



## 25-26 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- President:** Audra Wilson
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  - Vice President:** Hillary Mayberry
  - Secretary:** Abby Rainwater
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    - Central:** Sarah Lindsey
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- [Get to Know Us](#)



## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

This year feels a little extra special. The Arkansas Academy of Physician Assistants is celebrating 50 years! This milestone gives us a chance not only to look back, but to really appreciate how

far our profession has come in Arkansas. For five decades, ARAPA has been shaped by dedicated PAs who have stepped up to advocate, lead, and support one another. That legacy is something worth celebrating. When you take a moment to reflect, it's clear that our growth hasn't happened by accident. From expanding the PA role in clinical practice to strengthening our voice in advocacy and education, ARAPA has consistently worked to move our profession forward. And at the heart of all of it has always been our members- showing up, getting involved, and pushing for progress. All of ARAPA's success truly would not have been possible without your support and dedication.

That sense of momentum was on full display at our recent CME conference in Bentonville. It was truly one of those events that reminds you why being part of this community matters. The sessions were outstanding, the conversations were meaningful, and the energy throughout the conference was contagious. We also introduced a Challenge Bowl event, which brought a fun, competitive twist to the weekend and highlighted the depth of knowledge and talent within our profession. It's safe to say it was a hit, and we're excited to continue building on that in the future. I would like to extend a huge "Thank You!" to Amber Acord and Ada Sochanska, co-chairs of the CME committee, as well as to all the members of the CME committee for their hard work in planning such an excellent event! If you missed this year's conference, I hope you'll make plans to join us next year.

We also have some exciting developments happening beyond the conference. This year marks an important step forward for PAs in Arkansas, as the finishing touches are being finalized for PAs to serve as primary care providers and rendering providers for Arkansas Medicaid. This is a huge win, not just for our profession, but for patients across the state who will benefit from increased access to high-quality health care in their communities. It reflects the growing recognition of the essential role PAs play in Arkansas's health care system and opens new doors for how we practice and care for our patients.

Another area we're excited about is the growth of new partnerships that bring exclusive benefits to ARAPA members. One of these new partnerships was announced at the CME conference last month, and you can read more about it on page 3. The BOD is consistently exploring collaborations designed with you in mind, so stay tuned for more partnerships on the horizon, and we hope you'll take full advantage of them.

As we celebrate 50 years and look ahead to what's next, one thing remains clear: ARAPA is only as strong as the members who are willing to get involved. We currently have open positions on the Board of Directors, and you can learn more about each position on page 2. I encourage you to consider stepping into a leadership role. Whether you've been involved for years or are just looking for a way to engage more deeply, serving on the board is a meaningful way to help shape the future of our organization and our profession in Arkansas. If you are interested in any of the open positions, please do not hesitate to reach out!

The future of ARAPA is bright, and there is so much more ahead. Thank you for being part of this community, and it has been an honor to serve as your president for the past year. I'm excited for what's next as we continue to move our profession forward, and I hope you are, too!

Sincerely,  
Audra Wilson, DMS, MS, PA-C  
[president@arkansaspa.org](mailto:president@arkansaspa.org)

## Celebrating ARAPA's 2026 PA of the Year: Ada Sochanska, MPAS, PA-C



Another exciting aspect of celebrating 50 years of ARAPA is our ARAPA PA of the Year Award. This award recognizes a Physician Assistant who exemplifies excellence in clinical practice, leadership, service, and dedication to advancing the PA profession in Arkansas. Especially in this milestone year, as we celebrate 50 years of ARAPA, it is meaningful to recognize someone whose impact reflects both the heart of our profession and the bright future ahead.

This year's PA of the Year is Ada Sochanska. Since beginning her career in Infectious Diseases in 2018, Ada has shown extraordinary commitment, compassion, and leadership. Entering practice in a specialty that

stood on the front lines of a global pandemic, she rose to meet immense challenges while deepening her understanding of healthcare inequities across our state and her devotion to addressing them. She has turned those experiences into action, serving not only her patients, but the PA profession as a whole.

Ada has served as President of ARAPA and helped lead our organization with vision and purpose, recognizing the tremendous potential for growth and opportunity for PAs in Arkansas. She has also given generously of her time through service on ARAPA's CME, Legislative, and Communications & Outreach Committees, and is representing Arkansas to the AAPA House of Delegates this year. In addition to her work with ARAPA, Ada continues to volunteer in her community through a free clinic in Pulaski County. Ada represents the very best of what it means to be a PA: service, leadership, advocacy, and heart. She does it all with a smile and has been a wonderful mentor and friend to many. It is truly our privilege to recognize her as the ARAPA PA of the Year. Please join me in congratulating Ada Sochanska!

## OPENING SOON: ARAPA Annual Board of Directors Elections

Nominations for the following positions will open Monday, April 20 and close on Friday, May 1:

### 1. President-elect

- a. Three year term (president elect from July 2026-June 2027, president from July 2027-June 2028, past president from July 2028-June 2029)

### 2. Vice president

- a. One year term (July 2026-June 2027)

### 3. Secretary

- a. Two year term (July 2026-June 2028)

### 4. Directors-at-large

- a. Two year term (July 2026-June 2028)
- b. Three open regions: Northwest, Central, and Southeast

[Use this link to nominate a PA for an open position](#), and reach out to

[Presidenelect@arkansaspa.org](mailto:Presidenelect@arkansaspa.org) for any questions regarding the election position. More information about each BOD position can be found on the ARAPA website under the Bylaws.

# ARAPA Announces Exclusive DMSc Partnership

*Have you been considering furthering your education? Now may be the time!*

At our March CME Conference, ARAPA was proud to announce a new partnership with **Arkansas Colleges of Health Education (ACHE)**. Through this collaboration, ARAPA members are now eligible for an exclusive tuition discount for the Doctor of Medical Science (DMSc) program—offered through the state’s first DMSc program. This is an exciting opportunity to support your continued professional growth and advancement.

You can find additional details in the flyer on this page, or feel free to reach out to ARAPA at [president@arkansaspa.org](mailto:president@arkansaspa.org) for more information.

EXPERIENCE THE  
**ACHE DIFFERENCE**

• CREATED BY THE LEADERS WHO HELPED DEFINE THE FIELD •

**PROGRAM OVERVIEW**  
The Doctor of Medical Science (DMSc) at Arkansas Colleges of Health Education is designed to forge the next generation of PA leaders who will advance the profession through exemplary leadership, scholarship, administration, and international presence. The DMSc is a fully online, asynchronous doctoral program. Graduate certificate options are available for professionals seeking focused advanced training without completing the full doctoral degree.

**PROGRAM AT A GLANCE**  
**Designed for:** Physician Associates (PAs)  
**Credits:** 42 credit hours  
**Format:** 100% Online, Asynchronous | **Terms:** 8-week  
**Pathways:**

- Foundational
- Medical Education
- Executive Leadership
- Psychiatry & Mental Health
- Global Health & Humanitarian Medicine
- Emergency Management & Disaster Response

**SCAN** 

**COST**

• **\$8200 TOTAL TUITION**  
Discount price applies for PAs meeting **both** criteria below:  
Active clinical practice within the state of Arkansas **and** current ARAPA membership in good standing

- Led by industry experts **who defined the field**
- Online, asynchronous, flexible
- Forward-thinking, innovative curriculum
- Faculty are **prolific in publications**; they don't just talk about it, they're doing it on a regular basis
- Faculty that serve as mentors beyond degree completion
- A program that respects your **time**, values your **experience**, and challenges you to think about **all of which you are capable**

**ACHE** | ARKANSAS COLLEGES OF HEALTH EDUCATION

7000 Chad Colley Blvd | Fort Smith, AR | 479.308.2243 | [ACHEhealth.edu](http://ACHEhealth.edu)

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATES



The ARAPA legislative team is continuing to work with Arkansas Medicaid on PA enrollment for PCP status and rendering provider status. We expect **full enrollment** to be active for all Arkansas PAs later this summer! Contact [LegislativeChair@arkansaspa.org](mailto:LegislativeChair@arkansaspa.org) for any questions, and be on the look out for additional updates in the coming weeks.

ARAPA is already planning for the 2027 Legislative Session and would love to hear from our members about what legislative priorities are most important to you! Consider joining the committee or sitting in on an upcoming committee meeting. See page 4 for upcoming meeting dates, and reach out to [LegislativeChair@arkansaspa.org](mailto:LegislativeChair@arkansaspa.org) to provide feedback or to get more information.



## Highlights from the 2026 CME Conference in Bentonville



Attendees celebrated ARAPA's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary at a great conference with speakers including Jaime Turner, PA-C (*top right*) and a fun social event at Birdies and Brews (*top middle*). ARAPA thanks our CME committee (*left*) for all their hard work in planning this event and our sponsors for their support of PAs in Arkansas! See the last page for a complete list of all of this year's sponsors. We hope to see you at next year's event!

## On the Horizon: ARAPA Scholarships

If you're a PA student member of ARAPA, be on the lookout for the ARAPA PA Student Scholarships opening this July! ARAPA will offer two \$1,000 scholarships in alignment with our mission to empower PA students to become successful PAs, PA leaders, and PA advocates. More information is available by emailing [president@arkansaspa.org](mailto:president@arkansaspa.org)



## Upcoming Dates

**May 15-19, 2026**

### **AAPA Conference in New Orleans**

AAPA is headed to the Big Easy, and ARAPA will be there, too! If you're planning to attend, let us know by emailing [president@arkansaspa.org](mailto:president@arkansaspa.org), and be on the lookout for more information about an Arkansas PA meet up! We can't wait to see you there!

**Tuesday, April 21st at 8:00 PM**  
2026 CME Conference Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, April 28th at 8pm**  
Board of Directors Meeting (quarterly)

**Tuesday, May 12th at 8:00 PM**  
Legislative Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, May 19th at 8:00 PM**  
Communications Committee Meeting



## WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

### **Legislative Committee**

- a. Monitor the AR legislative session for opportunities to further PAs ability to deliver care in addition to participating in PA Day at the Capitol. Communicate with our national organization, the American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA). Interdisciplinary communication with other providers (MDs, DOs, APNs, etc) throughout Arkansas
- b. Contact: [legislativechair@arkansaspa.org](mailto:legislativechair@arkansaspa.org)

### **CME Committee**

- a. Develop yearly Continuing Medical Education (CME) Conference and engage PAs across the state through two day Conference
- b. Contact: [CMEchair@arkansaspa.org](mailto:CMEchair@arkansaspa.org)

### **Communications & Outreach Committee**

- a. Ensure communication about events, various committee engagements and legislative updates through social media and the website. Develop marketing items to distribute to ARAPA Members and to supporters of ARAPA. Organize social mixers for PAs within the 5 regions of the state
- b. Contact: [communications@arkansaspa.org](mailto:communications@arkansaspa.org)

# Thank You to our 2026 CME Conference Sponsors!

