



IOWA PA SOCIETY | 2026 HEALTHCARE IN THE HEARTLAND STUDENT SYMPOSIUM

10:00 AM - 10:25 AM | Sign-In and Poster Set-Up

10:25 AM - 10:45 AM | Welcome & Kickoff

Kick off the symposium with a fast, high-energy welcome to the Student Symposium—built for PA students. We'll preview the lineup—targeted training, the Poster Session, the Heartland Knowledge Bowl—and spotlight ways to connect with mentors and peers. Meet the organizers and gain insights into navigating your career path.

10:50 AM - 11:20 AM | Session I: From PA Student to Practicing Clinician: Navigating the Transition Into Your First Year of Practice

The transition from PA student to practicing clinician is exciting, demanding, and often accompanied by a steep learning curve. Drawing on her recent experience navigating the first year of practice, the presenter will offer a candid and practical look at common early-career challenges, including building clinical confidence, managing workload, seeking mentorship, and continuing to develop professionally. Attendees will leave with realistic expectations and actionable strategies to support a successful transition into practice.

11:25 AM - 11:55 AM | Session II: Your Clinical Rotation Playbook: Prepare, Participate, Perform.

Clinical rotations are an opportunity to translate classroom knowledge into practice, build confidence, and develop the habits that shape future professional success. This session will provide practical strategies for preparing for rotations, maximizing learning opportunities, communicating effectively with preceptors and healthcare teams, and responding constructively to feedback and challenges. Students will leave with a clearer understanding of how to approach the clinical year as an engaged, dependable, and adaptable member of the healthcare team while developing an individualized strategy for continued growth.

12:00 PM - 12:45 PM | Lunch and Sponsored Presentation

12:50 PM - 2:00 PM | Heartland Knowledge Bowl

2:05 PM - 2:50 PM | Poster Session and Exhibit Hall Break

The Poster Session highlights the curiosity, creativity, and scholarship of PA students from across Iowa. Participants will present healthcare-related research and scholarly work in a professional yet approachable setting, with dedicated time for discussion, questions, and feedback from peers, faculty, and practicing PAs. Judges will circulate during the session, and the Best Poster Presentation Award will be presented during the IPAS Annual Meeting and Awards in recognition of outstanding scholarship and communication. The session showcases the breadth of PA student inquiry, innovation, and academic work across the state.

2:55 PM - 3:55 PM | IPAS Annual Meeting and Awards

Join IPAS leadership for the Society's annual meeting and a celebration of the people and accomplishments advancing the PA profession in Iowa. We'll share organizational updates, highlight ongoing advocacy and professional initiatives, and recognize students and members through annual awards, scholarships, and symposium honors. Students will also gain a window into the work of their professional society and the many ways PAs contribute to and strengthen the profession across Iowa.

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM | Panel: Postgraduate PA Training: Structure, Opportunities, and Career Impact

Representatives from four University of Iowa Health Care postgraduate training programs will discuss how structured training can support the transition from PA school to clinical practice. Panelists will highlight their programs' structure, clinical experiences, mentorship, application processes, and career impact; share what they seek in applicants; and help students consider whether postgraduate training aligns with their professional goals. Audience questions and open discussion will follow.

5:00 PM - 5:05 PM | Closing Remarks