



# MEMO

**TO:** Hawk Family & Friends

**FROM:** President Anderson

**Date:** August 28, 2020

Greetings Hawks!!

I am excited to introduce some new members of the Hawk Family to you through this message - the incoming class of our newest academic program, the Physician Assistant (PAs). Recall, in March 2020, we were granted provisional accreditation from the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. We will remain in this category until we graduate the first cohort of students. So, this is a wonderful fresh start for us with a program that is only going to grow in value and significance over the next few years.

In the healthcare profession, physician assistants are trained to provide primary health care and specialty medicine. With the number of Maryland counties and communities throughout the nation that have medically underserved areas or health professionals shortages, our ability and dedication to graduating more PAs will be a game changer locally and across the country. Right now, we have an even more urgent need to prepare as many health care providers as possible to care for patients, save lives, and advance medical research.

With all this in mind you can see why we are so proud that our inaugural class of PA students have arrived on campus, to begin this 28-month long program. The students will complete their coursework and clinical experiences, under the leadership of Dr. Tiffany Maxwell and the talented faculty/instructional staff: Dr. Kamil Alzayady, Dr. Cynthia Gill, Dr. Mosha Peters-Harris, Dr. Khaled Hasan, Dr. Christjon Huddleston, Ms. Zakiya James, Mr. Timothy Sparta and Ms. Brittany Yerkes.

Recently, I visited with our inaugural class during their orientation. These students are from nine states, including 1 UMES alum; and all of them have completed a minimum of 500 hours of direct patient care hours as a prerequisite requirement for admission. Here's what two of them said about 'why they choose UMES' and 'why they want to be a PA':

Mr. Ronak Patel (Snow Hill, MD) stated, “My enthusiasm to become a PA started near the end of my internship as a Respiratory Therapist (RT) student. As a student RT intern I went on Emergency Room rotations and I encountered PA’s using various skills to stabilize our critical patients including resuscitate, intubation, arterial line placement, central line placement, and chest tube placement. On the daily rounds at our hospital I observed the Doctors and PAs relationship pre-operatively, intra-operatively, and post-operatively. Being a RT and working in COVID-19 pandemic helped me realize that PAs are very qualified medical professionals who diagnose illness, develop and manage treatment plans to improve the patient outcome, and this makes me more satisfying that I choose this as a career.”

Ms. Maresha Carrie (Irving, TX) said, “I witnessed issues within my community, alarmingly more so amongst the youth aging from 12-21, which compelled me to research and observe these difficulties in our community that warrant help. I have volunteered with “at risk” youth who suffered from mental health issues, from being raped, verbally abused, beaten, harassed, wrongfully stereotyped, and accused. I want to be someone that these types of individuals can trust as well as be an example for those who need to know that anything is possible.”

Wow, trust me when I say, this is a highly impressive, experienced, and engaged group of students, eager to continue their health care careers!

So, without further delay, let’s give a big Hawk shout out to the inaugural cohort of Physician Assistant students at UMES. Below, you will see the smiling faces of the Class of 2022, and learn where they traveled from to reach our beloved university.

  
UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND  
EASTERN SHORE  
SCHOOL of PHARMACY and HEALTH PROFESSIONS  
DEPARTMENT of PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT  
Cohort 2022



Tiffany Azzo  
Madison Heights,  
Michigan



Megan Barnes  
Moncks Corner,  
South Carolina



Courtney Camille  
Deltona, Florida



Valerie Campbell  
Silver Spring,  
Maryland



Maresha Carrie  
Irving, Texas



Caitlin Grant  
Woodbine,  
Maryland



Hillary Johnson  
Baltimore,  
Maryland



Jennifer Keithly  
Essexville,  
Michigan



Marian Maresco  
Magnolia,  
Delaware



Ronak Patel  
Snow Hill,  
Maryland



Shaina Selya  
Harrington,  
Delaware



Saloni Shah  
Bethpage, New  
York



Vyphuong Tran  
Lewis Center, Ohio



Jennifer Triplett  
Tallahassee, Florida



Jamison Trower  
(UMES Graduate)  
Chesterfield,  
Virginia



Kaila Wherry  
Arlington, Texas



Chanté Whitaker  
Portsmouth,  
Virginia

Finally, I hope all of you are enjoying the fall semester, and that you are feeling more at home each day on the Eastern Shore. I can't tell you how glad I am that you are back on our beautiful campus, giving it the life and energy we sorely missed in the spring.

Please continue to wear your masks, keep socially distant, wash your hands frequently, and spend as much time outside as you can as Autumn is fast approaching.

With Hawk Pride,