

BARRY

The GRANT Seeker

A quarterly spotlight recognizing excellence in grantsmanship by a Barry University employee

Keith L. Moore, JD, PA-C *Less Piñas, More PAs*

When Dr. Doreen Parkhurst and Keith Moore came across a federal health agency report declaring the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) a critically medically underserved region, an idea began to germinate: If Barry had already established a successful physician assistant (PA) distance site in St. Petersburg, why not replicate it in the USVI? So, in early 2010, when the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) released an RFP for programs that improve access to health care for medically underserved areas, the message was clear: "If you build it, they will come!" Dr. Parkhurst and Moore worked long hours developing two major proposals: one for trainee support and one for equipment. In July 2010, the pair received word that HRSA awarded their program \$1.5 million!

On the road to a career as a physician assistant, Moore, a native of Fort Wayne, Indiana, took a few side trips – first by way of sea, as a navy corpsman. He graduated PA training in 1977 and received a Bachelor of Science from Indiana University in 1980. In 1984, Moore enrolled IU's School of Law and, upon earning his JD, practiced general and appellate law for nearly 10 years. In 1995, a former PA colleague approached him for assistance in establishing a PA program in Fort Wayne. It was through this experience that Moore discovered his passion for medical education. He was hired by Barry University in 1997 as assistant professor of medical education and was quickly promoted to associate director of clinical education, then associate professor of medical education.



The St. Croix-based PA training program welcomed its first cohort of 12 students in August 2011. Classroom space was set up in a shopping mall in Frederiksted. When a major refinery on the island went out of business the following year, leaving 2,000 locals unemployed, it was clear the need for accessible health care in St. Croix was critical. The decision was made to grow the PA training program and renovate the Frederiksted space for increasing class sizes. The logistics of the buildout, still underway, created challenges that seemed insurmountable. As demand for the program grew, so too did Moore's resolve to meet the needs of its students and, ultimately, the people of St. Croix.

For students enrolling in Barry's PA program, the St. Croix experience represents a unique opportunity to train in a U.S. territory and work hand-in-glove with surgeons and doctors in office, clinic, and hospital settings. This highly-coveted medical training comes at a price. The cost of living in the USVI is

currently 30-40% higher than on the mainland. To afford this exceptional distance learning, students share housing, cars, phones and Internet service.

The St. Croix campus will reach its approved capacity of 24 matriculating students in August 2013, at which point there will be a total of 54 Barry PA students in the USVI. Space continues to be an issue, and with the initial HRSA grant funding ending in September 2013, there is increased attention being paid to fast-tracking the sustainability of the program.

For Moore, the extended "vacation" in the USVI has been considerably more work than pleasure. Despite the unanticipated challenges, Moore could not be more pleased, if a bit surprised, with the preliminary successes of the program. Three graduates of the Class of 2011 decided to stay on in the USVI and take positions at St. Croix's only hospital, Governor Juan F. Louis Hospital. These three Barry-trained physician assistants represent the culmination of what seemed an idealistic vision only three years ago. As a result of the commitment of Moore, Dr. Parkhurst and their dedicated faculty and staff, families living in one of the most critically underserved areas of the globe now have increased access to quality medical treatment. For Moore, the first Barry ambassador on the ground and the man who the St. Croix locals have affectionately nicknamed "Mr. Barry," the experience has certainly been "all-inclusive."



Barry thanks you

It's people like this who move Barry forward. If you are interested in pursuing a grant opportunity or have any questions, please contact the Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs at 305-899-3072.