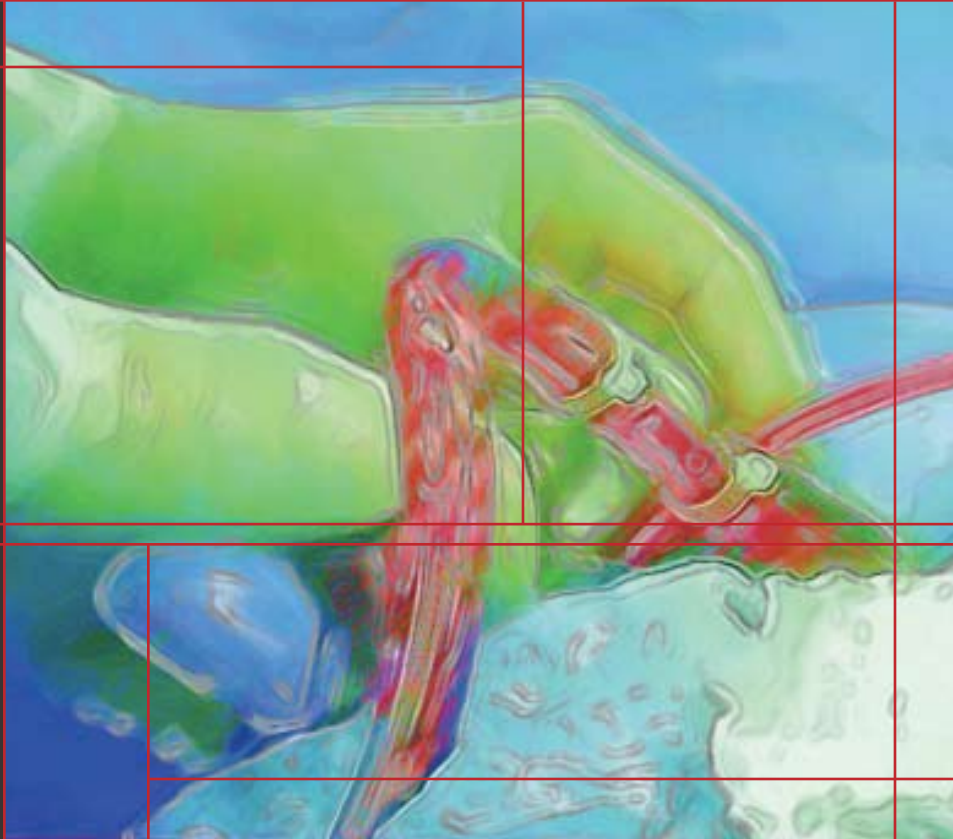


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MISSION & CONTENT

The mission of *CardioVISION™* is to provide a means of communicating pertinent information among practitioners of the specialty and among related professionals in the medical field and industry. *CardioVISION™* is a peer-reviewed quarterly journal that includes articles on practice issues, credentialing issues, educational opportunities, and more. *CardioVISION™* also includes classified job ads and industry advertisements.

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NCCPA LEADERS PARTICIPATE IN APACVS MEETING

Janet J. Lathrop, MBA, NCCPA President/CEO, and Randy Danielsen, PhD, PA-C,, participated in the APACVS 26th Annual Educational Meeting, held recently in San Diego, California, on behalf of the National Commission of Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA).

Lathrop and Danielsen arrived early enough to participate in the APACVS Board of Directors Meeting on January 25th and delivered a presentation to the APACVS membership on January 26th. Lathrop and Danielsen also participated in a dinner with the APACVS board and the STS liaison to the APACVS, Randolph Chitwood, Jr., MD, who is also First Vice-President of the STS. During their presentations the NCCPA representatives brought the APACVS board and membership up-to-date on NCCPA activities relating to the recognition of PAs working in specialty positions.

They presented a historical overview of the NCCPA, noting that the commission has been discussing PA specialty recognition since 1978 and that this issue has recently resurfaced with an intensity and frequency that far outstrips previous calls for such recognition. Consequently, in 2006, the NCCPA announced during the meeting of the House of Delegates at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Physician Assistants, that the NCCPA was embarking on an initiative of specialty recognition.

After the May AAPA meeting, the NCCPA convened a forum on specialty PAs in June. Representing the APACVS at this meeting were APACVS board members LaWaun Hance and Jonathan Sobel. The NCCPA invited 31 PA- and physician-specialty organizations to participate in this event.

Following the June meeting, the NCCPA presented its results to the NCCPA commissioners during their August meeting. During the November 2006, meeting, they adopted consensus points (which were presented at the meetings and are included in the Winter 2007 issue of *CardioVISION™*).

The NCCPA believes that it now has a broad overview of concerns of PAs who are engaged in specialty practice. Consequently, during the current year, NCCPA would like to develop an insight into specific PA specialty areas, in order to discuss how the NCCPA might be able to develop specific PA specialty recognition activities. One of the first specialties the NCCPA wishes to investigate is that of the CVT PA. Therefore, they invited the APACVS and STS to send representatives to meet with NCCPA representatives. (This meeting was held in March.)

During their presentations Lathrop and Danielsen also noted that the NCCPA is currently moving to repackage the recertification examination, to be more flexible to specialty PAs. The NCCPA plans to develop an examination in which the PA taking the examination will be able to answer a block of specialty questions derived from a practice area of the PA's choosing. They also reminded APACVS members that NCCPA commissioners have decided to end the Pathway II means of recertification following the administration of the examination in 2010.

The APACVS board and members attending the conference were extremely grateful to the NCCPA representatives for taking the time to participate in our conference. This is especially true for Randy Danielsen, since in his professional life, he is Dean of the Arizona School of Health Sciences

PA CONGRESSIONAL VISITS

APACVS members who are planning to attend the APACVS Eighth Annual Summer Educational Meeting, July 20-22, in Washington, D.C., may wish to extend their trip one day to visit their personal congressional representatives and/or their staff in our nation's capital.

The American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) encourages every PA to visit his/her legislators' offices whenever he/she is in the D.C. area, to discuss the role of the PA and to discuss federal legislation which needs to be passed to allow PAs to provide better medical care. When a PA volunteers for this activity, the AAPA will schedule the visits with the legislators in advance. The PA will then join AAPA representatives for breakfast, where the PA will receive a briefing on the activity. Each PA will be accompanied on his/her visit by a member of the AAPA Federal Affairs Staff. Following the PA's visit to the legislators, the PA will then have a debriefing with AAPA representatives to evaluate the meeting.

The AAPA is currently placing emphasis on the following activities:

- Updating Medicare to enable PAs to order home health, hospice, and nursing facility care.
- Passing legislation to allow PAs to diagnose and treat federal workers who are injured on the job.
- Providing funding for PA educational programs.

APACVS members who are willing to spend an extra day in Washington are encouraged to sign up for the AAPA Congressional Visit Program at www.aapa.org/gandp/cvp.html.

JOIN US FOR A SUMMER CME IN THE CAPITAL

A visit to our nation's capital is always an exciting experience, but when combined with lectures on cutting-edge topics, hands-on workshops, industry exhibits, and networking with peers, it's an opportunity not to be missed! When you make your plans to join us for the APACVS Eighth Annual Summer Educational Meeting, July 20-22, in Washington, D.C., make sure you extend your stay in order to enjoy the myriad of cultural offerings available in Washington, D.C.

The first-time visitor to D.C. will want to start at the National Mall.

- Visit the tallest structure in the capital, the Washington Monument, and get a stunning view of the city.
- Get a free ticket for a guided tour of the U.S. Capitol Building.
- Take a few days to explore the many Smithsonian Museums on the Mall. (Find the Hope Diamond, see Dorothy's Ruby Red Slippers, and touch a moon rock.)
- Catch an IMAX show at the Smithsonian Air & Space Museum or the Smithsonian Natural History Museum.
- See your Rembrandts and O'Keeffes and Raphaels and Monets at the National Gallery of Art and experience history at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.



Photo Credit: JakeMcGuire.com

While the museum offerings can be overwhelming, many museums have websites offering guides to the most popular pieces and maps for “what to see in less than an hour.”

When you need a refreshment break, the Mall offers many easy and leisurely options.

- Take advantage of the sunshine and picnic on the grass or make a quick stop at a vendor's cart for hotdogs and sodas.
- Visit the museum cafés for your favorite chains (National Air & Space Museum); a variety of pizzas, bistro sandwiches, fresh-baked desserts, and gelato (National Gallery of Art); or try something unusual with native-inspired food and beverages at the National Museum of the American Indian.

For those who've had their fill of museums, there are several must-dos in the city.

- Visit Dupont Circle to see some of D.C.'s historic homes and foreign embassies, treat yourself to a variety of ethnic cuisine, and relax in a bookstore or private art gallery.
- Spend a day at Mount Vernon, George Washington's 500-acre estate—tour the fourteen-room mansion, kitchen, slave quarters, smokehouse, coach house, and stables.
- Enjoy the sunshine and nature at the National Zoo or Great Falls Park.
- Take a step back in time and stroll the cobblestone streets of Old Town Alexandria or Georgetown.
- After sunset, dance the night away in one of the clubs of Georgetown or Adams Morgan.

For those who will be bringing families, there are plenty of places and activities that the kids will enjoy.

- Your budding banker can see real money being printed at the Bureau of Engraving & Printing.
- Your mini Mata Hari can get a new identity, listen to bugged conversations, and see how James Bond films affected the real spies at the International Spy Museum.
- Animal lovers can see 435 different species at the National Zoo and get their hands on crocodile skins and animal teeth at the National Museum of Natural History.
- Your aspiring actor, dancer, singer, musician can enjoy the live theatre at the Ripley Center or Imagination Stage, and take tea or experience an outdoor concert at the Strathmore Hall Arts Center.
- For kids—even the grown-up kind—who love rides, shows, and games, the Six Flags America Theme Park is a thirty-minute ride from downtown.

For the independent traveler, Washington, D.C., is a fairly easy city to navigate with plenty of public transportation options, including a comprehensive metro system. If you would rather put yourself in the hands of professionals, there are many tour companies available. Visitors can choose tours by type or by sites to visit—Two-Day Grand Tour, Washington After Dark, Monument and Arlington Cemetery, Trolley Tour, Photo Workshop, etc. There are also excursion tours to nearby areas, such as Colonial Williamsburg, Monticello, Gettysburg, and Busch Gardens. While many of the sites in D.C. are free, we encourage visitors to check the web for specific details about hours, accessibility, and admission costs. The brochure for the APACVS 8th Annual Educational Meeting will be available online (www.apacvs.org) in the near future and will be mailed to all members when published.

APACVS BOARD MEETS

The APACVS Board of Directors held a very productive meeting on January 25th, just prior to the APACVS 26th Annual Educational Meeting in San Diego, California. During the meeting, it was noted that the response to the Annual APACVS Practice and Compensation Survey was incredible, with nearly 500 individual responses received. The published results have been mailed to all respondents.

It was noted that while many APACVS members have completed the paper work necessary for Fellow membership status, many others appear to have procrastinated. The board would like to remind all members who are eligible for Fellow membership, that beginning this fall, there will be a fee to cover the costs of the paperwork involved in this process. All APACVS members eligible for Fellow membership status are urged to complete the application at their earliest convenience.

The board noted, with pleasure, the assistance Steven Gottesfeld, PA-C, an APACVS member from San Diego provided in preparation of our 26th Annual Educational Meeting.

The board received communication from Nevin Katz, MD, FACS, FACC, FCCP, who is the founder and executive director of the Foundation for the Advancement of CardioThoracic Care (FACTS-Care). He contacted the APACVS regarding establishing some type of relationship between FACT-Care and the new International Society of Cardiothoracic Surgical Critical Care and the APACVS. Members of the board and APACVS Fellow member and FACTS-Care lecturer Fred Moltenkopf met with Dr. Katz in San Diego. Dr. Katz has been invited to meet with the board during its summer meeting in Washington, D.C.

During the meeting, the board received an update from the NCCPA, provided by Randy Danielsen, PhD, PA-C, Chairman of the Board, and Janet Lathrop, MBA, President/CEO. The board thanked both Randy and Janet for taking time out of their busy schedules to participate in the APACVS 26th Annual Educational Meeting.

Charles Kock, former APACVS South Central Regional Director, received a token of appreciation for his eight years of service on the board. (Photo shows President Ed Lopez at left and Charles Kock at right.) During his tenure he was responsible for the development of the APACVS CD-rom, in which the PA bears a striking resemblance to Charlie.



Following a lengthy meeting, the board adjourned for a leisurely dinner. The board was joined for dinner by Randolph Chitwood, MD, who is the STS liaison to the APACVS, and by Randy Danielsen and Janet Lathrop from the NCCPA. In this informal setting, there was significant discussion regarding the CVT PA.



APACVS Board: Past & Present

APACVS Past Presidents (from left to right) Dana Gray, Rick Milam, Gregg Munson, and Joe Cooper pause for a moment of reflection, with APACVS Executive Director Carol Goodard (shown at center), at a reception provided by Boston Scientific, during the APACVS 26th Annual Educational Meeting.

PHOTO OPS IN SAN DIEGO

APACVS Fellows

In the fall of 2006, the APACVS introduced Fellow membership status to identify those PAs who had demonstrated proficiency in CVT surgery. As of December 31, 2006, 59 APACVS members had completed the necessary requirements to achieve this status. Pictured below are APACVS Fellow members who participated in the APACVS 26th Annual Educational Meeting.



TV Show Films at APACVS Meeting

PAs attending the APACVS 26th Annual Educational Meeting had to share their swimming pool with the cast of the television telenovela *Saints & Sinners*. While *Saints & Sinners*, shot by Fox for MyNetworkTV, is set in Miami, the outdoor shots were filmed in San Diego. Stars involved in the filming included Maria Conchita Alonso, Robin Givens, Natalie Martinex, Nick Stabile, Tyler Kain, Scott Bailey, and Ryan Scott Greene. Viewers seeing an APACVS member on the show should note that the PA has not changed professions but was merely attending an APACVS Educational Meeting



APACVS BOARD MEETS WITH STS BOARD

During the APACVS 26th Annual Educational Meeting, held recently in San Diego, California, the APACVS Board of Directors held a joint meeting with the Board of Directors of the Society of Thoracic Surgery (STS).

The APACVS brought the STS board up-to-date on recent APACVS activities, including the current status of postgraduate training and the implementation of APACVS Fellow status within the APACVS as a mechanism of providing recognition to those CVT PAs who have documented experience in the field of CVT surgery.



The STS's Randolph Chitwood, MD (left) & APACVS's Bruce Hormann, PA-C (right)

The APACVS informed the STS of the recent endeavor of the NCCPA to develop some mechanism of specialty recognition for PAs. The STS board was enthusiastic about this concept and offered to support the APACVS to achieve such recognition for CVT PAs.

During the meeting the STS clarified the terminology used on certificates presented to PAs attending STS activities. The STS advised the APACVS that since CME provided by the STS is provided under guidelines developed by the American Medical Association (AMA), the STS must comply with these guidelines. These rules and regulations currently mandate that certificates of completion of AMA Category 1 CME activities can only be issued to MDs or DOs. Consequently, for the STS to be in compliance with AMA guidelines, PAs participating in STS Category 1 CME activities will be issued certificates of participation.

ANNALS OF THORACIC SURGERY

APACVS members are reminded that the *Annals* are available to them at the discounted annual rate of \$146. Orders may be placed by phone (800-654-2452), fax (407-363-9661), or by e-mail (elspcs@elsevier.com). In the near future, orders may be placed online.

APACVS members must use the following promotional code in order to receive the discounted rate: M08184.

TWENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL EDUCATIONAL MEETING IN REVIEW

In January, CVT PAs from across the United States converged on San Diego, California, to participate in the APACVS 26th Annual Educational Meeting, which was held at the Marriott Mission Valley. Meeting participants were able to earn 21 hours of AAPA Category 1 (Preapproved) CME credit by participating in lecturer-learner and hands-on workshops.



Lectures, as members have come to expect, were indeed cutting-edge, with topics ranging from robotic cardiac surgery to new surgical techniques in the management of heart failure. In addition to the day-time activities, Terumo provided an evening scholarship event, and Boston Scientific hosted a relaxing evening at Jimmy Loves,

where attendees were able to renew old acquaintances and make new ones within the CVT PA community.

Breaks were scheduled between the educational sessions to allow conference attendees to visit the exhibit hall, where they could view new medical devices and pharmaceutical products displayed by industry supporters and exhibitors. CVT PAs attending the APACVS 26th Annual Educational Meeting uniformly reported having heard superb lectures, learned from the lectures and learned something new from the exhibitors.

Many of the PAs attending the meeting remained in San Diego to participate in the STS meeting, where the APACVS had an exhibit to educate surgeons, administrators, and others as to the role of the CVT PA in today's medical community. We hope that all members will be able to participate in an upcoming APACVS educational program.



APACVS 2007 SCHOLARSHIPS

During the APACVS 26th Annual Educational Meeting, Terumo Cardiovascular Systems Corporation sponsored a scholarship event at the San Diego Air and Space Museum. The museum provides individuals an overview of the history of aviation, from a model of the Montgolfier brothers' hot air balloon, the first manned vehicle in recorded history to break the bounds of gravity and lift man off the earth, to recent space capsules. During the reception conference attendees were invited to pilot a variety of aircraft, from a Navy A-4 to a home-built Kitfox

During the evening, while conference attendees enjoyed a leisurely dinner, Terumo provided an hour-long educational event on robotic surgery. Certainly, this innovation has the potential to expand the role of the CVT PA. During the evening, current scholarship recipients were honored:

- Heather M. Hatfield, PA, who is a resident in the Joseph Mercy Hospital CVT PA Residency Program, was awarded a scholarship of \$1000. In addition, her expenses to the APACVS 26th Annual Educational meeting were provided. (Pictured below with President Ed Lopez)
- Rosalyn Rosas, PA-S, who is a student at the John Stroger Jr Hospital of Cook County/Malcolm X PA Program in Chicago, Illinois, received a \$750 scholarship
- Adriana Sikyta, PA-S, who is a student at the Union College PA Program in Lincoln, Nebraska, received a \$750 scholarship.

The APACVS is grateful to Terumo for the continued support of our profession. APACVS members interested in providing support for scholarships are encouraged to send their donations to Physician Assistants in Cardiovascular Education Foundation at the APACVS national office.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: DO WE UNDERSTAND OUR NEED?

By Ed Lopez, PA-C, MHA, APACVS President



March 12, 2007, Atlanta, Georgia, Dr. Randolph Chitwood, MD, First Vice President of the Society of Thoracic Surgeons and Chairman of the Department of Cardiovascular Medicine at East Carolina University, addresses members of the NCCPA Task Force on Specialty Recognition. His topic, a report on the current and future workforce trends in cardiothoracic surgery that he presented at the last session of the Society of Thoracic Surgeons meeting in San Diego, California, in January of this year.

As he showed very convincing data to his audience regarding the increasing demands for cardiovascular services in the next 10, 20, and 30 years, he also clearly pointed out the decreasing number of cardiothoracic surgeons entering the specialty. There are many reasons for this decrease, and yet there are increasing numbers of sick baby boomers entering the “illness roles.” He essentially challenged the group with the notion that while the workforce numbers for cardiovascular surgery services is in a steep decline, simultaneously the demand for services is in a steep incline over the same time period and that physician assistants have a “golden opportunity to capitalize on this enormous need.”

The questions as I see it are: Do we as a profession understand the need? Do we have the political will to address this need, and, if so, how long will it take us to properly prepare PAs to address the need?

At a January 1998 conference on technology manpower issues, Vice President Al Gore, citing U. S. Department of Labor projections, expressed that in the next ten years the need for computer scientists, engineers, and information technology experts would likely double and therefore that the Clinton administration needed to apportion money and develop a strategy to meet the demands for technology workers.* Now, nearly ten years later, we know that this projection was correct.

The information technology sector has continued to grow at an exponential rate and because our labor market has been unable or unwilling to meet those demands, we have both recruited for human resources from other countries and worse yet, exported jobs offshore to address our growing I.T. needs. Unfortunately, while some colleges and universities have retooled their curricula in this country to address this need, hundreds of private enterprise technology education companies like “Knowledge University,” started by former junk bond trader and convicted felon Michael Milken, and “Productivity Point International,” out of Plantation, Florida, have seen the need and have also jumped into the “education market” for technology workers.

As the demand for not just cardiovascular physician assistants but PAs in all specialties continues to rise, at what I would consider an alarming rate, as I predict we will see in the next AAPA census report, it is my belief that now is the time for all physician assistant specialty organizations, the Physician Assistant Education Association, the American Academy of Physician Assistants, the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants, and the Association of Post Graduate Physician Assistant Programs to initiate a meaningful dialogue as one group with one voice to address the growing need for educating a physician assistant workforce that will possess the cognitive as well as the technical skills needed to establish itself as a long-term player within this diverse and growing specialty medicine marketplace and set the standards for what is specialty education and training for the physician assistant for today and for the future.

Among the many things Dr. Chitwood expressed were these words, “You’ve got to figure out a way to avoid splintering and fractioning yourselves as a profession like many doctors have done over the years. Your strength lies in your unity—the strength is in your numbers.” So our real need, as I see it, is learning to work closer together as one profession as we enter this vital time in our professional history.

* “Washington Technology” January 5, 1998



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APACVS
EIGHTH ANNUAL
SUMMER
EDUCATIONAL
MEETING

JULY 20-22, 2007
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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APACVS
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APACVS
Ninth Annual Summer
Educational Meeting

June 20-22, 2008
Keauhou Bay
Kailua Kona
Hawaii

Join us for CME through clinical lectures and hands-on workshops in beautiful destinations throughout the United States. In addition to outstanding education, these meetings offer opportunities to socialize with peers, network, and meet with industry representatives.