

The nccPA Health Foundation designs initiatives to advance the role of Certified PAs to improve health. Our work builds PA and student capacity, competencies, and skills through education and research activities. Below, we've highlighted Health Foundation resources for educators and students.

More than \$200,000 Invested to Equip PAs & Students to Be Champions for Health

Across its five seed [grant programs](#), the Health Foundation has invested more than \$200,000 to support PA and student led projects, improving health in 30 states as well as in Central America, the Caribbean, and Africa. We especially applaud grantees' efforts in the last year, adapting to fill outreach needs during the pandemic. Our Be the CHANGE grant, which provides up to \$2,500 in funding for you and your students to address a need of your choosing, remains our most popular program. Recipients have addressed diabetes education; sun exposure risk; eye care; pediatric and health literacy; breast cancer detection; health promotion with elementary, high school and college students; foot care; smoking cessation; global health; care to homeless and underserved communities, and more. Our mental health and oral health outreach grants (both \$1,000) support PA efforts to raise awareness, promote prevention, and foster education and treatment for these two often overlooked healthcare needs. All applicants gain valuable grant-writing experience, which can help faculty and students stand out among their peers.

At Great Lakes Plastic Surgery Center, Emily Hedley, PA-C, sought to educate and reduce risk of skin cancer by providing >1,000 community members with sunscreen in local parks.

Mount St Joseph PA students raised awareness and provided oral hygiene supplies to >200 kids in an underserved area.

Northwestern PA students launched an oral health education program with the Chicago Youth Program.

University of Utah PA students provide oral health education and fluoride treatments to underserved refugees.

Certified PA Sam Wijesinghe provided vision screenings and eyeglasses to 225 community members in his native Sri Lanka.

Kathy Pedersen grantee Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare & Hwal Lee, PA-C are providing Mental Health First Aid.

The Florida Academy of PAs partnered with Rise Against Hunger to pack 10,000 nutritious meals that were shipped to Timor-Leste.

119 (and counting)

Join the movement!

Funding is Available Now & You're Invited! PA faculty and students continue to be the largest segment (75%) of our grantee population with funds distributed to more than 60 PA programs. We invite each of you to join this network of PA educators and PA students. If you or your students need help getting started, please reach out to our staff at grants@nccpahealthfoundation.net.

Congratulations 2021 Grantees!

- **Albany Medical Center**
(PIs: Pamela Y. Young, PA-C, Sara DeSanctis, PA-C, & Jennifer Pelesz, PA-C)
- **Hands for Esperanza**
(PI: Daniel Hendricks, PA-C)
- **Hudson Headwaters Health Network**
(PI: Patricia Stevenson, PA-C)

who have been sexually assaulted (2020), supported community mental health education (2019), addressed oral health through global outreach (2018), fostered health literacy in urban, low-income communities (2017), and addressed mental health among the underserved (2016). **The next cycle opens in 2022, so start thinking about your program's proposal.**

Partners in Mental Health Initiative Remains Timely, Resources & Opportunities

In June, the Health Foundation convened its Partners in Mental Health Steering Committee, including leaders from six national PA organizations committed to equipping all PAs to address mental health and substance use disorder. This was the committee's first gathering in two years. All agreed the pandemic and social movements have amplified the impact of the mental health and addiction crises and are a further call to action. There was a marked sense of enthusiasm and engagement, a desire to move forward with this cross organizational effort in a spirit of collective impact. Please learn more about these efforts in the annual [stakeholders report](#).

The Health Foundation also continues to raise mental health awareness. First, educators and students are invited to share their perspectives in our [mental health spotlight](#). These 1-2 minute clips are designed to reduce stigma and normalize mental health by sharing with peers, for example, why mental health is important, how it's integrated into curriculum or practice, and how to encourage patients and peers to stay mentally health. Participants can record on their own, do a virtual recording session with our staff, or share their thoughts in writing. Please lend your voice to this important effort. In addition, we invite you to apply for our mental health outreach grant; connect with [resources](#); and listen to podcasts recorded with [NCCPA](#) and the [PA Foundation](#). Please also encourage your students to utilize these resources, not only to emphasize the importance of mental health but also to explore future practice areas and how mental health is integrated across disciplines.

PA Oral Health Movement Continues

Oral disease remains a recognized source of health disparities. In fact, a [Primary Care Collaborative report](#) published this year called for continued focus on oral health as a social and health justice issue. Further, a twenty-year follow-up report to the seminal Oral Health in America: A Report of the Surgeon General is expected and will focus on the prevention and treatment of oral disease, identify disparities and inequalities in oral health care, and propose strategies for ensuring all American share equally in the benefits of the oral health. The Health Foundation and the PA profession has embraced a mantle of leadership for integrating oral health in education and practice over a more than 10-year movement. We encourage the PA profession to maintain and expand its efforts, ensuring that all Certified PAs

In addition, the Health Foundation selected three recipients for the annual, competitive **Kathy J. Pedersen Grant to Promote Equitable Care**. The grantees are addressing the needs of underserved populations and developing models of equitable and inclusive care. This year's applicant pool was the largest in the program's history, and the proposals reflected the grant's spirit of social accountability as well as the breadth of PA efforts. Further, these efforts build on the program's tradition of PA leadership and outreach that has supported telehealth education (2020), provided follow-up care for patients

Partners in Mental Health Steering Committee



MENTAL HEALTH SPOTLIGHT
Jody Vulk, PA-C

“ I learned that mental health issues are common and treatable if we reach out. Treatment helps to clear our minds and focus on our patients. ”

PA Health Foundation

You're Invited

#PAsForOralHealth

How can you
integrate oral health
into your practice or
PA curriculum?

The logo for the NCCPA Health Foundation, featuring the text "NCCPA Health Foundation" in a stylized font with a gold and purple color scheme.



recognize the oral-systemic connection and the impact of oral disease, especially on vulnerable and underserved populations. One of the keys to these efforts is Smiles for Life, a national oral health curriculum that can be used in the classroom or for 8 free Category 1 CME credits. [Smiles for Life](#) also provides curricular, practice, interactive, and patient resources.

PA programs seeking to incorporate or expand oral health content may apply for up to \$3,000 in Health Foundation funding to make changes to curriculum and track the impact of your efforts. This program is a great opportunity for PA faculty scholarship and presentation/publication too: Grantees have presented at conferences held by PAEA, AAPA, the American Dental Education Association, and the American Public Health Association and been published in the Journal of PA Education and the Journal of Student

Run-Clinics. If you're seeking to reinforce student knowledge and skills, apply for our \$1,000 outreach grant, which covers the cost of outreach and hygiene supplies, production of patient education materials, fluoride varnish, and similar items. Plus, kick off the oral health conversation about with our free profession-neutral [videos](#) and be sure your students are ready to put the mouth back into the body.

Looking Ahead

This year, the Health Foundation completed a review of its strategic initiatives, discussing how to broaden and deepen its efforts around mental/behavioral health and oral health, our grant programs, and renewed efforts to address professional practice. We're looking broadly at how the thread of health disparities runs through our initiatives as well as opportunities to foster our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion through our programming. We look forward to launching new activities, including potentially a new funding opportunity, to seed PA and PA student efforts. In the meantime, we know advancing the role of Certified PAs to improve health requires partners; and we hope PAEA as well as PA faculty, preceptors, and students will continue to look to the Health Foundation for resources and grants to support their efforts.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Todd Allen".

Todd Allen, MBA, MMS, PA-C
Board Chair, 2021-2022

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dawn Morton-Rias".

Dawn Morton-Rias, Ed.D., PA-C
President and CEO