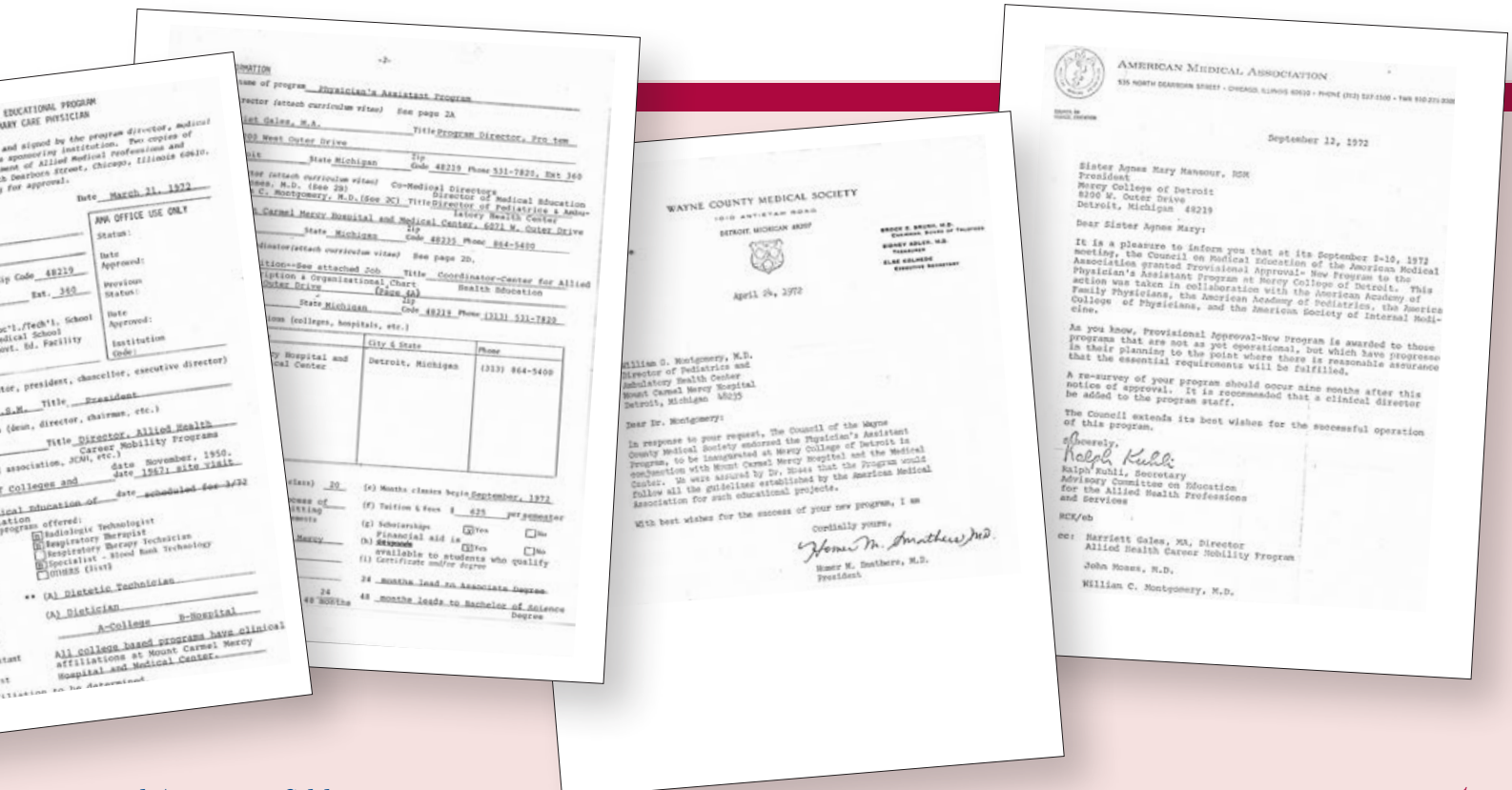
**Nour Lyon, MS, PA-C**  
Assistant Professor

**Ewen Nicol, MS, PA-C**  
Assistant Professor

**Marlene Shaw-Gallagher, MS, PA-C**  
Assistant Professor

**Rahima Ahmed, MSIA**  
Clinical Coordinator

**Alexis Burgess**  
Administrative Assistant







## Our History

In the early 1960s, an increasing concern with improving access to quality medical care for the medically underserved began to evolve. In addition, the United States was in the midst of a severe shortage of all types of clinical, nursing and allied health personnel, and it was projected that this shortage would persist well into the 1980s.

Duke University opened the first Physician Assistant (PA) program in 1965; the PA program at Mercy College of Detroit began in 1972. Given the proximity to the many other resources in metropolitan Detroit, Mercy College was uniquely situated to implement and sustain a training program such as that necessary for the education of

physician assistants. In addition to the educational resources of the College, Mount Carmel Mercy Hospital, located two miles from the college, provided a wealth of

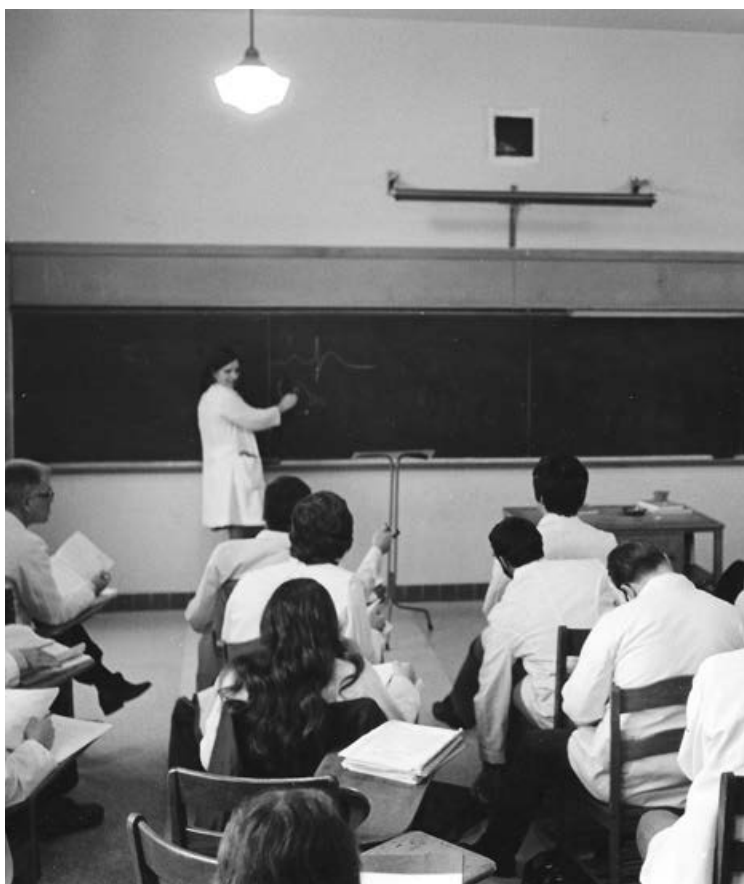
clinical resources. This hospital was a major teaching center with a strong commitment to serving inner city residents of Detroit. Growing out of this strong affiliation with Mount Carmel Mercy Hospital, many other clinical facilities and experiences evolved to address the health service needs of inner city and other medically underserved groups.

Beginning in the 1991-92 academic year, Mercy College of Detroit synergistically joined forces with University of Detroit. The new University of Detroit Mercy is an independent Catholic institution of higher learning whose mission includes compassionate service to persons in need, the service of faith and the promotion of justice and a commitment to quality education.

The PA program at Detroit Mercy has maintained continuous accreditation by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education







for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), membership in the Physician Assistant Education Association, sponsorship of a student chapter of the American Academy of Physician Assistants and a continued commitment to preparing well-rounded, capable and responsible practitioners.

### **PA Curriculum and Clinical Education**

In response to the constantly evolving roles in which Physician Assistants are employed, the University of Detroit Mercy Physician Assistant Program offers a master's level curriculum for the Physician Assistant training program. The PA Program has three tracks: full-time (24 month), part-time (36 month) and a 5-year BS/MS accelerated program.

The curriculum has a didactic portion and a clinical portion. The didactic year gives students the

foundational medical knowledge to prepare them for the clinical year. During the clinical year, students rotate through ten clinical rotations in the following specialties: Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, General Surgery, Pediatrics, Women's Health, Psychiatry and Emergency Medicine. Students also have the opportunity to do elective rotations in their areas of interest in medicine. Upon completion of the PA program, students are eligible to sit for the Physician Assistant National Certification Exam.

The PA program has a specific PA Diversity and Inclusion Committee that is charged with increasing awareness within the program and college. This committee schedules speakers to talk to students and faculty on a variety of topics, organizes quarterly town halls, and provides implicit bias training to students and faculty. The PA program students are active

volunteers promoting diversity and inclusion. Most recently, students from our program were involved in the development of the national organization PAs of Color (The PAC). The PAC Movement is committed to diversifying the Physician Assistant field by mentoring, increasing awareness and providing networking opportunities for people of color in pursuit of, or already practicing in the profession.

### **Our Graduates**

The Detroit Mercy PA program has graduated over 1,400 PAs. Our data indicates the majority of students remain in the Detroit metropolitan area. For example, in the last three years 161 students graduated and our data indicates that greater than 85% of them practice in Michigan. They practice in all areas including internal medicine, family medicine, surgery, pediatrics and emergency medicine.



# 50 Years in Photos







Detroit Mercy PA Program Directors - Agnes Bongero, Amy Dereczyk, Suzanne York, Harriet Gales

**New Doctors**

Continued from Page 11

personally. He will not believe or not the PA has ordered any follow-up tests. PAs are particularly valuable in return visits of patients who are on long-term therapy. Ultimately, it is up to each doctor to use or not use the PA. It is mostly a matter of trust and respect that grows with time.

Mary PA's have already mentioned hospital privileges. In communities where they are practicing, "The term 'practice' is proper in referring to what a PA does. This allows them to make regular rounds with or without the doctor, and with the full cooperation of nurses and other hospital staff."

The PA can follow such things as post-surgical progress more closely than can a regular doctor. The PA can afford to spend as much time as necessary with a patient rather than the accustomed three-minute head-on-shoulder approach many M.D.'s must be content with.

The PA may even order therapy or medication, but this must be supervised by the supervising M.D. Often this can be done by telephone.

An excellent doctor can make many uses of a PA.

**THE FUTURE OF PA'S** in the U.S. medical scene is not likely to be limited to such uses. In fact, already, they are practicing in big city hospitals.

Dr. William Montgomery, director of pediatric and adolescent health at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Detroit, says PA's bring a lot of value in large urban settings, especially in screening patients in urban clinics, scheduling, the more serious cases for M.D.'s. Dr. Montgomery is one of two M.D.'s in charge of medical education for the Mercy PA program. "Doctors should be able to use them widely also in nursing home practice. Medicine is serving human to achieve."

Dr. Gales, who likes children and old folks, is interested in this, and he is trying to devise a special geriatric program with his two supervising doctors. Dr. Montgomery is a scholar to Mrs. Gales' careful screening procedures. He is quiet, intelligent, highly organized. He, like every other PA applicant, is personally interviewed by Mrs. Gales before becoming one of the subject 25 who are enrolled each year at Mercy.

Mrs. Gales feels the selection process is the most important part of the program. The wrong type of person in a PA could be disastrous, a PA, for example, who would not take the essential dependency on the M.D.'s supervising. The dependency is drilled into the students.

"People who expect to be a doctor" need not apply, because it is

precisely these people who would make poor PAs.

"To date there have been no dropouts."

"The number of people interested in this type of work is making them of limited supply," says Dr. Robert Stewart, program director of the PA program at Duke University Medical Center.

Of the PA's, he says:

"It is not expected that the PA will be able to make diagnosis or prescribe management of patients, but they can be in the best about anything else. The diagnostic and prescriptive functions already belong to the physician. These functions belong to them and should always stay with them."

Donald W. Fisher is executive director of two national organizations - the Association of Physician Assistants and the American Academy of Physician Assistants - the latter being the temperance of the American Medical Association. The Academy is, in fact, the AMA of the PA's.

Fisher, whose office is in Washington, D.C., says there are between 1,000 and 1,200 PA's practicing in the country.

The rate of growth is suggested by the fact that almost that many (another 1,000) will graduate from programs across the country this year, another 1,000 in 1975. No one has yet estimated how many PA's will be needed to meet the nation's existing needs of the future.

In the first four years of the program, candidates were selected mostly from newly discharged Navy and Army medical personnel. A sprinkling of management people have become PAs. More than 80 percent of the applicants are men, and, Fisher adds, the relatively high salaries and the challenge of the work in attracting even more men, and more young people, is not easy. Fisher's most have at least a high school education and have two or three years of some other health allied experience.

The major breakthrough that made the approval of PA's came in April, 1973, when the National Board of Medical Examiners agreed to take over the job of certifying them. This is the same board that examines prospective M.D. candidates.

Fisher admits success stories about PA's. One came from George Washington University Hospital, one of several hospitals where PA's have been hired by doctors staffing Emergency Rooms.

"Before the PA's, the average wait for medical attention there was four hours. Today it is only two and going down," says Fisher.

"We're aware that medical care can be improved without higher costs," he adds, he says, there seems to be no limit.

**That's saying something.**

"It amounts to this, that we've been able to add a new person to the health delivery team without additional cost to the patients."

Most PA's estimate that at least 80 percent of the things they do are those things the physician himself would have to do. Dr. Montgomery says he figures 80 percent of his time is spent doing what the doctors did previously, from house calls to blood tests, to cost application and removal, to patient education.

Dr. Montgomery considers the latter one of his most important functions.

**P.A.'s**, of course, are ultimately and totally dependent on the supervising physician's license to practice, and as the sponsor of medical care always been over the program. But at Mercy, Mrs. Gales says that in 10 years on supervision and has been started in every way of the nation's PA's.

Until recently, the PA's have been included under the same costly malpractice insurance policies held. But last month Fisher's organization announced an insurance program offering PAs from \$100,000 to \$200,000 liability coverage with an average cost of about \$10 a year. If he were in the PA, he also take no compensation for the cost of covering him for \$1,000,000.

Nonetheless, physicians are apparently ultimately responsible for their PAs, because the dependency and doctor supervision built into the concept of a physician's helper is unbreakable.

"We have plans to take care of the malpractice problem for the physician who hires a PA," says Fisher. "We are negotiating with insurance companies to provide insurance for them, too. And we might begin in Michigan, where the malpractice problem seems acute."

For David McParson, P.A., a part of the new health field is exciting. "You know, when I got out of the Navy, I really wanted to stay in the health field. The only job I could get was as an ambulance driver."

"Now here I am doing just what I want to do, help people."

Fisher seems to be here to stay, possibly the first real addition to the long tradition health care has been referred to as that of the "delivery of primary health care" since the advent of nursing itself.

News Photograph by VCHOWDOL JORDEN

Harriet Gales heads Mercy College program, says selection of candidates and participating M.D.'s is the key.





# 50 Years in Photos









# 50 Years in Photos









# PA Graduates' Favorite Memories

**Lauri McDougall:**

Anatomy and Physiology course, a unique experience and place where strong friendships developed.

**Sarah Scantamburlo:**

I took a risk that completely changed my life.

**Josephine Roach:**

A sense of accomplishment on graduation day!

**Barbara Wolk:**

Anatomy class with Dr. Tracy.

**Susan Lint-Pirtle:**  
Graduation!**Daric Mueller:**

Not sure how I got so lucky, but I left Detroit Mercy with a PA degree and the love of my life!

**Kathleen Flannigan Kratz:**

My classmates, and faculty—Ron Dobrazinski, Larry Kramer, and Tim McDonald along with Harriet Gales. Clinically surviving 6 weeks at Cook County in January.

**Hannah Susick:**

My favorite memory of the PA program at Detroit Mercy was Professor Moser's Clin Med lectures. I learned so much knowledge from her classes that continues to help me succeed in my career as a PA today.

**Alexandra Guajardo:**

Professor Moser!  
I love you!

**Michael Nido:**

Dr. Tracy and the anatomy lab!



**Deborah Allen:**  
Friends

**Amber Feys:**  
Participating  
in WBS

**Susan Urba:**  
A clinical rotation  
in Escanaba

**Lawrence Kammer:**  
My study  
group.

**Robert Ibbetson:**  
Studying with  
classmates as student.  
Working with PA  
students as  
clinical coordinator.

**Tom Berry:**  
Clinical  
rotations

**Kathy Dobbs:**  
What a great group of  
classmates and faculty  
can do to make a  
challenging education  
become a reality.

**Rosalind  
(Sally) Moldwin:**  
Harriet Gales  
and classmates!

**Deborah Allen:**  
Friends

**Debra Knight:**  
Many, but white  
coat ceremony  
was the best!

**Julia Burkhardt:**  
My favorite memory about  
the Detroit Mercy PA Program  
is the bonds formed between  
my peers and the faculty  
members that have lasted  
well past graduation.

**Brandy Perko:**  
Making friends  
that have lasted  
a lifetime

**Daniel Ladd:**  
Anatomy  
class



MICHIGAN ACADEMY  
of PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS



**50<sup>TH</sup>**

**ANNIVERSARY**

*Congratulations!*

50 years of developing the next  
generation of PAs



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