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If you would like to continue supporting our school and our mission, we welcome you to:

Give Now

A Message from the Dean

James H. McKerrow, PhD, MD



Deep into the remote winter of 2021, getting as many people vaccinated against COVID-19 as possible is a current goal. So we should first recognize the heroes of our school: faculty, staff, and students who have volunteered at the Petco Park Vaccination Superstation. Remember our students are licensed as immunizers and many already gave flu vaccinations earlier this year (I got one!). As the newly elected Chair of the California Pharmacy Council, I organized the Deans of California schools of pharmacy to petition the California Board of Pharmacy for a restructuring of the current vaccination supervisor regulation. We won a waiver! Our students can now be supervised on site by other health care professionals besides licensed pharmacists. This will expand volunteer opportunities.

We should also recognize the efforts of our faculty, staff, and especially our Associate Dean for Assessment, Dr. Kelly Lee, for a successful response to the accreditation visit by the ACPE. Our school is accredited until 2029.

Despite the current pandemic, our faculty and research community have continued to make great strides in science, clinical practice, and education. This has included groundbreaking work on the discovery of new therapy for SARS-CoV-2 infections.

Read more about the contributions of staff, faculty, and students elsewhere in this Newsletter.



SSPPS Faculty and Students Vaccinate with UC San Diego Health at Petco Park!

by Rosalyn Nguyen (P1 Student), Monica Sliwa (P3 Student Ambassador), Amanpreet Sarai (P3 Student)

Sarah Lorentz, PharmD, Director of MTM and IPPE

Linda Awdishu, PharmD, Professor and Division Head, Clinical Pharmacy



The Moderna and Pfizer vaccines for prevention of COVID-19 were authorized for emergency use by the FDA and recommended by ACIP in December 2020. ACIP provided guidance on vaccination allocation based on a tiered approach with vaccination of healthcare personnel and long-term care residents in the first tier.

The next hurdle was organizing to deliver mass vaccinations and UC San Diego Health accomplished this tremendous task in five days! A superstation at Petco Park was designed through a collaboration between the County of San Diego, UC San Diego Health and the San Diego Padres.¹ This planning involved securing a location, event planning, vaccine supply and funding, information technology infrastructure, staffing plan, clinical care workflows, and documentation in the EHR.¹ On January 11, 2021 the UC San Diego Health COVID-19 vaccination superstation was opened. In just two weeks, 58,000 people were vaccinated and the superstation averages 5,000 vaccinations per day.



Faculty and students from UC San Diego SSPPS played an integral role in volunteering to vaccinate our community of San Diego. Volunteers filled different roles of vaccinators, observers, and runners. Drs. Sarah Lorentz and Alex Luli coordinated our efforts for COVID-19 vaccination clinic opportunities across San Diego. Faculty and students volunteered in 8-hour shifts starting at 6:30am and ending at 8:00pm with few breaks. This is not easy work! Volunteers were required to wear PPE, screen patients for contraindications and precautions, provide appropriate vaccine information statements, review any vaccination records in the EHR, instruct drivers to wait 15 minutes in their cars after receiving the vaccination, follow proper vaccine administration practices, and observe patients for vaccine-related adverse effects.



From mid-January to mid-February, our student pharmacists and faculty have participated in a total of 64 shifts. In addition, SSPPS has volunteered a total of 458 hours dedicated to vaccinating San Diego County. Volunteers vaccinated outside in different weather conditions, logging 10,000-15,000 steps, and working at a pace of four patients per 15 minutes per vaccinator. There were many emotions – anxiety over getting the vaccine, relief and gratitude, and so much kindness. We all felt a sense of privilege and duty to vaccinate the community and reduce the risk of severe COVID-19 infections. Students shared the following sentiments:

“I really enjoyed this experience, and I am glad I was able to help out with the COVID-19 vaccine vaccination effort. The other volunteers I worked with were fantastic at their roles, which pushed me to be better at my role as an observer. I also really enjoyed getting to know the volunteers I worked with because they come from different interesting backgrounds. And most importantly, I felt great that I was able to help the patients who got vaccinated and happy when they were thanking me for coming out and volunteering.”

“It was a very eye-opening experience. I have never seen a vaccination site as big as this one. I enjoyed working alongside so many different health care professionals. It was fulfilling to have been able to take part in this large-scale effort to vaccinate.”

“It was a great experience for me since I saw many people who were trying to stop the pandemic by getting their vaccines while they were aware that the COVID-19 vaccine was found by a new technology.”



Alongside UC San Diego SSPPS pharmacy students were faculty members making an effort to help vaccinate the community. Dr. Awdishu shares what motivated her to volunteer, “I felt an intense calling to jump in and vaccinate the public against COVID19. Words can’t express all the emotions I felt as a volunteer vaccinator. I was nervous at first administering vaccines in a drive-through at the Petco Vaccination Superstation and that quickly disappeared as patients were so grateful and smiling from ear to ear. They waved and cheered us on. I felt so proud to work for UCSD and be a part of the well-organized superstation. That moment, I realized that I was helping San Diego return safely to normal and making history.”

Additionally, Dr. Morello shares her experience, “At the vaccination center, I served as a runner to keep our lanes running smoothly, maintain stock, troubleshoot challenges, and to keep our patients successfully vaccinated and satisfied. The job description was no joke since I got up to 18,000 steps in a shift! Initially our team gathered as mostly strangers, but immediately we created a cohesive

functioning team. Seeing our SSPPS student pharmacists in action made me feel so proud! My favorite part was experiencing the sense of community and collegiality as our team worked together to successfully serve our patients. I felt humbled to be involved, yet also very proud to be UCSD Health and an SSPPS faculty member.”



These efforts will be ongoing for months and SSPPS is committed to improving the health of San Diego through COVID-19 vaccination.

1. Longhurst CA, Kremer B, Maysent PS. Rapid Implementation of a Vaccination Superstation. *JAMA*. 2021.

Alumni Highlights: COVID-19 Vaccine Distributions

by Jenna Bastear, Director of Student Affairs

SSPPS alumni are spread far and wide and many have been working tirelessly over this last year to aid in protecting the community from the spread of COVID-19. On top of their daily required roles, many of our courageous alumni are actively combatting the COVID-19 pandemic by distributing the approved vaccines in their communities. A few have kindly shared some of their experiences and photos with us so that we may share them with you.



Dr. Robert Mancini – Boise, ID

Like so many, Dr. Robert Mancini (Class of 2008) has volunteered his time to help in the vaccination effort by vaccinating other healthcare workers on weekends and when time allows.



Dr. Chad Friece – Plano, TX

Dr. Chad Friece (Class of 2007) and his pharmacy team, including APPE students, have been involved in COVID-19 vaccine preparation at all of their vaccine clinics in Plano.



Dr. Jason Lam – San Diego, CA

“In December 2020, our San Diego community started to receive doses of the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines to protect our highest-risk frontline clinicians and long-term care patients. Thinking back to my white coat ceremony at SSPPS, the first time I practiced injecting saline into an orange, the first flu shot I gave to a patient after I graduated, all of these moments prepared me to be ready for this historic moment. Pharmacy is more than a job, it even transcends a career, it is a calling. I’m proud that we alumni are answering the call.” – Dr. Jason Lam (Class of 2006)

“CVS/Health has contracted with local Skilled Nursing Facilities, post-acute, sub-acute, and assisted living facilities across the South Bay to vaccinate high-risk healthcare workers and their patients. These locations are famous for their initial large outbreaks of the COVID-19, with some facilities having at least half the staff and residents being COVID-19 positive two weeks prior or at the time of getting the vaccine, but asymptomatic. On average, we are vaccinating 100-200 staff and residents per day in teams of 5-6 pharmacists. I am a ‘Depot Runner’ and am charged with bringing vaccine supplies to clinic each day and leading the team, working with the clinics’ managers and optimizing workflow.”

- Dr. Mustafa Hussain (Class of 2018)

Dr. Hussain can also be seen in a [recent news report](#) showcasing the vaccination efforts in the Bay Area of California



Dr. Mustafa Hussain – Santa Clara, CA

Walgreens Volunteering Opportunity: COVID-19 Vaccinations

by Montana Panec, P1 Student, UCSD-ASCP VP of Immunizations 2020-2021

At the beginning of the 2021 Winter Quarter, Dr. Tiffany Huynh, the Healthcare Supervisor for Walgreens, approached the UC San Diego student chapter of American Society of Consultant Pharmacists (ASCP) and offered us the opportunity to volunteer administering COVID-19 vaccines to residents of long-term care and assisted living facilities as part of Operation Warp Speed. We quickly got to work planning and organizing, and starting in mid-January, our students were out in the field administering the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. So far, students have signed up for a total of 44 shifts located in both San Diego and Orange counties. I spoke to a couple of the student volunteers to get their thoughts on their experiences with this volunteering opportunity.

Evelyn Mendoza, a first-year student pharmacist, recently volunteered at The Shores Post-Acute Nursing Facility in San Diego and shared her experience with me:

This event was the most rewarding and challenging clinic I have ever been to. I had the opportunity to help vaccinate the older adult population in an environment that I have never experienced. It allowed me to get out of my comfort zone and push me to be a better student pharmacist.

Another first-year student pharmacist, Phuong Tran, lives in Orange County and was able to volunteer close to home at Anaheim Healthcare Center. Phuong shared the following on her experience:

Volunteering at the Walgreens Clinic was a very rewarding experience because I got to help administer COVID vaccines to long-term care patients. The staff was very welcoming and this event allowed me a wonderful opportunity to give back to my community during this pandemic.

On behalf of UCSD-ASCP, we are so thankful to all the students who have volunteered thus far. We have received very positive feedback from the Walgreens team, and they are grateful to have the extra help! We are excited to continue to work with the Walgreens team and to be a part of such an incredible opportunity to make an impact in the geriatric community.



First-year student pharmacist, Montana Panec, volunteering at Villa Lorena Senior Living alongside two Walgreens pharmacists.

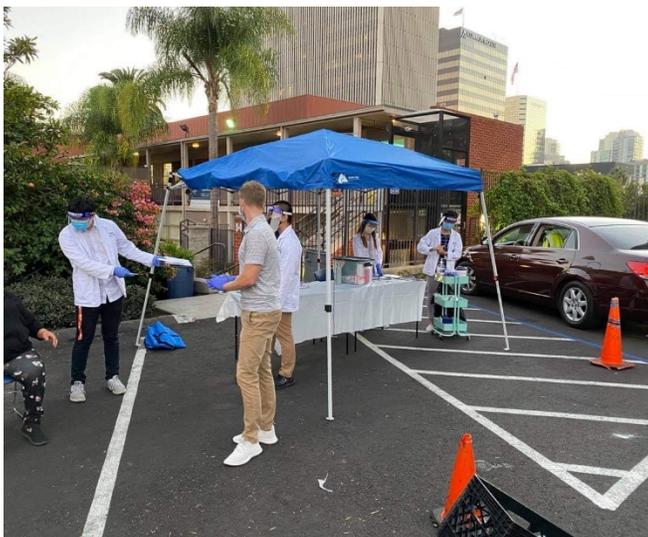
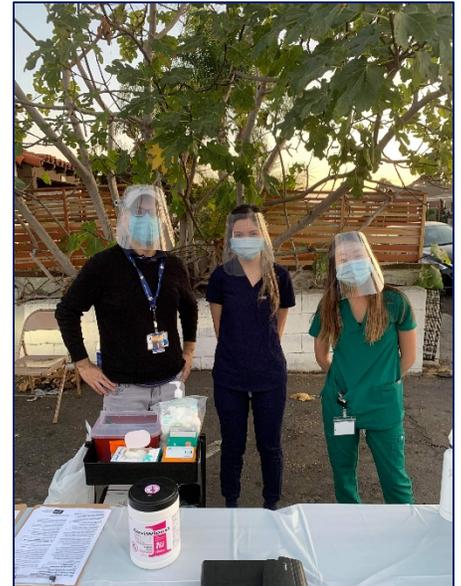
Drive-thru Flu Clinics at the Student-Run Free Clinics

by Emily Lim, P2 Student, Operation Immunization

From October 13, 2020 to February 9, 2021, the first ever drive-thru vaccination clinics were held at the UC San Diego Student-Run Free Clinics. Months of planning between the Free Clinic SSPPS-student managers and Drs. Alex Luli and Eduardo Fricovsky came to fruition. Flu clinics continued on a weekly basis at the Downtown, Normal Heights, and Pacific Beach locations. They were managed by APhA Operation Immunization Chairs Rosalyn Nguyen (P1) and Emily Lim (P2) and by Immunization Committee members Raymond Wen (P2), Parto Pakravan (P2), and Melanie Kwok (P1). A total of 25 flu clinics were held with 49 SSPPS student volunteers for a total of 165 flu shots administered.

How did student volunteers and pharmacists adjust their vaccinating protocol?

Patients parked their cars in designated spots, where they were screened for COVID-19 symptoms and contraindications to the influenza immunization. Volunteers were provided the appropriate PPE - eye protection, medical-grade surgical masks, and gloves. We used a vaccine rolling cart stocked with the typical supplies including a sharps container, bandages, alcohol swabs, hand sanitizer, and gloves. Patients remained in their cars for the duration of the vaccine administration, counseling, and waiting period in case of an allergic reaction. All flu shots were administered under direct supervision of an experienced immunizing pharmacist.



What were the most pressing challenges faced during the flu clinics?

Outdoor flu clinics faced many challenges including Wi-Fi logistics, scheduling, and visibility. In the past, flu clinics were set up as a booth indoors where patients in the vicinity could freely walk up and be screened. Due to distancing measures, a maximum number of patients per clinic were scheduled in intervals, which meant that the number of clinics had to increase in order to accommodate the patient population of the free clinics. One of the most challenging aspects of the Downtown and Pacific Beach flu clinics was the lack of light since these

clinics were held later in the evening after sunset. The volunteers and pharmacists overcame these barriers by using portable LED lamps and headlights.

The Flu Clinic Managers would like to thank all of the pharmacists and SSPPS student volunteers for their dedication and teamwork in making these drive-thru flu clinics possible. We look forward to the next season and any future immunization opportunities.

SSPPS Students Vaccinate for COVID-19 at UCI Bren Center

by Parto Pakravan, P2 Student, Student Organizer



When faced with the pandemic in March last year, we, as responsible health care professionals, stepped up as leaders in the community's fight against COVID-19. This February, SSPPS students living in the greater LA/Orange County area, stepped up and got involved with COVID-19 vaccinations at UC Irvine (UCI) Bren Center. Dr. Sarah Lorentz and I planned and coordinated this vaccination outreach with UCI School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (SPPS) faculty.

The students have been volunteering at the UCI Bren Center on the weekend shifts. This community vaccination experience has been an outstanding opportunity for students to participate in the SSPPS Co-curricular and Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experiences programs, and has been

very enthusiastically received by our student pharmacists. Some student volunteers drove all the way from San Diego to UCI to demonstrate their sense of responsibility and accountability to the community!

Student pharmacists were precepted by UCI SPPS vaccination-certified faculty pharmacists and fully participated in clinic operations. Students prepared and administered Pfizer and Moderna COVID vaccines to qualifying patients at one of two pharmacist-run vaccination stations and counseled them regarding the side effects of the vaccine.

Our faculty and students showed amazing enthusiasm, commitment, and flexibility in this collaboration with UCI and did an amazing job representing the Skaggs family in the best way possible.

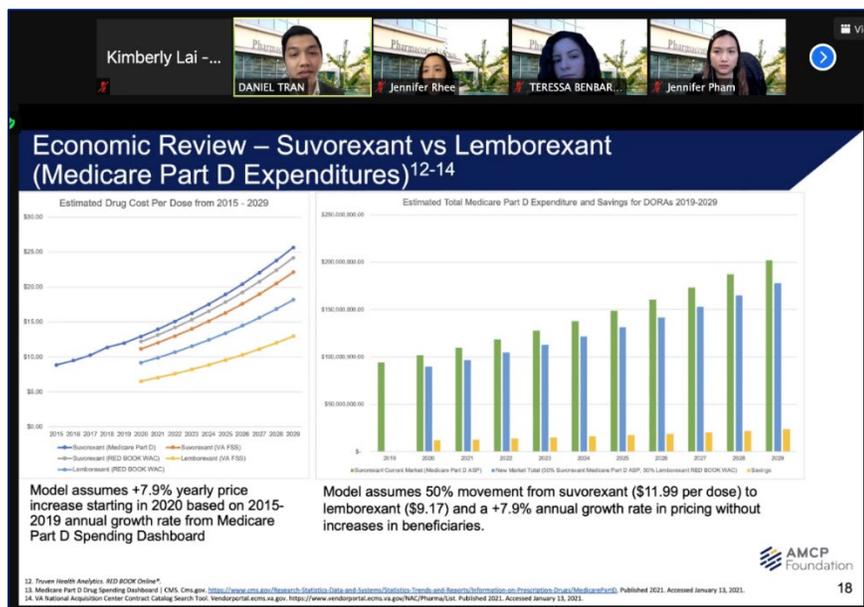
This event provided not only multidisciplinary care between pharmacists and other healthcare professionals but also a great hands-on experience helping to improve students' immunization techniques. During this interprofessional event, patients were checked in and screened prior to arrival at the administration station. Nursing faculty and staff were also involved in administering vaccines at nearby tables, and patients were observed after immunization in an open area monitored by physicians, nursing, and EMS staff.

We pharmacy students have chosen our careers because of our desires to serve people especially in light of this dire situation. Now more than ever, during this global crisis, it is our responsibility to give back to the community in the hope to expedite access to COVID-19 vaccination and fight this pandemic together.



AMCP UC San Diego SSPPS 7th Annual Pharmacy and Therapeutics Competition 2021

by Jeff Peng, P3 Student



On January 16th, 2021, the UC San Diego Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy (AMCP) President, Kimberly Lai, and Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) Chair, Vivian Pham, organized the 7th annual Local P&T Competition through Zoom where seven teams of 3-4 students from SSPPS showcased their ambition and ability to perform comprehensive drug reviews and generated evidence-based decisions to improve patient healthcare, population health, and drug affordability.

The teams presented their months-long hard work of reviewing and synthesizing data from peer-reviewed manuscripts, developing the drug monograph, and generating cost-effective formulary recommendations that would maximize patients' health outcomes under economic constraints.

We would like to recognize the following pharmacists who took the time out of their busy schedules to serve as our judges: Dr. Charles Daniels (UC San Diego Health System), Dr. Judy Truong (Astellas Pharmaceuticals), Dr. Kathy Nguyen (MedImpact), and Dr. Rebecca Kandilian (Kaiser Permanente).

A special congratulations to our local competition winners: Jennifer Rhee, Jennifer Pham, Teresa Benbarka, and Daniel Tran, as they will submit their work to represent SSPPS and compete in the National Competition.

A BIG thank you again to all the judges, student organizers, and competing teams for making this event successful and being flexible with the new virtual format!



Expanding Social Media Outreach during the Pandemic

by Anthony Quach, P3 Student

With the pandemic forcing people to stay inside and be more attentive to their computers or phone screens, it provided the unique opportunity for the Student Ambassador Program here at Skaggs to expand our social media outreach to a wider audience. Our social media presence has slowly but surely grown since we created our platforms four years ago, and the pandemic has certainly helped to engage more prospective students as well as others who are interested in how UC San Diego SSPPS is joining

the collaborative effort to provide healthcare to those in need during these times. Some ways we have expanded our social media outreach include hosting Facebook Live Q&As with our faculty and students as well as highlighting our school's participation in helping the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hosts
Sahar Adibi | Monica Silwa

FACEBOOK LIVE

Q&A

TOPIC: UC SAN DIEGO
SSPPS ADMISSIONS

WHEN
November 6th, 2020

WHERE
Facebook: UC San Diego
Skaggs School of Pharmacy
and Pharmaceutical Sciences

TIME
9 pm (Pacific Time)

CONTACT US
If you are unable to attend, please send us your questions on our social media platforms!

Rabia Atayee
Pharm.D., BCPS, APH
Professor of Clinical Pharmacy
Associate Dean for Admissions and Outreach

Jair Siqueira-Neto
Ph.D.
Associate Adjunct Professor
Admissions Committee Co-chair

Christina Mnatzaganian
Pharm.D., BCACP, APH
Health Sciences Clinical Associate Professor
Admissions Committee Co-chair

UC San Diego
SKAGGS SCHOOL OF PHARMACY
AND PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES

One of our primary goals in utilizing social media is to reach more prospective students and show them the great things our pharmacy school has to offer. Our Facebook Live Q&As have been a great way for anyone who has any interest in our school to attend and talk to our amazing faculty and students in real time and ask them any questions they might have. We believe that people have been more comfortable in attending our virtual Q&As since they are used to having most things be virtual at this point. It is also a brief 20-30 minutes session for each topic so the time commitment is not heavy. Additionally, the recording is available after the session both on our Facebook page and YouTube channel so it gives an opportunity to those who missed the live session to watch it later.

As pharmacists and as frontline workers, our students and faculty enthusiastically stepped up to the plate to help the people in our community affected by the pandemic. The social media team makes sure to highlight the many services provided by our students through posts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. One of our most popular social media posts thanks all our students and faculty at SSPPS for volunteering their time and effort to help administer the COVID-19 vaccines to patients at Petco Park in San Diego. The engagement we see on posts such as this show that many people care about our school's involvement in community efforts during the pandemic. We will continue to showcase our amazing students, faculty, staff, and alumni through our social media platforms to show appreciation for all the hard work they have put in during the pandemic.

In many ways our social media outreach has grown much during the pandemic as our team has adapted to the virtual landscape that society has moved towards. We are always exploring different avenues for reaching out not only to more prospective students interested in our school but also to the public to show how we are playing our part as future pharmacists in the healthcare world.



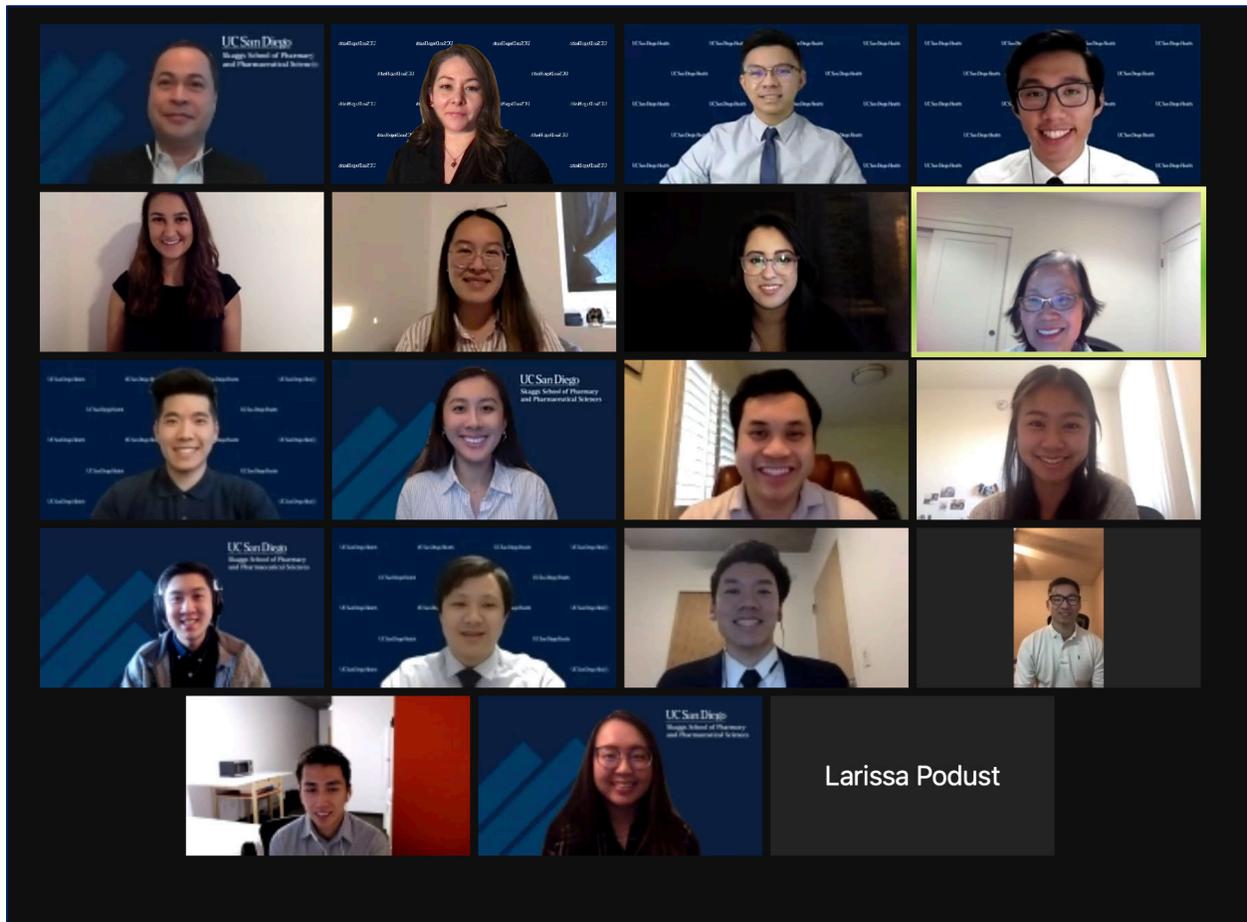
Summer Research Program

by Kristin Perez, Program Coordinator

On January 21, 2021, students who participated in the 2020 Summer Research Program virtually presented their work at the Annual Poster Symposium. The posters represented a broad range of content and topics, including the prevalence and predictors of pseudomonas aeruginosa among hospitalized patients with diabetic foot infections; assessing the prevalence of metabolic syndrome in San Diego County; impact of organ dysfunction on the aPTT distribution and patient outcome in patients being treated with unfractionated heparin infusion at VA San Diego; and effects of therapeutic interchange on drug cost, medication safety, & effectiveness at Student-Run Free Clinics.

During the event, the Biomedical Library staff judged student posters for best use of citations in the following categories: Quality of Resources, Variety of Resources, References Used throughout the Poster. Please join us in congratulating the 1st place winner, Nguyen Vo (P3), and 2nd place winner Andrew Dang (P3).

All students did an outstanding job in presenting their work during our first ever virtual showcase. Congratulations on all of your accomplishments!



Virtual Outreach Events during the Pandemic

by Teni Papelian, P3 Student, Student Ambassador

Every year, SSPPS student ambassadors organize and participate in various outreach events for pre-pharmacy clubs at universities and high schools to promote our unique program and the profession of pharmacy. In previous years, student ambassadors had the privilege to travel and meet prospective applicants in person locally, regionally, and even nationally. Since April 2020, due to the unfortunate circumstance of the current pandemic and our priority to keep everyone safe, all outreach events have been held virtually. Although virtual outreach events were rather new to us, we were able to find creative ways to engage and connect with prospective applicants, and the virtual nature allowed us to participate in more outreach events and widen our reach. We were able to interact with more pre-pharmacy and pre-health students to provide exposure to the ever-changing field of pharmacy, including our very first presentation to the University of Puerto Rico at Cayey.

At these outreach events, 1-2 representatives from SSPPS (usually a combination of student ambassadors and Admissions Committee members) gave presentations about the role of pharmacists in the healthcare setting, how to prepare for pharmacy school, student life at SSPPS, and much more. The presentations were followed by Q&A allowing the students to ask questions that may not have been covered.

During in-person outreach events, we provided Skaggs “swag” to attendees, and in an effort to continue this in the virtual environment we mailed the swag material to the attendees prior to the event. Thank you to Christine Cartlidge for her leadership in coordinating outreach events, mailing material prior to the event, and emailing brochures, presentation, and additional resources after the event! Thank you to all the students, faculty, staff, and alumni who have participated in these virtual outreach events in the last several months. We hope that we can participate in some in-person outreach events in the near future, but we have seen the benefits of being able to do some outreach virtually and hope to continue in some capacity moving forward.

Alumni Highlights: Being a Triton Leader

by Jenna Bastear, Director of Student Affairs



SSPPS Alumni are leaders in not only the world of pharmacy, but in other passions as well. Our very own Dr. Peace Uche (Class of 2013) is both a practicing pharmacist as well as a Transformational Rhythmic Speaker and Empowerment Guru. In both roles, she seeks to build connections, “one bridge at a time” whether that be through spoken word or through kindness and patience while proudly wearing her white coat. Through her words, she hopes to help others grow and bring light to a community where there may be darkness. I had the pleasure of connecting with Dr. Uche prior to her closing remarks at the annual UC San Diego Triton Leaders Conference and she left me with one acronym she hopes all may live by: GOLD. “Be GOLD” she told me. Genuine. Original. Legend. Dreamer.

Dr. Uche provided us with closing remarks during the annual Triton Leaders Conference in early February. During these last moments of a powerful weekend, she reminded us to take a look around and notice the people we are surrounded by. Day in and day out we know we should act with kindness and compassion to those around us, but it is easy to forget on those more challenging days. Dr. Uche challenges us to take note of our own individual biases and work to make the world a better place, by starting with ourselves. The words we use are powerful and should be treated as such. Speak with kindness and the world may follow.

“I’ve found that as a Pharmacist by trade and a Spoken Word Artist at heart, I am uniquely able to empower confidence in transformation seekers - my patients, students, clients - and wellness experts, alike. Connections and opportunities are endless when we learn to express our authentic self, see things in perspective and come from a place of compassion.”

SSPPS was extremely proud to have Dr. Uche representing both the field of pharmacy and the spoken word community on the Triton Leaders stage. Dr. Uche, thank you for being GOLD.

Alumni Highlights: Dr. Mary Moss Chandran

by Jenna Bastear, Director of Student Affairs

Our alumna from Class of 2012, Dr. Mary Moss Chandran, a clinical pharmacy specialist at Children's Hospital Colorado, recently published an article entitled, "[Considerations and controversies of pharmacologic management of the pediatric kidney transplant recipient](#)" in the Journal of Pharmacotherapy. From the abstract: This review aims to summarize key aspects of pharmacologic management in this population and present pertinent data that describe the influence of practice to serve as a resource for practitioners caring for this unique specialty patient population. Additionally, this review highlights select controversies that exist within pediatric kidney transplantation. Strong work on advancing our profession, Dr. Chandran!



Sirolimus: Cardiotoxic or Cardioprotective?

by Ruben Abagyan, PhD, Professor,
Shirley Tsunoda, PharmD, Professor of Clinical Pharmacy

Solid organ transplantation patients must take life-long immunosuppression in order to prevent rejection of the kidney, liver, heart or lung. While our current immunosuppressive agents are highly effective at preventing rejection, they also have toxicities that need to be medically managed. Sirolimus is a mammalian target of rapamycin (mTOR) inhibitor and is one of the maintenance agents that we use in transplant patients; its use has been increasing in recent years due to its unique mechanism of action and safety profile. Some of the common toxicities of sirolimus include hyperlipidemia, proteinuria, and delayed wound healing. Their known effects on low-density lipoproteins (LDL) and triglycerides suggest that they may increase risk for cardiovascular disease; however, their effect on inhibiting vascular smooth muscle cell proliferation and immune cells at the site of vascular lesions suggest they may help stabilize atherosclerotic plaques. So, to find if Sirolimus is a friend or a foe of a patient's heart we decided to look into "big clinical data".

Dr. Vi Nguyen, one of our stellar SSPPS alumni (SSPPS Class of 2017, UCSD PGY1 Residency Class of 2018, and UCSD PGY2 Transplant Resident 2019) conducted a large analysis using the FDA Adverse Event Reporting System (FAERS) database of over 10 million records from 2004 – 2018. She compared the frequency and reporting odds ratios of the mTOR inhibitors and tacrolimus, the other main immunosuppressant used in transplantation. She found that mTOR inhibitors had significantly higher cardiovascular adverse events (AE) across every transplanted organ type (ROR 1.95, CI 1.70, 2.23). In order to explore the effect of the transplanted organ, a subgroup analysis with heart transplant patients excluded was performed. mTOR inhibitors still had significantly higher cardiovascular AEs compared to tacrolimus (ROR 1.66, CI 1.42, 1.93).

The mTOR protein complex is a key regulator of cardiovascular physiology and pathology. There is evidence that mTOR inhibitors may be cardioprotective. In fact, coronary stents are coated with mTOR inhibitors and used routinely in percutaneous coronary intervention. In heart transplant patients, there is evidence that mTOR inhibitors have beneficial effects on cardiac allograft vasculopathy. On the contrary, large scale clinical trials have shown that mTOR inhibitors are associated with a higher risk of mortality with a larger proportion of death due to infection and cardiovascular disease. With cardiovascular mortality being the leading cause of death in kidney transplant patients at one and ten years post-transplant, determining whether mTOR inhibitors are cardiotoxic or cardioprotective is of utmost importance.

Link to full publication:

doi.org/10.1111/ctr.14228

Faculty Awards



Congratulations to Dr. Dionicio Siegel for being selected as a 2021 awarded project recipient for UC San Diego's Accelerating Innovations to Market program! Read more about his proposal to develop a new treatment for atopic dermatitis [HERE](#).

“Dr. Doug Humber...recently received a ‘Great Catch’ by UC San Diego Health’s Patient Safety Committee to recognize his efforts in preventing medication errors that could potentially cause harm to patients. The ‘Great Catch’ is awarded to a healthcare team member who recognizes and takes action beyond their regular duties to prevent harm or improve outcomes. Dr. Humber’s contributions highlight how pharmacists advocate for patient safety by preventing medication errors.”

-Nguyen Vo, P3 via [SSPPS Facebook](#)



Faculty Featured In The News

Conor Caffrey, PhD

["New Drug Screening Approach for Parasitic Infection Associated with Poverty"](#)
News of UC San Diego Health Sciences

Charles Daniels, PhD

["Rady Children's Hospital First In Region To Begin Vaccinating Frontline Workers"](#)
KPBS

William Gerwick, PhD

["Researchers identify natural products with potential to disrupt viral spread"](#)
The Medical News

SSPPS ACPE Accreditation Site Visit

by Jayne Laity, Experiential Coordinator,
Offices of Assessment and Accreditation & Experiential Education



SSPPS hosted the ACPE site visit team on November 3-5, 2020 as part of the Self-Study and Accreditation Site Visit. Despite the virtual nature, SSPPS was well-represented and the visit was a success!

At the ACPE Board of Directors meeting on January 23, 2021, the ACPE site visit team presented their Evaluation Team Report (ETR) and supplemental information from SSPPS. Based upon the site visit findings, the ACPE Board granted SSPPS full 8-year accreditation until June 30, 2029!

ACPE will conduct a required on-site verification visit in the future to verify the virtual visit findings. We look forward to hosting the ACPE site visit surveyors at a mutually convenient time to revisit and reinforce the exceptional work being done in the Doctor of Pharmacy program at SSPPS.

The Accreditation Action and Recommendations (AAR) from the ACPE Board released to the School includes the action that accreditation of the Doctor of Pharmacy Program be continued for an eight-year term, monitoring provisions to be communicated by SSPPS, comments and recommendations, and a summary of the evaluation of all ACPE standards. The AAR report will be used to guide SSPPS in future continuing developmental efforts.

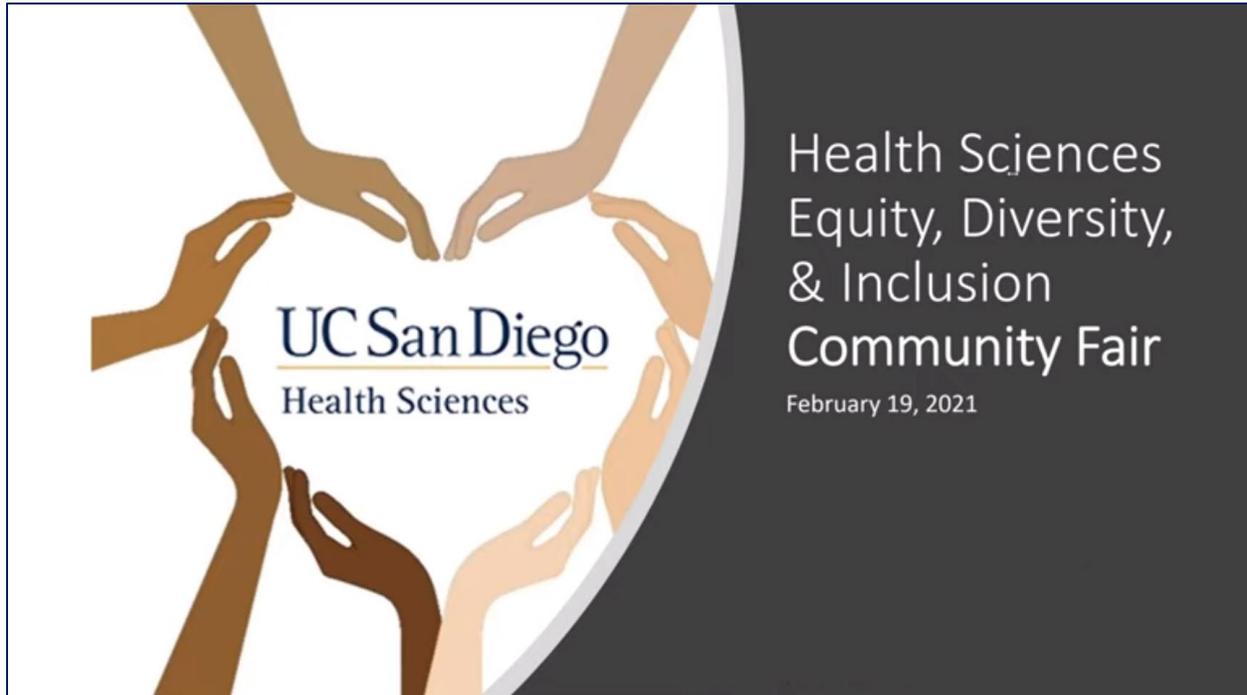
We in the Office of Assessment and Accreditation would like to congratulate and sincerely thank the faculty, students, preceptors, alumni, and staff for their significant contributions and dedication in this process to achieve accreditation.



If you have any questions regarding the self-study, the ACPE virtual site visit, or the recommendation of the Board, please feel free to contact Dr. Kelly Lee (kellylee@health.ucsd.edu), Andrina Marshall (amarshall@health.ucsd.edu), or Laurie Nelson (lnelson@health.ucsd.edu).

Health Sciences Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Community Fair

by Christine Cartlidge, Administrative Coordinator



As a campus built on the territory of the Kumeyaay Nation, UC San Diego's acknowledgement and commitment to diversity is vital to its success. Campus-wide equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) efforts have consisted of an array of workshops, artistic showcases, challenges, and other activities to keep the reality of injustices in the forefront of our community's mind and work to eradicate them. One such effort within UC San Diego Health Sciences was the inaugural Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Community Fair.

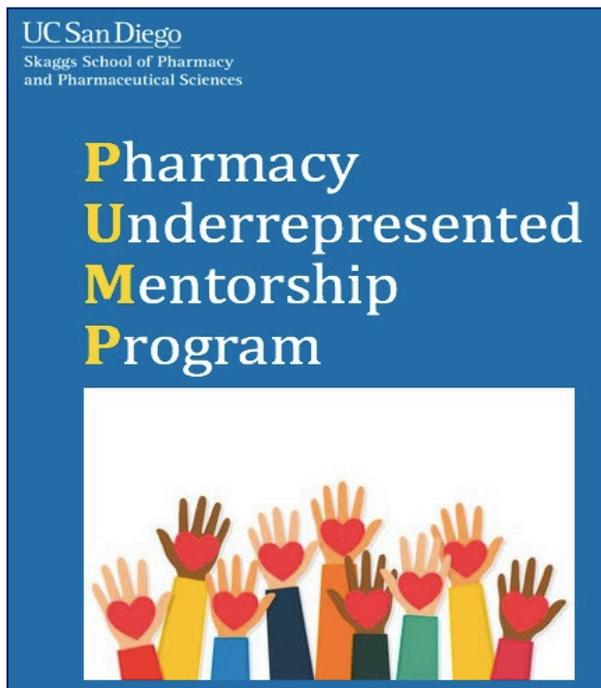
The EDI Community Fair took place on Friday, February 19, 2021 via Zoom and was open to all members of UC San Diego Health Sciences. The goal of the fair was to "bring our Health Sciences community together to share ideas, learn about activities that are occurring in departments/units, share feedback, and create a more robust network through which to support each other in creating a diverse, equitable, inclusive and anti-racist organization."

Among the esteemed speakers, including Vice Chancellor of Health Sciences David Brenner, were SSPPS EDI Committee representatives Mr. Dominic Cooper, Dr. Eduardo Fricovsky, and Dr. Conor Caffrey. Mr. Cooper discussed recruitment tips for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Dr. Fricovsky outlined improvements to diversity education within the pharmacy curriculum. Dr. Caffrey detailed ways in which we measure our diversity composition to better adapt as a school.

If you were unable to attend and would like to see the recorded videos, they can be found [here](#). Thank you to Mr. Cooper and Drs. Fricovsky and Caffrey for representing SSPPS at the inaugural Health Sciences EDI Community Fair. We are grateful for the work you do in improving our school and healthcare systems to better serve our community!

PUMP

by Sahar Khalili, P2 Student, Student Ambassador



Being a first-generation college student is a very proud and humbling feeling, especially being a first-generation student to also pursue a doctorate degree. However, I would be lying if I said that the journey to get to this point has been easy when in fact, it has been anything but easy. In middle school and high school, I was not able to ask my parents for help with schoolwork because English is not their first language. In my first year of undergraduate studies, I had to first teach myself what a FAFSA was before I could then teach and explain it to my parents. And finally, I was initially so completely lost when having to figure out the ins and outs of applying to pharmacy school. If it wasn't for the guidance and resources provided by my peers, my professors, and my undergraduate university, I don't know if I would have made it to where I am today, a second-year pharmacy student at SSPPS. Much of my journey was spent figuring things out on my own, teaching myself, doing my own research, and asking for help. I'm sure many other first-generation students can relate to many of these experiences plus so many more.

This is why I am so happy and proud to attend a graduate program that recognizes these struggles and has pioneered a program geared towards being a resource for pre-pharmacy students. The Pharmacy Underrepresented Mentorship Program (PUMP) provides students with tools to guide them throughout their interview process. Underrepresented in pharmacy (URiP) includes Black/African American, Latinx, Native American/Alaska Native/First American, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Southeast Asian (Cambodian, Filipino, Hmong, Lao, Thai, Vietnamese), First-Generation College Graduates, Refugees, and LGBTQIA. This program is still in its initial phases, however, there are plans to grow this program more and more as time goes on. Currently PUMP's first phase is offering mentorship and interview guidance. PUMP offers mentorship with current pharmacy students, staff and faculty to make sure that prospective students have all of the tools they need to succeed in their journey to pharmacy school. They will also offer tips on how to best prepare the student for the interview process through multiple workshops. At UC San Diego, community is everything. This is why this pharmacy mentorship program was created and built - to provide students with the tools necessary to prepare them for a career in pharmacy.

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