

EDUCATION – CLINICAL

OUR FUTURE



SRNA Sedation Sequels



**FALL 2021
Issue 18**

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"

BY CHECK: Please make your check payable to: **FIU Foundation, Inc.**

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

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MARC Building 5th Floor
11200 SW 8th Street
Miami, FL 33199

Message From the Department's Interim Chair



We are pleased to announce that our department name has changed to the: **Department of Nurse Anesthesiology (DNA)**. The program name will remain Anesthesiology Nursing Program. The departmental name change was a result of national and regional name changes within the Profession.

The faculty and I are very proud of our students and their commitment to the FIU Doctor of Nursing Practice, Anesthesiology Nursing Program.

The faculty and students have been working hard throughout the Fall Semester. The Department of Nurse Anesthesiology welcomed 43 students from the Class of 2023 on campus as they began their 3rd semester in the program, the Class of 2023 White Coat Ceremony was held in September prior to the commencement of their clinicals in October. The class of 2021 successfully presented their DNP scholarly projects in the DNP Virtual Symposium, were hooded by faculty and graduated in December. The department wishes them the best as they begin their careers as Doctorly prepared nurse anesthetist.

Faculty accomplishments include Dr. Campbell, Dr. Diaz, Dr. Alfonso and myself being selected to serve on National committees for the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (AANA) and National Board of Certification and Recertification for Nurse Anesthetists (NBCRNA).

Please remember that vaccinated or not, we must continue to adhere to the CDC guidelines. In addition, before arriving on campus each day, every member of the university community must complete the P3 app questionnaire. Together, we can ensure everyone's well-being as we bring more of the university community back to campus. Remember we are all in this together and stronger as a result.

Thank you for all your hard work in making the
FIU Doctor of Nursing Practice Anesthesiology Nursing Program a success.

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

Senior Year Survival Tips

By: David Luth, C/O 2021



One of the things I love most about eating Chinese food (besides the actual eating of Chinese food, obviously) is the fortune cookie. The cookie itself is nothing to write home about. What I love is reading the fortune inside. Most of them are pretty lame, but every once in a while, I get a fortune that is pertinent to my life and gives me a pearl of wisdom. In such cases, I keep the fortune and stick it on my refrigerator. They are my version of those cheesy motivational posters that used to be popular. As I find myself tackling my final semester of CRNA school, I will share what wisdom I can with some help from my fortunes.

“Right now, there is an energy pushing you to stay on your path.”

Congratulations! You have made it to your senior year of CRNA school, but it is not over yet; you still have a year to go. If you have made it this far, you are going the distance. There is no room for anything less than graduation. Senior year is not the time to start slacking, so believe in yourself. Do whatever it takes to get yourself across that finish line.

“A wise person cares not for what he cannot have but for what he can.”

The burnout is real. Make sure you take a minute to remind yourself that there is a life outside of school. Many SRNAs maintain they cannot enjoy life while in school, so they shut out family and friends for three years. That is bologna. You CAN give yourself a break. Schedule a weekend night out with your friends. Use your PTO days

for a mini-vacation during the summer. You cannot schedule it during a specialty rotation, but the long hours will start to get to you by the end of summer, so think ahead and schedule some time for yourself. You can have a little break, be smart about it and do it after that big final exam, and not the weekend before. Attending the AANA National Congress or FANA is a great excuse to knock out some conference hours and get away from school and Miami at the same time.

“Relish the transitions in your life—they will happen regardless.”

Life is about the journey, not the end result. Senior year you will experience the most growth during your program. Instead of being miserable and hating every minute of it, enjoy the strides, accomplishments, and newfound independence you are making as a senior.

“In human endeavor, chance favors the prepared mind.”

Do not procrastinate on the DNP work. Knock it out and get it done with. You will pat yourself on the back later when your classmates are still struggling to complete stuff in June, when you have been done since February.

Present your poster at the AANA Congress. This is a great way to force yourself not to procrastinate and simultaneously get recognized for your hard work. Everything you have to do for the Congress, you will have to do for the DNP Symposium anyway. Again, when your classmates are rushing their posters and presentations to completion in September and October, you will be patting yourself on the back because you have had that stuff done since May!

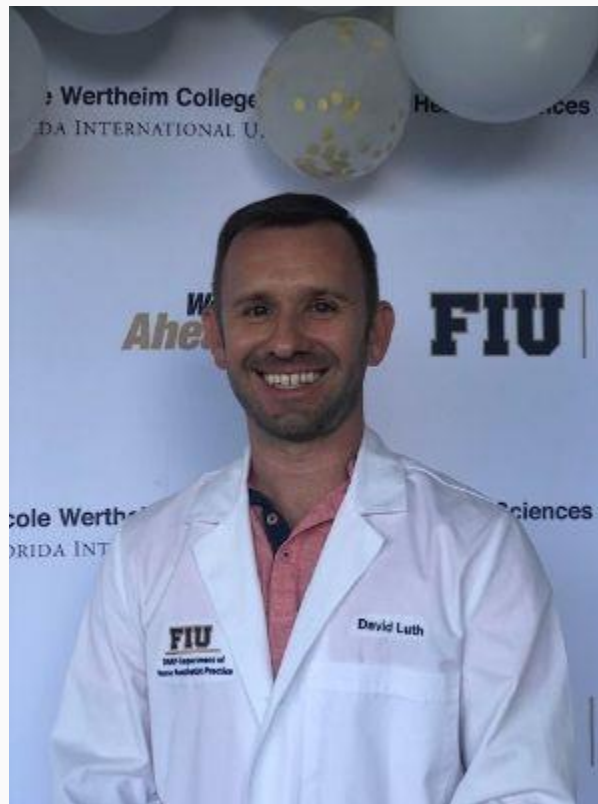
“Keep a cool head and bid your time: a chance is bound to come.”

Do not worry about getting a job. As your classmates start to get hired as soon as January, you might feel like you are behind the eight ball if you do not have a job lined up by summer. Do not worry about it. Employers are paying SRNAs to attend their recruiting events. It is an SRNA market out there, and everyone and their attending want YOU to work for them. Again, pat yourself on the back for choosing the best career in the world. Do not bite the first shiny hook that comes dangling in front of your face; bide your time. As another one of my fortunes says: **"Do not worry; prosperity will knock on your door soon."**

"Refer back to Fortune #1."

Life does not stop just because you are in CRNA school. A lot can happen in three years, and unfortunately, some of it is not good. Family members pass away—relationship's end. Loved ones get sick. If you are experiencing a difficult time in your life, inform your professors. Believe it or not, they are human, and they will understand and do what they can to help you out, even if it means taking a few weeks off during a family emergency. Now pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and get back in there because you will become a CRNA, no matter what adversity you have to overcome to

get there.



President's Council, Real Triumphs Faculty Award

By: Dr. Fernando Alfonso, DNP, CRNA, APRN

Dr. Jorge Valdes, Interim Chair of the Department of Nurse Anesthesiology, is known to many in Anesthesia. Dr. Valdes has been a leader in the Nursing Anesthesiology community for over 15 years. As past president of the Florida Association from 2013-2014, Dr. Valdes was a staunch advocate for the profession, testifying before the Florida State Congress in support of the Nurse Anesthesiology practice. Dr. Valdes has served as chair of the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (AANA) Diversity and Inclusion Committee from 2017-2020 and is currently the chair of the Professional Development Committee for the AANA. He has published numerous articles on decreasing health disparities and increasing minority representation within the Nursing Anesthesiology profession.

Academically, Dr. Valdes has left an indelible impression on future generations. Students who have been taught by Dr. Valdes attest to his hands-on approach and mentorship. Utilizing props to show how drugs create their effect on the body. Students roleplay different drugs with signs, hats, and chairs to act out and learn the drug's functions. Dr. Valdes' interest in his students shows in his mentorship and support. "I'm very big about mentoring. In the nurse Anesthesiology Department, we try to reassure students that the reason they are in this program is that we saw something in them. I always tell them how incredibly lucky they are to be in the program. Before their boards, I fill them with positivity, reassurance, words of affirmation and I send them emails wishing them good luck."

This minor sampling of Dr. Valdes' attributes has now earned him another groundbreaking honor. This past October Dr. Valdes was awarded the President's Council, Real Triumphs Faculty Award. One of the highest awards bestowed to faculty at FIU, Dr. Valdes is the first-ever recipient from the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Science, and only the 21st recipient of this annual award. We at the Department of Nurse Anesthesiology are proud of Dr. Valdes and are blessed to have him as our Interim Chair.

Clinical Spotlight: Chuck Magich Broward North Medical Center

By: Jonathan Morris, C/O 2022

Chuck is a compassionate, dedicated and hard working CRNA who recently relocated to Florida.



Tell me your background. Where are you from originally?

How did you get into nursing?

I was born and raised in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania. My first interest as a kid was to be a firefighter. I was a volunteer in Pennsylvania for over 10 years, and as a firefighter I got involved in Emergency Medical Service (EMS). While working with EMS I had a close relationship with various emergency department nurses, and the one encouraged me to go a community college for nursing school. I earned my Associates's Degree in Nursing in 1990 and then received my BSN in 1995.

Where did you go to school for college, and how long have you been a CRNA?

I have been a practicing CRNA for 23 years. I graduated from Wyoming Valley Healthcare System/Wilkes University School of Nurse Anesthesia in 1998. I spent most of my career doing Trauma Anesthesia at R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center in Baltimore, Maryland.



What made you pursue anesthesia?

I love the action and excitement, and I have always felt that I function best during a crisis. Plus, I like the high-tech nature of our work, the science behind it, and the human component of making a difference in a person's life.

What do you enjoy about working as a CRNA?

What we do is routine and daily for us, but usually a once-in-a-lifetime experience for a patient. If I can make it easier and less stressful for them, I feel like I have made a difference. I also enjoy the constantly changing nature of anesthesia techniques and drugs. Finally, I do enjoy teaching and mentoring students as it challenges me professionally.

Can you tell me about your family?

I am currently single and have no children. Unfortunately, both of my parents have been deceased for almost ten years now. I have a sister and two nieces who reside in Pennsylvania, and I have a close relationship with them all.

Is there anything, in particular, you like to do to de-stress from work or enjoy doing on your days off?

I am an outdoorsy person. I enjoy the beach, biking, and traveling on my days off.



Any recommendations on how to be successful in CRNA school?

Keep an open mind! There are very few absolutes in anesthesia and many ways to do the same procedure. By keeping an open mind, you can take in those differences in style and incorporate them into your practice if they work for you.

Any experiences or additional thoughts you would like to share?

Go the extra mile! Anesthesia school can seem like an uphill battle, but it is worth the work. One of the things that impressed me early on was the number of CRNA's I met that had been practicing for many years and still had good things to say about the profession and seemed to enjoy what they did for a living. It provides a stable and professional career path.



The Art of Balancing Anesthesia School and a Family

By: Shilpa Heald, C/O 2022

In January of 2020, I began my journey to become a CRNA. Before beginning the program, I spoke to several SRNAs and CRNAs to help me prepare for the commitment and endurance needed to complete this program successfully. My husband and I spoke at length as to how our responsibilities and priorities would change. We discussed childcare, his work schedule, and my classroom and hospital time commitment. We thought we were prepared for what the next three years would be like for us. However, nothing can prepare you for this rigorous program, and absolutely no amount of planning will ease the stress involved when trying to complete this program as a parent, let alone a mother.

My children were one and two when I began this program, and the palpable guilt began on day one. When I am studying, I feel guilty that I am not spending time with my children, and when I am spending time with my children, I feel guilty that I am not studying. Add to that the guilt of never having time to spend time with my husband and having to miss big occasions like my youngest son's 2nd birthday, and this program becomes nearly unbearable. However, every day, I remind myself that completing this program with fortitude will lead to a life of fortune, flexibility, and fun.



Annual White Coat Ceremony

By: David Hernandez, Class President C/O 2023

The Annual White Coat Ceremony, a traditional formality that embodies the spirit of excellence, purity, and pursuit of knowledge, took place on September 24th, 2021. The ceremony was filled with happiness and heartfelt speeches from the staff, faculty, and students. Families and friends cheered for the future CRNA's as they walked on stage to receive their white coats from the faculty members.

The White Coat Ceremony, first initiated by Columbia University in 1993, symbolizes a student's transition into clinical practice. It instills the importance of professionalism and responsibility for clinical excellence while promoting safe, ethical, and compassionate care. As students took their pledge, they were reminded of their roles not only as healthcare advocates but as future healthcare leaders.

I reached out to several colleagues to encompass the true meaning this moment represented in their lives. James Chen, SRNA, explained that “the ceremony was a

special moment where all of our loved ones could come together to celebrate all of the hard work that led up to this point.” James knows that the road ahead is rough, but he looks forward to making the most out of this experience. Camilla Marcos, the class Treasurer, shared that “the ceremony was more than a symbol, it was a rite of passage into a journey of life-long learning, professionalism, and commitment to quality patient care.”

Callesha Wright, SRNA, expressed that “it was a symbol of my dedication to all the patients I will care for as a provider, for who I vow to give my very best.” This has been the hardest time of her life, but Ms. Wright has never given up. She states, “I’ve experienced a closeness to the people who would ensure I could honor my commitment and complete my assignment.” Lastly, Brent Pendergast, class Vice President, explained that “as an unconventional student, proud father, and devoted family man, this ceremony has not only been an inspiration for me, but also for my two amazing young daughters.” Brent went on to share that “this experience showed them that anything is possible.”

This moment represented a pinnacle in every student’s career and an educational steppingstone towards their dream of becoming a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthesiologist. Always remember that we are often the ones who build the path for all who follow. So let us continue to build upon that path. Let us not talk about the difference, but be the difference we long for within ourselves, our community, and healthcare. Together we can lead by example! Congratulations!







American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (AANA) Finance Committee

By: Joseph Benson, C/O 2022

The American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (AANA) presents several opportunities for SRNAs, one of which is participating as a member of national committees. Student positions are available within seven committees such as the communication, diversity, inclusion, or education committee. I saw it as a chance to network and gain valuable leadership skills while enhancing my learning experience at Florida International University. As part of the requirements to serve as a student member, the student must be a member of AANA and in good academic standing with completed at least nine months of the program. The student is required to obtain permission from the program director stating that the applicant can meet the committee's demands in addition to the didactic and clinical components of the program.

I asked Dr. Valdes earlier this spring if he thought it would be possible for me to apply, and he gave full support as he serves on the professional development committee. I submitted my application, including a current CV and letter of intent. In July, I was notified that I would be serving on the finance committee for FY2022. This particular committee oversees the association's finances, creates budgets for special projects or initiatives, and assists in operating AANA insurance services. There are six virtual meetings throughout the year that I will be attending and the AANA annual congress meeting in Chicago next year. I am excited to meet with the leaders of the AANA network and learn how the professional organization operates.



Recipe: Protein Cookies

Courtesy of Jonathan Morris, C/O 2022



Ingredients

1. Bananas: Use overripe bananas for this recipe, as they're sweeter. Choose bananas with lots of brown spots or almost entirely brown for the best results.
2. Peanut Butter: I prefer to use organic natural peanut butter with no additives. However, any peanut butter will work.
3. Oats: You can use rolled oats or quick oats.
4. Protein Powder: I use whey protein powder vanilla flavor.
5. Chocolate Chips (optional): I like to use either semi-sweet, dark, or even sugar-free chocolate chips.

How to Make

1. Preheat the oven: To 350F, and then line a cookie sheet with parchment paper, or use a silicone baking mat sprayed with cooking spray.
2. Mash the bananas in a large bowl with a fork. You could also do this in a food processor/blender, but it's not necessary.
3. Add the remaining ingredients: Add the protein powder, oats, and peanut butter to the bowl and mix well until thoroughly combined. If you're using them, add chocolate chips now too.
4. The oatmeal protein cookie dough consistency should be fairly runny. Depending on the type of oats, peanut butter, ripeness of the bananas, and the protein powder used, this may vary. If you find the batter a little dry, then just

add a little milk, one spoonful at a time, until the batter is the correct consistency.

5. Transfer the mixture to the baking tray using a measuring spoon/small scoop for even-sized cookies. The cookies don't spread, so you can 'shape' them. Use damp fingers to press down the top/shape them, as preferred.
6. Bake the protein cookies: For smaller cookies, they'll need about 12 minutes. For larger cookies, try 14 minutes.
7. Allow the protein oatmeal cookies to cool: On a cooling rack for a few minutes before enjoying!



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