

# WEST VIRGINIA AAP CHAPTER CONNECT



## *The Advocacy Edition*

Welcome to the WV AAP Chapter Connect, a periodic update on chapter happenings, ways to get involved in the chapter, and showcase what our members do across the state.



**Please join us for 2026 WV AAP Advocacy Day at the WV State Capitol on Monday, February 23.**

*Now more than ever, pediatricians must have a strong, visible voice in policy discussions that impact children, families, and the practice of pediatrics. With significant federal changes underway and increasing pressure on child health systems, it is critical that lawmakers hear directly from those who care for West Virginia's children every day.*

Advocacy Day provides an opportunity to:

- Share real-world pediatric perspectives with state legislators
- Advocate for policies that protect child health and well-being
- Strengthen relationships between pediatricians and policymakers
- Stand together as a unified voice for children in West Virginia

**No prior advocacy experience is required. WV AAP will provide guidance, issue briefs, and support to prepare attendees for the day.**

**Register by using this QR code or click link below.**



### Lodging Information

A limited number of hotel rooms are available for Sunday night, February 22, at the Four Points by Sheraton in Charleston for members traveling from outside the area. Lodging is available upon request and will be confirmed separately after registration. Please email [candice.lefeber@wvaap.com](mailto:candice.lefeber@wvaap.com) for more information.



WV Legislative Photography, Photo by Will Price



*Your voice matters. Policymakers need to hear directly from pediatricians—especially during times of rapid policy change and uncertainty. We hope you will join us at the Capitol and help ensure that the needs of West Virginia's children remain a top priority.*

Can't attend advocacy day but want to stay up to date on ways to be involved? Join our TeamReach to get up to date information! Join using the QR codes or links below!

[Install TeamReach on iPhone](#)

[Install TeamReach on Android](#)



Enter code: WVAAP2025

Protect Kids: Keep WV's effective child care and school immunization policy!

Sign the petition by scanning the QR code or click link below.



If you have questions or would like to request lodging, please contact Candice Lefeber at [candice.lefeber@wvaap.com](mailto:candice.lefeber@wvaap.com). Thank you for your continued commitment to advocacy on behalf of children and families!

# Chapter Notes



Dr. Beth Emrick hosted a booth at a career fair at a local elementary school to teach children about how wonderful it is to be a pediatrician.

Dr. Kendra Butler, a second year resident at Marshall University, has developed a Grand Round series called “Shared Voices” that encourages the participants to learn about bias in medicine, teaching about real life examples, and how to approach bias at an individual and systemic level.

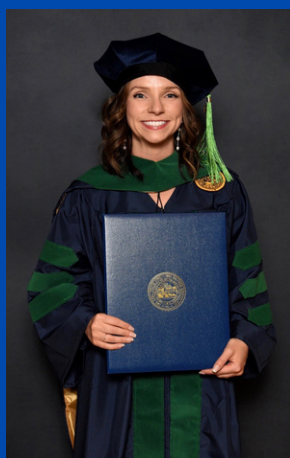


## Meet the residents!

Please help us in welcoming 3 outstanding residents who have taken a special interest in WV AAP and pediatric leadership!



Ash, a current resident at Marshall University in Huntington, is originally from South Carolina. Ash attended medical school in Columbia, South Carolina. Ash has matched into Pediatric Nephrology Fellowship at Children’s Mercy in Kansas City. Ash has a passion for equitable access to care and public policy that contributes to better health outcomes for all. Ash enjoys roller derby, cuddling with their cats, and curling up with a good book.



Dr. Megann Boone is from Braxton County, WV. She attended medical school at WVU and is currently a Med-Peds resident at WVU. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with friends and family, hiking, and traveling. She has a special interest in improving healthcare access for rural populations.



Dr. Artur Polechshuk was born in Kazakhstan and completed medical school at Saint Petersburg State Pediatric Medical University in Russia. He is currently a resident at CAMC Vandalia Health. He has a strong interest in child health advocacy and improving access to high-quality care for all children. He is especially passionate about protecting children’s rights and supporting families through preventive and community-based care. He also enjoys making music, exploring history, and traveling. He has visited 26 countries and doesn’t have plans to stop anytime soon!

# Chapter Notes Continued

A graduate student at the University of Michigan has worked with physicians at WVU Medicine to develop a survey aimed at assessing genetic testing and referral practices throughout West Virginia.

*Did you know, West Virginia has one of the lowest genetic providers to population ratios among all states (~1.67 genetic counselors/500,000 people)?*

With a general deficit of genetics professionals across the country, non-genetics healthcare providers are essential in bridging patient access to genetic testing. The ultimate goal of this study is to identify barriers and facilitators to offering genetic services in WV, which will then inform future tools and interventions to increase access.

Given that a large portion of genetic testing is offered in the pediatric setting, our perspectives are particularly valuable!

Link to access below, or use this QR code or click link below.



## Save the Date

**Monday, February 23rd 2026**

WV AAP Advocacy Day at the WV State Capitol. Registration information as above.

**May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026** - WV AAP Children's Healthcare Summit at Stonewall Resort. More information coming soon.

Call for abstracts - Resident Research Competition. Case reports and original research. Deadline for submission is **February 14, 2026**

## Call for Chapter Champions!

What is a chapter champion? These are members who take on a leadership role in a specific area of pediatric health, serving as a liaison to promote best practices, provide education, and advocate for change within their state chapter. We are currently looking for champions for:

1. **Healthy Mental Development (HMD) Chapter Champion** - serves as a subject matter expert on healthy mental development.
2. **The Chapter Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Champion** - leader who will contribute to efforts to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion within their chapter and communities.

Contact Candice for additional information!

Please submit any announcements, awards, or pictures to this QR code. By submitting, you are agreeing to the content being shared with the state-wide membership.

