What an honor to address you, the members of UAPA. I have been on the Board of Directors since 2013, first serving as secretary. In addition, I have served on the Education Committee and truly enjoyed working with fellow committee members to develop our educational conferences. During this time, I have been able to learn from several presidents and hope to emulate their best qualities. That being said, I am excited about our profession and its future impact in a specialty that needs us to fulfill healthcare needs. As we know, increasing healthcare demands of our population >65 years of age will put increasing pressures on the urological workforce. It is projected that there will be a 32% shortage of urologists by 2030. It is imperative that physician assistants be integrated into the urology practices to keep up with the healthcare demand. One of our several goals as an organization is to continue to provide top-notch educational programs that reach out to those new to urology and the veteran urology PAs. Next year our annual conference will take place in Scottsdale, Arizona and we hope to see each one of you there.

I will work hard to continue to spread the word of UAPA nationally. We continue to work with other organizations to foster relationships. For example, I was able to work with the AUA and SUNA on the official response to the US Preventative Services Task Force draft recommendations on screening for prostate cancer. As an organization we will continue to implement strategies to increase our membership. In addition, I encourage all of you to check out our new website! It is more user friendly and offers more information to our members. We are continuing to work on making this website a valuable resource for you. Please visit: www.uapanet.org.

Some of the goals I have while serving as your President are to continue to educate urologists integrating APPs into their practice to improve access to care and improve patient satisfaction. UAPA was invited to participate in the 2018 Annual Urology Advocacy Summit and this idea will be presented to them later this month in hopes of being part of their meeting. I also feel it is imperative that we begin the discussion on developing joint guidelines for PAs to perform procedures in the clinic setting. We should strive to practice in a capacity that maximizes our licensure.

I will work hard to represent you, our members this year. Please make plans to attend next year’s meeting in Scottsdale. Spread the word! Bring a friend. I very much look forward to serving as your President this year.

Best,
Jessica Nelson, MPAS, PA-C
Thank you for the honor and the privilege to work for all urology PA’s across the country and abroad over the past year. It has truly been a pleasure to lead and follow a team of colleagues, professionals, and friends that have risen to the occasion multiple times throughout the past year.

The immense effort put forth for the logistics of the meeting, educational planning with speaker recruitment, varied activities for vendors, attendees, and guests, was truly admirable. We appreciate the attendees, students and providers for the attendance and contribution in making a conference seem to go on without a hitch.

I had several individuals comment on how they couldn’t believe it is only the sixth meeting and soon-to-be seventh meeting, as it seemed to appear as though it was more like the 16th or the 17th years for meetings as things went so smoothly and seemed so polished.

We as an organization are proud of the commitment to our profession, integrity to uphold the highest standards, and persistence to reach even further with new goals and expectations that will be achieved. We congratulate all of you for a job well done.

We have been proud of a productive year, with the obvious growing connections within the organizations, deepened friendships inside and even outside the organization, and continued partnerships with industry and sponsorships that do not go unnoticed.

It is these characteristics that built the foundation of our profession that we will continue to rely on in the years to come. We congratulate our founders on establishing the benchmark standard that can be maintained throughout the years.

With the new but seasoned leadership for the UAPA, led by Jessica Nelson, there will be new goals, new expectations, and new challenges that I am sure will be tackled from all angles in the hopes of perfecting even more, our most humble organization.

Sincerely,
Rick
Richard D. Ulstad MS, PA-C, CCD

I am excited to assume the position of treasurer for UAPA. This is an organization that I have watched grow and improve over the years and I am so passionate about continuing that great work. UAPA provides an opportunity for advocating for PAs in the urology workplace, educating today’s physician assistants about providing the best urologic care, and giving a forum to network with colleagues around the country and beyond. I’m ready to work with the board and committee leaders to make the next year of UAPA even more successful.

I’d like to thank the outgoing board for their wonderful service and am excited to work with many of them still in new positions. I’d also like to thank WJ Weiser & Associates for their continued support, and finally to our industry sponsors who help us to provide such quality speakers and up to date content for our annual meeting. I know Scottsdale 2018 will be the best one yet.

G. Brooke Zilinskas, MMS, PA-C

I am pleased to continue a second year as secretary for UAPA. This organization is instrumental in helping to connect with urology PAs around the country, and in helping to advance our knowledge base. I am excited to help UAPA grow and continue to advance the field of urology for PAs.

As always, I expect a great upcoming Annual Meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona. This is one conference where I know that every lecture and breakout session is applicable to me in my day-to-day work life. I hope that as we all participate in the meaningful continuing education experiences from the Annual Meeting, we will share these experiences with other urology PA colleagues to help expand our organization.

I look forward to serving this year, keeping you informed of the happenings of UAPA, and wish everyone a great year ahead.

Heidi Turpen, MS, RD, MPAS, PA-C
I had a distinct goal in mind when I created this board position as president and we continue to strive toward the goal. I believe the UAPA is THE voice of the PA urology specialty PERIOD. We collaborate with physician colleagues and I’m grateful the AUA has created a membership category for PAs to participate in the physician specialty society just as the UAPA has a membership category for physicians to participate in the UAPA. Many years ago an AUA staff leader commented the AUA felt they were the voice and representation of the PA urology specialty. It was clear to me in the early days of working with the AUA that the genesis of offering a membership track was revenue driven for the AUA; however, the AUA has learned that we bring both money and an opinion. Objective evidence has shown me the AUA is learning with us and they see us as a strategic group to collaborate with.

I’m proud of what UAPA has built and I think we are ready to take a stand on issues affecting PA urology practice. It is time for UAPA to take a stand (in writing) about shared values related to urologic specialty care. It is also time to debate specialty certification. We should define this for ourselves or else our physician colleagues will. I believe by nature, PAs are collegial and collaborative and it is time to determine if the AUA can reciprocate. I think UAPA is ready and strong enough to seek representation within the AUA organizational structure to ensure our distinct (PA) voice is heard. The UAPA President and AUA Liaison must have official representation within the AUA for me to feel that we are more than a revenue source to the organization. I’m concerned presently within the AUA that our collective voice is being lumped in with our Advanced Practice Nursing colleagues and at times, it is appropriate if we are in agreement, but we must not be drowned out if we have a differing point of view. After all, we are the only PA point of view and we must be recognized as such. I’m very supportive of our APN colleagues and I believe we have many things in common, but there are also some areas where PAs are distinctive. These are some of my thoughts as I enter into this position and if you speak to some of the “old timers” in the organization, they will tell you these thoughts are not newly formed. I look forward to participating on the Board and I will carry out their direction as UAPA advocates the PA voice within the AUA.

Todd J. Doran, EdD, PA-C, DFAAPA

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION for the UAPA Board of Directors?

Please submit any questions to Heather Swanson at heather@wjweiser.com.
The 2017 AAPA House of Delegates (HOD) session was historic not only for being associated with the 50th anniversary of the AAPA profession, but for many significant actions that took place. A full list of actions addressed by this HOD can be found on the AAPA web page “2017 Summary of Actions” report.

One of the most note-worthy changes for the AAPA came in the adoption of new “Guidelines for State Regulations of PAs.” This paper, identified as resolution 2017-A-07, recommended that “applicants who meet the qualifications for licensure should be issued a license. States should not require employment or identification of a supervising, collaborating, or other specific relationship with a physician(s) as a condition or component of licensure.” This is the first step towards separation of the physician/PA team approach and focuses more on the “Optimal Team Practice.”

Though “the PA/physician team model continues to be relevant, applicable and patient-centered, the degree of collaboration of the practicing PA should be determined at the practice level in accordance with the practice type and the experience and competencies of the practicing PA.” By removing the requirement for PAs to have a supervising physician prior to issuance of any state license, PAs can more easily maintain their licensing credentials even when unemployed. Also, by taking this approach to healthcare credentialing, the HOD hopes to diminish the job loss issues happening throughout the United States where supervision limits our ability to compete against nurse practitioners for comparable jobs. Furthermore, it would enable us to better support our communities and our country during times of emergencies and disasters. This would also allow PAs to have activities measured and attributed to PAs instead of hidden in their supervising physician’s productivity measurements.

Needless to say, this received considerable discussion. Some felt the PA/supervising physician team concept was too entrenched in our profession to forsake it at this time. Much testimony was given about corporations, the VA Center, and other private organizations unwilling to assume any liability for a PA when an NP could work unsupervised. Plus that, many physicians were now becoming employees as well and did not want the supervisory burden placed on them without additional compensation. In the end, the changes in healthcare administration and provider utilization showed a need to re-evaluate our old paradigms and adjust accordingly.

Another area that received wide debate was resolution 2017-C-13 which states, “AAPA opposes unsolicited lobbying by the NCCPA.” This came about due to the NCCPA interrupting several state chapter efforts to broaden their scope of practice. The NCCPA sent in lobbyists to block the chapter’s efforts to decrease the recertification burdens. This had ramifications on other practice efforts.

The NCCPA gave testimony that they were merely “monitoring” the situation and “didn’t really get much involved” with the state issues. The three states involved gave testimony to the contrary and were very upset with the NCCPA claiming to be an entity “for public safety in healthcare.” Some considered the language a bit harsh and wanted it changed to something “tamer.” In the end, the initial language was voted into policy. Other policy adjustments were considered to allow for an NCCPA exam or “any exam that is recognized by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), the AAPA HOD, and the AAPA Board of Directors as valid entrance standards for PAs (Resolution 2017-C-11). This will start the process to make the PA profession less dependent on a single certifying body like the NCCPA. (This particular resolution was postponed until the 2018 HOD session.)

Other actions that were adopted included 2017-B-02 which addresses “guidelines for updating Medical Staff Bylaws: Credentialing and Privileging PAs.” This paper explains that the AAPA believes PAs should be voting members of the medical staff with full rights and privileges. PAs should also be allowed to work in any work setting, whether it be in a hospital, independent clinic or retail/convenient care facility. They can also be used in staffing agencies or as independent contractors. The paper further goes on to define a PA and the requirements to become a PA by AAPA standards.

We, the members of the AAPA 2017 House of Delegates, hope the actions voted on during this conference, will go far in opening doors and creating work improvements for our fellow PAs to compete in an ever-changing medical environment.

Respectfully submitted,

David R. Coleman, MPAS, PA-C, DFAAPA
UAPA Delegate to the AAPA HOD
The new UAPA website is now live! The new design speeds the membership renewal process because it remembers your membership data. This allows renewing members to simply review their information, make updates as needed, and pay dues in a much more streamlined fashion as compared to the old website.

The new site also allows for a “live” member directory. The profiles of new members and updates to existing profiles are immediately available for other members to view when they are logged-in to the site. Your privacy is important to the UAPA – only your name is shared by default. You may expand this information in the settings area or prevent your profile from appearing at all. You may also connect both your Facebook and Twitter profiles.

In more exciting news for 2018, this will be the second year UAPA will be represented at the Bladder Health Alliance Roundtable in October at the AUA Headquarters in Baltimore. UAPA will be one of 29 specialty associations with an interest in bladder health and bladder issues. This roundtable discussion will be in preparation for Bladder Health Month in November. We continue to have a good relationship with the AUA. We have several UAPA members serving on the AUA Advanced Practice Providers Education Committee. This committee “develops AUA educational products, programs, and services for APP interested in or already engaged in urologic practice.” These are great opportunities to work alongside our physician colleagues to continue to provide education to expand our core knowledge, skills, and promote our value within our chosen field of medicine.

Have a great summer, stay cool, and we will see you Scottsdale.

James R. Kovarik, III, PA-C

President-Elect’s Message
James R. Kovarik, III, PA-C

It is an honor and privilege that I am writing as this year’s UAPA President-Elect. I am looking forward to serving with our current officers and leaders in the urology PA field. Most importantly, I am looking forward to serving you, our UAPA members. The outlook is great for the upcoming year. Our new and improved website is up and running. Please visit the website frequently for updated conference information and urology news. We have a fantastic membership committee with exciting ideas and energy to continue to move our organization forward.

Thank you to all of those who attended last year’s annual meeting in Las Vegas and submitted your conference evaluations, comments, and suggestions. The Program Committee reviews all of the responses to determine what worked and what could be improved for next year’s meeting. Speaking of the annual meeting, the preparations for this year’s UAPA Annual Meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona are starting to get underway. The Program Committee will put forth another strong slate of topics, speakers, and sessions. Please start looking ahead to your 2018 calendars and submit those PTO requests for April 6 – 8.

Visit the new website at: uapanet.org!

Website Update
Matthew H. Steidl, MPAS, PA-C

The current UAPA Newsletter is always available on the website, along with an archive of prior newsletters. Other resources available on the site include a calendar of upcoming urology meetings, links to clinical references and other organizations, and a job board. Over the coming year, we anticipate adding the ability to download slides from prior UAPA Meetings. We also hope to offer opportunities to discuss interesting cases and engage with fellow UAPA members.

We believe that the new website platform will give the UAPA leadership better tools to manage the organization and UAPA members more opportunities to connect with each other and reach out to potential members. As always, we need members who are interested in web and graphic design to join our team. We would love the help of any member who wants to improve the online and social media presence of UAPA. Contact me at matthew.h.steidl@gmail.com.

Visit the new website at: uapanet.org!
MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

UAPA 7th Annual Meeting
April 6 - 8, 2018
Scottsdale, Arizona

For more details and online registration, please visit:
tinyurl.com/UAPA-2018