



The Physician Assistant Studies Program works with a variety of communities and people throughout the state of Utah. The PA program recently visited Hildale, a small town in Southern Utah, to provide medical services for the community.

Below is a firsthand account from Trenton Honda, PhD, MMS, PA-C, the new Physician Assistant Studies Division Chief, about his experience working with the PA students, faculty, and staff who participated in a medical outreach event for the town of Hildale.

Dear colleagues,

I had the opportunity this weekend to join the Division of Physician Assistant Studies faculty, staff, and students for a medical outreach event in Hildale, a small town in southern Utah. Hildale, a town of around 2,900 adults and 600 children, is a town in transition. The community, under the

intrepid and undeniably brave new leadership of the new mayor, Donia Jessop, is attempting to overcome its recent tragic past and build a path into the future. Despite major recent infrastructure accomplishments, the town has no healthcare services. There are no medical providers, only part-time dental providers, limited mental health services, and no operating healthcare facilities. This is a community in need.

I am new to the division, having started just a few weeks ago, and this was my first experience of the UPAP mission 'in-action'. This is what I saw:

Richard Bennett, PhD, PA-C, Associate Professor in the UPAP program, identified the needs of this community and worked with local community leaders and our partners at Intermountain Healthcare and Dixie State University to organize a multi-specialty health fair with an eye on providing culturally sensitive dental, eye, and medical exams for the children of Hildale. To facilitate this, he arranged for participants to take a tour of the town, learn about its recent history, and, perhaps most importantly, develop the cultural competence necessary to provide compassionate care.

A crack team of UPAP faculty, staff, and students, having gained the knowledge necessary to provide culturally sensitive care, then donated their time, energy, and significant expertise to the delivery of high-quality preventive care for the people of Hildale.

In the course of one Saturday, UPAP and our community partners provided:

- 1)101 fluoride treatments*
- 2)120 pre-participation sports physicals*
- 3)60 eye exams*

4)59 adult screenings for hypertension, diabetes, substance use disorder, and mental health

5) >100 children's books

This was my first opportunity to participate directly in the mission of UPAP, and the dedication and altruism I witnessed from faculty, staff, and students alike was humbling. I look forward to returning to Hildale next year to continue supporting this underserved community.

A special thanks to Richard Backman, Richard Bennett, Jennifer Forbes, Melissa Husebye, Karen Wunningham, Jacqueline Murray, Jared Spackman, the St. George UPAP students, and our community partners who helped make this event possible.

A local news article advertising the event can be found here:

<https://canaanmountainherald.com/2018/07/09/hildale-health-fair-open-to-all-sign-up-today/>

An article regarding the event and efforts of those involved can be found here:

<https://canaanmountainherald.com/2018/07/30/hildale-health-fair-a-lively-success/>

Warm regards,

Trent

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