A Message from the Dean – James H. McKerrow, PhD, MD

Since our last Newsletter, we had a very productive and exciting summer at the Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. The education of a new generation of pharmacy students is a key element of our mission. As a research-intensive school of pharmacy, we require all of our PharmD students to carry out a research project during their time with us. This summer we were very fortunate to have support from several investigators in the school, as well as from local institutes to initiate many of our students in research projects. In addition we hosted six students from pharmacy schools in Brazil who were supported by the CAPES program, a prestigious science fund of the Brazil government. We also hosted three high school students from San Diego County supported by funds from the ALSAM Foundation, a philanthropic arm of the Skaggs family. The experience of the high school students at our school was so positive that the Director of their Science Institute visited with several other science teachers to meet and congratulate our three local mentors – Danielle Skinner, Stephan Meister, and Ruben Abagyan.

Finally we are very pleased to welcome Christina Mnatzaganian, our newest faculty member, who will play a key role in the education of our pharmacy students.
Student News

White Coat Ceremony for the Class of 2019
By Kim Ciero

The White Coat Ceremony for the new Class of 2019 took place on Friday, September 25, 2015 at the Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. Dean James McKerrow gave a warm welcome to the incoming class as well as recognized our outstanding faculty and preceptors for all they do to contribute to the education and growth of the students and the school. He introduced the keynote speaker, our very own Charter Class Alumna, Dr. Shadi Vaccani. Dr. Vaccani spoke to the new class and their family members about the importance and the underlying symbolism of the White Coats they were about to receive in her talk titled, “Little White Cloak.”

Dr. Candis Morello, Associate Dean for Student Affairs presented the 62 incoming students, 14 male and 48 female, by calling out their names as they came up one by one to have Dean McKerrow present them their coat. After posing for a photo with Dean McKerrow, the students then lined up to recite the Oath of a Pharmacist. The students and audience were then welcomed by our Associated Student Pharmacy President, third year student pharmacist, Mark Lin. Mark encouraged the new class to embrace the many educational opportunities available to them through our curriculum, student organizations and outstanding faculty. He also welcomed them to the student body. In conclusion Dean McKerrow invited the students and the audience to a reception held in our Health Sciences Education Center.
Training the Next Generation of Immunizers  
By Courtney Miller, P-2

With another flu season upon us, many patients are flocking to their local pharmacies to get their annual flu vaccine. Here at Skaggs, students are trained how to properly administer vaccines in their first few weeks of class during their first year as student pharmacists. This year was no different; the class of 2019 completed their immunization class Saturday October 3rd.

Because immunization training is finished so early in the curriculum, student pharmacists have the opportunity to utilize their skills during their remaining years at Skaggs. So far student volunteers have delivered almost 500 flu vaccines this year. They are expected to deliver a few hundred more once the flu vaccine clinics begin at the student-run free clinics.

This impact on the community would not be possible if not for the help of our lecturers, community volunteers, and student volunteers who helped to train the cohort of new student pharmacists.

Trainers:
- Dr. Carolyn Szigethy
- Dr. Lin L. Chen-Peng
- Dr. Eduardo Fricovsky
- Dr. Christina Mnatzaganian
- Dr. David Bao
- Dr. Renu Singh
- Dr. Elizabeth Vuong
- Dr. Larry Harker
- Dr. Sarah McBane
- Dr. Carolyn Jin
- Professor Panteha Kelly

Lecturers:
- Dr. Sarah Lorentz
- Dr. Sarah McBane
- Dr. Nathan Painter
- Dr. Jennifer Le
- Dr. Victoria Adams
- Dr. Elizabeth Rosenblum

Great news! Our CSHP student chapter has won all three Student Chapter Community Service Project Awards in Tobacco Cessation, Asthma Education, and Poison Prevention Awareness! Hats off to our immediate past President, Sarah Brown and our 2014-2015 CSHP-UCSD executive board.

Two SSPPS Student posters have been selected as Best Poster Finalist in the ACCP 2015 Global Conference in San Francisco:

Elika Hefazi: “Metabolic Syndrome Monitoring for Inmate-Patients Prescribed Antipsychotic Therapy”

Omeed Valipour: “Evaluation of Sedative Hypnotic Use Among Inmate-Patients at a Correctional Facility”
Diabetes and Hypertension Screenings for an Asian-Indian Population
By Khushwinder Gill, P-3, Danial Husain, P-3 and Renu Singh, PharmD, BCACP, CDE

Student pharmacists from the SSPPS offered their second annual health-screening event at the Sikh Foundation San Diego (SFSD) in Poway on Sunday, September 27, 2015. Danial Husain and Khushwinder Gill screened over 40 adult participants, many of whom were older adults and lacked regular medical care. Several older adults spoke Punjabi only, and were assisted by Khushwinder, a fluent Punjabi speaker. According to the World Health Organization, India has the highest number of people in the world with diabetes. The prevalence of type 2 diabetes in urban areas of India is estimated to be 9%, and is rapidly increasing. Additionally, a meta-analysis review for prevalence of hypertension in India, documented 29.8% overall prevalence of hypertension from urban and rural parts of north, west, south and east India for ages ≥18.

For this event each participant was offered a diabetes and hypertension screening. Guidance on nutrition, lifestyle modifications, including weight loss and daily exercise, and how to lower blood glucose and blood pressure (BP) was provided in both English and Punjabi. A color brochure was created by Khushwinder in both languages to assist participants in understanding normal and high blood glucose and BP readings, and explaining how Indian diets can be modified to reduce carbohydrates and saturated fats and increase vegetable intake to improve glycemic control. The brochure was very popular as it included a color photograph that showed how a typical Indian meal could be adjusted for a person with diabetes or pre-diabetes. While most participants knew that rice or sweets could raise their blood glucose, many were surprised to learn that fruit or potatoes could also raise their glucose levels. Two patients were advised to seek medical attention promptly for possibly undiagnosed diabetes while six patients were in pre-diabetes category. Nine patients were in the pre-hypertension category. Patients with at risk blood glucose and blood pressures readings were encouraged to exercise, reduce salt and or sugar intake, and follow-up with their primary care physician. It was also an excellent opportunity to remind participants of the importance of taking their medications regularly as prescribed, and to work with their health care provider if their glucose or BP was high. Overall, the event was a success with much gratitude being expressed to the students and an invitation for the student pharmacists to extend the screening event to more locations in San Diego. We thank Dr. Singh for her guidance and preceptorship for this event, and the Pharmacy Practice course assistants (Adrienne Imada and Shirley Walker-Domingo) for the loan of screening equipment.

References:


Joseph Chen, P-4 Gives Oral Presentation of Research Findings at ICAAC

Joseph Chen presented his research entitled "Population Pharmacokinetics of Lopinavir with WHO Weight Band Dosing - IMPAACT P1083" as an oral platform at the 2015 Intersciences Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy to a packed room in September. His findings represent a culmination of three years of effort, starting with a T35 award followed by dedicated persistence continued throughout his P2-P3 years. ICAAC is arguably the top annual ID research meeting in the world and only a very few of the abstracts submitted are selected for oral presentation. Joseph gave an excellent presentation of his findings and deserves kudos for his hard work and fine representation of SSPPS.

CSHP-UCSD Hosts the Clinical Skills Competition
By Justin Lin, P-3

This past September, CSHP-UCSD hosted its annual Clinical Skills Competition at UCSD SSPPS to select a team to represent the school at CSHP Seminar in San Diego, as well as ASHP Midyear in New Orleans. The Clinical Skills Competition is comprised of a patient case to analyze, as well as an oral presentation and a written pharmacists’ care plan. The competition requires students to apply their clinical knowledge, utilize resources, and practice their patient presentation skills. Students compete in teams of two, and were given a month to prepare for the competition.

The competition took place on the UCSD SSPPS campus on Saturday, September 12th. A total of ten teams signed up, and students from the P2, P3, and P4 class competed. The teams were given their cases, and after two hours of preparation, they presented a standard two-minute presentation in front of a panel of four pharmacists. The judges had eight minutes to ask further questions of each team. Though the competition was close, after all the points were tallied, the winners of this year’s competition were P4s Danielle Ishihara and Brittany Newton. They successfully competed at the CSHP Seminar on October 8, and will continue to prepare for the competition at ASHP Midyear in December.

Thanks to Drs. Qin Gao, Jeremiah Momper, Ila Saunders, and Felix Yam for their hard work in judging the competition and selecting a team, and Dr. Jaclyn Jaskowiak, the faculty liaison for the competition. Thanks to CSHP-UCSD volunteers Jennifer Han, Bryan Pham, Rachelle Roxas, and Erin Lee for helping to make sure the competition ran smoothly.
Faculty News

Tropical Diseases In The Bullseye at UC San Diego Lab
KPBS Article By Kenny Goldberg (Article from Monday, August 31, 2015)
(Link to the below article and video: http://www.kpbs.org/news/2015/aug/31/tropical-diseases-bullseye-uc-san-diego-lab/)

There's not many laboratories that have 10 of the world's most notorious parasites.

But the drug discovery lab at UC San Diego does.

Lab Director James McKerrow reaches into one of the lab’s incubators and takes out a flask of gold-colored liquid. You wouldn’t want to take a sip.

“This is the organism that causes amebiases, which is one of the leading causes of diarrheal disease worldwide,” Dr. McKerrow said. Or how about this container? Swimming inside of it is a different parasite that causes Chagas disease. That’s one of the major causes of heart failure in South America. You get it from being bitten by what’s called a kissing bug.

You can see this parasite in action by looking into a microscope. It’s literally invading the host cell and replicating.

“So what happens to you is, if you get infected with this parasite, they will invade your heart muscle cells, and over a period of about ten years, they’ll destroy them,” McKerrow said.

The lab also has a special room for a parasite that currently infects 240 million people.

“The reason there’s a door here, if you go in, it’s temperature controlled. So it’s like the tropics,” McKerrow said.

This closet-size room has a number of tanks filled with fresh-water snails. These snails are found in water sources
throughout the tropical world. They produce parasitic larvae.

“They find you by swimming through the water, following your body heat, and then they penetrate right through your skin,” McKerrow said.

In about six weeks, the larvae grow into worms that infect the body with schistosomiasis. The disease causes anemia in children, and chronic ill health in adults.

Taken together, the parasites in this lab cause widespread suffering and death. But because the victims are primarily in poor countries, drug companies aren't interested in developing new treatments. That's why they're called neglected tropical diseases.

That's where this lab comes in. It's well equipped to handle the process of identifying potential drugs.

The lab has robots that screen parasites against hundreds of chemical compounds at a time. The goal is to find a compound that kills the parasites.

Once the machines identify a hit, the compound goes through a series of other steps in the lab.

“So we can actually take the hits from these robots, and if they look promising enough, can put them into an animal model of infection, and ask, do they actually cure the disease? Because that's what we really want to know,” McKerrow said.

The $2 million seed money for the lab came from a combination of philanthropy, grants, and university funding. The lab has 14 core researchers, and a variety of students and interns.

The lab's activities are all part of the process that takes place before a drug can go into clinical trials.

UCSD infectious disease specialist Sanjay Mehta said the lab is doing important work.

“The current drugs are somewhat effective, depending on the disease, and oftentimes very toxic, particularly for things like sleeping sickness,” Dr. Mehta said. “Sometimes the treatment can be more toxic than the actual disease. And people used to die from the treatment. So we clearly need better treatments for a lot of diseases.”

Post-doctoral fellow Laura-Isabel McCall works in McKerrow's lab. She's studying a variety of parasites, including the ones that cause Chagas disease and sleeping sickness.
McCall said finding one drug that made it all the way to the clinic would be a dream come true. But she said she wouldn’t stop there. “I’d probably keep on trying to find better ones,” McCall said. “But it would be an achievement.”

McKerrow said his lab has identified two drugs that are ready to move into clinical trials. The odds against them being successful are extremely high. But that's the nature of the drug development business.

We are very pleased that two of our faculty have been recognized for their work with ACCP:

**Kelly Lee:** “Dr. Lee’s service on the 2015 ACCP Clinical Pharmacy Challenge is greatly appreciated. In gratitude ACCP will recognize Dr. Lee in the October issue of ACCP Report.”

**Sarah McBane:** “I wish to commend Sarah McBane for her service on the 2015 Clinical Pharmacy Challenge. In gratitude, ACCP will recognize Dr. McBane in the October issue of the ACCP Report (www.accp.com).”

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**SSPPS Clinical Faculty News (July 2014-June 2015)**

**By Grace M. Kuo, PharmD, PhD**

**Associate Dean for Academic Clinical Affairs**

**WELCOME NEW CLINICAL FACULTY**  Christina Mnatzaganian, PharmD, BCACP

Dr. Christina Mnatzaganian, Health Sciences Assistant Clinical Professor, joined SSPPS in August 2015. Dr. Mnatzaganian attended the University of Arizona where she received a BS in Business Administration in 2003 and a Doctor of Pharmacy degree in 2011. She completed a one-year Community Pharmacy Practice residency at University of Hawaii-Hilo and is board certified in ambulatory care. Prior to joining UCSD, Dr. Mnatzaganian worked as an Assistant Professor at the Daniel K Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP) at the University of Hawaii-Hilo, specializing in chronic disease management, women’s health, and public health issues. She was the chartering adviser for Phi Lambda Sigma Pharmacy Leadership Society and served as Grand Council Deputy for Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity at DKICP. She has a passion for teaching and her teaching responsibilities at SSPPS will include developing and directing a community pharmacy residency program, chairing Pharmacy Calculations, serving as a Conference Leader in the Pharmacy Practice Course, and teaching didactic courses (e.g., Pharmacy Practice and Therapeutics). One of her goals is to improve student learning by including humor in teaching.
PROMOTION AND APPOINTMENTS
Congratulations to the following clinical faculty on their promotions:

- Dr. Linda Awdishu, Health Sciences Associate Clinical Professor
- Dr. Eduardo Fricovsky, Health Sciences Associate Clinical Professor
- Dr. Douglas Humber, Health Sciences Clinical Professor
- Dr. Jennifer Le, Professor of Clinical Pharmacy and Pediatrics

HONORS and AWARDS

- Dr. Rabia Atayee received Board Re-Certification in Pharmacotherapy from the Board of Pharmacy Specialties.
- Dr. Linda Awdishu received an Award for Excellence in Medication Use Safety from the American Society of Health Systems Pharmacists Foundation.
- Dr. Linda Awdishu received the Barbara and Paul Saltman Distinguished Teaching Award from UC San Diego.
- Dr. Brookie Best was Top 5 Reviewer of 2014 for Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes.
- Dr. Grace Kuo was re-appointed as a member of the Editorial Board of the NIH NHGRI G2C2 (Genetics/Genomics Competency Center) Program.
- Dr. Grace Kuo was appointed as a voting delegate of the United States Pharmacopeia (USP).
- Dr. Jennifer Le received Board Re-certification in Pharmacotherapy from the Board of Pharmacy Specialties.
- Dr. Jennifer Le was recognized as Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist with Added Qualifications in Infectious Diseases by the Board of Pharmacy Specialties.
- Dr. Jennifer Le was invited as Editorial Faculty Chair for the Pediatric Self-Assessment Program of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy.
- Dr. Kelly Lee received accreditation from ASHP Commission on Credentialing for PGY2 Psychiatric Pharmacy.
- Dr. Kelly Lee was selected as Co-Chair for Assessment SIG Sub-Committee on Culture of Assessment.
- Dr. Sarah McBane received the National Community Pharmacists Association Leadership Award.
- Dr. Sarah McBane received CSHP Grassroots Advocacy Award.
- Dr. Sarah McBane was elected to be the President of the California Pharmacists Association.
- Dr. Sarah McBane was selected to be Member of the Clinical Practice Affairs Committee of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy.
- Dr. Sarah McBane was selected as the Chair of the Resolutions Committee, Pharmacy Practice Section, American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy.
- Dr. Felix Yam was recognized as a Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist with Added Qualifications in Cardiology by the Board of Pharmacy Specialties.
- Dr. Felix Yam was awarded the Faculty Preceptor of the Year Award by the Class of 2015.

CLINICAL SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS:

- Dr. Rabia Atayee created inpatient palliative care pharmacist interventions and outcomes flowsheet.
- Dr. Linda Awdishu’s clinic received the Disease Specific Re-Certification in Chronic Kidney Disease from The Joint Commission.
- Dr. Linda Awdishu developed a registry of chronic kidney disease patients.
- Dr. Linda Awdishu developed automated reporting of ASCVD risk.
- Dr. Linda Awdishu developed patient education videos on chronic kidney disease which are now on UCSD Health System YouTube Playlist.
- Dr. Jan Hirsch, Executive Director of Partners in Medication Therapy (PMT), launched a Truvada Patient Counseling program via televideo and continued to provide Medication Education services [print media and website (MedEdUCSHIP.org)] and MTM.
SSPPS News

The Summer Preceptor Skills Workshop

By Amber Berean

On Saturday, August 1st, the Office of Experiential Education (OEE) hosted the Summer Preceptor Skills Workshop “Approaches to Effective Preceptor Teaching,” a refresher course for experienced preceptors and a learning opportunity for new preceptors and residents. The workshop was led by Stephen Schneid, MHPE, Health Sciences Educator and Co-Director of the Team-Based Learning (TBL) Program at SSPPS, who focused on such skills as preceptor teaching roles, a systematic approach to clinical teaching, asking effective questions, developing teaching scripts, and promoting self-directed learning. The Summer Preceptor Skills Workshop also featured an Expert Preceptor Panel featuring seasoned preceptors: Dr. Juan Toledo, PharmD, UC San Diego Health System, Hillcrest; Dr. Jonathan Lacro, PharmD, VA San Diego Healthcare System; Dr. Marcie Lepkowsky, PharmD, UC San Diego Health System, Hillcrest; Dr. Jonathan Watanabe, PharmD, PhD, Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences; Dr. Renu Singh, PharmD, Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. The OEE is planning to host this workshop again next year and are already working on ways to further enrich the experience.

The New CA BOP Intern Hours Legislation Positively Impacts Pharmacy Students

By Drs. David Adler and Candis Morello

We have some important news to share with you!

Since 2013, UCSD SSPPS and UCSF have been working with the California State Board of Pharmacy (CA BOP) and other California Schools of Pharmacy to change the laws regarding intern hour requirements. We are thrilled to report that the change has finally occurred. Exact details, outlining the changes and how all of this impacts you, are bulleted below:
What is the OLD Law?
- Prior to qualifying to take the California Pharmacists Jurisprudence Exam (CPJE), the CA BOP required 1,500 intern hours experience from pharmacy graduates.
- Of the 1,500 intern hours, 600 were required to be related to the practice of pharmacy and the School of Pharmacy granted these. For the remaining 900 hours, pharmacy interns were required to complete these in a licensed pharmacy and they required signed affidavits from licensed pharmacist preceptors.

What helped CHANGE the Law?
- In 2013 Dean Emeritus Taylor appointed a joint UCSD/UCSF Intern Hour Committee with David Adler as chair and asked Drs. Candis Morello, Jonathan Watanabe, Felix Yam, Ken Schell, Raffi Simonian and then SSPPS student John Garrett (Class of 2015), with UCSF Dean Guglielmo appointed faculty of Drs. Marcus Ferrone and Jennifer Cocohoba and students Katherine Gruenberg and Henock Woldu, to move the issues forward.
- For two years, SSPPS and UCSF have worked with CA BOP and other pharmacy schools to modernize the above historic requirement.
- Change required agreement across the profession and legislative amendments.
- A legislative bill, SB590, was put forward in California.
- On August 7, 2015, this legislation was signed by Governor Brown and “Chaptered” and becomes effective AS NEW LAW on January 1, 2016, impacting ALL student pharmacists graduating from an ACPE accredited pharmacy school.

What is the NEW Law?
- Specifically the NEW LAW now reads:

  SECTION 1. Section 4209 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

  (d) An applicant for the examination (CPJE) who has graduated after January 1, 2016, from an ACPE accredited college of pharmacy or school of pharmacy recognized by the board shall be deemed to have satisfied the pharmacy practice experience requirements specified in subdivisions (a) and (b).

- This law modification recognizes the changes that have occurred in pharmacy education since 2000, allowing the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) standards of combined experiential IPPE and APPE hours which satisfies the 1,500 intern hour requirement.

How does this impact SSPPS Graduates?
- The Class of 2016 will be the first class to benefit from this new ruling. This will change and simplify the filing requirements for taking the CPJE. We anticipate the State Board of Pharmacy will be revising their filing procedures and we should have that information by January 2016. We will provide you this information as we receive it.
- The bottom line; Dr. Morello, on behalf of UCSD SSPPS, will provide the BOP with a letter confirming that you have graduated from an ACPE accredited school of pharmacy and have satisfied the experiential experience requirement. Effective immediately, signed intern affidavit forms are NO LONGER needed.
- This change has been long needed and the students in classes before you and your faculty have provided the support for this change.
- Internship opportunities will continue to be available for those who desire additional practice experience and for those who wish to work. However, the burden of completing the additional 900 hours is now REMOVED.
- We look forward to seeing you at your Class Orientations and we can answer other related questions at that time.
How does this impact SSPPS Faculty and Preceptors?

- Effective immediately, California school of pharmacy graduates NO LONGER need to complete intern affidavit forms.

The Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences hosted three high school students for summer research internships. Manuel Sobo, Margarita Sanz, and Diana de la Toba are students in the Mater Dei High School (Chula Vista) Science Academy directed by Dr. Suzanne Till. Their summer internships are supported by a grant from the ALSAM Foundation (Skaggs Family). Manuel apprenticed with computer scientist, Dr. Ruben Abagyan, Margarita learned about robotic drug screens with Dr. Stephan Meister and Diana worked on the molecular biology of the schistosome parasite with Dr. Danielle Skinner.

Regional Legislative Day
By Binh Tran, PharmD

“If you cannot attend the Legislative events in Sacramento, you can meet some of the representatives today”, said Dr. Sarah McBane, President of California Pharmacists Association, welcoming the pharmacists practicing at various settings and students at the first Regional Legislative Day at UC San Diego Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences on May 30, 2015.

Dr. Grace Kuo, Professor of Clinical Pharmacy & Associate Dean for Academic Clinical Affairs, gave an excellent keynote presentation, “Provider status: opportunities, provisions and payment for services.” Brian Warren, Vice President, Center for Advocacy, and Megan Maddox, Policy & Advocacy Manager, presented a review of state legislation affecting pharmacy practice.

Jeff Stone, PharmD, gave a spirited and insightful view of his personal experiences as he made the change from a pharmacist delivering meds to a political candidate knocking at constituents’ doors to becoming a Senator for the State of California District 28. Brian Maienschein of district 77 was active with the United Way in San Diego and Brian Jones of District 71 also expressed his views.

Next, participants joined breakout discussions with the Representatives’ staff. In the group with Jason Weisz, Senior Field Representative for Speaker of the Assembly Toni Atkins, many pharmacists reinforced their concerns on:

- AB 627 Maximum allowable cost transparency,
- Medical therapy management as a Medi-Cal benefit.
Other two featured areas were:
- SB 672 Pharmacist peer review protections, and
- SB 277 Public health vaccinations.

We thank Dr. McBane, California Pharmacists Association and UC San Diego Skaggs School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences for hosting this very helpful Legislative Day. We also thank the distinguished Legislative Representatives and all pharmacist attendees for their participation. Two CE Credit hours (ACPE) were obtained for pharmacists attending the event. A similar meeting may be held in Orange County for the Vietnamese pharmacists in that area.

Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences Hosts Pharmacy Students from UC San Francisco

The UC San Diego Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences is hosting two pharmacy students from UC San Francisco for two six-week blocks (one in cardiology and one in oncology) this academic year. They received a thorough orientation from their preceptors and started developing connections with their UC San Diego student colleagues.

Pharmacy Screening Event

By Binh Tran, PharmD

Thank you to all of you that participated in the screening event at Royal Hall. We appreciate Dr. Chan and Christine Nguyen's kindness for letting us use the beautiful Hall, which is normally reserved for celebrations in the area.

We thank Brian Myers of City Heights for coming to interview members of the APHF at a typical screening event.
Dr. Robert Gish spoke on various aspects of hepatitis work from APHF, Hepatitis B Foundation, and the CDC. Binh Tran answered questions on the operations at a health outreach, and activities in conjunction with the National Task Force on hepatitis B with focus on Asians and Pacific Islander Americans. Sandy Chong, Michael Pham and Tuan Phan spoke on their participation in projects at Skaggs School of Pharmacy that benefit the community in San Diego. Karen Yu, who worked last summer on expanding the hepatitis screening project to the Pacific Islander populations, has finished the coordination of the elective course Hep Free San Diego in Spring. Her help and Sandy's are much appreciated. Anne Nguyen, Shareen Faltas, Lisa Vuong, and Gary Tang took care of registration and provided help at the centrifugation tables. Khushi and Karla took care of the osteoporosis station, with occasional translation help from Quyen Nguyen, who was mainly at the hypertension screening with Dr. Viet Truong. Dr. Ton Tran provided counseling for some patients. We screened 17 persons for hepatitis B and C, osteoporosis and hypertension. After the event closed at 1:00 PM, most students, staff members and hosts walked to nearby Pho Van and had a relaxing lunch after a good day's work.

Alumni News

Lieutenant, Medical Services Corps, United States Navy
By Sam Mendoza – Class of 2013

Following graduation, I entered into the US Navy as a pharmacist, receiving the rank of lieutenant (equivalent to an army captain), which is the standard rank for people entering with doctoral degrees. I volunteered for and was accepted for assignment to Naval Hospital Guantanamo Bay Cuba. The hospital is located on a navy base isolated from the rest of Cuba; the only travel on or off the island is by airplane.

As one of two pharmacists for the hospital and the whole base, I was assigned as the Assistant Department Head for Pharmacy. We covered all inpatient and outpatient medication needs for the hospital and over 5000 base inhabitants; military, civilian, and foreign national workers. We supported all tenant base commands, which included various naval support activities, Coast Guard vessels, the Marine Corps Security Force, and the Joint Task Force/Joint Medical Group. In the short 18 months I was stationed in “Gitmo,” I was able to learn a lot about Navy Pharmacy; in turn our department was able to accomplish many things. I was indoctrinated into hospital inpatient and outpatient operations, pharmacy logistics, formulary management, and leadership as a military pharmacist. Pharmacy Department was able to spearhead and successfully implement a new IV infusion pump system promoting patient safety, streamline and improve the performance of the hospital’s automated dispensing cabinets, and we were able to coordinate and execute the base’s first DEA Drug Take Back Day. Our Pharmacy Department also provided medications to the Navy’s only assisted living program, a program that covers care for Cuban refugees that fled to US territory during the Fidel Castro regime.

As a junior naval officer, I was also assigned duties outside of pharmacy. These duties are meant to cultivate the knowledge and skills needed for my
next rank. I stood watch as the hospital’s Command Duty Officer (CDO), learning hospital operations, administration, resource, and facility management. In this capacity I reported to the Commanding Officer and acted as his representative during after-hour operations. Concurrently, I was assigned as the Patient Safety Investigator for Ancillary Services (Laboratory, Pharmacy, Radiology, and Physical Therapy Department). In this role, our group sought to improve patient safety by looking at errors discovered through normal practice and designing measures to prevent future occurrences.

My assignment to Naval Hospital Guantanamo Bay presented many challenges. Frequently placed in situations that required calmness, planning, and resourcefulness, I was immediately looked at as pharmacy subject matter expert regardless of the fact that I just graduated a few months prior. However, I could say that my education and training at Skaggs was successful in providing me the foundation and tools to succeed. I’m thankful for that.

I’m currently assigned to Naval Medical Center San Diego as a Staff Pharmacist, Division Officer for the Central Refill Pharmacy and Temporary Division Officer for Naval Branch Health Clinic Pharmacies. It’s a bigger, faster, and a more challenging role than “Gitmo”, but I’m excited for the challenge, the opportunity for learning, and a chance for bigger adventures.

Katie Watkins, PharmD
Alumni Class of 2008

UCSF Medical Center
Heart and Lung Transplant Clinical Pharmacist

Presented at the Heart and Lung Transplantation 35th Annual Meeting and Scientific Sessions in Nice, France, April 2015.

Lecture Title: “Up in the Air: Can My Drug Be Nebulized?”


Presented a webinar recap of the conference for the American College of Clinical Pharmacy Transplant and Immunology practice and research network (ACCP):

“What was nice from Nice: an update from the ISHLT 2015 Annual Meeting.”

ACCP immunology/transplant PRN educational Webinar, June 2015
Class of 2007 Alumni Awarded Intermountain Medical Center Resident Preceptor of the Year for 2014-2015

Danielle (Mahfood) Scott, PharmD,
SSPPS Class of 2007
Intermountain Medical Center
Newborn ICU Clinical Pharmacist

Alternative Pharmacy Careers

By Lindsey and Natalie Hohmann, Doctors of Pharmacy
UC San Diego, Skaggs School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences Alumni 2012

The field of pharmacy is advancing and changing. From providing immunizations, to medication therapy management (MTM), to provider status, there are so many new opportunities. This opens the door for new career paths and new education for pharmacists beyond the traditional community and hospital pharmacist roles. We will share a bit about our experiences navigating the changing pharmacy landscape.

We graduated from UC San Diego Skaggs School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences in 2012 – as far as we know, we are the first pair of identical twins to graduate together from the school. We were lucky enough to be admitted together, and to follow a very similar educational path. We worked with Rite Aid as intern pharmacists during school and volunteered at Palomar Medical Center. When rotations came around in our fourth year, we
experienced a mix of hospital, ambulatory care, and specialty pharmacy areas. We also attended a rotation at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) at the same time – twin luck! This was a wonderful experience that first piqued our interest in alternative pharmacy careers.

We always thought that we wanted to practice pharmacy in the patient care arena, so we applied to several residency programs, but were disappointed that we did not match. However, we were both offered pharmacist positions with Rite Aid in our hometown – this was a great opportunity, so we accepted and spent the next three years in these positions. Community pharmacy really allows you to be involved in patient care, while MTM and outreach events keep you busy. At times, we were even able to work together at the same store and confuse all our patients and coworkers! We also worked as part-time consultants and medical writers for a San Diego-based drug information company.

Although we were secure working in community pharmacy, we both began to feel that we wanted to do more – be more involved in the changes we saw happening in pharmacy, particularly the movement towards pharmacy outcomes research we witnessed through our MTM work. We thought about different areas of pharmacy practice – hospital, ambulatory care, etc. We also thought about options for post-PharmD education – residencies, fellowships, and masters and doctoral programs. Throughout our education we were so focused on clinical practice that we realized we had missed less common career paths – government, research, and academia. There is so much you can do in these nontraditional fields: mentor students in academia; monitor pharmaceutical innovations on a broad scale in government; and influence new changes in research. We received so much help and support from our teachers and advisors at Skaggs, encouraging us to pursue a new path. With this in mind, we decided that the best way to advance our careers was to advance our education, and we applied to doctoral programs in pharmacy outcomes research.

This fall, we were admitted to the Health Outcomes Research and Policy PhD Program at the Harrison School of Pharmacy in Auburn, Alabama – together again! At Auburn University, we will attend classes for two years followed by dissertation work for two years. We were nervous to leave our careers in community pharmacy and even our home state, but we knew that we wanted to advance our careers. We could not be happier with this decision, as already we have begun to delve into research and even made connections with former classmates pursuing their own research. With a PhD in this field, so many pharmacy careers open up – the FDA, National Institutes of Health (NIH), MTM or insurance companies, university professorships and research appointments, contract research organizations (CRO’s), and big pharma, to name a few. We do not know where our paths will lead next, but are excited for the future!

For those pharmacy students looking for something different, we hope our journey sheds some light on alternative pharmacy careers. There are so many options – do not be afraid to go back to school or pursue a career that is different from your peers. The right path is out there, you just have to recognize it.

Taste of UC San Diego Alumni Event

Jonathan Watanabe, PharmD/PhD. Featured Speaker at Taste of UC San Diego. Dr. Jonathan Watanabe of the Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences was one of five faculty members featured at the Taste of UC San Diego held on June 4, 2015.

When I graduated from UC – San Diego Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (SSPPS) on May 18, 2013, I knew two things: 1) I was moving to Chicago for a PGY1 Pharmacy Residency at North Shore University Health System, and 2) I wanted to pursue specialty residency training in Geriatrics. Beyond those two facts, I was unsure where the pursuit of residency training would take me. Ten days after graduating from UCSD, I packed what possessions I could into my Honda Civic, and embarked on the 2,000-mile journey to Chicago.

As a PGY1 Resident at North Shore, I developed skills as an acute care pharmacist in both a distributive and clinical role, while simultaneously balancing precepting responsibilities and research projects. There were many late nights and early mornings, but the rewarding part of the residency was that the majority of the patient population was primarily over age 65. This experience with the older adult population helped me to decide to pursue a PGY2 Residency in Geriatrics. Unfortunately, there were no PGY2 Geriatrics programs in the Chicago area, which meant I would have to move after completing the PGY1 residency. On Match Day 2014, I received an e-mail stating I had matched at the VA Boston for a PGY2 Residency in Geriatrics.

The day after I finished my PGY1 residency in Chicago, I packed up my belongings into a 10-foot U-Haul truck towing my Civic, and embarked for Boston. I awoke the morning of July 4th, 2014 to find myself 3,000 miles away from where I graduated at UCSD just 14 months earlier. During my PGY2 residency, I trained alongside the Harvard Geriatric Medicine Fellows in a multidisciplinary Geriatrics outpatient clinic. In this clinic, I improved the lives of older adults by identifying potentially inappropriate medications and suggesting age-appropriate therapeutic alternatives. In October 2014, I was extremely fortunate to attend the ASHP John W. Webb Award Lecture, presented to our very own Dr. Charles Daniels, held at Northeastern University School of Pharmacy in Boston. Attending Dr. Daniels’ lecture was one of the highlights of my time in Boston and it was a very proud day to be a graduate of UCSD SSPPS.

Halfway through the residency at the VA Boston, I decided to pursue pharmacist positions in the Chicago area, where I was born and raised. After an arduous job search, I accepted a Clinical Pharmacist position at the University of Chicago Medicine (UCM) in July 2015. After finishing my PGY2 residency at the VA Boston, I packed up my belongings into a 10-foot U-Haul truck towing my Civic (again) and made the 1,000-mile journey back to Chicago. The position at UCM is a hybrid clinical pharmacist position in which I split time equally between an inpatient operations/hospital position and an outpatient anticoagulation clinic. The majority of patients in the anticoagulation clinic are older adults with complex comorbidities, so I still utilize the specialty training in geriatrics. The position also has multiple opportunities for research as well as teaching, and I could not be more pleased to start my pharmacist career at an academic medical center of such prestige.
As I reflect on my two-year and 4,000-mile journey since graduating from UCSD SSPPS in May 2013, I have three conclusions: 1) Pharmacy is a small world. I heard this phrase when I was a student at UCSD SSPPS, but did not believe it until I started expanding my pharmacy network during two years of residency. 2) Follow your dreams. It was difficult to move three consecutive years, but I am proud that I completed the PGY2 Residency in Geriatrics and fulfilled the goal I had when I graduated from UCSD SSPPS. 3) Advancement of patient care is the motivation to complete additional training and certification. As pharmacists, we endure a lengthy process to complete pharmacy school, become licensed, and complete additional training. If you forget why you are completing additional training, remember, the end result is to help patients by advancing the practice of pharmacy.

Dan Ford, PharmD – Charter Class of 2006

After starting the decentralized ICU program at North Bay Medical Center in 2009, I became the Clinical Coordinator and now have the title of Clinical Practice Manager. As of a year and a half ago, I also became our Residency Program Director for our PGY1 residency. But of course my biggest accomplishment is happy family (Ben is 6, Sam is 4 and Catherine (Cate) is 8 months old)!

Megan Chynoweth, PharmD - Class of 2010

Megan Chynoweth graduated from UC San Diego Skaggs School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences in 2010. After graduation, Megan completed a PGY-1 ambulatory care focused residency at Kaiser Permanente Kern County in Bakersfield, CA, her hometown. After residency, Megan was hired on as a clinical ambulatory care pharmacist and became board certified in ambulatory care (BCACP) and a certified diabetes educator (CDE).

As a medically underserved community, there are many key opportunities for pharmacists to serve the Kern County residents. Megan has helped develop, implement, and obtain funding for several pharmacist-run clinical services.

She attributes these achievements to her many invaluable experiences at Skaggs, especially working with Dr. Candis Morello.
Currently, Megan is a renal ambulatory care pharmacist. With full prescriptive authority, she works directly with early stage chronic kidney disease (CKD) patients to prevent or prolong the progression of the CKD. She assists the patients in managing their diabetes, blood pressure, cholesterol, and any other risk factors that may contribute to CKD progression. As part of an interdisciplinary team, she also conducts home medication reconciliations for dialysis patients at risk for hospital admissions.

Megan remains active in local and state pharmacy associations and has served as the local chapter president and on state committees. She is also involved in the local diabetes educator association. In her free time, she enjoys hiking, hosting dinner parties for family and friends, and attending NFL games.

Staff News
Three SSPPS Staff members were honored and celebrated over a lovely lunch on September 15th for their many years of service at UC San Diego. Congratulations Shelly, Yvette and Shirley!

Shelly Fromholtz – 10 years
Yvette Durazo – 10 years
Shirley Lash – 40 years

Quarterly SSPPS Newsletter Production Calendar

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