

NATIONAL APP WEEK

UVA HEALTH | MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

INSIDE THE SYSTEM

HOW APPs EXPAND ACCESS,
MANAGE COMPLEXITY,
AND SUSTAIN CARE.

THE PULSE OF PROGRESS

WHEN DEMAND RISES, APPs HOLD THE LINE

FROM INFECTION REDUCTION TO CLOSING GAPS IN CARE,
THIS ISSUE FOCUSES ON MEASURABLE CLINICAL IMPACT DRIVEN BY APPs.

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From The Desk

A MESSAGE FROM APP LEADERSHIP

In the United States, Advanced Practice Providers conduct over 1 billion patient visits a year. They manage chronic conditions, perform procedures, lead clinical teams, and fill critical gaps in care that the healthcare system could not close without them. Many people who receive APP care never know the credential behind the name on the badge. They just know the care was good and they felt a connection that mattered.



William Lombardi

This newsletter exists because that role invisibility has a cost. When the contributions of APPs go undocumented, scope of practice debates happen without evidence. When outcomes go uncelebrated, recruitment and retention suffer. When leadership goes unrecognized, the next generation of APPs has no map for what is possible.

National APP Week 2026 is a national platform, hosted by UVA Health this year, built to change that. Every edition of this newsletter tells one part of the story: what APPs are doing, what they are creating, and why it matters beyond the walls of any single hospital. This issue features stories from our host institution that we feel captures the theme of “The Pulse of Progress”. We hope you find them inspiring, but we know these stories are happening across the nation. This is your call to share your stories, how you are shaping the future of healthcare, with the nation. We want future issues to feature you.

This is edition one. The work starts here.

APP SPOTLIGHT 01

KRISTI KIMPEL-WILKINS

**MSN, APRN, CCNS, CCRN at
UVA Health**

Each CLABSI case costs a hospital approximately \$48,000 in additional care and carries more than double the risk of in-hospital mortality. Approximately 250,000 bloodstream infections occur in US hospitals every year. At a system the size of UVA Health, with thousands of active central lines at any given time, these numbers are not abstract.

Kristi Kimpel Wilkins decided they were not acceptable either. As Coalition Lead for Hospital-Acquired Infections, she built the protocols, trained the clinicians, and ran the data that drove CLABSI down 71% and CAUTI down 64% at UVA Health.

The vascular access standards she wrote are now followed by over 2,300 nurses and 2,500 physicians - not because they were mandated from above, but because they work.

The 2026 NACNS Evidence-Based Practice and Quality Improvement Award does not go to people who write guidelines. It goes to people whose guidelines change what happens to patients. Kristi Kimpel Wilkins is this year's winner.



"I can attest to Kristi's exceptional leadership, clinical expertise, and unwavering commitment to advancing evidence-based practice and quality improvement across a complex healthcare system and beyond."

**Kim Elgin,
DNP, APRN, ACNS-BC, PCCN, CMSRN, FCNS, FAAN at UVA Health**

APP SPOTLIGHT 02



KIM ELGIN

**DNP, APRN, ACNS-BC, PCCN, CMSRN, FCNS,
FAAN at UVA Health**

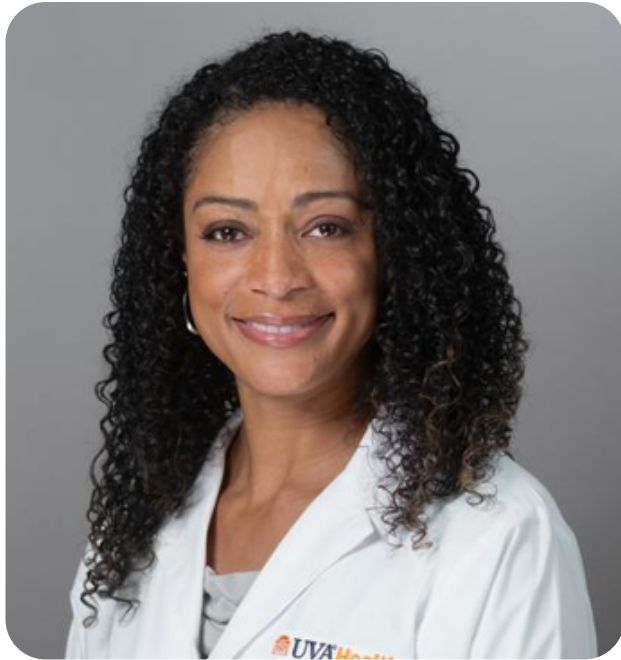
The nation's 72,000 Clinical Nurse Specialists are uniquely prepared to meet increased demand for healthcare and safeguard the provision of quality care. They reduce readmissions, shorten length of stay, lead quality improvement initiatives, and function as the connective tissue between clinical expertise and institutional systems. Despite that, the CNS role remains poorly understood, with ongoing confusion around titling, credentials, and scope of practice - resulting in inconsistent and inadequate use of the role across healthcare systems.

Kim Elgin has spent her career making sure that does not happen at UVA Health - and increasingly, beyond it.

As Director of Advanced Practice for Clinical Nurse Specialists and Genetic Counselors at UVA Health, Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing, and Clinical Assistant Professor at the UVA School of Nursing, her work operates simultaneously at the bedside, the system level, and the national policy table. That combination - clinical grounding, institutional authority, and national reach - is precisely what the NACNS Brenda Lyon Leadership Award recognizes. Kim Elgin is the 2026 winner in recognition of her work in updating the national standards and guidelines for the role, including educational preparation and core competencies.

The award carries weight because the problem it addresses is real. CNS leadership is not just a credential question - it is a patient outcomes question. CNSs are the connectors in healthcare, using evidence and relationships to move projects forward that significantly impact patient and system outcomes. Elgin has built her career making that impact visible, measurable, and replicable for the next generation of CNS leaders she mentors locally, nationally, and internationally.

CLINICAL INNOVATION



ALANA HARRISON
PNP at UVA Health

BRIDGING THE GAP: NPS LAUNCH EPILEPSY TRANSITION CLINIC AT UVA HEALTH

Less than half of pediatric patients with epilepsy report receiving care from an adult epilepsy provider after transition. In fact, approximately 75% of adult patients living with epilepsy still report visiting their pediatric neurologist - long after they have aged out of that system. The gap between pediatric and adult epilepsy care is not a logistics problem. It is a clinical risk. Adolescents with epilepsy are often unable to explain their own diagnosis, because explanations were always directed to the parents and never repeated as the child developed the cognitive skills to understand. They arrive at adult care unprepared, and the adult system is frequently unprepared for them.

Jennifer Schach, Adult Epilepsy NP, and Alana Harrison, Pediatric General Neurology and Epilepsy NP, decided to close that gap at UVA Health. Together they designed and launched the Epilepsy Transition Clinic, grounded in the nationally recognized Six Core Elements of Healthcare Transition Framework. The goal was not just a smoother handoff - it was to build the knowledge, confidence, and self-management skills that adolescents need to own their care as adults.

The results are already visible. Pediatric and adult neurology teams report improved coordination. Families describe a process that replaces uncertainty with preparation. Patients are arriving to their first adult visits better informed than any previous cohort. What makes this especially notable is that the clinic was conceived, designed, and built entirely by two nurse practitioners - no committee mandate, no institutional directive. Just two clinicians who identified a gap and fixed it.



JENNIFER SCHACH
AGACNP at UVA Health

NATIONAL APP WEEK

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE ACROSS THE NATION

National APP Week 2026 exists because the work APPs do every day - the infections prevented, the transitions managed, the procedures led - rarely makes it into the room where decisions about the profession are made.

These awards do.

UVA Health at the 2026 NACNS Annual Conference

This year, UVA Health sent two nominees to the national stage. Both won.

Kristi Kimpel Wilkins received the 2026 NACNS Evidence-Based Practice and Quality Improvement Award for her record of driving measurable infection reduction across one of the most complex health systems in Virginia.

Kim Elgin received the 2026 NACNS Brenda Lyon Leadership Award in recognition of her work updating national standards and competencies for the CNS role - standards that shape how the profession is understood and practiced across the country.

Amy Johnston was named a finalist for the Virginia Nurses Foundation Patient Safety Award.

Susan Ketcham was nominated for the Magnet Consortium recognition.

Four names. Four nominations. All from the same institution.

BUILDING THE NEXT GENERATION: CRNA MENTORSHIP AT UVA HEALTH

Stefani Bell did not wait for a formal program. When she identified a gap - ICU nurses with the aptitude and drive to become Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists but no structured path to get there - she built one.

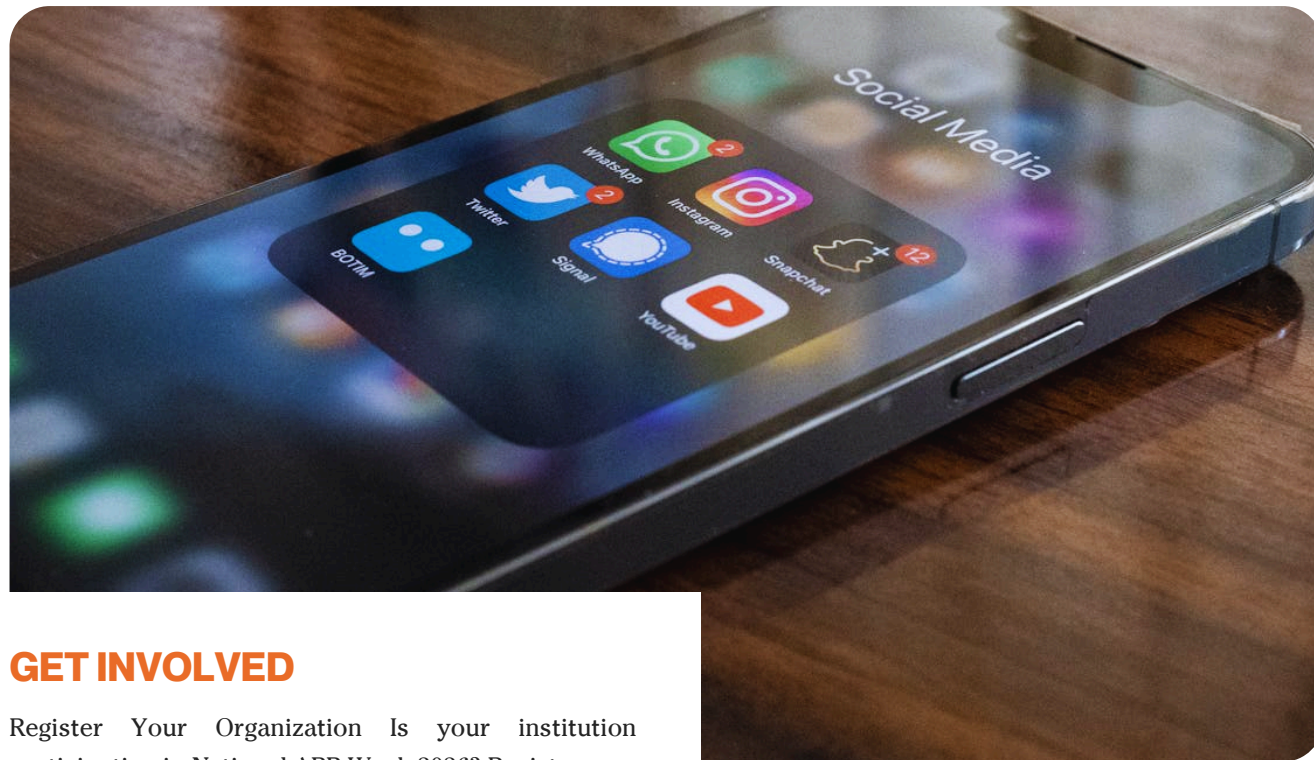
The six-month mentorship program pairs aspiring CRNAs with experienced practitioners, providing clinical exposure, career guidance, and the kind of direct mentorship that turns intent into preparation. The first cohort is underway. The pipeline it creates will extend well beyond any single class.

This is what APP leadership looks like before it gets a title.



STEFANI BELL
CRNA at UVA Health

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNITY



GET INVOLVED

Register Your Organization Is your institution participating in National APP Week 2026? Register now to be listed as an official participating organization and have your logo featured on the National APP Week website.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

SHARE YOUR STORY

Every edition of this newsletter features APPs driving measurable impact. If you have a story - a quality improvement initiative, a program you built, an outcome worth documenting - submit it for consideration.

[SUBMIT HERE](#)

SUBMIT YOUR CONTENT

Photos and videos from your institution celebrating National APP Week are welcome. Share what your team is doing.

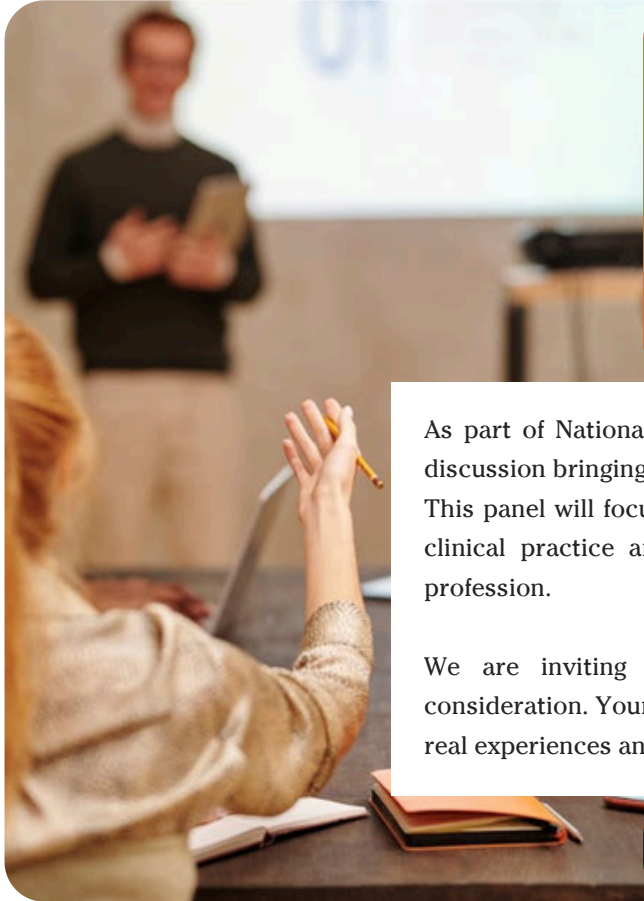
[SUBMIT HERE](#)

STAY CONNECTED

Stay Connected Follow National APP Week on social media and share your participation using the official hashtags. Tag your institution, your team, and your stories.



MEET THE PRESIDENT'S PANEL



Submit your questions to help shape the National APP Week 2026 President's Panel.

As part of National APP Week 2026, we will be hosting a President's Panel discussion bringing together national leaders across Advanced Practice. This panel will focus on the questions that matter most to APPs today, from clinical practice and workforce challenges to the future direction of the profession.

We are inviting APPs across organizations to submit questions for consideration. Your input will help shape the discussion and ensure it reflects real experiences and priorities from across the field.

[**SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION**](#)

Bringing together leaders from across national Advanced Practice organizations, the President's Panel reflects a collective voice shaping the direction of the profession. Each panelist represents a distinct perspective within the APP landscape, contributing insight, experience, and leadership at both the clinical and system level.

PANEL

VALERIE FULLER

American Association of Nurse Practitioners

TRACY YOUNG

American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology

JACKELINE ISELER

National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists

EMILY MYCYK

American Academy of Anesthesiologist Assistants

DAVID BUNNELL

American Academy of Physician Associates

PETER JOHNSON

American College of Nurse Midwives

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Contact Questions, story submissions, or newsletter feedback: CUK7UB@uvahealth.org

For any sponsorship-related inquiries, please contact: BTT6JH@uvahealth.org

www.nationalappweek.com