

## College of Health Professions continues to grow

Exciting things are happening at Upstate's College of Health Professions. The past year has been marked by significant growth and expansion of degree offerings as well as national recognition of well-established programs. Below are just a few of the latest developments.

### New alumni have excellent employment outlook



Last month, 156 degrees were awarded to graduates of the College of Health Professions, including 60 bachelors of science, eight bachelors of professional studies, 39 masters of science and 41 doctorates of physical therapy.

For many Upstate graduates, the job market is booming. For example, students in the Physician Assistant program, who will complete their studies in August, are all but guaranteed a job in their field.

Program director Sandy Banas said the increasing demand for physician assistants is fueled by retirements in the medical field, an aging population in need of more health care and the Affordable Care Act that has provided more people with access to care.

Also highly sought-after are cardiovascular perfusionists. All 10 students in this year's graduating class have job commitments.

Commencement was held at the SRC Arena at Onondaga Community College, marking the first time since 2011 that students from all four colleges were honored during a single ceremony. Receptions for the individual colleges were held the evening prior.

### New master's degree program in Behavior Analysis Studies



A new master's degree program was launched to help address a pressing health concern in New York state. Graduates of the new Behavior Analysis Studies program will be licensed healthcare professionals able to provide therapeutic services for people with autism and

related disorders, with a focus on pediatric patients. Upstate provides a unique and comprehensive environment to prepare students for their future careers, led and facilitated by nationally renowned expert Henry Roane, PhD. Students will also gain first-hand experience working at the Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital.

### New program helps students prepare for medical school

For the first time, the college will offer a one-year master's degree program designed to enhance a student's skills before they enter medical school. The Medprep Academic Enhancement MS in Medical Technology Program will be a rigorous year of study that also includes a guaranteed admissions interview at Upstate Medical University's College of Medicine. A master's degree in Medical Technology will be awarded upon completion. The fall 2019 pilot class is expected to have 10 to 15 students.



### Respiratory Therapy program achieves national recognition

The Respiratory Therapy program was named a 2019-2020 Apex Recognition Award winner by the American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC). The award was developed to recognize the contribution of respiratory therapists and to highlight best practices in respiratory care that are aligned with evidence-based medicine.

*With excerpts from spring 2019 issues of UpOnline*

# Health Professions Alumni Connection

*Alumni Connection* is published by the SUNY Upstate Medical University Health Professions Alumni Association. Distribution is free to college alumni, faculty, staff, students and friends.

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We extend our gratitude to the alumni, faculty, students and friends who contributed to the Upstate College of Health Professions Alumni Association 2018 annual campaign, including restricted funds and endowments. Donors are listed according to gifts received between January 1 and December 31, 2018.

## A.C. Silverman Society\*

Named in honor of respected pediatrician, epidemiologist and public health administrator A. Clement Silverman, the society recognizes donors who have given lifetime gifts of \$2,500 or more to the alumni association and/or have given annually for 10 or more consecutive years. Special thanks go to founding members who have given for 26 years – every year since the alumni association was formed.

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*"I am beyond grateful and humbly honored for the support of alumni. I fully intend to honor Ken George's memory."*

*Isabella Gilner,  
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## A note to our alumni in Florida:

Because of the large number of Upstate alumni and friends living in Florida either full- or part-time, the Upstate Foundation has registered as a charitable organization with the State of Florida. The Health Professions Alumni Association is administered by the Upstate Foundation and is governed by the same rules. We hope this will facilitate charitable giving among our alumni. The Upstate Foundation's Florida registration # is CH57700.





### Harriet Mark Scholarship

*"I am honored to receive the Harriet Mark Scholarship from the graduates of the college. When I succeed, I will follow the steps of the alumni and keep this donor ripple spreading wider."*

*Vy Le, MT '19*

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### Dr. Pamela Gramet Physical Therapy Endowed Scholarship

*"Alumni support allows students to be recognized for their caring and compassion which they exhibit in the clinic and in the community. Pamela Gramet was a leader in her field and her scholarship inspires students like me to follow her example."*

*Sarah Connolly, DPT '19*

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From left, Dean Katherine Beissner, PhD, PT, congratulated retiring faculty members **Jill Dungey, PT, DPT '07, MS, GCS** (17 years of service), **Josephine Przepiora, MT '00/MS '10** (28 years of service), and **Debra Wolf, BS, RPA-C** (5.5 years of service). Przepiora is also active on the Alumni Board and served as president from 2013 to 2017.

## CVP Class of '09 establishes memorial endowment for beloved classmate



*Nicholas Rappa*

Just one short decade after graduating from Upstate, the Cardiovascular Perfusion Class of 2009 lost a cherished classmate, **Nicholas Rappa, CP '09**, in a car accident. The remaining four enlisted the help of the alumni association and CVP alumni and, with matching funds from the Upstate Foundation, established the Nicholas B. Rappa Memorial Endowment. They noted, "In our search for meaning in this terrible event, we find solace in preserving Nick's legacy and giving others an opportunity to work toward mastering what Nick so loved – perfusion." To join this memorial tribute, visit [www.upstatefoundation.org/rappa-endowment](http://www.upstatefoundation.org/rappa-endowment)

Give online at

[www.upstatefoundation.org/chpalumni](http://www.upstatefoundation.org/chpalumni) or call 315-464-4416.

# Alumni Connection

## Health Professions Alumni Association News

SUNY Upstate Medical University  
326 Campus Activities Building  
750 East Adams Street  
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[www.upstatefoundation.org/chpalumni/](http://www.upstatefoundation.org/chpalumni/)



*In the spirit of interprofessional collaboration, the Health Professions and Nursing alumni associations provided funding for artwork by local artists for permanent display in the new Academic Building. From left with one of the new paintings are CHP Dean Katherine Beissner, PhD, and CON Dean Tammy Austin-Ketch, PhD.*

## ALUMNI UPDATES



Some bonds really do last a lifetime. The Physical Therapy Class of 1979 recently gathered to mark their 40-year reunion. Eleven classmates traveled from Hawaii, Texas, New Jersey, Delaware, California and Pennsylvania, as well as eastern and central New York. The weekend's activities included a tour of the PT program's facilities in the new Academic Building along with a cocktail reception and banquet at the Genesee Grande hotel near campus. Pictured from left are '79 PT alumni Janice Volk, Carol Recker-Hughes, Nanette Parfitt Burnett, Glen Dunks, Rosemarie Agresta Trigger, Erin (Sarley) Burch, Kathy Kane Uhlman, Laura (Skopek) Grenier, Janet Nydam Reitz, Phil Reitz, and Bob Burton. Several remarked on how their Upstate education had given them an excellent foundation for a successful career. Also attending were several spouses, 1979 faculty member Pat Van Beveren, alumni director Mary Knepper and current DPT program chair George Fulk.

## Class of '09 RT alumna joins faculty

Upon graduation a decade ago, **Tierney Dygert, RT '09**, began her radiation therapy career at Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester. Seven years later, she headed home to Upstate University Hospital to work in Hematology/Oncology. Remaining involved as a preceptor to students, Dygert now serves as clinical education coordinator at the college.



Dygert said, "As I travel to 35 busy clinical sites, many of which employ our very own grads, I am able to work with students and, as a team with fellow alumni from all years, prepare them to become successful." She added, "We share a common goal and take great pride in directly impacting education. It sparks joy to see our students succeed. I enjoy working one-on-one with students. Radiation Therapy is part of who I am."

The College of Health Professions curriculum had prepared Dygert to teach, evaluate and support the Radiation Therapy program. One of the programs alumni had the honor to speak at the American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT) national conference in San Antonio.

In addition to being committed to making a difference in the lives of those she teaches, Dygert is busy completing her master's degree, teaching adult education, spending time with her fiancé, and participating in fitness and yoga.