NOV 2026 | EDITION 08

NATIONAL APP WEEK

UVA HEALTH | MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

WHERE PRACTICE LEADS

THIS NOVEMBER, WE FOLLOW APPS EXPANDING ACCESS TO CARE, PREPARING FUTURE CLINICIANS AND BRINGING CLINICAL EXPERIENCE INTO DECISIONS THAT SHAPE THE PROFESSION.

THE PULSE OF PROGRESS

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE SHAPING WHAT COMES NEXT

IN THIS ISSUE: A UVA NURSE PRACTITIONER HELPS BRING SPECIALIZED CARE TO CAMPUS, AND A TENNESSEE PA PROGRAM INVESTS IN RURAL CLINICAL TRAINING.

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Nominate a colleague for an APP Spotlight, share a team initiative, or follow National APP Week for new stories.

From The Desk

A MESSAGE FROM APP LEADERSHIP

In September, National APP Week gave us a chance to recognize the work Advanced Practice Providers do for patients, families, and communities. As we look back on that celebration, I keep coming back to something I see in my own practice: good care begins with trust.



As a nurse practitioner and Director of APP Surgical Specialties, I see this in my work in metabolic surgery and metabolic medicine. I care for patients living with obesity, diabetes, and other chronic conditions that affect many parts of their lives. Some come to us after years of trying to find care that works for them. Others have had experiences that left them feeling unheard.

Building trust starts with listening. Before discussing a treatment plan, I want to know what a patient has already tried, what matters most to them, and what concerns they bring to the visit. That conversation helps us talk through their options and decide together what makes sense for their care. For someone considering surgery, it may mean taking time to answer questions before they feel ready to make a decision.

Access matters just as much. Across primary and specialty care, APPs help patients get appointments, coordinate with other clinicians, and stay connected to their care between visits. That continuity gives patients someone to turn to when questions come up or their needs change.

When I think about what we celebrated in September, I think about the work that happens quietly every day: the follow-up call, the question that finally gets answered, and the time a clinician takes to listen. Thank you for making time for those moments and for the care you give your patients throughout the year.

Heather Passerini

A More Familiar Place for Care

BRIDGING THE GAP: EXPANDING CARE ON GROUNDS

For UVA students seeking a forensic medical exam after a sexual assault, there was once only one place to go: the emergency department. Kerry Hendrix helped give students another option by making specialized care available in a setting many already knew, Student Health & Wellness.

Hendrix has cared for UVA students as a family nurse practitioner since 2009. In 2016, she pursued training and certification as a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner. She then worked with colleagues in Student Health & Wellness, UVA Health, and Student Affairs to develop a campus program that supports forensic evidence collection and coordinates with the UVA Health Emergency Department. Hendrix also cares for survivors in that emergency department, where she sees both students and community members.



KERRY HENDRIX

MSN, FNP-C at UVA Student Health & Wellness

After the exam, students may still have questions about where to find counseling, how to get help with academic concerns, or whom to contact for advocacy. Hendrix works with Counseling and Psychological Services, Violence Prevention & Advocacy, and Care and Support Services to connect students with those resources. Her work also involves partners outside the University, including Charlottesville's Sexual Assault Resource Agency and the local Sexual Assault Response Team.

Hendrix brings her clinical experience into campus education as well. She speaks with peer health educators, teaches through the Rugby Project, and takes part in panels with colleagues from different disciplines. These conversations help students and staff learn what support is available and how to connect someone with it.

UVA named Hendrix a 2026 Hoos Building Bridges Award recipient for bringing clinical teams, student services, and community advocates together. She has also mentored other Student Health & Wellness clinicians so the program can continue serving students. The work began with a practical question: could students get a forensic medical exam on campus? Today, they have that option and a team that can help them find support after they leave the exam room.

Leadership Beyond the Clinic

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE IN PUBLIC SERVICE

Clinical practice and policy meet in the work of Ashley Apple, a family nurse practitioner and UVA School of Nursing assistant professor appointed to the Virginia Board of Nursing in August.

The 14-member board regulates nursing education and practice. Apple brings experience in emergency nursing, pediatric urgent care and teaching health policy. The School of Nursing also highlights her advocacy on issues affecting NP practice and access to care.

Her appointment brings a practicing clinician's experience to decisions about nursing education and professional standards across Virginia.



ASHLEY APPLE

DNP, RN, FNP-BC at UVA School of Nursing

A LARGER VOICE IN DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP

Nearly 700 APPs hold clinical privileges in Vanderbilt's Department of Medicine. In October, Vanderbilt announced Jane Case's appointment as Vice Chair for Advanced Practice and Associate Chief Advanced Practice Officer, effective October 1.

Case began as an ICU nurse, became a family nurse practitioner and later moved into departmental leadership. Her appointment follows service as Director of Advanced Practice and Associate Vice Chair.

Vanderbilt reports that its Department of Medicine APP workforce has quadrupled over 15 years. The appointment places advanced practice leadership within the structure guiding that department's work.



JANE CASE

DNP, APRN-BC at Vanderbilt Health

From Training to Practice

RECOGNITION ACROSS PA CAREERS

The transition into practice, the move into management and the relationships formed during a night shift each ask something different of a PA. An October Hofstra University feature recognizes alumni working across all three.

Daria Szymczyk, a general surgery PA at South Shore University Hospital, received its Rookie of the Year award. Kevin Barile, emergency department advanced clinical provider manager at Peconic Bay Medical Center, was named Advanced Clinical Provider of the Year.

At Cohen Children's Medical Center, pediatric hematology-oncology PA Kristen Decicco received an Excellence in Compassionate Care Award. Her work includes children and families facing blood disorders, cancer and bone marrow transplantation.

The profiles offer distinct examples of professional growth, from entering a specialty to leading colleagues and building trust with families.



DARIA SZYMCZYK, KEVIN BARILE & KRISTEN DECICCO

Hofstra University PA graduates at Northwell Health.

Making Rural Rotations Possible

Rural clinical education depends on clinicians who can make room for students. Bethel University is directing the largest portion of a new $225,000 state grant toward those preceptors.

Announced October 20, the funding supports its Rural Physician Assistant Workforce Pathways Initiative through June 30, 2027. The university allocated $130,000 for preceptor stipends and expects the project to support 110 to 130 rural rotations.

Other funding will expand rotation sites and improve simulation and clinical skills resources. The announcement describes a planned investment in preparation and access. Its results will become clearer as the project progresses.



Bethel University, Tennessee.

Professional Development

A SHARED FOUNDATION FOR PULMONARY PRACTICE

Moving into pulmonary practice can mean learning through very different onboarding experiences. CHEST is developing a dedicated education and certification program for NPs and PAs working in the specialty.

In its October 14 announcement, the organization described research involving 226 pulmonary APPs and 116 physicians, alongside interviews and other analyses. The findings identified demand for structured education and a consistent approach to validating specialized knowledge.

Planned elements include a job task analysis, an examination blueprint, competency expectations and APP education modules. The announcement describes development plans; it does not provide an application deadline or opening date.

For APPs and teams considering future specialty education, the immediate resource is CHEST's APP Professional Hub, where the organization directs readers for updates.

RECOGNIZING NURSE PRACTITIONERS THIS NOVEMBER

National Nurse Practitioner Week was observed from November 8 to 14, 2026. In its November 9 announcement, the American Association of Nurse Practitioners recognizes more than 461,000 licensed NPs across the United States.

The observance highlights practice across primary, acute and specialty care. We join colleagues across the country in recognizing the NPs who care for patients and support their teams throughout the year.

Visit AANP's NP Week resources to learn more about the observance and find information about the NP role.



ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNITY

HELP US FIND OUR NEXT APP SPOTLIGHT

Is there an APP whose work more people should know about? Maybe a colleague started a mentoring program, helped patients get care closer to home, or found a better way for the team to work. We'd love to hear how it started and what changed.

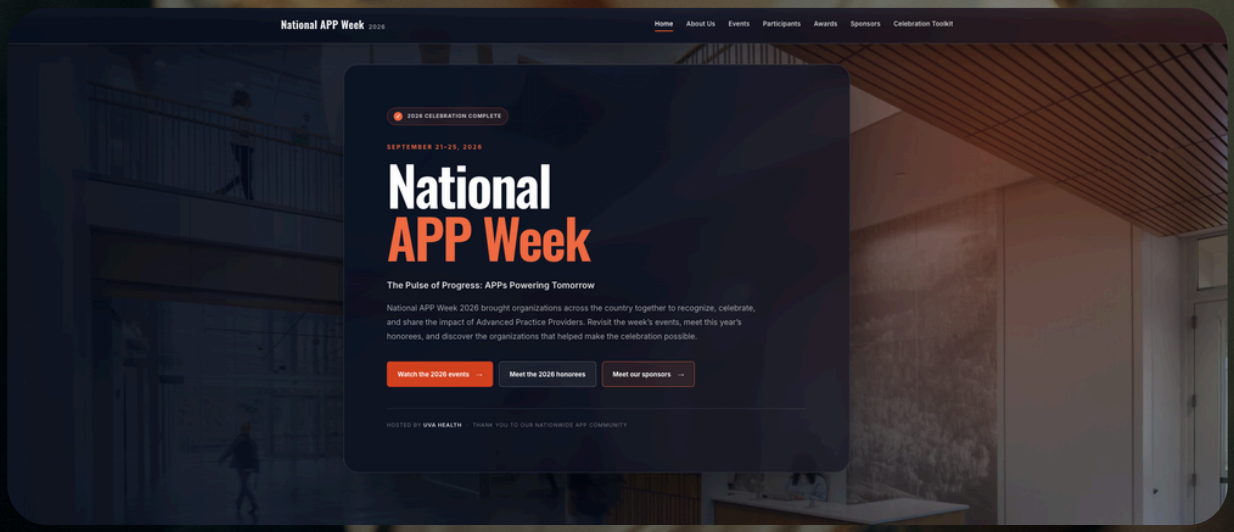
STAY CONNECTED. FOLLOW

Follow National APP Week on LinkedIn and Instagram for new issues and stories from APP teams across the country.

SUBMIT YOUR CONTENT

SUBMIT HERE

Send us a short description of the work, the names and roles of the people involved, and their organization. If you have results you can share or a photo we have permission to publish, please include them.



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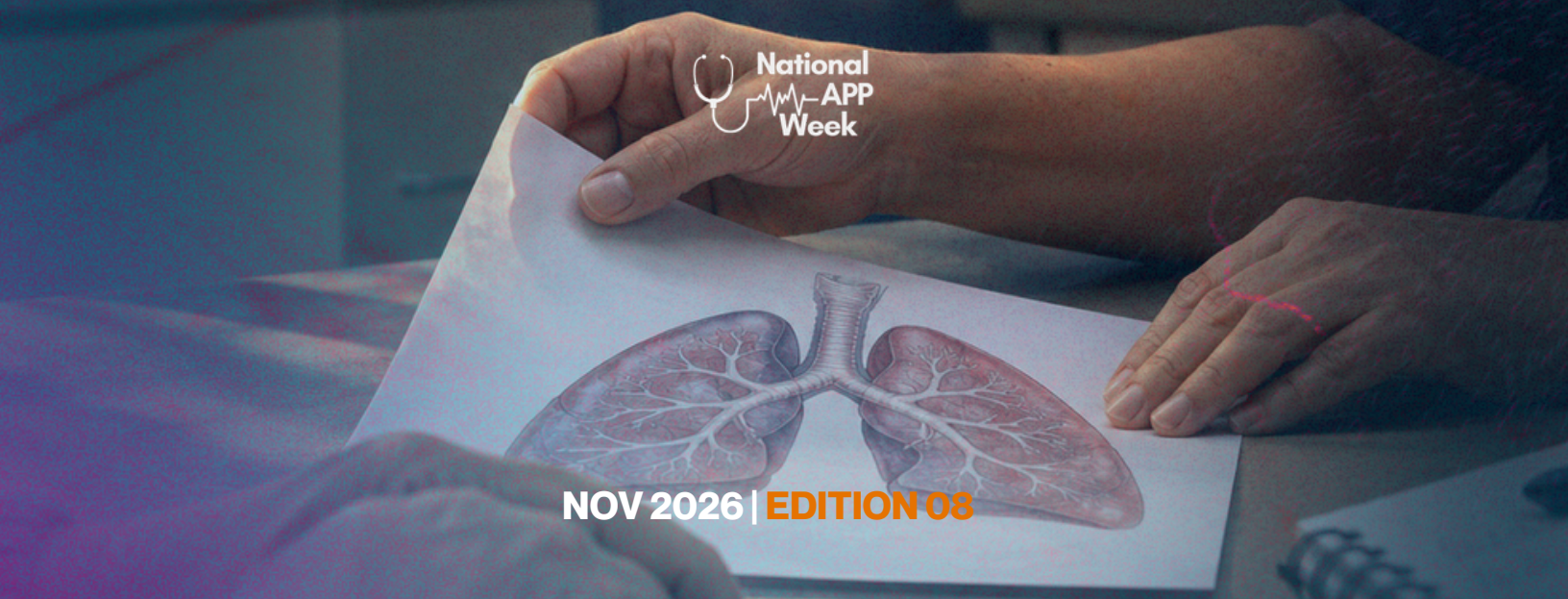

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