



## Student Spotlight

By Christopher Reed, RN, BSN  
*Fiscal Year 2014 Student Representative  
to the AANA Foundation Board of Trustees*

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The AANA Foundation is pleased to present Student Spotlight, a new feature that recognizes student registered nurse anesthetists who have captured attention through their dedication to education, professional excellence, and overall commitment to advancing nurse anesthesia.

### Harold Barnwell, RN, BSN

In February, I had the opportunity to attend the Assembly of School Faculty (ASF) meeting in Tucson, Ariz. Although this meeting primarily attracts nurse anesthesia faculty and educators, the AANA Education Committee provides mentoring opportunities for students to be paired with established leaders in our profession. Harold Barnwell, RN, BSN, was one of the other students who attended the ASF.

Upon meeting Harold, I immediately appreciated his zeal for life and passion for caring for others. His energy was contagious, and I have no doubt that he will be a leader who has a dramatic impact on shaping the future of nurse anesthesia.

Barnwell is a graduate student in the Master of Science–Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia Practice (MSNA-DNAP) combined degree program in the School of Allied Health at Virginia Commonwealth University. He considers his opportunity for graduate study in anesthesia to be a phase of rapid growth and development, preparing him for service as a leader in the healthcare field. His dedication to advancing the profession of nurse anesthesia has been evident both in his academic record and extracurricular pursuits.

Barnwell began his professional career as a cardiac surgery ICU nurse after receiving his Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Liberty University, Lynchburg, Va. During his first two years as a critical care nurse, Harold served as unit representative for a hospital-wide safety coach pilot program, as a member of the Evidence-Based Practice Committee, and as facilitator of the CSICU New Graduate Nurse Development Group. The VCU Health System recognized Harold as “Novice Nurse of the Year” after his first year of service, and later awarded him for his work as a preceptor and advocate for patient safety.



Harold Barnwell,  
RN, BSN

Barnwell says that he strives to approach each day with “enthusiasm, determination, and a commitment to excellence.” He has most recently found inspiration for that pursuit in the eloquent words of famed UCLA basketball coach John Wooden. Wooden said, “You can’t live a perfect day without doing something for someone who will never be able to repay you.” It has been said of Harold that he demonstrates a certain spirit and set of attributes that nurture a love of learning for its own sake, create a respect of human values, and put some kind of order to the human experience as we know it in an attempt to bring a sense of history and purpose to what that pursuit is all about.

At Virginia Commonwealth University, Barnwell serves as president for the class of 2014, where he has demonstrated success in fostering a collaborative student environment. He and his classmates decided that competition stopped the moment they were accepted to the program, and each member of the class utilizes his or her unique talents in order to ensure the success of the group as a team. Barnwell has spearheaded the development of this collaborative environment by readily sharing his study materials and seeking out opportunities to offer encouragement to his fellow students.

VCU’s program director, Michael Fallacaro, CRNA, DNS, provides an eloquent summary of the profound impact that Harold has on others: “Speaking of Mr. Barnwell, as an instructor, one can always teach a student registered nurse anesthetist the theory and mechanics surrounding anesthesia practice. However, genuine concern and compassion for other human beings is something one cannot teach. These characteristics are either present or absent in the individual. Harold possesses these traits and demonstrates them daily in his zest for life. I know I speak for my entire faculty when I say that if I, or anyone I cared for, needed surgery, it would be comforting to see Harold Barnwell at the head of the operating room table.” ■

*“You can’t live a perfect day without doing something for someone who will never be able to repay you.”*

*John Wooden*