

EDUCATION – CLINICAL

OUR FUTURE



SRNA Sedation Sequels



**Summer 2022
Issue 19**

The Semesterly Newsletter Produced by Florida International
University's Student Registered Nurse Anesthetists

Each year, our Nurse Anesthetist students are charged with completing a DNP project as part of their degree. These projects are very successful and give students the important experiences to produce research and scholarship during their academic career. Many of our students receive opportunities to travel to conferences to present their projects and publish articles in scholarly publications. In addition, these initiatives help increase excellence and rankings of our Nurse Anesthetist Program throughout the country. Currently, the Nurse Anesthetist Program is ranked #88 in the country by U.S. News & World Report. The College seeks philanthropic support to provide these experiences for our students as the university does not cover these costs. Please consider supporting our students with a tax deductible gift to support the Nurse Anesthetist Program.

You can make your tax deductible gift in one of two ways:

ONLINE: Click [DONATE](#) and choose "Anesthesiology"

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On the memo line note: **NWCNHS Nurse Anesthetist Program.**

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FIU Foundation, Inc.
Florida International University
MARC Building 5th Floor
11200 SW 8th Street
Miami, FL 33199

Message From the Department of Nurse Anesthesiology's Chair



Greetings from the Department of Nurse Anesthesiology. As we head into the Fall semester, we have much to report. Dr. Miller and I have been named permanent Assistant Chair and Chair of the Department of Nurse Anesthesiology. Dr. Miller and I have been serving as interim since August 2020 and were named permanent in July.

The faculty and I are very proud of our students and their commitment to the FIU Doctor of Nursing Practice, Anesthesiology Nursing Program. The program achieved an 88.5% first-time pass rate for the graduating class of 2021. This is the highest first-time pass rate in 10 years for the program. The faculty will continue to strive for the goal of 100% first-time rate on the National Certification Examination (NCE).

The Department has been very busy compiling and preparing for reaccreditation from the Council on Accreditation (COA) which will occur in October 2022. Additionally, the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences will also be undergoing reaccreditation from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education in November 2022.

The FIU Department of Nurse Anesthesiology will be making a very large presence in Chicago, as 27 students will be traveling with the faculty to attend the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (AANA) Annual Congress. This year, we will have the largest number of FIU students attend the annual Congress since the program's inception almost 20 years ago. Two students from the Class of 2022 will also be participating in the Annual College Bowl and will compete against students and faculty from all 128 Nurse Anesthesia programs. Several FIU students and faculty will have podium and poster presentations at congress.

On a personal note, I am honored to have been selected to be inducted as a Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (FAANA) on Saturday, August 13, during the Annual Congress. Fellows of the AANA are selected based on their leadership in the Nurse Anesthesiology profession, and dedication to the advancement of clinical practice, education, research, and professional advocacy consistent with the high standards of the AANA.

I would like to thank our clinical partners, preceptors, alumni, faculty, staff, and students for all their hard work in making the FIU Department of Nurse Anesthesiology a success.

We are making history together.

Jorge A. Valdes, DNP, CRNA, APRN
Chair, Department of Nurse Anesthesiology

Recognitions

The Department of Nurse Anesthesiology at Florida International University would like to recognize and congratulate the following students for their recent awards and accomplishments:

- Odlanier Herbert for his presentation on "Advantages of intravenous administration of amisulpride over ondansetron for prophylaxis of postoperative nausea and vomiting" at Sigma Theta Tau.
 - Joseph Benson as the FIU DNA representative at the inaugural AANA SRNA Leadership Conference.
 - Eduardo Subero as incoming FASNA president.
 - Erik Zuniga as recipient of Nicole Wertheim Nursing & Health Sciences Endowment and the Richard Elias, MD Cardiac Nursing Scholarship.
 - David Hernandez as recipient of the Richard Elias, MD Cardiac Nursing Scholarship.
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The Value of Mentorship

By: Gianfranco Ratto, C/O 2023

As defined by the Oxford dictionary, mentorship is the guidance provided by a mentor that is experienced in a company or educational institution. During our second semester at FIU, Student Registered Nurse Anesthetists (SRNAs) were assigned mentors. Mentorships give students additional support with tips on understanding the operating room culture, managing work-life-family balance, and incorporating wellness into our everyday lives while smoothing our transition from the critical care environment to being an SRNA. With a huge leap into the unknown, immersing into academic life and a new clinical role can be overwhelming for many SRNAs. This is especially the case for students relocating to Miami and calling it home for their studies. The mentorship program in place helped answer many questions that many first-year SRNAs often have.

I am grateful for my mentorship experience with upper-level student, Eduardo Subero, who mentored me as a first-year SRNA. Without me even asking, Eduardo took time from his busy 5th-semester schedule to FaceTime me before my first day of clinical. As we navigated through the online student portal, we watched a video on how to perform intubations and discussed his tips and strategies on how to navigate through my first SRNA clinical experience. His mentorship continues today as he reinforces the importance of paying it forward to the new first- and second-year students as we will soon be transitioning to our final year as SRNAs.

The time for us to manage rooms and cases independently is fast approaching. We'll soon be interacting with the incoming SRNAs during these cases, which will provide an invaluable opportunity for us to provide mentorship to the new class. As the late author, Bob Proctor, said, "A mentor is someone who sees more talent and ability within you than you see in yourself, and helps bring it out of you."

So whenever possible, reach out and offer the wealth of knowledge you've gained on how to navigate and succeed this far into the program.



**Clinical Spotlight:
Dr. Karina Grubbs
Memorial Regional Hospital
By: James Chen, C/O 2023**

Dr. Karina Grubbs is a CRNA practicing at Memorial Regional Hospital. She also happens to be an FIU graduate who was the Cohort 2021 Class President. It is my pleasure to interview Dr. Grubbs, a confident and excellent CRNA. I thank her for the opportunity to learn more about her and CRNA practice.

Could you tell us a little about yourself? Where are you from, what is your nursing background, and did you have a career before nursing?

I was born and raised in South Florida and love the heat so I don't see myself ever leaving. Both of my parents, and 3 out of my 4 grandparents were nurses so I was pretty much slated into this profession. I went to undergrad at UCF (Go Knights!) and started working at Memorial Regional's Trauma ICU right out of school. After 3 years in the unit, I applied for CRNA school and once I was accepted, I took one travel nursing assignment, then backpacked Asia for a month before starting classes in January.



How did you decide to pursue CRNA as a career?

My dad was also an ICU nurse and considered going to CRNA school, but thought it would be too hard after my brother and I were born since there were no schools in South Florida at the time. So when I became a nurse, he told me about CRNAs and pushed me to shadow someone he knew. Of course, it was love at first sight. I loved the autonomy, elevated level of care, and the idea of specializing. I've always loved learning so it was just a matter of time before I went back to school, but now I knew exactly what I wanted to do.

What are your favorite types of anesthesia cases?

I really love the cases where I feel like I learned something. In our 3 years of school, information is sprayed at us with a fire hydrant. Then you graduate and the formal learning stops, so you need to supplement with different learning methods in order to continue growing. So if I know a surgeon is nice, I will ask them questions about the procedure and then try to read an article about it on Uptodate or a similar website. For example, I did a Y90 radioembolization case for liver cancer that I had never heard of prior to. So, it was super interesting to be exposed to new therapies and treatments. Medicine will continue to change throughout our careers, so I think it's fun to be exposed to new and better ways to do things.

What are some of the rewards and challenges of being in this field?

I think the biggest challenge in this field is balancing safety and efficiency. We have to walk a fine line of responding to production pressure while keeping patient safety the priority. Don't be afraid to question things and speak up if they don't seem right. Normally, mistakes happen and things get overlooked when people are rushed. So always go back to your basics of SOAP-

ME to make sure you have all necessary equipment and are prepared.

The biggest reward is patient satisfaction, like when the patient grabs your hand in PACU as you're about to run back to the OR to set up for the next case and says "thank you" from the bottom of their heart. Or in GI when they say it was the best sleep of their life. Those are the times that you can't help but smile under your mask and give yourself a little pat on the back.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

In my spare time, I like to adventure outdoors, go biking, visit farmers' markets/random outdoor events, and plan my next trip. I am usually spending time with my family, fiancé, and friends where sarcasm and ridiculousness are on the menu. I can also be found teaching my cat Paco Taco 305 tricks and telling everyone how great he is. Lastly, I enjoy volunteering and feeling like I'm contributing to something bigger than myself. By the time my life is over, I want to have made the Earth a little greener and a little nicer.



The real question on everyone's mind. What is your spirit animal?

My spirit animal is obviously a bear because I googled a spirit animal quiz and that's what it told me. I'm not sure if it's because I'm hairy or because I sleep a lot, but either way, I'm flattered.



Any advice for aspiring CRNAs?

Never lose your curiosity. Never forget what it's like to be at the bottom. Always try to see things from someone else's perspective. Live with integrity and be kind to everyone.



Having a Baby While in CRNA School
By: James Chen, C/O 2023

My daughter, Ellie, was born in January 2022, a week before the start of my second year as an SRNA. I'm assuming that you, as someone who would read a newsletter called Sedation Sequels, are familiar with the rigors of an SRNA program. But for those who are not familiar, being an SRNA is a full-time commitment with precious little free time. "Say good-bye to your friends and family for the next three years" is the advice that I've heard on multiple occasions.

So the question you may be asking is, why would James have a baby while in an SRNA program if he already knew about the difficulties and challenges ahead? Well, my wife and I are a testament to the fact that life does go on outside of school. For the record, I did ask my wife to keep that baby in there until I graduate in December, 2023, but for whatever reason she didn't even try to accommodate.

So here I am. One more semester under my belt and one new addition to our family. How did I get through even more sleepless nights while juggling the responsibilities of being a new cool dad and a second year SRNA? Two words: Café Bustelo.

OK, I'm kidding (or am I?). The secret for me is having an incredible wife who is totally not mad at me and setting realistic expectations. When we first brought Ellie home, I thought I would go to class or clinical and rush home to give my poor wife a break. This is a newborn, I thought. I'll change her, feed her, she'll sleep for 3 hours, and I'll study while she sleeps. You can probably guess that my plan never worked. After a less-than-stellar performance with the first round of exams, I was confronted with a harsh reality – things needed to change if I wanted to survive this program. So I made the adjustments necessary to succeed. I made sure to keep my school and home life totally separate. That way, when I came home I knew that my focus could be on my family. That meant longer days at the library and really buckling down to use my time wisely. It has also meant spending only a fraction of the time I'd like to with my family and missing them dearly when I'm away. But so far these changes have been working. At a cost, but we sacrifice now to reap the rewards later, right?

I'm not the first person to grow their family while in school, and I definitely will not be the last. To my colleagues also raising children during this program, I applaud you. To anyone who may find themselves in my position, just know that success is achievable. This process has been challenging, but I am grateful for every bit of it. Having this opportunity to pursue a career as a CRNA and welcome the birth of our wonderful little baby has been a huge blessing. A huge and exhausting blessing.



A Special Thank-You

By: Erick Zuniga-Mejia, C/O 2023

I am sincerely honored to be a recipient of the Nicole Wertheim Nursing & Health Sciences Endowment and the Richard Elias, MD Cardiac Nursing Scholarship. Nurse anesthesia school requires many sacrifices and it's a full-time commitment. I would not be able to do it without the support of my family and friends. A special shout out to my mom (my number one supporter), Jose (my boyfriend), Alexander (our dog), Camila, SRNA, and Gianfranco, SRNA. Nurse anesthesia school would not be the same without all these special people.



Recipe: Homemade Hummus

Courtesy of Grabiél Pagan, C/O 2023



Hello Everyone!

My name is Grabiél Pagan and I am an SRNA in the Cohort of 2023. One of my favorite things to do is make delicious snacks for when I'm studying. The following is a recipe for some homemade hummus. You can get creative with different garnishes and spices. For example, if you like your hummus spicy, you can add jalapenos to the food processor/purée step. You can also add roasted red peppers or sun dried tomatoes. Garnishing with ground paprika, sumac, or even Za'atar seasoning is a nice finishing touch.

Ingredients

- 1/3 cup Tahini
- 2-4 Tbsp cold water
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1/2 tsp ground cumin
 - 3/4 tsp salt
- Juice of one lemon
- 2-5 cloves garlic
- 1 can chickpeas (15 oz)

Tbsp = tablespoon

tsp = teaspoon

How to Make

1. Add the Tahini, water, olive oil, cumin, salt, garlic, and lemon juice to a food processor and purée.
2. Next add the chickpeas. If the consistency is too thick, just add an additional tablespoon of water. Keep adding 1 tablespoon of water at a time until you reach the desired consistency.
3. Finally, garnish. You can be creative with your garnishes. I like to top it off with a little of olive oil, sesame seeds, and Za'atar seasoning. Sometimes a pinch of red pepper flakes can add a nice kick to the overall flavor.

If you don't have Za'atar seasoning, you can make it yourself by combining the following spices in a food processor or using a mortar and pestle:

- 1 Tbsp sesame seeds
- 2 Tbsp dried thyme
- 2 Tbsp dried oregano
- 2 Tbsp dried marjoram
- 1/4 cup ground sumac
 - 1 tsp salt



Produced by:

James Chen, Editor, C/O 2023

Gianfranco Ratto, C/O 2023

Erick Zuniga-Mejia, C/O 2023

Grabiel Pagan, C/O 2023

Fernando Alfonso DNP, CRNA, APRN

Jorge A. Valdes, DNP, CRNA, APRN

Mairelys DeLaGuardia, MBA