

*Hands-on activities take center stage at anesthesia school*

## **State, County, City officials take part in CRNA Week**

Celebrating CRNA Week is an annual tradition enjoyed by the faculty, students and staff of the UPMC Hamot Anesthesia Department and the School of Anesthesia. But this year, during the week-long celebration held January 19 to 23, School of Anesthesia director Dr. Rachel Wolfe added an element of excitement by inviting VIPs to observe during a special day of this event.

Pennsylvania State Representative Patrick Harkins and representatives from the new county and city administrations joined the faculty and students of the UPMC Hamot School of Anesthesia during a simulation lab to not only observe but to try some of the hands-on activities themselves. Chris Groner, the director of administration for Erie County, under the leadership of new Erie County Executive Christina Vogel, as well as Mary Wassell, the media and public relations coordinator, serving the new City of Erie Mayor Daria Devlin, joined Pat Harkins to participate in activities such as IV placement, arterial line placement, and fiberoptic intubations, under the guidance of Dr. Wolfe while various students from the Classes of 2026, 2027, and 2028 provided both instruction and humor.

Students involved in the simulation lab included Class of 2026's Jake Martinez, Andrew Skuta, and Vanessa Stenulis; Class of 2027's Samantha Douglas, Josh Miller, and Stephanie Wong; and the Class of 2028's Cathryne Chao, Eric Clark, Alyssa Hahn, and Cohen Wildeson.

By inviting Mr. Harkins, Mr. Groner and Ms. Wassell, Dr. Wolfe made great strides to educate the community and the public on the work and function of CRNAs. Hand in hand with that goal, she's putting the name of the UPMC Hamot School of Anesthesia in the public eye to bring additional visibility and focus to the school.



PA State Representative Pat Harkins, successfully inserts a breathing tube while Samantha Douglas, Class of 2027, guides and instructs him during a Simulation Lab demonstration during CRNA Week 2026.

Rep. Harkins joins SRNAs after successfully learning CRNAs roles and responsibilities through a Simulation Lab at the UPMC Hamot School of Anesthesia during CRNA Week, January 19-23.

From left to right, Jake Martinez, Class of 2026; Cathryne Chao, Class of 2028; Eric Clark, Class of 2028; State Rep. Harkins; Cohen Wildeson, Class of 2028; Stephanie Wong, Class of 2027; Calvin Gilbert, Class of 2026; Joshua Miller, Class of 2027; Andrew Skuta, Class of 2026; and Vanessa Stenulis, Class of 2026.





Mary Wassell, the media and public relations coordinator, serving the new City of Erie Mayor Daria Devlin, begins a pediatric intubation while Samantha Douglas, Class of 2027, carefully guides her during a CRNA Week 2026 Simulation Lab demonstration.



Chris Groner, the director of administration, representing Christina Vogel, Erie County Executive, guides an IV needle under the tutelage of SRNA Stephanie Wong, Class of 2027, during a Simulation Lab demonstration during CRNA Week 2026. He then attempts the simulated intubation of an infant – no easy feat!

Mr. Groner was one member of the community invited to participate in the simulation in an effort to educate members of the public on the work of CRNAs in the community.



Following a successful day of demonstrating what CRNAs' roles are in the hospital environment during CRNA Week 2026, State Rep. Pat Harkins, (far left), poses with Dr. Rachel Wolfe, (far right), the director of the School of Anesthesia, Chris Groner, from the Erie County Administrator's Office (next to Dr. Wolfe), and Mary Wassell, from the City of Erie Mayor's Office (4 from the left).

The SRNAs who spent their time demonstrating and assisting in many hands-on activities included (from left to right) include Jake Martinez, Class of 2026; Cathryne Chao, Class of 2028; Cohen Wildeson, Eric Clark, and Alyssa Hahn, Class of 2028; Stephanie Wong, Class of 2027; Samantha Douglas, Class of 2027 (crouching); Calvin Gilbert, Class of 2026; Joshua Miller, Class of 2027; Andrew Skuta, Class of 2026; and Vanessa Stenulis, Class of 2026.