

Anesthesia Update

Celebrating 60 Years

Hamot School of Anesthesia enters its next chapter



From its inception in June of 1965 to its present incarnation, the nurse anesthesia program here at Hamot has gone through a multitude of changes, transitions, progressions, and improvements, and continues to thrive and grow. Under the leadership of many forward-thinking directors, the school has continued to produce excellent CRNAs and send them out not only regionally but across the country.

Starting with Robert Merriman, MD, in 1965 who established the program at Hamot Medical Center, other directors have included Steve Anderson, MEd, CRNA, who moved the program into its baccalaureate framework with an affiliation with Edinboro State College in 1987. After that it moved to the Master of

Science program in 1989 and extended to 28 months.

The next major change would be in 1990 when the school moved its academic affiliation to Gannon University's Villa Maria School of Nursing. Then with Donald Larmon, DNP, CRNA, at the helm, the School of Anesthesia took its next great leap and transitioned into a 36-month DNP program in 2023 with the first doctoral students graduating this year, the Class of 2025.

Now with Rachel Wolfe, DNP, CRNA, taking the lead as director, the school has seen an expansion of its number of faculty members and rotation sites.

Not only has the school grown and expanded but it has moved on from just being a "feeder" of CRNAs to Hamot by attracting applicants from across the country who then spread through the country in a variety of roles as anesthesia providers. We've had students from Hawaii, California, Arizona, Texas, Florida, New York, Idaho, Utah, and many more, and of course the Pennsylvania and Ohio regions.

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Special Points of Interest

- Faculty Accomplishments
- We want to hear from alums



Dr. Don Larmon
teaching during a
Simulation Lab.

Join us for
Open House
at the school
on Friday,
Sept. 19th,
to celebrate the
School's 60th
Birthday!

SAVE THE DATE

3rd Annual Anesthesia Symposium

Sept. 20, 2025

Cost: \$350
Students: \$200

Early registration
(through August 1):

Cost: \$300
Students: \$175



We would
LOVE to hear
from our
alumni

Please reach out with updates on your lives, jobs, families, new babies, new pets, etc., so that we can include those in future newsletters.

We are always excited to hear from you!

Class of 2026 earns white coats, takes anesthesia oath

The Class of 2026 becomes the second class of the UPMC Hamot School of Anesthesia to accept their white coats on August 10, 2024, on the track to becoming doctors of anesthesia in May of 2026.

Dr. Rachel Wolfe, DNP, CRNA, as the new director of the School, welcomed the students and families and presented roses to each student. Shannon Markham, MSN, CRNA, the new clinical coordinator helped each SRNA into a new white coat. Towards the end of the ceremony, Rachael Broadbent, DNP, CRNA, another faculty member, administered the oath.

The families enjoyed a small reception and a tour of the school after.



Rachael Broadbent, DNP, CRNA, (far left) administers Nurse Anesthetist Oath to Class of 2026 on August 10, 2024.



Dr. Wolfe speaks at the ceremony in her first office as the new director.



Calvin Gilbert grins as he dons his white coat in front of family and friends.



Shannon Markham assists Izzy Meehl with her white coat.

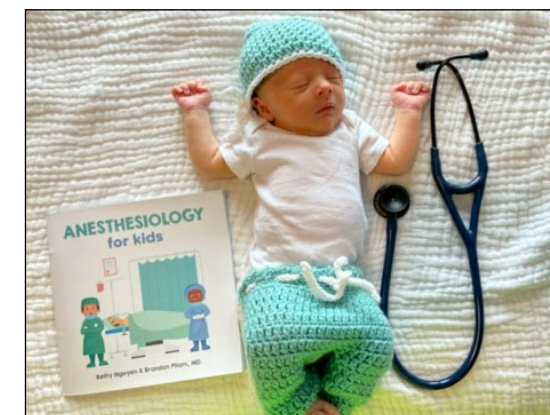


Rachel Keum Ok Han beams in her white coat with her lavender rose at the end of the ceremony.

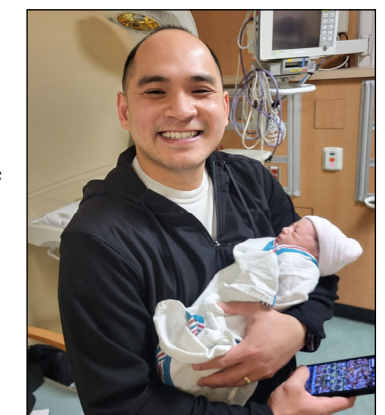


Jake Martinez receives his rose and a congratulations from Dr. Wolfe.

Baby Boom at School of Anesthesia



Not only did Kevin Dale, Class of 2025, and his wife have an adorable baby boy (see left) during his senior year at UPMC Hamot's SOA, but there seems to be something in the water. Trung Kitchener, Class of 2025, and his wife, Emily, also had a beautiful baby girl born in April. And there are more on the way! Mark Erickson, Class of 2025, and his wife, Brianna, are expecting this year as well as Ryan Flach, Class of 2025, and his wife, Kaitlyn, Class of 2024.



Trung Kitchener, '25, and his newborn baby girl.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2ND ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM SPONSORS

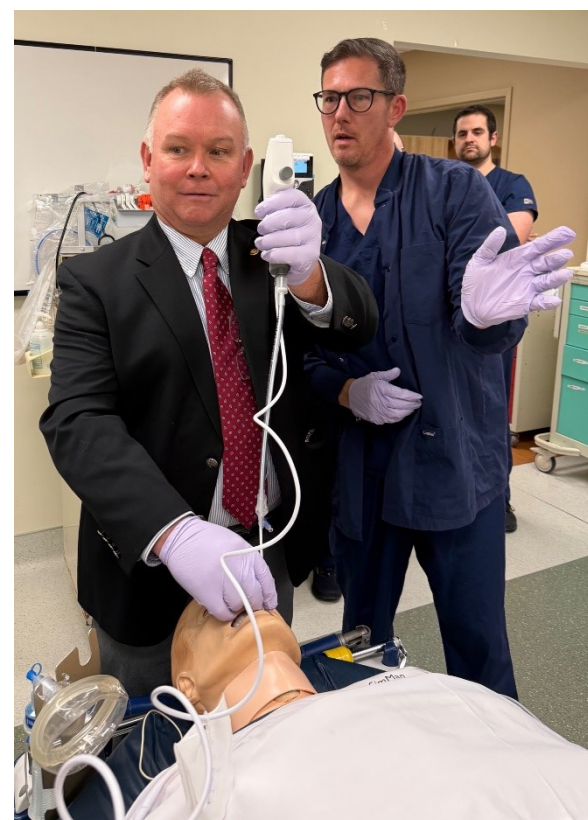


Erie City Mayor, PA State Rep participate in CRNA Week

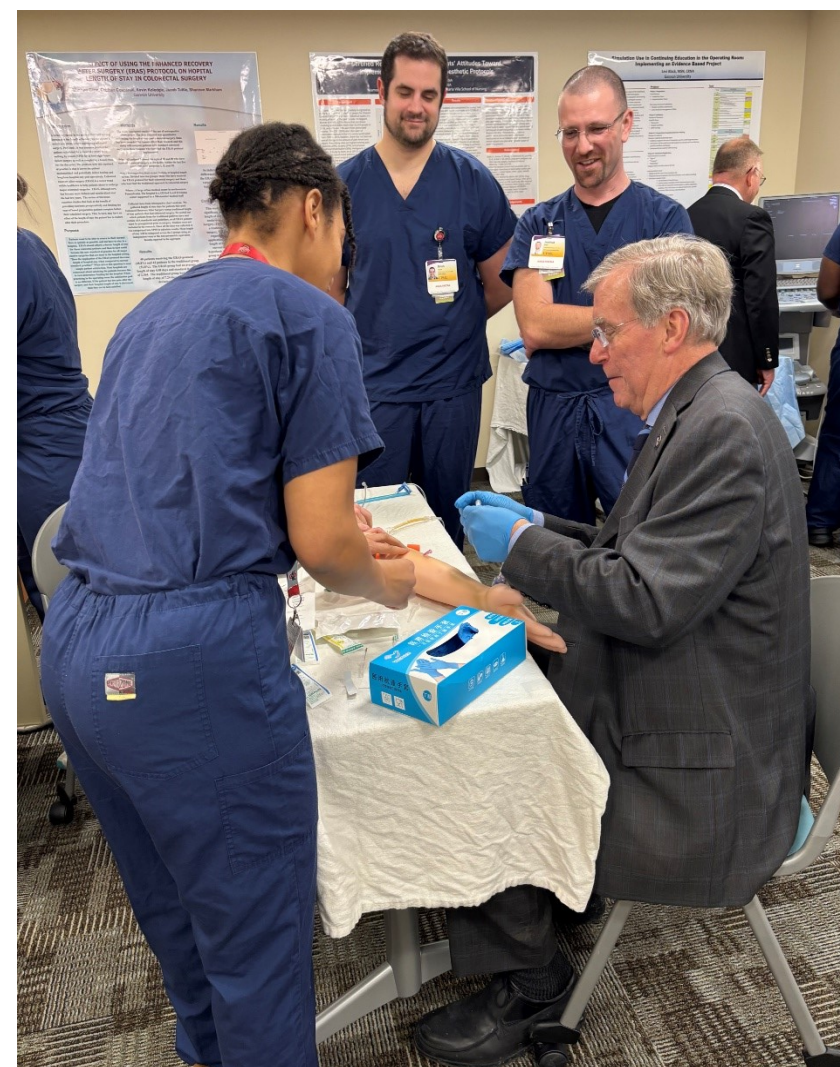


Following a successful day of demonstrating what CRNAs' roles are in the hospital environment during CRNA Week 2025, Joe Schember, Mayor of Erie, (center), poses with Rachel Wolfe, (far right), the director of the School of Anesthesia.

The SRNAs who spent their time demonstrating and assisting in many hands-on activities included (from left to right) Pamela Brown, Class of 2025; Lacey Rovnak, Class of 2026; Mark Erickson, Class of 2025; Vanessa Stenulis, Class of 2026; and Naudya Yanno, Class of 2025.



PA State Representative Pat Harkins, successfully performs a fiberoptic intubation while Mark Erickson, Class of 2025, guides and instructs him during a Simulation Lab demonstration during CRNA Week 2025.



Mayor Joe Schember starts an IV under the tutelage of SRNA Naudya Yanno, Class of 2025, during a Simulation Lab demonstration during CRNA Week 2025. Two members the Class of 2027 observe in the background — Brian Doyle and Joshua Miller.

The mayor and state representative were invited to participate in an effort to educate members of the public on the work of CRNAs in the community.

**Thank you
PANA for
continuing to
support our
students
through your
Mid-Year
Assembly
scholarships.**

Rep. Harkins poses with SRNAs and the school director after successfully learning CRNAs roles and responsibilities through a Simulation Lab at the UPMC Hamot School of Anesthesia during CRNA Week, January 20-24.

From left to right, Pamela Brown, Class of 2025; Brian Doyle, Class of 2027; Calvin Gilbert, Class of 2026; Lacey Rovnak, Class of 2026; Joshua Miller, Class of 2027; Rep. Harkins; Vanessa Stenulis, Class of 2026, Director Wolfe; and Naudya Yanno, Class of 2025.



**Register for the 3rd Annual
UPMC Hamot School of
Anesthesia Symposium on
September 20, 2025**



Rich Local History of Nurse Anesthesia

Erie has a rich, wonderful history of nurse anesthesia, so while celebrating CRNA Week from January 20 to 24, it was important to reflect on this.

Sister Mary Bernard (1844-1896) started training as a nurse in 1877 at St. Vincent's Hospital right here in Erie, Pa. After just one year, she became the primary anesthetist in the hospital. This was the first record of a nurse anesthetist. Prior to this, interns and other doctors were used.

Sister Mary Bernard used her anesthesia skills alongside another woman pioneer of medicine, surgeon Dr. Mary Edwards Walker, during the Civil War.

She went on to train with the "Mother of Anesthesia" Alice Magaw at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota.

Sister Mary Bernard started a nurse anesthesia legacy here in Erie that our faculty and students are proud to continue. (references: <https://crnaschoolprepacademy.com>; crnas.org; <https://aneskey.com>)



Faculty Accomplishments

Rachel A. Wolfe, DNP, CRNA

- ◆ American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA) Clinical Instructor of the Year, 2024

Donald Larmon, DNP, CRNA

- ◆ UPMC Cameo of Caring Award for Advanced Practice Clinical Providers, 2024

Autumn Arkwright, MSN, CRNA

- ◆ Autumn Arkwright and her husband, Daniel, welcomed their second child, Mackenzie Alexandra, on November 20, 2024.
- ◆ All are healthy and happy including Mackenzie's big brother, Jacob, who is beyond in love. ♥



Class of 2025 1st Doctoral Class graduates in May

Making history, the UPMC Hamot School of Anesthesia graduates its first doctoral class, the Class of 2025, on May 9, 2025, at the Kahkwa Club. The 19 graduates received their Doctorate of Nursing Practice—Nurse Anesthesia from Gannon University the following day.

The long running nurse anesthetist program, which prepares professional nurses with an in-depth concentration in clinical anesthesia, welcomed its first cohort in 1965. The new cooperative DNP cohort began in 2022. The inaugural DNP graduating class includes 19 students who have completed nine semesters of coursework, featuring a comprehensive blend of didactic and clinical experiences at UPMC Hamot and regional hospitals.

The UPMC Hamot program is accredited by the Council on Accreditation, which is required of all nurse anesthesia programs in the United States. Gannon University maintains Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education accreditation.

The program was recently ranked No. 68 on U.S. News & World Report's 2025 list of Best Nursing-Anesthesia Schools.

"As advanced practice providers, our graduates are entering the field at a critical time, and I have no doubt they will make a profound impact on patient care and the future of healthcare," said Rachel A. Wolfe, DNP, CRNA, CCRN, CPN, director of the UPMC School of Anesthesia. "These graduates have met an exceptionally high standard of academic and clinical excellence, and their achievement reflects the dedication, rigor and vision that this program was founded on."

"It is an incredible honor to celebrate the first graduating class of our Doctor of Nursing Practice – Nurse Anesthesia degree option students," said Kimberly



Cavanagh, DHSc, PA-C, dean of the Morosky College of Health Professions and Sciences at Gannon University. "Our partnership with UPMC Hamot and the UPMC Hamot School of Anesthesia ensures that students receive a comprehensive, specialized education focused on contemporary practice, social responsibility, collaboration and leadership."



(above) Ashley Benedict and her parents enjoy the festivities at the UPMC Hamot School of Anesthesia graduation at the Kahkwa Club.

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Congratulations to UPMC Hamot School of Anesthesia RRNAs on winning scholarships from the [Stephen Anderson CRNA Professorial Endowment Fund](#) (provides funding for scholarship support of the CRNA program) and the [Sandra Shreve Pickens Anesthesia Fund](#) (to support the education of CRNA students through scholarships and to support research activities and equipment).

2024 AANA Mid-Year Assembly Scholarship:

- ◆ Naudya Yanna, '25 (selected to be part of the student mentoring program)

2025 AANA Mid-Year Assembly Scholarship:

- ◆ Erin Gorman, '26
- ◆ Alexa Papas, '26
- ◆ Shreya Umredkar, '26

2024 AANA Annual Congress SRNA Scholarships:

- ◆ Pamela Brown, '25
- ◆ Micaela Celender, '27
- ◆ Ryan Jacobs, '25
- ◆ Chelsea Marterella, '26
- ◆ Amanda Rybak, '27
- ◆ Stephanie Wong, '27

2025 AANA Annual Congress SRNA Scholarships:

- ◆ Rachel Cowan, '27
- ◆ Cathryne Chao, '28
- ◆ Calvin Gilbert, '26
- ◆ Emily Jensen, '28
- ◆ Kims Plantin, '28

WE NEED YOU!

[Donate | Hamot Health Foundation](#)

Please select the **Stephen Anderson** or **Sandra Shreve Pickens** funds for your donation.



UPMC Hamot School of Anesthesia Faculty

Rachel A. Wolfe, DNP, CRNA
Director

Donald E. Larmon, DNP, CRNA
Assistant Director

Cathy Miseta, MS
Education Coordinator

Angela M. Rood, BA
Sr. Administrative Assistant

Emily Britton, PharmD
Faculty

Autumn Arkwright, MSN, CRNA
Clinical Coordinator

Shannon Markham, MSN, CRNA
Clinical Coordinator

Rachael Broadbent, DNP, CRNA
Faculty



**SAVE THE DATE—3rd Annual UPMC Hamot School of Anesthesia
Symposium coming September 20, 2025.
REGISTER EARLY FOR GREAT SAVINGS!**

UPMC Hamot School of Anesthesia/
Gannon University

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