

Get to know our APEX students

HealthPartners is committed to establishing a best-in-class clinical education environment for physician assistant and nurse practitioner students. Learn more about the students involved in our Advanced Practice Education eXperience (APEX) cohort below.



Ashley Burkett

Full Program Name: Doctor of Nursing Practice: Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner, Winona State University

Brief Background: I received my Associate's degree in Nursing from Minneapolis Community and Technical College and went straight into the Bachelor of Science in Nursing completion program through Augsburg University. While in school I worked as a nursing assistant in long-term care and at Children's Hospital in Minneapolis in the float pool. My career as a Registered Nurse began at Bethesda Hospital in the float pool when it was a long-term acute care hospital. From there I transitioned to the medical intensive care unit at Regions and also the surgical trauma neuro intensive care unit at the University of Minnesota.

Why You are Pursuing Your Advanced Degree: When I started my career at Bethesda it was a lot of new learning but often our patients would become extremely sick necessitating transfer to an intensive care unit. Once I felt comfortable, I decided I wanted to be on the receiving end of those sick transfers to gain more knowledge and skills. That curiosity has continued while working in the intensive care unit and going back to school to further expand my scope of practice felt like the natural next step. I enjoy being a lifelong learner and helping others and am excited that becoming a nurse practitioner will combine both passions.



Michelle Hanggi

Full Program Name: St. Catherine University Masters of Physician Assistant Studies

Brief Background: I graduated from Rice University with a bachelor's of Visual and Dramatic Arts/French Studies in 2014. I always knew I wanted to end up in the medical field, but I took several years after college to explore--teaching math and science at a mission school in Central Africa, completing a master's in Intercultural Mediation through a French university, and working for a small nonprofit in Washington DC--all of which were incredible life experiences. When I moved to Minnesota in 2018, I started working towards a long term career in medicine, and I was thrilled to be accepted to St. Kate's PA program in 2022.

Why You are Pursuing Your Advanced Degree: There are so many fantastic career options in the medical field, but the more research I did, the more apparent it became that Physician Assistant would be the perfect fit for me. I'm excited to be part of a profession that is committed to teamwork, continual improvement, and being adaptable to the needs of our medical system and our patients.



Ami Khan

Full Program Name: BSN-DNP/Acute Care Adult Gero Nurse Practitioner, College of Scholastica

Brief Background: I have been a Registered nurse for about four years and currently work at Mercy Hospital-ED. Before obtaining my RN, I worked six years as a nursing assistant and six years as LPN. My nursing background is; in Homecare/Hospice, ALF, TCU, and SNF, and a year ago started at the hospital on the Med Surg floor before moving to the ED about six months ago. I live in Otsego, MN. I am a married woman with two children, ages 14 and 12.

Why You are Pursuing Your Advanced Degree: I decided to pursue my advanced degree because I wanted to provide the highest level of nursing care to the patients I serve.



Mariya Tkachenko

Full Program Name: University of Minnesota Doctor of Nursing Practice: Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Specialty

Brief Background: As a registered nurse I have experience in ambulatory surgery, inpatient hospital medical surgical and postpartum units, and university teaching as an adjunct nursing instructor. For my undergraduate education I attended Normandale Community College and finished my bachelor's degree in nursing at Metropolitan State University in St Paul.

Why You are Pursuing Your Advanced Degree: My goal throughout my nursing studies has been motivated by my desire to take care of my family, friends, and community in the best way possible. I enjoy getting to know people and forming meaningful connections that help build trust. I am passionate about teaching people how to take better care of their health. The above combined with academic inclination led me to pursue an advanced practitioner degree.