

# INTERACTIONS

University of Houston College of Pharmacy | Volume 12



## RIO GRANDE VALLEY

Satellite Program

*Patient Care, South Texas Style*



UNIVERSITY of **HOUSTON**

COLLEGE of PHARMACY

# A message from DEAN PRITCHARD



Eighteenth century English poet, Percy Shelley, once said “The more we study, the more we discover our ignorance.” This principle is universal and unending. It holds special significance for our vast world of pharmacy. New areas of research are increasing our pharmaceutical knowledge base at an exponential rate. Areas such as informatics, genomics, genetics, proteomics, nanomedicine/nanotechnology, specialty pharmacy, pharmacoepidemiology and pharmacoconomics hold significant promise for the future, as we seek to discover novel approaches to continuously improve the pharmaceutical care that we deliver to our patients. Unfortunately, we have not been able to adequately incorporate all of these novel topics into our traditional six-year Pharm.D. program. There hasn’t always been room.

After several years of investigation and discussion, our College of Pharmacy Curriculum Committee began the process of re-engineering our Pharm.D. program in 2014. Bloom’s Taxonomy, which identifies key terminal competencies and antecedent requisite knowledge and skill sets, was a key tool in this all-embracing process. The launch of our new state-of-the-art Modular Integrated Curriculum began in the fall of 2018 with our new incoming P-1 class. The process of re-engineering, implementation and launching of the P-2, P-3 and P-4 years will take place in the next three years. After that, the new Modular Integrated Curriculum will be fully implemented, and the old curriculum will be phased out. A key centerpiece of the new curriculum is the six-semester Pharmacy Care Laboratory sequence that will allow students to begin pragmatic “hands-on” training immediately upon entry into the professional program.

This new approach will allow students to begin to assimilate knowledge and principles in a pragmatic and applied manner much earlier in the curriculum. New aforementioned topics will be covered in much greater detail. Computer and live simulations will also be used to a greater degree, which will better prepare our students before “live-patient” rotations begin.

Workstation capacity in our Pharmacy Care Laboratory has increased to 64 stations. We have a simulated community pharmacy that will allow our students to design and operationalize such important principles as workflow design, patient counseling methodologies, inventory control, personnel management, etc. We also have a patient assessment/education/OSCE suite, state-of-the-art IV Training Laboratory, mock hospital room with computerized mannekins/patients, and a group demonstration area. We truly expect that these curricular and facility improvements will greatly enhance the abilities of our students upon graduation. This will translate into enhanced pharmaceutical care for the citizens of Texas and beyond.

Longue vie et prospérité.

F. Lamar Pritchard, Ph.D., R.Ph.  
Dean, College of Pharmacy

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# WE'RE HOME!



UH College of Pharmacy alumni, faculty, staff, students and its many other supporters realized a dream — decades in the making — finally come true with the completion and summer 2017 move-in at the college's new state-of-the-art home in Health 2.

“None of this would have been possible without the support of our alumni, donors, UH leadership and administration, our elected officials and friends throughout the community,” said UHCOP Dean F. Lamar Pritchard, Ph.D., R.Ph. “I’d also like to acknowledge the impact made by our alumni, students and faculty in building and sustaining the college’s reputation for excellence as proof that this facility is a sound investment in the future of patient care and drug discovery.”

UHCOP occupies approximately 157,000 gross square feet spanning five floors in the nine-story building connected to Health 1. The first stage of occupation occurred over the summer 2017 in time for the fall semester for Pharm.D. students. Due to Hurricane Harvey-related damage to the Texas Medical Center Building, faculty, staff and

“**This facility is a sound investment in the future of patient care and drug discovery.**

— Dean Lamar Pritchard

graduate students temporarily moved into recently vacated space in the college's old home at Science & Research Building 2. By late spring 2018, however, all students and college personnel and operations were completely transitioned into Health 2.

Highlights of the new facility include two large lecture halls, each with a capacity for 130 occupants; a compounding and sterile products laboratory; a skills lab and

multipurpose room; dedicated Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) suites with A/V recording and patient care mannequins; OTC and patient care simulated pharmacy; group study and quiet study rooms; spacious student lounge and kitchen area; and a catering kitchen for large college events. A closer look inside H2 is available on the college's YouTube channel at <http://tinyurl.com/uhcop-h2-1st-look>.

Bench-centered research spaces and student write-up spaces are open and airy, while specialized labs and resources — such as a nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) instrument and high resolution imaging lab — comprising light-year advancements in the college's research capabilities.

“Having our students, faculty, classrooms and laboratories at one site affords us collaborative learning, mentoring and research opportunities unlike anything the college has ever experienced,” Pritchard said. “We're eager to show what we can do now that we have a facility that allows our outstanding programs, students and faculty to thrive and focus on success.”





# 2017 NAPLEX



1st  
in Texas



3rd  
in U.S.

## COUGARS SPRING TO NEW HEIGHTS IN NAPLEX RESULTS

UH College of Pharmacy Pharm.D. graduates taking the North American Pharmacy Licensure Examination (NAPLEX) — the comprehensive examination of pharmacy knowledge required for professional licensure in the U.S. — in 2017 scored the highest pass rate in Texas and the third highest pass rate in the nation.

Developed and administered by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP), the 250-question NAPLEX exam is designed to assess a candidate's knowledge and competency in pharmacy practice and is a part of the evaluation process employed by state boards of pharmacy when considering an individual's licensure application to practice. The exam is administered three times per year.

As reported on the NABP website, 105 UHCOP Pharm.D. graduates achieved a pass rate of 99.05 percent on the NAPLEX. The

national pass rate on the exam for 2017 was 86.28 percent, as reported by the NABP.

“Although we always strive for perfection, the 2017 results are nonetheless an outstanding and impressive achievement by our graduates and the work of faculty, staff, preceptors and alumni mentors in creating and maintaining an environment where our students are educated and trained to provide the highest level of care for their patients,” said UHCOP Dean F. Lamar Pritchard, Ph.D., R.Ph.

In addition, UHCOP graduates excelled on the Multistate Pharmacy Jurisprudence Exam (MPJE) during the May-August 2017 testing period. The 103 UHCOP graduates taking the exam

in 2017 achieved a pass rate of 97.09 percent vs. the national pass rate of 83.98, according to the NABP website.

**NAPLEX**

**99.05%**

105 first-time test takers

**MPJE**

**97.09%**

103 first-time test takers

*Source: National Association of Boards of Pharmacy, 2nd Trimester Results (May-August 2017)*

## DUAL DEGREE, SAS CERTIFICATE OPTIONS ADDED TO PHOP PROGRAM

Current and prospective Pharmaceutical Health Outcomes and Policy (PHOP) Ph.D. students are being provided with two new options for enhancing not only their knowledge and skill sets, but also their job opportunities.

UH College of Pharmacy and UH College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences are partnering on a dual degree option leading to the PHOP Ph.D. and a M.A. in Applied Economics — the only such program of its kind in the nation.

The move is designed to provide a deeper understanding of economic theory, quantitative methods and analytical processes and ensure PHOP students are positioned to excel in the field of phar-

macoeconomics, as well as provide a new avenue for current economics students to pursue a career in the growing field.

The Applied Economics M.A. degree is a 12-month, 30-semester credit hour program emphasizing data management and statistical analysis; trend monitoring and forecasting; critical thinking/problem-solving; business management decision-making based on macroeconomic policy; and regression analysis.

The new option will allow students to apply up to 12 credit hours from one program to the other, which will reduce the amount of time required to complete both degree programs separately.

PHOP Ph.D. students also now have the option of earning a certificate in “Health Analytics and Real World Evidence” jointly offered by UHCOP and SAS Institute Inc., the software developer behind one of the “gold standard” platforms used to conduct advanced statistical health outcomes research.

SAS software suites already are used extensively by PHOP students and faculty members, but the new certification provides additional documented evidence of a student's competency with the programs. To earn the certificate, students are required to complete a set of four specific courses in the Ph.D. curriculum.



# RIO GRANDE VALLEY

Pharm.D. Satellite  
Program



*The Lower Rio Grande Valley region comprises the four southernmost counties of Texas bordering Mexico — Starr, Hidalgo, Willacy and Cameron — with a combined population of more than 1 million. Although rich in culture, history and natural beauty, the region carries heavy burdens in terms of chronic diseases — especially obesity, diabetes and hypertension — and health disparities.*

*A new collaboration between the University of Houston College of Pharmacy and DHR Health in Edinburg, the UHCOP Rio Grande Valley (RGV) Pharm.D. Satellite Program offers prospective students — especially those from the RGV region — along with UHCOP faculty and researchers an opportunity to be agents of change in a vibrant, growing community that nonetheless faces significant health challenges.*

# UHCOP, DHR TO REMODEL PATIENT CARE WITH SOUTH TEXAS FLAIR

The RGV region has long experienced a shortage of health professionals, with particular difficulty in recruiting and retaining primary care and specialist physicians, nurses, physician assistants and clinical pharmacists. Poverty, remoteness, lack of an academic health educational center, and cultural and language barriers all contribute to the difficulty in recruiting and retaining health care professionals to the region. In recent years, however, the region has experienced tremendous growth, with a Manpower Group study published by Forbes in 2016 citing McAllen-Edinburg-Mission as the “No.1 Best City for Jobs.”

“DHR’s new partnership with the University of Houston College of Pharmacy demonstrates our shared commitment to providing health care professionals in the region,” said Dr. R. Armour Forse, DHR chief academic officer. “We are faced with the growing need for pharmacy services within our own health care system and in the local community. By training these pharmacists side-by-side with medical students and residents in our hospital, they will graduate well equipped to work in team-based health care and provide the high quality of patient-centered pharmacy care needed for the Valley.”

The RGV Pharm.D. Satellite Program will serve as a major teaching site for the college’s Professional Pharmacy Hispanic Healthcare Certificate Program, which is the first program of its kind in the nation. The certificate program is designed to help bridge disparity gaps in health care in the Rio Grande Valley by being responsive to the unique health beliefs, practices, and cultural and linguistic needs of the region.

The RGV program will be based on a “3+1” model in which students attend the college’s campus in Houston for the first three years of the Pharm.D. curriculum, with the fourth year of advanced pharmacy practice experiences completed in the RGV in cooperation with DHR as well as preceptors in the community setting.

The new program is a continuation of the UHCOP’s outreach to — and connection with, thanks to many alumni who call the region home — the RGV. In 2015, UHCOP established a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with South Texas College in McAllen to provide a streamlined pathway for RGV pre-pharmacy program students into the UHCOP’s Pharm.D. applicant pool. Only a year earlier, the University of Houston opened an RGV Admissions Office based in McAllen.



Participating in the RGV Pharm.D. Satellite Program signing ceremony were UH representatives Bruce Jones and F. Lamar Pritchard, and DHR representatives Carlos J. Cardenas, R. Armour Forse and Gavino “Gabby” Garza.

To expand upon the MOU, UH sought to establish a satellite program with DHR, the area’s foremost teaching hospital. Through their experiential rotations at the hospital and its outpatient clinics, Pharm.D. students will be trained in a team-based approach with medical students as well as students from other health care professions.

This collaborative new program will produce more well-trained clinical pharmacists to provide the essential primary and preventative health care services needed by citizens of the Rio Grande Valley. The program also allows UHCOP to meet the expanded Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education Standards 2016 guidelines surrounding Interprofessional Education requirements.

“The University of Houston has always been committed to connecting with the community,” said Paula Myrick Short, UH senior vice president for academic affairs and provost. “By expanding the College of Pharmacy program in the Rio Grande Valley through



photo by Christian Möller, DHR Health

More than a dozen UHCOP Pharm.D. students traveled from Houston to Edinburg to participate in the college's collaboration on DHR's annual Community Health Fair in January 2018.

this partnership, UH has the opportunity to bring patient-centered pharmaceutical care to a region with one of the most severe shortages of clinical pharmacists in the nation.”

The population-to-pharmacist ratio in border counties is about twice that of non-border counties, according to data from the Texas Statewide Health Coordinating Council. Recent data presented by the Walgreens Corp. shows that the RGV has one of the most severe shortages of clinical pharmacists in the nation.

“The role of clinical pharmacists and pharmacy technicians continues to grow here at DHR. From discharge counseling, therapeutic drug monitoring and medication therapy management to collaborative practices with physicians, DHR is committed to putting drug experts at the patient’s bedside,” said Gavino “Gabby” Garza, R.Ph. (B.S. ’81), director of Pharmacy at DHR.

“Fostering a new partnership with University of Houston College of Pharmacy further reinforces the commitment DHR Health System has to our patients, community and to education.”

**“The University of Houston has always been committed to connecting with the community.”**

— Paula Myrick Short

DHR Health is a 530-bed, physician-owned health system that includes more than 700 physicians and 1,200 nurses who dedicate themselves to offering a full continuum of care in over 70 different sub-specialties, encompassing general acute care services and preventative health programs to graduate medical education and pharmacy residencies.

“With our significant Hispanic and Spanish-speaking populations in Texas, this program is part of our commitment to ensure that providing outstanding, safe and effective patient care is not hampered by language and cultural barriers,” said F. Lamar Pritchard, Ph.D., R.Ph., UHCOP dean.

Rio Grande Valley-based UHCOP alumni and friends welcomed college leaders to Edinburg ahead of the RGV Pharm.D. Satellite Program signing ceremony with DHR Health.



# FRIEND OF PHARMACY

## COLLEGE HONORS UH ICON WELCOME WILSON SR. FOR ADVOCACY, LEADERSHIP



University of Houston College of Pharmacy Dean F. Lamar Pritchard, Ph.D., R.Ph., hailed the efforts of UH icon Welcome Wilson Sr., former chair of the University of Houston System Board of Regents, in rallying support for not only the college's priorities but also leadership of the UH Tier One campaign.

In recognition of his dedication to the university and the college as well as his leadership of the UHS during a period of unparalleled growth, Wilson was honored with UHCOP's 2017 Meritorious Achievement Award.

An alumnus of Bauer College of Business, Wilson serves as chairman of GSL Welcome Group LLC and principal of Kingham Dalton Wilson Ltd. as well as on the Board of Directors of the Greater Houston Partnership and chair of GHP's Higher Education Committee.

In addition to his contributions to the economic development of the Greater Houston region, Wilson also won new appreciation for his zeal and determination in drawing attention to the funding disparity issue in Texas pharmacy academia. For decades, health system-associated colleges of pharmacy in Texas have received higher tuition reimbursement than other colleges that are not directly associated with a health system, including UHCOP.

"The impact of his service to the college and the entire UHS will resonate across the campus, the state and the nation for decades to come as UH's national reputation continues to climb and more people recognize what a unique, exceptional institution UH has become," Pritchard said.

“**I am dedicated to do anything I can for the College of Pharmacy.**”

— Welcome Wilson Sr.

Wilson, who has said the hiring of the UHS Chancellor was his greatest accomplishment when serving on the UHS Board of Regents, is one of the most storied individuals to graduate from UH. Born and raised in Corpus Christi, Wilson's success in public service, business

and other enterprises began at the age of 7, when he took the initiative to help stack lunch trays at his elementary school.

He also worked as a radio news broadcaster and DJ, a longshoreman and drummer before he and his brother began attending UH. Before graduating UH with a business degree, Wilson found success as business manager for the Daily Cougar newspaper and met his future wife.

Wilson served as a naval officer in Japan during the Korean War after graduating at the top of his academy class. He served under three U.S. presidents, including serving as U.S. Ambassador to Nicaragua, and earned distinction as one of the "10 Outstanding Young Men in Federal Service."

Turning his attention to real estate and business, Wilson was once part-owner of the Houston Astros and responsible for the development of Jamaica Beach and Tiki Island — now both incorporated cities — in Galveston County as well as thousands of homes, apartments, office buildings and other properties across the Greater Houston area.

Wilson and his wife have five children, including current UHS Vice Chairman Welcome Wilson Jr., and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



## HARDIN-OLIVER ‘SHOWS UP’ FOR PHARMACY PROFESSION, COLLEGE

UH College of Pharmacy bestowed one of its highest honors — the UHCOP Alumnus Pharmacist of the Year Award — to longtime pharmacy leader and advocate Carole Hardin-Oliver, R.Ph. (B.S. '83), health care supervisor for Walgreens Houston Northeast district.

“Carole is an unabashed, tireless champion and servant leader of our profession, and an outstanding ambassador of the college,” said UHCOP Dean F. Lamar Pritchard, Ph.D., R.Ph. “She is frequently invited by our students to share her knowledge, wisdom and guidance about the art and science of effective advocacy and issue education.

“Her leadership and commitment to advancing the profession are admired by her peers and students alike.”

Currently a member of the Texas Pharmacy Foundation Board of Trustees and the UHCOP Dean’s Advisory Council (DAC), she previously served as president-elect, president and immediate past president of the Texas Pharmacy Association and as co-chair of the UHCOP DAC.

Hardin-Oliver was named TPA’s 2014 Pharmacist of the Year, an honor which “recognizes a pharmacist who possesses a record of unquestionable integrity, outstanding service to the local or state association and a personal record of exemplary service to the pharmacy community.”

Hardin-Oliver also is a past president of the Lake Houston Pharmacy Association, former board member of the Houston Area Pharmacy Association and the UH

“**Working together, we have achieved strong results.**”

— Carole Hardin-Oliver

Pharmacy Alumni Association, past chair of TPA’s Academy of Chain Pharmacists, and on countless committees, task forces and other capacities for pharmacy organizations at the state and local level.

Hardin-Oliver said she was “incredibly honored and surprised” by the latest recognition from the college.

“The education, experiences, networks and passion for our profession all began in a repurposed, leftover aircraft hangar where our spring pharmacy class began our training,” she said.

Staying involved with the college, fellow practitioners and students is a duty to not only the college and university but to the profession, Hardin-Oliver said.

“Alumni organization, recruiting, student activities, advocacy and financial support are all ways that we can all give back to the college that has given us our professional lives,” she said. “I am proud to have participated in any way possible in the many advances we have accomplished through his ongoing tenure. UHCOP has so many highly influential alumni, and working together, we have achieved strong results.”

Hardin-Oliver posed a request and a challenge to her fellow alumni “To do more, give more, advocate more and join us in every way. Give back to the College that has given you so much. There is a saying, ‘The world is run by those who show up.’ Thank you, UHCOP for giving me the opportunity to show up.”

# Robert L. Boblitt Professor of Drug Discovery



Mention the name Robert L. “Bob” Boblitt Sr. to almost any UH College of Pharmacy graduate from the first five decades of its existence and you’re sure to hear warm, humorous and awe-filled stories of a fast-walking, affable former U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant and World War II veteran who taught and served as an administrator at the college for more than 30 years.

There’s the one about how he could simultaneously draw chemical structures and formulas with one hand while erasing with the other hand (and using every chalkboard mounted to the four walls of the classroom for good measure).

Or, tales about his days criss-crossing the state while either recruiting promising students or conducting pharmacy inspections for the state as a summertime side hustle.

Or, the time Boblitt admonished a student for being late to his morning class after a late-night fraternity barbecue (which they both attended).

But to those closest to him, Boblitt was simply “Dad.”

In tribute to his late father, Robert Boblitt Jr. — president and chief operating officer of Houston-based Silver Eagle Distributors — established the Robert L. Boblitt Endowed Professorship in Drug Discovery, the college’s first-ever endowed professorship.

“From my perspective, I believe both my dad and my mom – as an unpaid volunteer — contributed significantly to the development and success of the college,” Boblitt said. “My dad was more interested in teaching than being an administrator, and I think that was why he was never interested in being a full-time dean, because that would mean he’d have to give up teaching. That’s part of the reason the professorship seemed like an appropriate way to recognize their efforts.”

With a B.S. in pharmacy and a Ph.D. in medicinal chemistry, the elder Boblitt joined the college as one of seven faculty members in 1953, only seven years after UHCOP’s founding. Before retiring in 1987, Boblitt was honored with UH’s Teaching Excellence Award in 1972. In addition to the newly endowed professorship, the annual lecture of the UHCOP chapter of Rho Chi and an endowed student scholarship also bear his name.

Unlike his father, grandfather and two of his older sisters — Deborah (’90) and Pamela (’91), both of whom

# FIRST ENDOWED PROFESSORSHIP HONORS LATE ICON

graduated from UHCOP and still practice — the younger Boblitt's own successful career path was outside of the profession. Yet, his memories are inextricably linked to the pharmacy world.

"I spent formative years engaged in the business or academics of pharmacy, whether it was hanging out with my dad in the laboratories or classrooms at the school; driving around South Texas while he did inspections for the state during the summers; going to Austin for Texas Pharmacy Association meetings with my dad and mom (the late Leita Boblitt), who was in the TPA Auxiliary; or working at Park Place Pharmacy down the road from our house," Boblitt said.

Boblitt particularly recalled how his father was passionate about botany, the history and chemistry of medicinal plants, and the untapped potential for plant-based drug discovery and development.

"He was a researcher at heart and had great interest in pharmacognosy," Boblitt said. "I remember walking through the botanical gardens as a kid, and he would point out the different plants and their pharmaceutical purposes. Pharmacognosy probably isn't in the mainstream, but I think it's something that younger people have an interest in, and maybe this professorship could have some part to play in an resurgence of the field."

In addition to passing along his name to his son, the late Boblitt also gave him a deep appreciation for the profession and practice of teaching.

"Not a year goes by that I don't run into somebody who tells me how much his classes, teaching and commitment to teaching meant to them," Boblitt said. "There are teachers who love to teach, and there teachers who have a knack for it — I think he was both."

Boblitt said he also was motivated by the new energy surrounding UH and greater recognition for the quality of its programs, students and faculty.

"I've really enjoyed working with Dean Pritchard and UH Vice Chancellor/ Vice President for University Advancement Eloise Dunn Brice; they're doing a great job, and it's nice when you get to be inspired by people who have the ability to tell the story and you know are going to steward your gift in what would be in line with your expectations. I'm not sure if it would have been anyone else who approached me that it would've ended like this."



# PRECEPTOR PRIDE



ANDERSON



BURNS



GESSNER-  
WHARTON



WANAT



YOO

UH College of Pharmacy honored several individual preceptors and a practice site for excellence in Pharm.D. student precepting during the 2016-17 academic year.

Recipients are selected by a committee of faculty members and the Office of Experiential Programs based on student nominations and evaluations of the preceptors and sites.

“I’m continually amazed and humbled by the commitment, skill and wisdom of our preceptors in striving to ensure that the next generation of practitioners not only meet but exceed the high standards of the college and the academy,” UHCOP Dean F. Lamar Pritchard, Ph.D., R.Ph., said.

This year’s honorees are:

- Community Preceptor of the Year Award — John Yoo, Pharm.D. ('03), pharmacist-in-charge at the Compounding Shop Pharmacy in Houston
- Ambulatory Care Preceptor of the Year Award — Ashley Burns, Pharm.D. ('12), Patient Care Service Manager for the Houston Division of the Albertsons Cos.
- Institutional Patient Care Preceptor of the Year Award — Megan Anderson, Pharm.D., BCPS, clinical pharmacist with Memorial Hermann Healthcare System
- Hospital Pharmacy Preceptor of the Year Award — Mallory Gessner-Wharton, Pharm.D. ('11), M.S. ('13), BCPS, director of Pharmacy at Kingwood Medical Center
- Health Systems Pharmacy of the Year Award — Houston Methodist Hospital
- Faculty Preceptor of the Year Award — Matthew Wanat, Pharm.D., BCPS, BCCCP, FCCM, UHCOP clinical assistant professor and clinical pharmacy specialist-Critical Care at Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

# RAY'S OF HOPE: PHARMACY COOGS RESPOND TO NEIGHBORS IN NEED

*The widespread devastation caused by Hurricane Harvey up and down the Texas Gulf Coast was for many unfathomable, but the rapid, selfless response by the Cougar Pharmacy family – alumni, students, faculty and preceptors – to the health, financial and emotional needs of friends, neighbors and strangers alike was equally as inspiring and reassuring in the face of immense tragedy.*



While some were recruited for ride-out teams at health systems and other institutions or navigated still-flooded streets to report to work at community pharmacies to either assist patients or assess the damage, many others took it upon themselves to volunteer at emergency shelters or begin the cleanup process at homes throughout the region.

Many among the dozens of UHCOP alumni and students who responded to the calls for help were alerted via social media, which became an invaluable tool for not only posting updates about personnel needs and locations, but also the medications and other supplies that were most in need at specific locations.

Among the first to show up at what would become the largest, longest-running shelter at NRG Center were alumni Bernadette Asias-Dinh, Pharm.D. ('11), Jodie Gee, Pharm.D. ('09), Lori Markel, Pharm.D. ('08), Marissa Blumenthal, Pharm.D. ('17), and Minh Hong, Pharm.D. ('17), and students Ryan Winslow, William Giang, Nicole Lee, Grace Hwang, Samantha Sangabi and An Dieu.

“We walked into a room where there was this huge pile of medications — everything from OTC and prescription medications, creams, IV and infusions ... just a huge array of donations — in the corner,” said Gee, who worked at NRG both as a volunteer and in her position as an ambulatory care pharmacist with Harris Health System. “Our job on the first day was to sort through and organize everything at the same time we had physicians, nurses and other health professionals coming up and asking for medications. It was a little chaotic that day because we didn’t know what we had, much less where it was.”

After putting together a game plan for creating an inventory by class of medication or type of supply and equipment, the volunteers were not only able to fill provider requests but also put out the call for needed meds or restocking of items.

With floodwaters still rising and inundating roads throughout the area, finding and collecting either purchased or donated critical medications and basic supplies — including insulin, syringes, glucometers, test strips and blood pressure cuffs — turned into something of a scavenger hunt.

“The needs of the shelters seem to change by the minute, but the need for insulin was consistently high across the board,” Hong said. “We’d put out the word asking for donations and, within an hour, we had about \$900; in total, we collected about \$1,300 plus some donated items, such as pediatric oral syringes. It was definitely eye-opening to find out how expensive OTC insulin can be.”

Volunteer Phuoc Anne Nguyen, Pharm.D., M.S. ('15), BCPS, was



Then-student pharmacists, from left, William Giang, Grace Hwang and, far right, Da Eun Nicole Lee and alumna/preceptor Bernadette Asias-Dinh were among the first from the pharmacy profession to join the health care response effort at the NRG Center shelter (photo courtesy of Lori Markel).

able to draw on her experience volunteering on international medical mission trips.

“It was helpful being familiar with how to substitute or find alternatives based on the resources we have on hand, as well as being able to think fast, triage appropriately and be creative,” Nguyen said.

Student Da Eun Nicole Lee said one of the challenges facing some patients — and for the pharmacists and students trying to help — was the limited emergency supplies available to be dispensed before supply lines were restored.

“At the shelter, a lot of patients were very worried about how they would get their medication after they were released from the shelter,” Lee said. “At the specialty pharmacy where I work, we normally mail our medications, but the carriers weren’t going into flooded areas.

“A patient of ours had run out of his transplant medication, so we had to call around to a lot of other pharmacies in the area to find it, because it was an expensive medication and not something normally carried by most pharmacies. Although we eventually were able to get it to him, it was a very frustrating feeling of wanting to help and not being able to.”

Although the initial response at NRG was primarily staffed round-the-clock by volunteers, as Harris Health and chain community pharmacies, including CVS, Kroger and Walgreens, set up their mobile clinic/pharmacy operations within days of the shel-

ter's opening, the volunteers were most needed to cover overnight shifts.

Gee also said the experience was both heart-wrenching and inspiring.

"What I thought was neat within the pharmacy group we had — all of us came from different backgrounds, from academia, 'amb care,' inpatient and outpatient dispensing — we came together and thought of a method of how best to tackle this problem of this unorganized mess of medications," Gee said. "Not only pharmacy, but all of health care came together and asked each other, 'What do you need?'"

Like Gee, Markel worked at NRG both as a volunteer in the initial days, then in her Harris Health role once the county was up and running at the shelter.

"It was great to be able to help them and both sad and amazing to listen to their stories of what they went through," Markel said. "It was my first experience in doing anything like that, but I wouldn't hesitate to do it again and hopefully I'll be better prepared."

Zeke Medina, Pharm.D. ('13), was originally set to go on planned vacation with his family only a few days after the storm, but they canceled the trip so he could volunteer several days over the next two weeks.

"I couldn't in good conscience go on vacation while there were people in my community who were in such need," Medina said. "When things like this happen, it's our civil duty, especially for those of us who are licensed professionals; we took an oath to help people whether we get paid for it or not. It was an honor to work alongside so many other health professionals to do what we could."

Student Samantha Sangabi agreed that the spirit of teamwork



Alumna Jodie Gee breathes easier after fellow pharmacists and students were able to get donated medications and supplies organized in the NRG makeshift pharmacy (photo courtesy of Jodie Gee).

among volunteers and the compassion and concern among the victims themselves was humbling.

"Not only was it amazing to see all of these professionals volunteering for days on end, but also to see those who'd basically lost everything still smiling and laughing, which I think was really beneficial at that time," said Sangabi, who also volunteered with her fellow Kappa Psi fraternity members to help clean up homes as part of the recovery. "

Hong said he was inspired to help thanks to stories told by former UHCOP teacher and fellow grad Lynn Simpson, Pharm.D. ('97).

"I recall Dr. Simpson telling us about volunteering during other hurricanes, which really stayed with me; I felt like it was great opportunity to help, especially as my family was not impacted," he said. "Although it was an unbelievable tragedy for our community, I felt fortunate to be in a position to volunteer and learn from it, if something like that should ever happen again."

For more Harvey stories and reflections by or concerning Pharmacy Coogs, visit the following links:

- <http://tinyurl.com/harvey-acvarkey>
- <http://tinyurl.com/harvey-kingwoodmc>
- <http://tinyurl.com/harvey-cleveland>
- <http://tinyurl.com/harvey-tetanus>
- <http://tinyurl.com/harvey-pritchard>
- <http://tinyurl.com/harvey-pharm-call>
- <http://tinyurl.com/aacp-hurricanes>
- <http://tinyurl.com/harvey-ppn>



Members of the UHCOP Delta Delta Chapter of the Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity help begin the cleanup/tear-out process in a flooded home (photo courtesy of Rohan Dwivedi).



UHCOP alumna and faculty member Bernadette Asias-Dinh begins the daunting task of sorting and organizing donated medications and supplies (photo courtesy of Jodie Gee).



# THE SCHOOL MUST GO ON

## APhA-ASP Chapter's School Supply Relief Drive for Harvey-ravaged Texas Communities Gets 'Viral' Boost

What started as the humble idea of two UH College of Pharmacy students to enlist fellow students to collect classroom supplies for schools in Rockport, Texas — the focus of Hurricane Harvey's initial landfall on Aug. 25 — soon blossomed into a nationwide campaign with donations arriving from Hawaii to Rhode Island.

The drive raised more than \$40,000 in supplies for 13 Texas Gulf Coast and Houston-area schools and benefited 150 teachers and more than 5,100 students.

Hannah Chan and Kaycie Rathburn, the president and president-elect respectively of the UHCOP Chapter of the American Pharmacists Association-Academy of Student Pharmacists, said they were spurred into action while watching the devastation on TV and waiting for the UH campus to reopen during the week long shutdown due to widespread, record flooding.

The pair recruited fellow UHCOP students as well as students at UH College of Optometry, Texas Southern University College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, and McGovern Medical School and the School of Dentistry at UTHealth to join in the effort.

"I was communicating with the APhA headquarters on some other issues, and they asked how we were doing because they'd seen it on the national news," Chan said. "I told them about the drive and sent them the flier we'd created that listed the types of items we were collecting and how to get them to us. It wasn't long

before it was being shared all over social media, and our emails and phones started blowing up with people wanting to help."

Among those responding to the call were fellow APhA-ASP chapters and colleges of pharmacy, non-pharmacy higher education institutions, private businesses, nonprofit organizations, places of worship, alumni, and countless families and individuals from across the country. Many of the "care packages" also includ-



Drive organizers Callie Downs and Kaycie Rathburn unload boxes of supplies for the heavily damaged community in Rockport, Texas.

ed words of support and encouragement. Several other UHCOP student organizations, including Phi Delta Chi, Phi Lambda Sigma and the Vietnamese-American Pharmacy Student Society, even held fundraisers or opened up their own coffers to support the campaign.

UH alumnus-founded BB's Cafe in Houston set up donation boxes and changed its marquee signs at all of its locations asking for donations; a teacher supply store offered deep discounts to the organizers for the purchase of classroom furnishings and other items; and a storage facility operator provided an empty unit to store donated items.

"It got to the point where the living room at my house and at my parents' house were unusable, and there were boxes lined up in the hallways of my parents' house," Rathburn said. "It was tiring and inspiring. I had to learn how to run a nonprofit organization in what seemed like five minutes."

The donations were delivered directly to the Rockport and



Aransas school districts in a boxed moving truck and a flatbed trailer pulled by a pickup truck. While those two districts received the bulk of the donations due to the extent of damage to their facilities and supplies, the organizers also were able to help restock several classrooms in the Greater Houston area that were damaged by storm-related flooding.

"Even a couple of weeks after school restarted, we were still having people check in on us to see how we were doing," Chan said. "The amount of love and support we received from people all over the nation has been overwhelming. It just shows you that, no matter the distance, people took the time to help out others in need."

To view the YouTube video Rathburn created about the campaign, visit <https://tinyurl.com/asp-harvey>.

— Photos courtesy of UHCOP APhA-ASP

## ALUMNI, FACULTY AND ACADEMY RESPONDS

Hurricane Harvey and the subsequent flooding took a devastating toll on the Greater Houston area and much of the Texas Gulf Coast, including dozens of UHCOP students, faculty and staff members — as well as an unknown number of alumni — who suffered varying degrees of loss and hardship.

Damages ranged from the loss of vehicles and personal property, such as laptops and clothes (including white coats), to the complete loss of homes.

Yet, the floodwaters had not even started to recede before donations of gift cards, clothes and other items began to flow in from generous alumni members of the UHCOP family, students, faculty and staff from fellow colleges of pharmacy, and



complete strangers. Many of the gifts included notes of support and encouragement, such as "Never give up, and reach your goals no matter the obstacles. Stay Strong!"

**Among those who provided some form of assistance to affected UHCOP family members were:**

Amelia Sofjan  
 Andrea Mora Luce ('07)  
 Andrea Smesny ('98)  
 Danielle E. Parrish  
 Divya Varkey  
 Doug Eikenburg  
 Doug Thornton  
 Elizabeth Coyle  
 Inez Jenkins  
 Janet Clark  
 Jodie Gee ('09)  
 Joseph L. Fink III  
 Julianna Fernandez ('06)

Kathryn Wright  
 Kathy Ryan  
 Katie Suda  
 Maureen Macalos Powers ('93)  
 Michelle Chen  
 Lesa Thornton ('11)  
 Lynn Simpson ('97)  
 Molly Graham Minze ('05)  
 Mr. and Mrs. Larry Norwood  
 Paige Pitman ('94)  
 Robert & Susan Yokel  
 Robert Kuhn  
 Sally Gullede

Suzy Moore  
 Sylvia Garza  
 Tara Esse ('09)  
 The University of Texas at El Paso  
 University of Illinois at Chicago College of  
 Pharmacy  
 University of Kentucky College of Pharmacy  
 University of Rhode Island College of  
 Pharmacy  
 W. Benjamin Fry ('72)  
 W by Worth Corporation/Kristen Hoell  
 Western New England College of Pharmacy



# UHCOP CONVOCATION CLASS OF 2017

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN  
PHARMACY LEADERSHIP AND  
ADMINISTRATION**

Ashley Adams  
Amanda Beck  
Joshua Blackwell  
Amanda Grego  
An Le  
Claire McClain  
Laura Stokes

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN  
PHARMACOLOGY**  
Emma Murdoch

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN  
PHARMACEUTICAL HEALTH  
OUTCOMES AND POLICY**

Archita Bhansali  
Farid Chekani  
Anthony Carmine Colavecchia  
Ya Huei Li  
Nandita Kachru  
Manvi Sharma  
Sneha Dixitkumar Sura  
Xin Wang

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
IN PHARMACOLOGY AND  
PHARMACEUTICS**

Nashid Farhan  
Radhika Joshi  
Yu Jin Kim  
Hesong Liu  
Ankita Abhay Salvi  
Santosh Vijay Suryavanshi  
Guncha Taneja  
Xitao Wang  
Jian Zhou

**DOCTOR OF PHARMACY**

Lidia Adamache  
Nora Farhat Alzibdeh  
James Aniebiet-Abasi  
Shireen Ashouri  
Noris E. Benitez  
Marissa Sarah Blumenthal<sup>2</sup>  
Brandon Rudolph Casarez<sup>3</sup>  
Jill Chao  
Melanie Lok-Kwan Cheng<sup>3</sup>

Rose Cherian  
Maggie Onkei Chu<sup>2</sup>  
Natalie Doan Chu  
Tiffany Lynn Conner  
Michael T. Dinh

Jennie P. Do  
Tran Do  
Vivian Si Dong  
Ha My Duong  
Lisa Marie Fischer<sup>3</sup>  
Krutina Patel Garcia<sup>2</sup>  
Dipu George  
Alan Gracia

Shuaishuai Guo<sup>2</sup>  
Katie Elizabeth Hay  
Nicole Elaine Ho<sup>3</sup>  
Thien Kim Ho  
Thuy-Tien Thi Ho  
Tien T. Hoang  
Minh A. Hong  
Komal Jalaluddin Hooda<sup>2</sup>  
Paul John Hudacek  
Nhu Huynh  
Chiemeka Uzoma Ike  
Eric Z. Kao  
Stefan Kim  
Stella Kim  
Thuy-Duong Thi Lam<sup>3</sup>

Justin Thomas Wayne Lankford

Alan Lara  
Anne Tricia Le<sup>3</sup>  
Bao Tran Nguyen Le<sup>3</sup>  
Caitlin Thuy-Khanh Le<sup>1</sup>  
Huong Hoai Le  
Thao Thuy Dieu Le  
Hae Sun Lee<sup>3</sup>  
Brian Taylor Loe  
Susan Margaret Lowrie<sup>3</sup>  
Dao Cam Ly  
Tai Ly  
Meena Mabbu  
Linda Mai

Reshma S. Mathew  
Bijal Dilipkumar Mehta<sup>3</sup>  
Robert Stephen Miller<sup>3</sup>  
Hina Hasanali Momin  
Erin McGregor Moody<sup>3</sup>  
Jared Moore<sup>2</sup>  
Marizu Joy Ndubuizu  
Cindy Ngo<sup>3</sup>  
Nancy Ngo<sup>3</sup>

Amanda Nguyen  
Dzung Tan Nguyen  
Tracy Phuong Truc Nguyen  
Vicky Nguyen  
Scott Tomas Ondrasek  
Chioma Leslie Opara  
Alessandria Ornelas  
Nicholas Avery Panayi  
Sarin Mahesh Patel  
Sonal Satish Patel  
David Pham  
Renee Diane Pinkston  
Stacy Renee Poindexter<sup>3</sup>  
Muneeb Rahman  
Caroline Eppler Root<sup>1</sup>

Holly S. Ryan  
Sailakshmy Sadhu  
Lisa Michelle Salinas

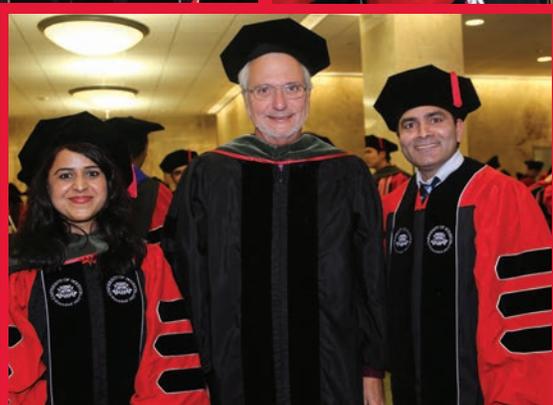
Shiney Samuel<sup>3</sup>  
Soumya Samuel<sup>3</sup>  
Nabeel Sattar  
Steven Lee Seagroves, Jr.<sup>2</sup>  
Ruja Shahrzad  
Aayna Shamsi<sup>2</sup>  
Tiffany Sieben<sup>3</sup>  
Lydia Matar Solis<sup>2</sup>  
Mary Sun<sup>1</sup>  
August Sky Tessari  
Tracey Maria Thomas  
Andrew Jonathan Tindall  
Marc Anthony Kiet Tran  
Emily Trinh  
Lauren Cathleen Tulio  
Shawn Varghese<sup>3</sup>  
Elizabeth Mary Villanueva  
Mien Ha Vu  
Pari Nesa Wafayee  
Kaitlin Rose Wasko<sup>3</sup>  
Cody Michael Will  
Christopher Theodore Wilson  
Chelsea Wong<sup>2</sup>  
Amber Michelle Wright<sup>2</sup>  
Boxin Allen Xu  
Mahwish A. Yasin  
David William Yu  
Sherien Maher Zaid<sup>1</sup>

**PHARMACY CERTIFICATE IN  
HISPANIC HEALTHCARE**  
Eric Kao

<sup>1</sup> Summa Cum Laude Honors

<sup>2</sup> Magna Cum Laude Honors

<sup>3</sup> Cum Laude Honors



photos by Eddy Marchante and Kris Kehn

# HOUSTON PROGRAM MAKES ITS MARK

Not yet a decade into its existence, The Houston Program — the collaboration between UHCOP and seven fellow Texas Medical Center institutions to develop the next generation of health-system pharmacy leaders — already has built an impressive track record of leadership and service.

Successful completion of The Houston Program includes an M.S. in Pharmacy Leadership and Administration from the college and consecutive PGY1 pharmacy practice residency and PGY2 in health-system pharmacy administration from either CHI St. Luke's Health Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center, Harris Health System, Houston Methodist Hospital, Memorial Hermann Health System, Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Texas Children's Hospital or The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center.

Although far from the first honorees, some of the most recent individuals to be recognized are:

Linda Haines, Pharm.D., M.S. ('11), pulled off a unique double-play in 2017 with her election as a Fellow of the Texas Society of Health-System Pharmacists and as recipient of the Pharmacy Leadership Award.

A member of The Houston Program's

inaugural class, Haines currently serves as Houston Methodist Hospital pharmacy operations manager and director of the hospital's health-system pharmacy administration residency.

Haines' service to health-system pharmacy includes TSHP Executive Board Treasurer, chair of both the TSHP New Practitioners Section and New Practitioner Mentor Program, and several councils, such as public affairs and communications.

"I really didn't think I'd get here in my career so fast; I know it's been many years since finishing the Houston Program, but I still felt like I was young in my career," Haines said. "To constantly admire leaders

who've achieved similar statuses, and to feel like I've grown into a leader that people recognize and look up to, it's an amazing accomplishment."

Fellow Houston Program alumna Phuoc Anh (Anne) Nguyen, Pharm.D., M.S. ('15), BCPS, was recognized with TSHP's 2017 New Pharmacist Award — only two years after earning Leo F. & Ann Godley Residency Fellowship Award.

Her impressive record of leadership and service has included TSHP New Practitioner Chair and Executive Board Secretary-Elect, member of the Pharmacy Practice Managers and Leadership Development advisory groups for the American Society of Health



**LINDA HAINES**, Pharm.D., M.S. ('11), BCPS, FTSHP  
Pharmacy Operations Manager,  
Houston Methodist Hospital



**PHUOC ANNE NGUYEN**, Pharm.D., M.S. ('15), BCPS  
Transitions of Care/Internal Medicine Clinical Pharmacy Specialist  
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

credited for her leadership in the expansion of the nationwide Pharmacy Administration Residency Collaboration (PARC), an organizational network for health-system pharmacy administration residents which was co-founded by Houston Program alumnus Patrick Birney, Pharm.D., M.S. ('14). Smith's PARC-support activities included developing a bimonthly newsletter and website and facilitating the formation of its board of advisors.

Smith also was instrumental in planning the inaugural lecture and fundraising event for the recently established Roger W. Anderson Pharmacy Leadership Program endowment at UHCOP, as well as spearheading the creation of a Leaders of Tomorrow task force within GCSHP. In addition, Smith's participation on a Code Blue team led to a first-place poster award at MD Anderson's Education Week in 2017.

"It is an absolute honor to receive this award, but the work and accomplishments that led to my receiving it are certainly not mine alone," Smith said. "I feel fortunate to have been surrounded by so many

*continued next page*

-System Pharmacists and member for the Gulf Coast Society of Health-System Pharmacists Board of Directors.

After a gap year in which the Godley Residency Fellowship Award was not awarded, the Houston Program's Amanda Beck, Pharm.D., M.S. ('17), earned it in 2017.

"Originally, I wanted to pursue a residency to help me figure out who I wanted to be ... What kind of pharmacist, what kind of projects did I want to manage, what was my leadership style" Beck said. "After going through the residencies, I didn't find out who I wanted to be — I figured out who I was.

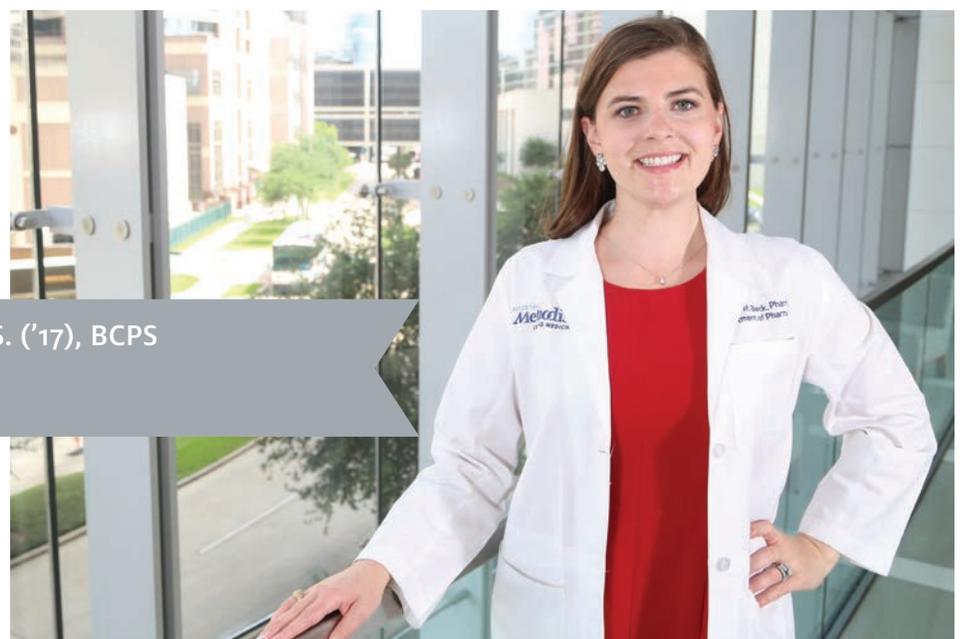
"The reason that I love my mentors and got along with them so well is because they spent time and effort into building me up — allowing me to reflect and grow from

that. I realized that a true leader is someone who builds up others around them."

The outstanding work — and recognition for — Houston Program participants, alumni and mentors continued into 2018, as two with second-year residents/students adding their names to the program's legacy with.

Class of 2018's Devlin V. Smith, Pharm.D., defended the Houston Program's reign by earning the Godley Residency Fellowship Award at the 2018 TSHP seminar. Smith was

**AMANDA BECK**, Pharm.D., M.S. ('17), BCPS  
Pharmacy Operations Manager,  
Houston Methodist Hospital



great teachers that have inspired and guided my accomplishments during residency and whose effects will continue to be seen as I start my career as a pharmacy leader.”

With Smith’s designation, Houston Program participants have received the award every year it has been bestowed between 2014 and 2018 (it was not awarded in 2016).

Houston Program classmate Thomas Roduta, Pharm.D., also was recognized at the 2018 meeting, taking home the first-place award in the Research Poster Competition-Resident Category for his project, “Impact of Real-Time Prescription Benefit Information at Point of Discharge on a Provider-Sponsored Health Plan.”

In the multicenter retrospective study of more than 1,000 patients, Roduta and his coauthors sought to evaluate the impact of prescription formulary status availability at the point of discharge on patients’ ability to acquire and remain adherent to medications and to decrease medication costs through optimized prescribing of preferred medications. While they found that benefit availability did not affect prescribing behavior for preferred formulary medications, it did reduce the amount of non-formulary medication prescribing.

The study was coauthored by UHCOP alumni Dominic Vu, Pharm.D. (’11), director of Pharmacy at Memorial Hermann Health Solutions, and Rodney Cox, R.Ph., M.S. (’11), director of Pharmacy at Memorial Hermann The Woodlands, and UHCOP faculty mem-



Roduta



Smith

bers David A. Wallace, Pharm.D. (’98), and Susan Abughosh, Ph.D.

In the first win by a program partner specifically for its health-system pharmacy administration residency, Houston Methodist received the Residency Program Excellence Award for the PGY1/PGY2/M.S. program. The award is presented to a “pharmacy residency program that has a track record of excellence in the training of pharmacy residents and consistently provides an exceptionally positive and rewarding experience to their residents.” Nominated programs are evaluated on such criteria as innovation, quality improvement, training environment, achievement record, service excellence and preceptor development.

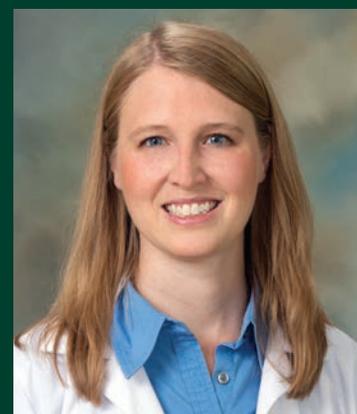
## TSHP Special Recognition Awards



Divya Varkey, Pharm.D., M.S., clinical associate professor and director of UHCOP’s component of The Houston Program, received the 2017 TSHP Special Recognition Award for Educational Service. While working at Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center prior to joining UHCOP, Varkey was part of the founding team from the original five Texas Medical Center-based health systems and UHCOP that established The Houston Program.



Kyle Munch, Pharm.D., M.S. (’14), pharmacy operations manager at Conroe Regional Medical Center, received the TSHP Special Recognition Award for Organizational Service. Munch was credited for his contributions to TSHP’s New Practitioners Executive Section, including program planning for the 2018 Annual Seminar.



Mallory Gessner-Wharton, Pharm.D. (’11), M.S. (’13), pharmacy director at Kingwood Medical Center, was honored with the TSHP Special Recognition Award for Professional Service. Gessner-Wharton is immediate past president of the Gulf Coast Society of Health-System Pharmacists who also served in the TSHP Mentor Program.



# THERE'S NO 'I' IN PHARMACOLOGY

## PROVOST HONORS TEAM WITH GROUP TEACHING AWARD

A team of 14 faculty members and researchers from UH College of Pharmacy's Department of Pharmacological & Pharmaceutical Sciences and five external academic health institutions was recognized by the UH Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost.

The Group Teaching Award was presented to instructors of the college's Cardiovascular and Renal Pharmacology course in the Pharmacology & Pharmaceutics doctoral program by UH Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Paula Myrick Short, Ph.D., at the 2018 Faculty Excellence Awards dinner.

"The goal in our approach to this course is to make the content as current or relevant as possible to the students and to provide content and discussions that will propel them through their future careers, so we've emphasized critical thinking, analysis, writing and oral communication skills," said course coordinator and instructor Bradley K. McConnell, Ph.D., FAHA, FCVS, associate professor of Pharmacology.

In addition to McConnell, the other UH-COP instructors in the course were: Anees

Banday, Ph.D.; Krishna Boini, Ph.D.; Richard A. Bond, Ph.D., FBPhS; Tahir Hussain, Ph.D.; Sai S. Koka, Ph.D., R.Ph.; and Ke-He Ruan, M.D., Ph.D.

External members of the teaching team were Peter Doris, Institute of Molecular Medicine, Center for Human Genetics, UTHealth; Terry Kenakin, Ph.D., School of Medicine, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Na Li, Ph.D., and George Rodney, Ph.D., Department of Molecular Physiology and Biophysics, Baylor College of Medicine; Adebayo Oyekan, DVM, Ph.D., FAHA, College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, Texas Southern University; and Regis Vollmer, Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh College of Pharmacy.

The class is structured with a different faculty member/researcher each week presenting a key topic of the course (such as "Cardiometabolic Disorders and Heart Disease," "Cardiac Pathology & Cell Repair of Heart Disease" and "Renal Transporters") and his or her specific field of research.

Students were required to read original research papers assigned by the topic's instructor, engage in tutorial style discus-

sions between the students and instructor about the article and case studies, participate in class exercises such as performing a heart rate check on classmates and submit a report each week on the presented material. The course culminated with each student presenting a critique of a journal article related to one of the topic areas.

"Collaborative teaching integrates the strength of every instructor's background into one course, something that could not have been accomplished by one instructor alone," wrote Pharmacology Ph.D. student Elizabeth Gray in her nomination letter.

Gray and fellow doctoral student Razia S. Mohammad also commented that they found the course to be "extremely beneficial in instilling logical thinking, critical analysis of data, expanding the knowledge and training the students as future scientists."

*photo by Alexander Rogers/  
Alexander's Fine Portrait Design*

# FACULTY FELLOWS

## Pharmacology, Critical Care Societies Bestow Honors

Three faculty members of UH College of Pharmacy have been elevated to the top ranks of their disciplines.

Richard A. Bond, Ph.D., professor of Pharmacology, and Heather A. Giles, Ph.D., adjunct associate professor of Pharmaceutics, attained Honorary Fellow status in the British Pharmacological Society, and Matthew A. Wanat, Pharm.D., BCPS, BCCCP, clinical assistant professor, was honored as a Fellow of the American College of Critical Care Medicine.

With a B.S. in Pharmacy ('83) and a Ph.D. in Pharmacology ('88), Bond is best known for his research on beta blockers (beta 2 adrenergic agonists) in asthma. His work has been published in such journals as *Nature*, *Science*, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* and the *British Journal of Pharmacology*. He also served as an editor and senior editor of BJP for a total of 10 years and attended all but one of the society's past 21 annual meetings.

"I was extremely honored, and initially thought that perhaps there had been a mistake in giving me the honor compared to the achievements of others," Bond said. "It was also extremely gratifying to be accompanied by my Ph.D. mentor, Professor David Clarke, and to be inducted along with my longtime colleague Heather Giles."

With more than 20 years of research and strategic leadership experience, Giles serves as interim president and chief executive officer of Vapogenix Inc., a Houston-based clinical stage company developing a new class of non-narcotic analgesics for localized pain.

After earning a Ph.D. in Pharmacology from the University of London, Giles joined the Wellcome Research & Development team working under the late Sir James Black, Ph.D., considered the "Father of the Beta Blockers" and a longtime friend, mentor and colleague of both Giles and Bond. A



photo courtesy of British Pharmacological Society

*British Pharmacological Society President David Webb, FRCP, FRSE, FMedSci, presents Richard A. Bond, Ph.D., with a certificate recognizing his induction as an Honorary Fellow of BPS.*

longtime member of the society, Giles also has served as editor of BJP and on the society's governing board.

Wanat, who also serves as a critical care pharmacy specialist at the Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center (MEDVAMC), was inducted during the Society of Critical Care Medicine (SCCM) 47th Critical Care Congress.

Wanat's SCCM-Texas Chapter activities have garnered support from his peers, including receiving the chapter's Excellence in Leadership Award and Excellence in Service-Education Award as well as being elected board member and chapter president. He also has twice earned SCCM Presidential Citations in 2015 and 2017.

He also is a recipient of the UH Provost's Teaching Excellence Award at the Clinical/Instructor level in 2016, a two-time recipient of the Rho Chi Society UH Beta Omicron Chapter's Excellence in Teaching

Award in 2013 and 2015, the Phi Lambda Sigma Leadership Society's Faculty Leadership Award in 2015 and the UHCOP Faculty Teaching Excellence Award in 2014.

A preceptor/co-preceptor for more than 40 pharmacy students from UHCOP and medical residents from Baylor College of Medicine, where he holds a clinical instructor appointment, Wanat developed a Critical Care Pharmacotherapeutics elective course into a hybrid online/in-class course and secured a grant for the purchase of mannequins and software to add "Code Blue" simulation into the curriculum.

Wanat's position as at MEDVAMC also allows him to practice in an advanced multidisciplinary collaborative care team model, including prescriptive authority.

"Being recognized as a Fellow is a great honor," he said. "I love taking care of critically ill patients and teaching this knowledge to pharmacy learners."

# SIMPSON HANGS UP COAT, BUT CHERISHES LIFETIME OF PHARMACY FRIENDS



After 21 years in the pharmacy and teaching professions, UH-COP alumna and Clinical Associate Professor Lynn Simpson decided it was time to hang up her white coat, step away from the podium and enjoy her other passions: traveling, enjoying family and friends and, of course, spoiling her four-legged kids.

Simpson started with the college the month after graduating with the college's inaugural Pharm.D. class in 1996, eventually teaching pharmacy practice courses, skills labs, immunizations and therapeutics to serving as a faculty advisor for multiple student organizations, which included attending events and precepting students at health fairs at night and on weekends several times each month.

Simpson's career included such honors as Texas Pharmacy Association Distinguished Young Pharmacist, Houston Area Pharmacy Association Pharmacist of the Year (as well as serving as

president), American Pharmacists Association-Academy of Student Pharmacists Faculty Advisor of the Year and Phi Lambda Sigma National President. But Simpson said she was most proud of her students' triumphs, including consecutive National Patient Counseling Championships and Chapter of the Year awards.

A breast cancer survivor, Simpson said her husband Bill's own recent successful cancer battle was a sign to start a new chapter in their lives.

"Although it was exciting to be going into a new curriculum and a new building, it felt like the right time to retire and relax," Simpson said. "I was fortunate to have some amazing teachers and mentors in school and starting out, but I was also fortunate to be able to teach and precept a lot of awesome students. And, I know our profession is in good hands because of the faculty and the type of students our program attracts."

## Faculty Accolades

Faculty members **Susan Abughosh**, Ph.D., **Greg D. Cuny**, Ph.D., and **Samina Salim**, Ph.D., were promoted to associate professor.

**Rajender R. Aparasu**, Ph.D., FAPhA, professor, has been appointed to a four-year term on the Nursing and Related Clinical Sciences Study Section of the National Institutes of Health's Center for Scientific Review.

**Hua Chen**, M.D., Ph.D., assistant professor, has been appointed a four-year term on the Healthcare Safety and Quality Improvement Research Study Section of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services' Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

**Diana S-L. Chow**, Ph.D., FNAL, professor, was recognized as a 2017 Texas Medical Center Women's History Project honoree. Launched in 2013, the project recognizes the significant contributions made by women to the development of the TMC.

**Marc L. Fleming**, Ph.D., MPH, R.Ph., assistant professor; **Matthew A. Wanat**, Pharm.D., BCPS, BCCCP, clinical assistant professor; and **Louis Williams**, Ph.D., associate professor, were honored with the Rho Chi Society Beta Omicron Chapter's Teaching Excellence Awards at the chapter's 2017 Robert L. Boblitt Lecture.

**Amelia K. Sofjan**, Pharm.D., BCPS, clinical assistant professor, was among the graduates of the 2017 American College of Clinical Pharmacy's Teaching and Learning Academy.

**Dhara N. Surati**, Pharm.D., BCPS, clinical assistant professor, has been appointed Director of Pharmaceutical Care Teaching Laboratories.

**David A. Wallace**, Pharm.D., clinical associate professor, has been appointed Director of Co-Curriculum for the Pharm.D. program.

# NEW FACULTY

*In its quest to climb to new heights in the delivery of exceptional patient care, research and teaching, UH College of Pharmacy has initiated an aggressive faculty recruitment and retention initiative to ensure that its academic and research programs are supported by highly innovative and motivated faculty members, researchers and clinicians.*



**Bernadette Asias-Dinh**  
*Pharm.D., BCPS, CDE*

Bernadette Asias-Dinh, clinical assistant professor, earned her Pharm.D. degree from UHCOP and completed a PGY-1 Pharmacy Practice Residency Program with emphasis in Primary Care at the Central Texas Veterans Health Care System in Temple, Texas.

She joined the college from Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center, where she served as an ambulatory care clinical specialist in the Medication Therapy and Wellness Clinic. During her four years at the clinic, Asias-Dinh provided disease state management services through collaborative drug therapy agreement in anticoagulation, diabetes, tobacco cessation, and immunizations to patients in the greater Houston area.

Asias-Dinh is a Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist and a Certified Diabetes Educator. Her research interests include diabetes management, chronic disease state management, and preventative care. Asias-Dinh's practice site will be at Vecino Health Center's Denver Harbor Family Clinic, a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) northeast of downtown Houston.



**Krishna M. Boini**  
*Ph.D.*

Krishna M. Boini, assistant professor of Pharmacology, earned a Bachelor of Pharmacy degree and a Master of Pharmacy degree with a Pharmacology specialization from Andhra University in Visakhapatnam, India. After earning a Ph.D. in Pharmacology from the University of Tuebingen, Germany, he completed postdoctoral training at the University of Tuebingen and Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Va.

Boini has published more than 95 articles in peer-reviewed, high-impact scientific journals, and serves as a reviewer and editorial board member of several journals. He has also been recognized by the American Physiological Society and the Association of Scientists of Indian Origin in America.

His research interests mainly focus on the renal physiology and pathophysiology in mouse models of renal diseases, glucose metabolism, hypertension and obesity. His current project, "Instigation of Glomerular Injury by Inflammasomes in Obesity: Beyond Inflammation," is being supported by a five-year, \$1.7 million National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive Kidney Diseases grant awarded in 2015.

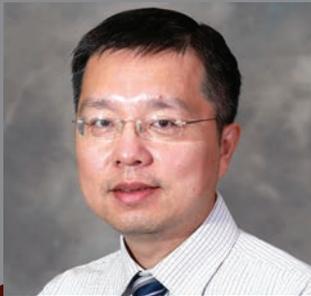


**Austin De La Cruz**  
*Pharm.D., BCPP*

Austin De La Cruz, clinical assistant professor, received his Pharm.D. degree from Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Pharmacy. He then completed a PGY-1 Ambulatory Care Focused Pharmacy Practice Residency and a PGY-2 Psychiatric Pharmacy Residency at the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System in Gainesville, Fla.

With a practice site at the Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center, De La Cruz has clinical practice interests in the management of various mental health disorders, including schizophrenia, major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder and substance abuse.

His research interests include evaluating the use of evidence-based therapies for treatment-resistant schizophrenia and major depressive disorder, impact of mental health pharmacists on acute-care psychiatry, management of psychiatric illnesses and symptomatology in the geriatric population and expanding the role of psychiatric pharmacy services.



**Bin Guo**  
Ph.D.

Bin Guo, associate professor of Pharmaceutics, received his B.S. degree from University of Science and Technology of China in 1992 and his Ph.D. from The State University of New York at Buffalo in 1999.

After a post doc fellowship at the Burnham Institute in the group of Professor John C. Reed, he joined North Dakota State University (NDSU) in 2003. During his time at NDSU, he was promoted to associate professor with tenure in 2010 and received two Dean's Awards for Excellence in Research.

His research interests focus on understanding the epigenetic mechanisms that regulate cancer progression and the development of new cancer therapeutic agents. Guo's research is currently funded by two National Institutes of Health R01 grants totaling more than \$2.5 million.

He has published a number of papers on high-impact journals, including *Nature*, *Gastroenterology* and *Cancer Research*, and has served on numerous study sections for the National Institutes of Health, Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense.



**Sai Sudha Koka**  
Ph.D., R.Ph.

Sai Sudha Koka, research assistant professor of Pharmacology, earned her Ph.D. in Pharmacology and Toxicology from the Eberhard Karls Universität of Tuebingen in Tuebingen, Germany. She also received a Master of Pharmacy with a specialization in pharmacology and a Bachelor of Pharmacy from Andhra University in India.

Her research is focused on understanding the cellular and molecular mechanisms regulating the development of cardiometabolic disorders and identifying novel pharmacologic strategies to combat cardiovascular diseases, such as atherosclerosis in diabetic, obese and aging patients. Koka's current work is on the role of gut microbe-derived metabolites in endothelial and vascular cell signaling, inflammation and cardiovascular dysfunction.

Koka has been recognized with several research, travel and presentation awards from such organizations as the American Heart Association, National Postdoctoral Association and the Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences of the International Academy of Cardiovascular Sciences.



**Xinli Liu**  
Ph.D.

Xinli Liu, associate professor of Pharmaceutics, received a B.S. in Chemistry from Lanzhou University, China, and earned her Ph.D. at the University of Kentucky. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship in Clinical Cancer Pharmacology from the Institute of Pediatric Clinical Research's Division of Hematology and Oncology at the University of Southern California-Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

Liu's main research interest is to develop molecular-targeted nanocarriers and drug conjugates to deliver small molecule anticancer agents and biologics to target cancer metastasis.

Her currently funded projects include a three-year, \$446,000 R15 National Cancer Institute grant for "Novel Therapeutics Targeting HER2 Positive Breast Cancer Brain Metastasis" and a two-year, \$200,000 Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) grant for "Engineered Bone Targeting Nanomedicine for Treatment of Bone Metastases from Breast Cancer."

Her research has been published in *PLoS One*, *Journal of the American Chemical Society*, *ACS Nano*, *Molecular Cancer Therapeutics*, and *Analytical Chemistry*.



**Ronnie Ozuna**  
Pharm.D.

Ronnie Ozuna is a clinical assistant professor and the inaugural Assistant Dean for the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) Pharm.D. Satellite Program based at Doctor's Hospital Renaissance (DHR) in Edinburg. He earned his Pharm.D. degree from The University of Texas at Austin College of Pharmacy and a B.A. in Biology from Texas A&M University in College Station.

Ozuna is a Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist and certified in Medication Therapy Management. He has worked in both clinical/hospital and community pharmacy settings, most recently as DHR's Pharmacy Clinical Manager since 2009.

During his time with DHR, Ozuna has played a leading role in the development and/or implementation of a variety of clinical pharmacy initiatives, including a pharmacokinetic consult service, pharmacy renal dosing program, IV-to-Oral conversion program, medication reconciliation/medication therapy management service, and transition to an electronic medication administration record (eMAR) system.



**Katie Smith**  
Pharm.D.

Katie Smith, who joined the college as a clinical assistant Professor, received her Pharm.D. degree from Creighton University School of Pharmacy and Health Professions in Omaha, Neb. After graduation, Smith completed a PGY1 Pharmacy Practice Residency and PGY2 Ambulatory Care Pharmacy Residency at the Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Houston.

Smith is proficient in Spanish and a Board Certified Ambulatory Care Pharmacist (BCACP). Her academic and research interests include the impact of pharmacists on chronic disease states in underserved populations, diabetes and cardiovascular disease, and interdisciplinary education. Smith will maintain a practice/experiential education site at Vecino Health Centers' Denver Harbor Family Clinic, a Federally Qualified Health Center which serves a predominantly Hispanic/Spanish-speaking patient population in Houston's near eastside. Smith and UHCOP colleague Bernadette Asias-Dinh have received Texas State Board of Pharmacy prescriptive authority under physician's protocol for diabetes, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, smoking cessation and anticoagulation therapies.



**Alexander V. Statsyuk**  
Ph.D.

Alexander Statsyuk, assistant professor of Medicinal Chemistry, received his M.S. degree at Moscow State University in Russia and his Ph.D. degree at the University of Chicago. During his doctoral program studies, he was the first to complete the total synthesis of the cytotoxic natural product bistramide A and unravel the mechanisms that underlie the toxicity of bistramide A in cancer cells. He then moved to the University of California San Francisco for his postdoctoral studies, where he worked on developing chemical methods to identify upstream kinases of protein phosphorylation sites.

After joining Northwestern University, he led a research team that pioneered many chemical methods to study the enzymes of the ubiquitin and ubiquitin-like systems and developed novel approaches for covalent drug discovery. With a primary focus on cancer, his current research interests include mechanistic studies of enzymes that control protein ubiquitination and developing chemical probes that target this class of undruggable enzymes to understand their biology and test novel therapeutic hypotheses.

His current project on "Pharmacological Inhibitors of Nedd4 Ubiquitin Ligase as Anticancer Therapeutics" is supported by a five-year, \$1.4 million NIH grant awarded in 2015.



**J. Douglas Thornton**  
Ph.D., Pharm.D., BCPS

J. Douglas Thornton, assistant professor of Pharmaceutical Health Outcomes and Policy, graduated magna cum laude from the West Virginia University (WVU) School of Pharmacy and the Honors College with a Pharm.D. and completed a PGY1 pharmacy practice residency at Saint Mary's Medical Center in Huntington, W. Va.

In addition to being a Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist (BCPS), Thornton earned a Certificate of Advanced Study in Healthcare Administration from the WVU John D. Rockefeller IV School of Policy & Politics and a Certificate in Introduction to the Principles and Practices of Clinical Research from the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center.

His primary research interests are focused on safe, effective medication use and reducing morbidity and mortality associated with chronic opioid therapy and opioid use disorders. A reviewer for seven journals, he has authored or co-authored journal articles and manuscripts in such publications as the *Quality of Life Research Journal*, *Aging and Mental Health*, the *Journal of the American Pharmacists Association* and *Value in Health*.



**Divya Varkey**  
Pharm.D., M.S.

Divya A. Varkey, clinical associate professor, earned her Pharm.D. degree from Purdue University and completed a PGY1/PGY2 Health-System Pharmacy Administration residency from The Ohio State University Medical Center along with an M.S. in Health-System Pharmacy Administration from The Ohio State University.

She joins the college with 12 years of health-system pharmacy experience, with the last 10 years in leadership roles. Varkey most recently served as the director of Pharmacy at CHI St. Luke's Health-Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center in the Texas Medical Center.

Varkey will oversee the continued growth and development of the college's role in The Houston Program, which comprises a master's degree in Pharmacy Leadership and Administration from UHCOP and a PGY1-PGY2 in Health-System Pharmacy Administration program from one of partnership with seven fellow TMC institutions. Varkey played an instrumental role in the creation of the program, which welcomed its first cohort of students in 2009.



**Alexa Vyain**  
Pharm.D., AAHIVP

Alexa Vyain, clinical assistant professor, received her Pharm.D. degree and a certificate in Personalized Medicine from Nova Southeastern University College of Pharmacy in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

After graduation, she completed a PGY1 residency at Oklahoma State University Medical Center in Tulsa, Okla., and a PGY2 specialty residency in HIV Ambulatory Care/Clinical Pharmacogenetics through UHCOP, Texas Children's Hospital and Therapeutic Concepts.

Vyain's primary research and clinical interests are focused on the management of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and opportunistic infections, global health pharmacy education and professional development, and classroom-based learning styles and innovative teaching methods.

Vyain is certified as an HIV Pharmacist (AAHIVP) by the American Academy of HIV Medicine, and precepts students at Therapeutic Concepts PA in Houston.



**Wei Wang**  
M.D., Ph.D.

Wei Wang, research associate professor, received her Ph.D. in Molecular Pharmacology from Fudan University School of Pharmacy and her B.M. (M.D. equivalent) with Honor from Changzhi Medical College.

In addition to serving as a co-investigator on several projects with her longtime colleague Ruiwen Zhang, Wang is principal investigator on a \$780,889 American Cancer Society-funded project entitled, "Targeting MDM2 Oncogene for Breast Cancer Therapy."

A co-inventor on several patents filed or in progress, Wang is the author/coauthor of nearly 40 presentations and abstracts as well as more than 60 papers in such publications as *Oncotarget*, *Nature Communications* and *Gastroenterology*. She also serves as a book review editor for *Current Cancer Drug Targets*; an editorial board member of several journals, including the *Journal of Bioequivalence & Bio-availability*, *Journal of Pharmaceutics*, *Drug Delivery & Safety* and the *Journal of Cancer Clinical Trials*; and a reviewer for dozens of journals.



**Ruiwen Zhang**  
M.D., Ph.D., D.A.B.T.

Ruiwen Zhang is the inaugural Robert L. Boblitt Professor of Drug Discovery, professor of Pharmacology and Toxicology and inaugural director of the proposed UH Center for Drug Discovery.

A Diplomate of the American Board of Toxicology since 1999, Zhang earned his Ph.D. in Toxicology and Occupational Epidemiology and M.D. degrees from Shanghai Medical University (now Fudan University Shanghai Medical College). He also completed a post doc/clinical pharmacology fellowship at the University of Alabama School of Medicine in Birmingham, Ala., before joining Texas Tech University.

He serves as editor-in-chief of *Current Cancer Drug Targets*; associate editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Nutritional Oncology*; and associate editor of the *Journal of Biomedical Research*, *Frontiers in Pharmacology* and *Therapeutics and Clinical Risk Management*. He is the principal investigator on two National Cancer Institute grants: a five-year, \$2.9 million project, "Novel NFAT1-MDM2 Inhibitor for Breast Cancer Therapy" and a five-year, \$2.4 million project, "Novel Small Molecule MDM2 Inhibitors for Pancreatic Cancer Therapy."



**Yang Zhang**  
Ph.D.

Yang Zhang, associate professor of Pharmacology, earned a Ph.D. in cardiovascular pharmacology from Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee and a B.Sc. in applied chemistry from Peking University, China, before completing a postdoctoral fellowship at University of Duisburg-Essen in Germany.

Zhang joined the college from Virginia Commonwealth University, where he served as an assistant professor and a director for its undergraduate summer research program.

His research interests include the roles of redox signaling, lipid metabolism, immune cells, adipokines and high glucose in endothelial dysfunction, smooth muscle dedifferentiation and vascular injury in the pathogenesis of cardiovascular diseases.

Zhang has published more than 60 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters. He currently holds two multiyear RO1 grants — "Endothelial Inflammasome in Microcirculation: Beyond Inflammation" and "Lysosome Trafficking Dysregulation of Arterial Myocytes in Atherogenesis" — totaling \$3.4 million from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

# MONITORING FOR MISUSE



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## UHCOP Duo to Craft State Plan for Expanding Use, Identifying Best Practices of Rx Monitoring Program

As communities across the country struggle to find effective, lasting resolution to the opioid crisis, UH College of Pharmacy researchers are helping to plot a new course of engagement for Texas pharmacists to prevent continued misuse of controlled substance prescriptions.

UHCOP Assistant Professor Marc Fleming, Ph.D., MPH, R.Ph., and his co-investigator, Assistant Professor Doug Thornton, Ph.D., Pharm.D., BCPS, have been awarded funding from the Texas Health and Human Services Commission via a federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant program. The UHCOP investigators' work is expected to total approximately \$365,000 in 2018 and at least \$857,000 over the subsequent three fiscal years.

SAMHSA's chief goals for the Strategic Prevention Framework for Prescription Drugs (SPF-Rx) program include enhancing utilization of prescription drug mon-

itoring programs (PDMPs) and analyzing PDMP data to understand the epidemiology trends in state prescribing and dispensing of controlled substance prescriptions.

In addition, Fleming and Thornton are forming an education plan to address how healthcare professionals — including pharmacists — could provide counseling on all controlled substance prescription drugs, but with an emphasis on prescription opioids.

Elements of the education plan include encouraging greater use of the Texas PDMP by pharmacists; best practices in safe use of opioids and controlled substances; safe storage and disposal of these substances, such as the dissolution packs that render the active ingredients inert; and, perhaps what may be the most challenging aspect, a referral component based on local resources for treatment and recovery, Fleming said.

In developing their plan, the investigators will solicit pharmacists' input to better understand such aspects as barriers to counseling and the logistics of delivering the educational content.

With a solid education plan in place and a process for delivering it, Fleming said the program will be rolled out in the Harris County/Houston area, then expanded to other major metropolitan areas and finally smaller regions across the state.

Leading up to the project's current phase, Fleming took part in the first Texas Drug Abuse Summit last year and was among the presenters at a Houston town-hall meeting — one of a dozen such events organized by HHSC across the state in 2017 — to engage stakeholders on the challenges, resources and needs of communities from a prevention and treatment perspective.

# STAKING OUT THE RESISTANCE

## Garey Heads TMC-funded Watch for Resistant Candida

UHCOP Professor Kevin W. Garey, Pharm.D., M.S., FASHP, is spearheading the development of an “early warning system” that could detect whether a dangerous, drug-resistant strain of fungus exists in area hospitals.

Supported by a \$203,785 grant from the Texas Medical Center, Garey’s team is targeting a dangerous yeast called *Candida auris*, which first appeared in the U.S. in 2016. The yeast causes fungal infections that often spread through the bloodstream, and it doesn’t respond to commonly used antifungal drugs, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. About 30 to 60 percent of patients infected with *C. auris* have died.

Garey’s team is working to establish a system to conduct real-time monitoring that would detect whether the yeast exists in area hospitals.

“The problem with *C. auris* is we have a

hard time diagnosing it, and by the time we actually diagnose it, many patients will have died,” Garey said. “If we could proactively look for it, that would be a game changer.”

Garey said Houston facilities could be at risk since drug-resistant organisms typically emerge in medical facilities, and Houston has a large concentration of hospitals. It’s important to develop a system to proactively monitor hospitals for the fungus, since it’s difficult or impossible to effectively treat infections caused by it, Garey said.

“The bottom line is this project can help protect patients,” said Stephen Linder, Ph.D., associate director of the TMC Health Policy Institute. “We’re excited this work has the potential to extend beyond Houston and become a national model.”

*C. auris* was first identified in 2009 in Japan. Since then, it’s been reported in more than a dozen countries. As of late 2017, the

CDC has confirmed 157 cases in the U.S. but none in Texas. In 2016, the CDC issued an alert to warn the health care community about the emergence of the drug-resistant fungus, which can spread through contaminated surfaces and equipment, as well as person-to-person.

Garey said monitoring for *C. auris* requires the use of specialized techniques and protocols, otherwise it’s easy to misidentify the fungus.

Texas A&M Health Science Center, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, Memorial Hermann Health System and CHI St. Luke’s Health are participating in the study. Garey aims to enlist 20 Houston-area hospitals in the monitoring effort in the first year, then recruit hospitals from across Texas.

Establishing such a system would allow researchers to detect other drug-resistant organisms as well, Garey said.



# TAM CRAFTING SKIN NECROSIS MODEL FOR SUB-Q ANTIBIOTICS

Vincent H. Tam, Pharm.D., BCPS (AQ-ID), is developing a pre-clinical model of skin necrosis in preparation for the next phase development of a new in-home infusion platform for antibiotic therapy.

Supported by a \$546,700 research grant from Massachusetts-based scPharmaceuticals Inc., the project aims to establish key parameters — including concentration, volume and duration — for a new home-based subcutaneous administration of an antibiotic therapy instead of the Food and Drug Administration-approved intravenous (IV) administration restricted to the hospital setting. Tam said as better, safer technologies and drug formulations are being developed, the home-based infusion market is poised for major expansion.

“(Subcutaneous infusion therapy) is not necessarily risk-free, but there is precedent: People have been doing self-injections of insulin on a daily basis for all of their lives and are fine,” Tam said. “But, a common problem of giving drugs under the skin in general is local inflammation, especially if it’s puncturing the skin



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daily. You can have local irritation and necrosis, so obviously this is a concern that manufacturers, patients and caregivers have — and we need to have an idea of how to address this problem.”

Skin presents unique challenges for pharmaceutical companies and device manufacturers during new product development, particularly in the pre-clinical phase that can make or break a product’s progression as well as in the associated costs of moving through the FDA review/approval process.

“There’s no widely established way of dealing with this problem in a systematic, scientific fashion,” Tam said. “In a preclinical model, you can’t really use cell lines because the skin is a heterogeneous organ; there is no one definitive cell line that can represent the skin structure. We’re aiming for maximum patient convenience with the minimum local intolerance; my hypothesis is that there is a sweet spot somewhere in the middle. The whole point is that you don’t want to try this out on humans without knowing or having high degree of confidence of the likely outcomes.”

## Bench Notes

**Nicholas D. Beyda**, Pharm.D., BCPS, assistant professor, has received a \$20,000 Young Investigator Research Award from the Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists’ for his project, “Uncovering Novel Mechanisms Governing Non-FKS Mediated Echinocandin Resistance in *C. Glabrata*.”

**Kevin W. Garey**, Pharm.D., M.S., FASHP, professor, was awarded subcontracts on two National Institutes of Health-funded projects: a one-year, \$112,875 award for “Relationships Between Metronidazole Resistance, Pharmacodynamics and Treatment Outcomes in *Clostridium difficile* Infection” via the Texas A&M University Health Science Center, and a two-year, \$247,200 award for “Ultrasensitive *C. difficile* Toxin Measurement for Diagnosis and Outcome Prediction” via Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.

**Anamitra Ghosh**, Ph.D., a post-doctoral fellow working with UHCOP Associate Professor **Joydip Das**, Ph.D., won in the poster presentation category at the inaugural UH Postdoctoral Research Symposium. Ghosh’s presentation was entitled, “Ethanol upregulates active zone protein Munc13-1: A possible implication in presynaptic physiology and alcoholism.”

**Samanthreddy Kedika**, a Pharmacology/Medicinal Chemistry Ph.D. student, working in the lab of Associate Professor **D. Gomika Udugamasooriya**, Ph.D., won one of two poster

presentation awards during the 10th Peptoid Summit at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory’s The Molecular Foundry in Berkeley, Calif. Kedika was recognized for their project entitled, “Harnessing Additional Binding Sites to Improve Binding Specificity and Activity of Protein Targeted Ligands.”

**Suchi Raghunathan**, a Pharmacology Ph.D. candidate working with faculty advisor UHCOP’s **Bradley K. McConnell**, Ph.D., FAHA, FCVS, received an American Society of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET) Travel Award to present a poster at the ASPET Annual Meeting at Experimental Biology 2018. Her project was titled, “Reprogramming Human Cardiac Progenitor Cells into Pacemaker Cells for Heart Repair.”

**Alexander Statsyuk**, Ph.D., assistant professor, received a one-year, \$100,000 grant from the William & Ella Owens Medical Research Foundation for his project entitled, “Autophagy Inhibitors to Prevent Nutrient Supply and Organelle and Proteome Quality Control in K-Ras and B-Raf Driven Cancers.”

**D. Gomika Udugamasooriya**, Ph.D., associate professor, received a one-year, \$100,000 grant from the William & Ella Owens Medical Research Foundation for his project “Discovery of ‘True’ Early Biomarkers for Early Cancer Diagnosis and Therapy Developments.”

# CHEN LAUNCHES STUDY OF MEDICAL HOME MODEL FOR REDUCING DISPARITIES IN PEDIATRIC MENTAL HEALTH

The patient-centered medical home (PCMH) model is being championed by some as the most effective pathway for achieving higher quality of care and reducing racial/ethnic health disparities among other benefits. Yet, it's not clear whether PCMH-recognized organizations with integrated behavioral services (either through colocation or telepsychiatry) lead to reduced disparities in pediatric mental health care versus the traditional primary care.

"PCMHs are being advocated as not only more convenient for patients, which can have a significant impact on their adherence to therapy and even the most basic factor of maintaining follow-up appointments, but also as a means of improving care efficiencies for the organization and patients through shared electronic medical records and other areas across the service continuum," said UH-COP Associate Professor Hua Chen, M.D., Ph.D.

With the support of a two-year, \$100,000 grant from the Agency for Health Care Research and Quality (AHRQ), Chen is examining whether PCMH-recognized health care organizations are more effective than the traditional primary care setting in reducing racial/ethnic disparities in the diagnosis, treatment and outcomes of major depressive disorders within the pediatric/adolescent population.

Chen will utilize the PCMH recognition data from the National Committee for Quality Assurance, and the Medicaid claims and provider/practice characteristics from the largest pediatric Medicaid managed care plan in Texas — with a pediatric enrollment in excess of 400,000 patients.



## APARASU STUDIES TOLERABILITY OF ANTIMUSCARINICS FOR OAB IN ELDERLY DEMENTIA PATIENTS

UHCOP Professor and Department Chair Rajender R. Aparasu, Ph.D., FAPhA, is studying whether use of a medication to treat overactive bladder (OAB) may pose a greater risk of adverse drug events (ADEs), such as falls, hospitalization and death, in dementia patients.

Backed by a three-year, \$384,000 R15 grant from the National Institute of Aging, Aparasu and his co-investigators are analyzing medication and outcomes data from more than 4 million Medicare beneficiaries to develop the first known safety profile for selective and non-selective antimuscarinic agents in older adults with dementia. Aparasu's team is working to identify adverse health outcomes associated with selective agents (such as darifenacin and solifenacin) vs. non-selective agents (such as oxybutynin, tolterodine, trospium and fesoterodine) in elderly dementia patients being treated for OAB.

"The non-selective agents inhibit all muscarinic receptors, which play an important role in memory, whereas the selective agents target muscarinic receptors responsible for bladder contraction," Aparasu said. "As dementia patients already are in a state of progressive cognitive decline due to damage to the cholinergic neurons system, our hypothesis is that nonselective agents will exacerbate their dementia and put them at increased risk for ADEs. It's important to understand the comparative safety of these two classes of medications to provide information to clinicians and patients to enable them to make informed decisions regarding antimuscarinic use in dementia."

Aparasu's previous work on anticholinergic use in elderly dementia patients revealed that more than 40 percent of the 2.18 million outpatient visits by older adults in 2009-10 were for OAB, and use of the agents in elderly nursing home residents with depression was associated with a 14 percent greater risk of falls and fractures vs. residents who had not taken the drugs within a prior 30-day period.



## PPS RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM LOGS ABSTRACTS RECORD

The Department of Pharmacological and Pharmaceutical Sciences' 5th Annual PPS Research Symposium in August 2017 saw a record number of abstracts submitted for oral and/or poster presentation by Ph.D. program students and postdoctoral researchers.

The Symposium Scholar-in-Residence, Eschelmann Distinguished Lecturer at the University of North Carolina Jeff Aubé, Ph.D., delivered both scientific and career-development talks during the two-day event.

Two graduate students were recognized with poster presentation awards: First Place — Sameer Nikhar for “Optimization of pyrido[2,3-d]pyrimidinones as dual ALK2/RIPK2 or preferential RIPK2 inhibitors” (Gregory D. Cuny, Ph.D., UHCOP associate professor and advisor); and Second Place — Santosh Suryavanshi for “Mechanistic role of human mAKAP polymorphisms in car-



*Pharmacology/Medicinal Chemistry Ph.D. candidate Sameer Nikhar explains his project to a symposium attendee.*

diovascular disorders” (Bradley McConnell, Ph.D., FAHA, FAPS, UHCOP associate professor and advisor).

Graduate students receiving awards for their oral presentations were: First Place — Hesong Liu for “Animal model of early life stress: understanding stress resilience and susceptibility” (Samina Salim, Ph.D., UHCOP associate professor and advisor); and Second Place — Henrietta Abodakpi, Pharm.D. ('16), for “Prevalence of extend-

ed-spectrum  $\beta$ -lactamase and carbapenemase-producing bloodstream isolates of *Klebsiella pneumoniae* in a tertiary care hospital” (Vincent H. Tam, Pharm.D., BCPS [AQ-ID], UHCOP professor and advisor).

The top two postdoctoral oral presentations were: First Place — Anamitra Ghosh, Ph.D., for “Ethanol upregulates Munc13-1: A possible implication in presynaptic physiology and alcoholism” (Joydip Das, Ph.D., UHCOP associate professor and sponsor); and Second Place — Indira Pokkunuri, Ph.D., for “Simulated vehicle exhaust exposure causes age-related impairments in the kidneys of adult rats” (sponsors Mohammad Asghar, Ph.D., UHCOP assistant professor, and Salim).

The symposium provides an opportunity for students, postdoctoral researchers and faculty members to learn about each other's work as well as additional presentation experience for students and postdocs.

**GRANTED**

“Liposomal Formulations of Polymyxin and Uses Thereof” (U.S. Patent 9820940 issued Nov. 21, 2017), Inventors: **Vincent Tam**, Pharm.D., BCPS (AQ-ID), **Diana Chow**, Ph.D., FNAI, and **Jie He**, Ph.D. ('12)

“Lipid-based Nanoparticles” (U.S. Patent 9801957 issued Oct. 31, 2017), Inventors: Ananth Annapragada, Ph.D., **Jason L. Eriksen**, Ph.D., Eric A. Tanifum, Ph.D., Indrani Dasgupta, Ph.D., Stephen C. Cook, MBA

“Steroid-sparing effects of beta-adrenergic inverse agonists and uses thereof” (U.S. Patent 9730889 issued Aug. 15, 2017), Inventors: **Richard A. Bond**, Ph.D. ('88), B.S. ('83), Burton F. Dickey, M.D., Michael J. Tuvim, Ph.D.

# HIGH-RISK MEDICATIONS AND PRESCRIPTION MISUSE

## Inaugural Medication Safety Symposium Draws Professionals, Researchers and Students from 15 Houston Institutions

Houston-area health care providers and researchers launched a new effort to explore options for reversing America's addiction to painkillers, but also addressing growing concerns about the use of high-risk medications in the vulnerable geriatric population.

The inaugural Houston Medication Safety Symposium brought together more than 130 health care professionals, including physicians, nurses, pharmacists and dentists as well as fellows, residents, health care policy researchers and students from more than 15 institutions to gain new perspectives from experts in academia, the pharmaceutical industry and the regulatory arena.

Plenary session speakers were Grant Baldwin, Ph.D., MPH, of U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Zachary Marcum, Pharm.D., Ph.D., of the University of Washington; Steven Passik, Ph.D., of Collegium Pharmaceutical, Inc.; and Michael Steinman, M.D., of the University of California San Francisco.

The event also featured poster and podium presentation sessions, with awards bestowed for the top presenters (see box at right).

Held in the world-renowned Texas Medical Center, the symposium was hosted by UH College of Pharmacy's Department of Pharmaceutical Health Outcomes and Policy and the UTHealth McGovern Medical School's Department of Geriatric and Palliative Care, and sponsored by the Phyllis Gough Huffington Endowed Lectureship and the UTHealth Consortium on Aging.

More than 50 percent of the attendees received continuing education credit in their respective disciplines. Comments from attendee surveys included, "This was a fantastic program ... would never have guessed that this was the first year!", "Enjoyed the interprofessional nature ...", and "Well organized, great venues, great speakers!"



*Clockwise from top right, Hemalkumar Mehta of The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston discusses his research findings with an attendee; UHCOP faculty member Marc Fleming is interviewed by a Houston TV reporter about the symposium; and event co-chairs Rajender Aparasu of UH College of Pharmacy and Holly Holmes of UTHealth McGovern Medical School present the Best Poster Presentation Award to UHCOP Ph.D. candidate Nandita Kachru.*

### Podium & Poster Presentation Awards

The Association between Payments Made by the Pharmaceutical Industry and Prescriptions for Drugs of Uncertain Medical Benefits to Medicare Part D Beneficiaries  
Manvi Sharma<sup>1</sup>, Aisha Vadhariya<sup>1</sup>, Michael L. Johnson<sup>1</sup>, Zachary A Marcum<sup>2</sup>, Holly M Holmes<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Houston, Houston, TX, <sup>2</sup>University of Washington, Seattle, WA, <sup>3</sup>The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, Houston, TX

Anti-Dementia and Anti-Hyperlipidemic Medication Use at End of Life in Elderly Lung Cancer Patients

Min Ji Kim<sup>1</sup>, Zhigang Duan<sup>1</sup>, Hui Zhao<sup>1</sup>, Holly Michelle Holmes<sup>2</sup>, Joanna-Grace Mayo Manzano<sup>1</sup>, Sharon Hermes Giordano<sup>1</sup>, Maria E. Suarez-Almazor<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX <sup>2</sup>The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, Houston, TX

Antimuscarinic Medication Utilization Among Older Dementia Patients

Nandita Kachru<sup>1</sup>, Rajender R Aparasu<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Houston, Houston, TX

Improving Safety of Opioid Prescription in UTMB Geriatric Population

Jose A Mendoza<sup>1</sup>, Erin Hommel<sup>1</sup>, Amandeep Kaur<sup>1</sup>, Joyce Alasse<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston, TX

Predictors of Antipsychotic Initiation Among Short-Stay Nursing Home Dementia Patients

Sneha D. Sura<sup>1</sup>, Holly M. Holmes<sup>2</sup>, Michael L. Johnson<sup>1</sup>, Hua Chen<sup>1</sup>, Rajender R. Aparasu<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Houston, Houston, TX <sup>2</sup>McGovern Medical School at UTHealth, Houston, TX

Characteristics of Psychotropic Polypharmacy in the Management of Pediatric Mental Disorders

Rohan Medhekar<sup>1</sup>, Hua Chen<sup>1</sup>, Joy P Alonzo<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Houston, Houston, TX



# NGUYEN CREDITS COMMUNICATION FOR SUCCESS

UHCOP alumnus Thuy Nguyen, Pharm.D. ('08), is thankful that the local bank near his home in North Texas wasn't hiring the summer between high school and college. Otherwise, he may not have discovered his passion in pharmacy.

"I was planning on a career in medicine, but once I saw the accessibility of the pharmacist, whether it's answering questions about OTC products or helping them understand how to use a new medication, I realized the importance of being able to help a patient at any time and without an appointment."

He started his career as a floater pharmacist for Walmart, rising to the position of Market Health & Wellness director without oversight of the pharmacy and vision center of multiple sites in less than a decade. In 2017, Nguyen was honored as Director of the Year in his district, region and the nation.

"One thing I've learned is communication is so important to achieving success in your interactions with patients and your team," Nguyen said. "Pharmacists have to have that patient first mentality — have it at the forefront of everything we do — from moment of drop-off and even when they leave the store."

Nguyen said he appreciates that this value is part of Walmart's patient-care philosophy, which was a major factor in his decision to join the organization immediately after graduation.

"At the time, we'd just developed the \$4 (prescription) list, so Walmart has been a pioneer in our industry by bringing affordability to the patient," he said. "I've been out of my (former) store about four years, but it's part of my territory, and whenever I'm there, I still have patients hug me, ask questions and want to know when I'm coming back. That means a lot to me."

# VARKEY, WOO ATTAIN FELLOW STATUS IN APHA

UHCOP alumni May J. Woo, B.S. ('91), R.Ph., and Alex C. Varkey, Pharm.D. ('05), M.S., have reached what many consider the pinnacle of pharmacy peer recognition with their induction as Fellows of the American Pharmacy Association at the 2018 APhA Annual Meeting & Exposition.

Woo is establishing a “micro” pharmacy focused on podiatry-related pharmaceutical care and services. Her career has included work in academic, community, consultancy, emergency/micro-hospital and regulatory settings.

She has served in numerous roles at the local, state and national level, including Houston Area Pharmacy Association president/director, UHCOP Dean’s Advisory Council member, Texas Pharmacy Association director and House of Delegates speaker, Texas Pharmacy Foundation trustee, American Pharmacists Association Texas delegate, and National Phi Lambda Phi Lambda Sigma Pharmacy Leadership Society president.

She previously has been recognized with the Bowl of Hygieia awarded by TPA, the National Alliance State Pharmacy Associations and Boehringer Ingelheim; “Distinguished Young Pharmacist of the Year” from HAPA; and the “50 Outstanding Alumni” honors and Dean’s Special Recognition Award from UHCOP.

“It’s a blessing, honor and privilege to be inducted,” she said. “APhA has been instrumental in my professional life, from the time I was a student. I have learned so much as a result of my involvement, and it has provided me with amazing, invaluable opportunities to connect with the leaders from across our profession and build a network of lifelong colleagues, friends and mentors.”

Varkey’s affiliation with APhA also started during his time at UHCOP, most notably as president-elect/president of the APhA-



Alumni Alex Varkey and May Woo flash the Shasta Paw after their APhA Fellow induction (photo courtesy of May Woo).

Academy of Student Pharmacists and member of the APhA Board of Trustees in 2004-2005. He also served as a national postgraduate officer in the APhA Academy of Pharmaceutical Research & Science (APhA-APRS) and new practitioner officer of the Academy of Pharmacy Practice and Management (APhA-APPM).

Varkey’s service to APhA also includes chairing its Policy Committee and the House of Delegates Nomination and Canvassers committees as well as member of the Preceptor Advisory Board, Government Affairs Committee and Task Force for Review of Policy Development Process.



APhA President Nancy Alvarez administers the oath of office to Varkey at the APhA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. (photo courtesy of Alex Varkey).

## VARKEY JOINS APHA TRUSTEES BOARD

Alex C. Varkey, Pharm.D. ('05), M.S., director of pharmacy services at Houston Methodist Hospital, has been appointed to fill an unexpired At-Large term on the American Pharmacists Association Board of Trustees until the March 2019 APhA Annual Meeting & Expo.

After serving on the board as the president of the APhA-Academy of Student Pharmacists as a student, Varkey has continued to be involved in state and national pharmacy associations, including all three APhA academies.

“Serving as an advocate for health-system pharmacy practice on the APhA Board is a responsibility I take very seriously — I feel privileged to have that opportunity through the remainder of this appointment,” he said.



CUÉLLAR

CROW

## TAN, CUÉLLAR AND CROW EARN HONORS AT TSHP 2018

UH College of Pharmacy alumni Christina Tan, Pharm.D. ('12), BCPS, Lourdes M. Cuéllar, R.Ph., B.S. ('73), M.S. ('79), FASHP, and Denise Crow, R.Ph., B.S. ('82), BCPS, have secured commendations from their peers at the Texas Society of Health System Pharmacists 2018 Annual Seminar.

A clinical specialist in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Kingwood Medical Center, Tan was honored with the 2018 Lewis S. Smith Pharmacy Practitioner Award, which recognizes individuals who have demonstrated active involvement in the education and professional growth of pharmacy technicians and support staff.

UHCOP alumna Mallory Gessner-Wharton, Pharm.D. ('11), M.S. ('13), BCPS, director of Pharmacy at Kingwood Medical Center, credited Tan with initiating and developing the clinical pharmacist role in the NICU.

"She is seen as the drug resource in the NICU by the nursing staff, nurse practitioners and neonatologists," Gessner-Wharton wrote in nominating Tan. "Christina assists with discharge medication education and outpatient prescription coordination for our NICU babies.

"Dr. Tan is always available to answer

questions for pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and nurses who are less familiar with pediatric medication dosing. She has created educational materials for the NICU nursing staff on medications that are used frequently in the NICU."

Gessner-Wharton added Tan was the first clinical pharmacist to attend pediatric and neonatal codes to assist with medication administration and dosing. Tan trains all new clinical pharmacists in the NICU and precepts UHCOP students on their Pediatric Pharmacy Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience rotation. In addition, she covers the hospital's Antepartum, Labor and Delivery, Post-Partum and Pediatric units.

"I am honored and humbled to receive this award and am thankful for the support from and collaboration with the women's services, pediatric and neonatal intensive care departments at Kingwood Medical Center," Tan said. "I want to dedicate this award especially to my Kingwood pharmacy family!"

Cuéllar, who serves as administrative director of Pharmacy, Clinical Support Services and Medical Outpatient Clinics at TIRR Memorial Hermann Hospital, was honored as a TSHP Fellow for her years of

dedicated service to the organization, the TSHP Research & Education Foundation and the pharmacy profession.

A Fellow of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP), Cuéllar is a past president of TSHP, the TSHP Research & Education Foundation and the Gulf Coast Society of Health-System Pharmacists.

A preceptor, adjunct faculty member and Mading Society member of the college, Cuéllar is a past recipient of TSHP Distinguished Service Award and the UHCOP Dean's Special Recognition Award. For many years, she also served as a Texas delegate to ASHP and the Texas Statewide Health Coordinating Council.

A clinical specialist at TIRR Memorial Hermann, Crow earned an Honorable Mention in the Practitioner-Clinical Category of the Research Poster Competition. Crow's project, "Review of Medications Used for Patients with Disorders of Consciousness and the Impact on the Level of Consciousness," was coauthored by fellow alumnae Devon El-Dana, Pharm.D. ('18), and Sarah Lake-Wallace, Pharm.D. ('00), M.S.

— photos courtesy of Christina Tan and TSHP

# TOSH ELECTED PRESIDENT, DAY NAMED TO BOARD OF COMPOUNDING ACADEMY

UHCOP alumni Erik Tosh, B.S. ('91), R.Ph., FIACP, FACA, and A.J. Day, Pharm.D. ('07), R.Ph., were installed as president and director, respectively, for the International Academy of Compounding Pharmacists Board of Directors during the 2018 IACP Education Conference.

Tosh has nearly 40 years of experience in health care, including the past 32 years in pharmacy. A Fellow of IACP and the American College of Apothecaries, Tosh has previously served on the IACP Board as well as the IACP Foundation Board of Directors, including as past president and treasurer and current director.



**TOSH**

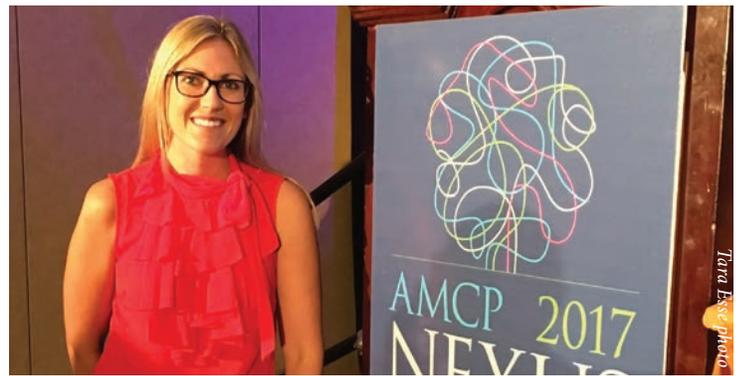
Prior to entering pharmacy practice, Tosh served six years in the U.S. Navy as a Hospital Corpsman specializing in Public Health and Environmental Health and Safety. He currently serves as vice president, Professional Services of Letco Medical of Temple, Texas.

Day is a consultant pharmacist and director of Clinical Services at Houston-based PCCA, which recognized him as the Kay Sparks Employee of the Year in 2016. His practice focus areas include veterinary compounding, pain management, aseptic compounding, compounding techniques and regulatory compliance.



**DAY**

Over the course of his career, Day has provided continuing education (CE) and non-CE presentations to thousands of physicians, veterinarians and pharmacists and regularly provides expert testimony to the FDA Pharmacy Compounding Advisory Committee. Day is active in the Society of Veterinary Hospital Pharmacists, National Community Pharmacists Association, American Pharmacists Association, the Texas Pharmacy Association and Texas State Guard Medical Brigade.



Tara Esse photo

## DOUBLE PLATINUM

### Ferries, Hong Land Top Honors on MTM, Adherence Projects at AMCP Nexus, Annual Meetings

UHCOP alumni Erin Ferries, Ph.D. (PHOP '15), MPH, and Minh Hong, Pharm.D. ('17), secured back-to-back Platinum Medal-winning abstracts at back-to-back meetings of the Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy (AMCP).

A research scientist at Humana, Ferries received a new award jointly presented by the AMCP Foundation and the Journal for Managed Care & Specialty Pharmacy (JMCP) for the best research poster in "Value-based Health Care." She was invited to present her project, "Medication Therapy Management Services and the Impact to Healthcare Utilization," in a special session at the 7th Annual AMCP Foundation Research Symposium held in conjunction with the AMCP Nexus 2017 in October in Grapevine, Texas.

Only a few months later, Hong also was recognized with a Platinum Medal from AMCP and an invitation to present his project, — "Evaluating the Impact of Primary Care Provider Intervention on Paid Pharmacy Claims Using a Medication Adherence Tracker in a Medicare Advantage Plan" — at the podium during the 2018 AMCP Managed Care & Specialty Pharmacy Annual Meeting in Boston.

Coauthors of the project included fellow alumni Tara Esse, Pharm.D. ('09), Esteban Gallardo, Pharm.D. ('11) and Omar Serna, Pharm.D. ('08), all of CareAllies; PHOP Ph.D. student Aisha Vadhariya; and UHCOP faculty member Susan Abughosh, Ph.D.

**Evaluating the Impact of Primary Care Provider Intervention on Paid Pharmacy Claims Using a Medication Adherence Tracker in a Medicare Advantage Plan**  
M. Hong<sup>1</sup>, T. Esse<sup>2</sup>, A. Vadhariya<sup>3</sup>, E. Gallardo<sup>4</sup>, O. Serna<sup>5</sup>, & Abughosh<sup>6</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>CareAllies, Houston, TX; <sup>2</sup>University of Houston, Houston, TX

**INTRODUCTION**

- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) measures the level of quality care through the STAR Rating System.
- Adherence to diabetes, hypertension, and hyperlipidemia medications are triple-weighted metrics and can significantly impact a Medicare Advantage Plan's (MAP) quality bonus payments.
- No specific tool has been suggested to overtly improve medication adherence.
- The Medication Adherence Tracker (MAT) is an innovative tool that can be used to address non-adherence, promoting Primary Care Physician (PCP) accountability for interventions that can ultimately result in a paid pharmacy (Rx) claim.

**OBJECTIVE**

- To determine the association between PCP intervention and paid pharmacy claims of members in a MAP enrolled on the MAT.

**METHODS**

Study Design: Cohort study

Setting: Primary care

Population: Members identified in the health plan during calendar year 2016

Intervention: PCP was included on the MAT solution

Measure: PCP was included on the MAT solution

Time: For one year in 2016

Location: Of stage renal disease with dependence on dialysis from Atlanta

**RESULTS**

Characteristics	Received Intervention (n=2,845)	Did Not Receive Intervention (n=1,684)	P-Value
Male	1,386 (48.7%)	415 (24.6%)	0.27
Female	1,459 (51.3%)	1,269 (75.4%)	
Low Income (Salary < \$20,000)	208 (7.3%)	77 (4.6%)	

## 1990s

**Gloria Davis-Brackins**, R.Ph. (B.S. '92), FASCP, owner of Gloria's Medication Therapy Management Services, PLLC, has published a book on patient advocacy titled, "Smart Tips for Patients Checking into Health Care Facilities."

## 2000s

**Jeena Connor**, Pharm.D. ('06), Pharmacy director at Methodist Charlton Medical Center in Dallas, is serving as 2018-19 immediate past president of the Metroplex Society of Health-System Pharmacists.

**Todd Connor**, Pharm.D. ('07), M.S., director of Pharmacy at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital in Flower Mound, has been installed as 2018-19 president-elect of the Metroplex Society of Health-System Pharmacists.

**Thani M. Gossai**, Pharm.D. ('08), manager of Pharmacy Services at Houston Methodist Hospital, was named 2017 Outstanding Pharmacist by the Gulf Coast Society of Health-System Pharmacists.

**Shane Lechler**, Pharm.D. ('07), pharmacy manager at H.E.B. Pharmacy in College Station, president/owner of Cornerstone Consulting Pharmacy and president/owner of Lechler Pharmacy Management Group, was named the 2017 Preceptor of the Year by the Texas A&M University Irma Lerma Rangel College of Pharmacy.

**Andrea Mora Luce**, Pharm.D. ('07), clinical associate professor for Texas A&M University Irma Lerma Rangel College of Pharmacy, was honored as the college's Faculty Preceptor of the Year for 2017. Luce also received the 2017 P3 Teacher of the Year Award.

**Yousif Rojeab**, Ph.D. Pharmaceutics ('07), associate professor at

Ohio Northern University Rudolph H. Raabe College of Pharmacy, has been honored with his third consecutive Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Sciences Outstanding Professor of the Year Award.

**Sarah Yost**, Pharm.D. ('08), BCPS, advanced clinical pharmacist at Intermountain Park City Spine and Pain Clinic in Park City, Utah, was selected as a 2017-18 ASHP Research and Education Foundation Advanced Pain Management and Palliative Care Trainee.

## 2010s

**Sandipan Bhattacharjee**, Ph.D., M.S. ('10), who is a graduate of the college's predecessor Pharmacy Administration master's degree program (now the Ph.D. in Pharmaceutical Health Outcomes and Policy), was one of three recipients of the Best New Investigator Poster Research Presentation award at the 22nd Annual ISPOR International Meeting. Now an assistant professor at the University of Arizona, Bhattacharjee was honored for his project, "Healthcare Expenditures Among Community-Dwelling Adults with Thyroid Cancer in the United States: A Propensity Score Matched Analysis."

**Joseph Rogers**, Pharm.D., M.S. ('16), director of Specialty Pharmacy at Memorial Hermann Health System, was installed as 2018-19 president of the Gulf Coast Society of Health-System Pharmacists at the 2018 Texas SHP Annual Seminar.

**Munder Zagaar**, Ph.D. ('11), Pharm.D. ('09), assistant professor at Texas Southern University's College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, was recognized with the university's 2017 McCleary Teaching Excellence Award.

**Pratik Rane**, MBA, Ph.D. ('16), Global Health Economics manager at Amgen, earned one of three Best Student Poster Research Presentation awards for "Risk of Clostridium difficile Infection Associated with Proton Pump Inhibitor Use Among Community Dwelling Adults with Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease" at the 22nd Annual ISPOR International Meeting.

## 1967 Golden Cougars

*UHCOP Dean F. Lamar Pritchard, second from left back row, is joined by Class of 1967 Golden Cougars, front row from left, Rual Martinez Jr., Edna Houston and Jerry Thiem, and, back row, Charles Janak, Royce Jackson and Thomas Cammack Jr. on stage at the 2017 UHCOP Convocation @ Golden Cougar Walk.*





# CHAPTER OF THE YEAR

## UHCOP CHAPTER CLAIMS 2<sup>ND</sup> NATIONAL TITLE IN 3 YEARS

The UHCOP Chapter of the Student National Pharmaceutical Association (SNPhA) remains one of the most consistently successful chapters in the nation, with the chapter taking home several top awards — including National Chapter of the Year — at the 44th Annual SNPhA National Meeting in Las Vegas, Nev.

In addition, chapter members Gifty Gyebe, Vivian Lieu and Chidi Iroegbu were elected or appointed to leadership positions in the national organization. Gyebe was elected 2017-18 National Vice President, while Lieu and Iroegbu were appointed 2017-18 Region 4 Facilitator and Bridging the Gap Chair, respectively.

The chapter’s 2016-17 President Sara Mirjamali was one of five recipients nationwide to receive the Rite Aid Community Leader of the Year Award, which included a \$2,500 scholarship. Also receiving scholarships were Johnny Hoang, who was one of five students nationwide to be awarded a Kroger Endowed Scholarship of \$1,000, and Darian Allen, who received

the Attorney Sybil Richard Book Award.

Under the leadership of initiative co-chairs Samantha Sangabi and Julia Roh, the chapter also was recognized with the Power to End Stroke Initiative Award and a \$500 cash award from the American Heart Association. The chapter also brought home the National Convention Registration Award for having the highest attendance at the national meeting in the Large Chapter category.

Officially named the SNPhA/Rite Aid Chauncey I. Cooper Chapter Excellence Award, the “Chapter of the Year” award

is presented to local organizations in the small, medium and large categories, with one being crowned the overall winner. The UHCOP presentation team comprised Mirjamali, Hoang, Allen, Iroegbu and Rohan Dwivedi. The chapter netted \$6,500 in monetary prizes for the two awards.



### VICE PRESIDENT GIFTY GYEBI

*Gifty Gyebe, right, a 2018 Pharm.D. candidate and past president of the UHCOP Chapter of SNPhA, was elected SNPhA National Vice President at the 44th Annual SNPhA National Meeting in Las Vegas.*



**SCHWEITZER FELLOW CROWLEY  
ENCOURAGES ONCE-HOMELESS  
TO PURSUE POSITIVE OUTLETS**

## HELPING IDLE HANDS FIND NEW PURPOSE

It's said that "Good things come in small packages," and UH College of Pharmacy Pharm.D. student Stephanie Crowley saw firsthand the truth of the idiom as residents of a nonprofit housing community aimed at breaking the cycle of homelessness expressed newfound confidence, pride and camaraderie in a tiny jewelry bead.

Crowley recently marked the completion of her yearlong work as a member of the 2017-18 class of the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship Houston-Galveston with her new status as a "Schweitzer Fellow for Life," bestowed at the local chapter's 2018 Celebration of Service event. Named for the famed humanitarian and physician Dr. Albert Schweitzer, the program encourages students to address the unmet health needs of vulnerable and marginal populations.

"When addressing situations of addiction and abuse, there is a lot of focus on the acute phase of the recovery process, but not enough support for what happens to an individual afterward," Crowley said.

Crowley partnered with New Hope Housing, a nonprofit organization offering "affordable, permanent single-occupancy rental housing with support services for people who live on very limited incomes," to en-

gage its residents in a constructive, personal development activity.

For her project, Crowley hosted a class on "beading" — the popular hobby of making necklaces, bracelets and other jewelry and decorative items from hollowed glass, acrylic or wood shapes, and string or wire — for residents. The activity not only involves skill development in planning, time management, patience and problem-solving, but also offers a creative outlet.

"My two goals were for it to be inclusive, so that everyone felt they were part of a larger community and not isolated, and for it to be a productive activity," said Crowley, adding that her naivety about beading likely made it less intimidating for attendees. "What was surprising is that the class also attracted several people who weren't necessarily working on their coping skills as part of their mental health or addiction recovery but had osteoarthritis, poor hand-eye coordination or poor vision."

One of the first challenges for some was trying to manipulate the extra-small beads left over from a class at the facility. Crowley then located larger beads that were easier to handle, but found that the residents rose to the challenge by setting a goal of

progressively working toward the smaller beads.

"When you're working with the beads, inevitably you're going to accidentally let go of the string or bump your supplies, and the beads — and your work — ends up all over the floor and you feel embarrassed," Crowley said. "The first couple of times, they were obviously frustrated and ready to give up. But we treated it like it wasn't a big deal, and when it happened again, other people in the class would be supportive and help clean up, too. You really saw them develop a strong sense of community."



# COOGS LOCK UP FIRST PLACE IN DISEASE STATE MANAGEMENT, CLINICAL SKILLS AT TSHP 2018



Competition winners and finalists at the TSHP meeting were, top row above, Sean Badal, Ibrahim Chowdhury, and Lucas Merten; and, bottom row, Sara Mirjamali, Lauren Goldberg, and Erica Morales; and, below, Katelynn Tran and Amanda Gee.



UH College of Pharmacy Pharm.D. students took top honors at the Texas Society of Health-System Pharmacists (TSHP) 2018 Annual Seminar in The Woodlands, claiming wins in the Disease State Management Competition and two divisions of the Clinical Skills Competition.

Third-year student Erica Morales secured the victory in the TSHP Research & Education Foundation Disease State Management competition, while classmate Sara Mirjamali was recognized with an Honorable Mention in the competition.

In the Clinical Skills Competition, first-year students Amanda Gee and Katelynn Tran won the P1 Division and third-year students Ibrahim Chowdhury and Sean Badal won the P3 Division. In addition, third-year students Lucas Merten and Lauren Goldberg brought home an Honorable Mention in the P3 Division.

In addition, Pharm.D. students Bradley Endres and Aimen Naveed were awarded the 2018-19 Micheline & Bourjois Abboud and Glenda Lawson McRee scholarships, respectively.

## RIISING UH CHAPTER OF AMCP AMONG NATIONAL FINALISTS

The UHCOP Chapter of the Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy's advocacy work led it to second place in the national AMCP Chapter Challenge at the AMCP Managed Care & Specialty Pharmacy 2018 Annual Meeting.

The AMCP Chapter Challenge is designed to allow students to engage with AMCP on a national level with the national organization's policy issues as well as become educated on managed-care policies and barriers that may affect students in their future practice.

This year's challenge revolved around voicing support for a current piece of proposed legislation related to policies impacting the pharmaceutical industry and federal



With only five schools invited to the Chapter Leadership Academy at the AMCP meeting, chapter officers Angelica Asadi, Kim Dinh and Grace Pham represented UHCOP.

regulation. Participating chapters were required to develop and document their advocacy project proposals and communicate their messages to members of Congress through letters and social media. The UH-

COP chapter won second place in the challenge and received \$100 as a prize.

In addition, the UHCOP chapter was one of only five invited to participate in the Chapter Leadership Academy to equip AMCP members and advisors with tools and best practices. UHCOP Chapter President Kim Dinh shared details of her chapter's series of legislative workshops in collaboration with other student organizations at the college.

The meeting also saw P3 Pharm.D. student Angelica Asadi presenting a research poster for her project, "A Motivational Interviewing Elective for Pharmacy Students: A Student Perspective."

# DELTA DELTA STAYS THE COURSE

## KAPPA PSI CHAPTER CLAIMS STREAK OF PROVINCE TITLES, ELECTIONS, AWARDS

It appears that change is not the order of the day for UH College of Pharmacy's Delta Delta Chapter of the Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity, as the organization claimed its third consecutive Southwest Province Chapter of the Year title in spring 2018.

In addition, Chapter Regent (president) and outgoing Province Secretary Rohan Dwivedi was honored with not only the province's inaugural Regent of the Year Award, but also election to the position of 2018-19 Province Satrap. Fellow Delta Delta member Jessie Ho was elected Province Historian at the meeting.

Dwivedi follows in the footsteps of UH-COP alumna Erin Chartier, Pharm.D. ('15), who led the Southwest Province during the 2017-18 year.

"When my name was called for the award, it was another rush of emotions as all I could think about was the laugh-

ter, tears and effort which was put forth by everyone on our leadership team as well as the chapter as a whole," Dwivedi said.

Delta Delta's previous top chapter wins occurred at the Southwest Province Fall Assembly in September 2017, when the chapter also claimed the Man Mile Award with the most members traveling the farthest distance and member Sara Mirjamali was recognized with the One for All Award, and the Spring Conclave in February 2017, when member Serenity Gracia was elected Province Treasurer.

"An individual can establish a vision and have goals and aspirations, but none of that can be attained without dedicated, hardworking and passionate individuals that share a common mindset: To advance our profession through Kappa Psi. I have loved every aspect of being a Kappa Psi brother since my induction and am excited to take my ideas to the regional level as the Southwest Province Satrap."



Newly elected Southwest Province Satrap (president) Rohan Dwivedi, who also serves as regent (president) of the UHCOP Delta Delta Chapter, accepts the gavel of office from Southwest Province representative Anthony Bray, Pharm.D.

In addition, Delta Delta was recognized as a "Top Performing" chapter at the KY national Grand Council Convention in August 2017. The meeting also saw chapter faculty co-advisor Louis Williams, Ph.D., UHCOP associate professor, honored with a Grand Council Deputy Certificate of Excellence for his service to the chapter.



photos courtesy of Kappa Psi Delta Delta

# APHA-ASP WINS REGIONAL ACCLAIM FOR DIABETES OUTREACH

The UHCOP Chapter of the American Pharmacists Association Academy of Student Pharmacists won its second consecutive Operation Diabetes Award at the 2017 APhA-ASP Region 6 Midyear Regional Meeting in Houston.

The Operation Diabetes leaders implemented a variety of new programs and strategies, not only for chapter members to be more effective in their patient interactions, but also to enhance the quality and relevancy of diabetes prevention and management guidance for patients.

During the 2016-17 year, the chapter's Operation Diabetes team planned and participated in 28 health fairs and outreach activities on its own or in collaboration with other student, local and national organizations or institutions. Through these activities, more than 4,000 people benefited from screenings ranging from diabetic foot exams and blood glucose screenings to education on various aspects of the disease.



Members updated the Operation's poster display of popular drinks with a bag of equivalent sugar content in each of the beverages; created a drawing activity and trivia contest for children; produced a sample meal plan; and designed a food plate activity and human body poster activity.

To help chapter members better prepare for health fairs, team members provided wellness screening skills reviews and assisted with the creation of a health fair

handbook by the APhA-ASP chapter, which included screening instructions, counseling tips and helpful phrases in Spanish.

In addition, members launched an awareness campaign via social media that included a Mythbusters-style series of posts (reaching an audience of more than 4,500) and a photo of members in a circle — the national symbol of diabetes awareness — that was published in the national APhA-ASP newsletter.

# UH WINS HISTORIC BACK-TO-BACK ISPOR COMPETITION TITLES

A team of four students in the Pharmaceutical Health Outcomes and Policy Ph.D. degree program secured a place in history by capturing the first back-to-back titles in an academic quiz-bowl style competition during the 22nd Annual International Meeting of the International Society of Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research (ISPOR) in Boston.

The 2017 ISPOR Student Research Competition winning team members were Carmine Colavecchia, Pharm.D., M.S. Pharmacy Leadership & Administration ('15), BCPS, who completed the Ph.D. program in August 2017; Navneet Upadhyay, M.S.; Aisha Vadhariya; and Qingqing Xu, M.S. Upadhyay and Vadhariya were teammates on



*The 2017 ISPOR Student Research Competition winning team members comprised, from left, Navneet Upadhyay, Qingqing Xu, Aisha Vadhariya and Carmine Colavecchia, who graduated from the Ph.D. program shortly after the meeting.*

the college's first winning team in 2016.

Launched by ISPOR in 2005, the competition is open to teams advancing from an initial qualifying round from the nearly 90 ISPOR student chapters around the world. Using a bracket system, the competition features an academic "quiz-bowl" style format in which questions derived from the official ISPOR Book of Terms and ISPOR Good Research Practices for Outcomes Research are posed to two teams in head-to-head competition. The first team to

hit the buzzer and provide the correct answer receives points, but wrong answers — or even attempting to answer before being recognized — results in deduction of team points.

## JOHN J. & PAULA LOVOI LOBBY

# Named Entry to Welcome Students, Visitors to Health 2 Benefits Committed Philanthropists, Ever-Gracious Hosts

Longtime UHCOP Mading Society members John J. Lovoi Sr. ('62) and Paula Lovoi knew they wanted to continue their support for the college with a gift toward the Health 2 building campaign, but initially weren't sure in what way. When they learned about the naming opportunity for the third floor entry, they were sold.

"The lobby just jumped out at us," said John, who retired in 2015 from a 53-year career in pharmacy after selling his ownership stake in the Lovoi and Sons Pharmacies started by the family patriarch in 1932 to his brother and fellow UHCOP alumnus Jasper J. Lovoi Jr. ('69). "We enjoy being with good friends and among good conversation, so being associated with a place that welcomes people to the building appealed to us."

The Lovois have a long history of philanthropy and support for education and community causes in Beaumont, Orange and Houston, ranging from historical preservation and arts and culture to support services for the developmentally/intellectually disabled, to name a few.

They have established endowed scholarships at UHCOP, Paula's alma mater of Lamar University and Monsignor Kelly Catholic High School in Beaumont, from which all four of their children graduated. The Lovois also are lifetime members of the UH and Lamar alumni associations and longtime season ticket-holders of UH Cougars football.

In addition to his longtime service on the UHCOP Dean's Advisory Council, John served for a quarter of a century on the board of directors — and nearly 20 years as board president — for their children's high school. A past president of the Junior League of Beaumont and the P.E.O. Sisterhood, Paula served as a Lamar University Foundation trustee for more than a decade.

For several years, the Lovois have opened their home for their "Dinner with 12 Strangers" event to give Lamar students an opportunity to meet and network with alumni and other professionals in their field of interest.

Married for more than 50 years, the Lo-

vois are enjoying the opportunity to devote more time to their interests outside of the pharmacy.

"I'd get calls to the pharmacy where people are crying because they can't afford their medicine," John said. "I'd say, 'Come by the house tonight and let's talk about it.'"

"Growing up when we lived above the drugstore, my dad had a bell; if you got sick in the middle of the night, you rang the bell and my dad came down and took care of you. It was just what you did; they're your patients, but they're also your friends and neighbors."

Paula, who also worked in the family pharmacy as a technician, said their civic mindedness is based in their shared faith and their similar upbringings.

"We just hope that students will look back and say, 'This college or this university had such meaning in my life that I'd like to have that same meaning back for someone else,'" she said.



## GOOD COMPANY: MADING SOCIETY WELCOMES INDUCTEES

The UH College of Pharmacy’s Mading Society of benefactors inducted six members into ranks — as well as bestowed a “Cougar Red Coat” for milestone giving — for the 2017 class.

Those inducted at the 2017 Mading Society Induction & Dinner were:

- Rita A. English, Pharm.D., M.S., B.S. (’89), R.Ph., consultant pharmacist with Superior Laboratory Services in Pasadena, Texas
- F. Lamar Pritchard, Ph.D., R.Ph., UH College of Pharmacy dean, and wife Judy Pritchard
- Julie Spier, R.Ph., B.S. (’86), R.Ph., director of Pharmacy Operations-Southern and Houston Divisions for Randalls-Tom Thumb-Albertsons, and husband Derek Spier, B.S., a Katy Independent School District teacher

Lamar also welcomed Robert L. “Bob” Boblitt Jr., president of

Houston-based Silver Eagle Distributors L.P., into the Mading Society and presented Boblitt with society’s “Cougar Red Coat” for milestone giving of \$100,000 or more.

Boblitt established the college’s first endowed professorship in memory of his late father, UHCOP faculty member and administrator, pharmacist and medicinal chemist Robert L. Boblitt Sr.

“The pillars of a truly exceptional academic institution are the students, faculty and staff, alumni and donors,” Lamar said. “UH College of Pharmacy is being raised to new heights every day, every month and every year, thanks to the strength and alignment of our pillars.

“The support of our alumni and friends is essential to our ascension to national prominence for the quality of our teaching, patient care and drug discovery programs.”

# ANDERSON PROGRAM LAYS FOUNDATION FOR LEADERS

In recognition of his role in elevating the clinical pharmacist to an essential member of the health-system patient care team, The Houston Program in Pharmacy Leadership and Administration recently launched The Roger W. Anderson Pharmacy Leadership Program endowment initiative at UH College of Pharmacy.

With the 25th anniversary of his visionary American Society of Health-System Pharmacy's Harvey A.K. Whitney Award Lecture serving as the backdrop, family, friends, colleagues and mentees honored Anderson with a commemorative lecture presented by his longtime friend, colleague and fellow Whitney awardee Harold N. Godwin, B.S., M.S., FASHP, FAPhA, associate dean and professor emeritus of the University of Kansas School of Pharmacy. The lecture was followed by a reception celebrating Anderson and his tremendous impact on pharmacy and health care.

The endowment is designed to serve as

an engine for the development and cultivation of leadership skills, professional development and career exploration among not only participants in The Houston Program but also of UHCOP students and practitioners outside of the college. The key groups and the primary goals to be supported through the institute are:

- Practitioners — Provide toolkits, continuing education and other programming design to help innovatively develop and communicate the value of pharmacy and developing resources necessary to navigate the leadership learning curve;
- Houston Program Participants — Support the residents/students through scholarships as well as programs ranging from workshops to symposia in collaboration with Anderson; and
- Pharm.D. Students — Expose students to essential characteristics and career opportunities in pharmacy leadership



and administration while allowing them to understand their potential.

Anderson and his wife, Betty, made a foundational challenge match of \$25,000 to set up the endowment.

Launched in 2009, The Houston Program is a collaboration between UHCOP and seven Texas Medical Center institutions: CHI St. Luke's Health-Baylor/St. Luke's Medical Center, Harris Health System, Houston Methodist Hospital, Memorial Hermann Health System, Texas Children's Hospital, The Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center and The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center.

Aimed at training the next generation of health-system pharmacy leaders, the program allows participants to concurrently earn an M.S. degree in Pharmacy Leadership and Administration and complete PGY1 and PGY2 Health-System Pharmacy Administration residencies.



Anderson is joined at a celebration marking the 25th anniversary of his ASHP A.K. Harvey Award by wife Betty and daughter Kathy Anderson Salinas.

## Roger W. Anderson Leadership Program Donors

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# GOLF CLASSIC PLAYERS, SPONSORS SCRAMBLE FOR SCHOLARSHIPS, TRAVEL FUND

UH College of Pharmacy alumni and friends took on Mother Nature and the Lakes course of Wildcat Golf Club June 5 to raise nearly \$14,000 toward UHCOP Pharm.D. student scholarships and other areas of need at the 2017 UHCOP Golf Classic.

All proceeds from the tournament, which totaled \$13,775, were allocated to student scholarships, travel awards to professional conferences and other areas not funded by state allocations.

Sponsors of the event were: Gold — Jeff Harrison (Pharm.D. '05) & Jennifer Harrison (Pharm.D. '05), and Walgreens; Silver — Brookshire Brothers; Red & White — Doug Eikenburg, Donald Lackey (B.S. '81), Kip Lackey & Pitney Bowes Foundation, LLW Consulting Inc., Randalls/Tom Thumb/Albertsons and Jim Rutan (B.S. '92); and Cougar — Bruce Biundo, R.Ph. (B.S. '61), Chi-Ngo Chen, (Pharm.D. '02), Charles Kneip (B.S. '92), and Kathy Ryan.

The winning and second-place teams were: Low Gross — First place, Melchor Garza (B.S. '92), Johnny Hargroue, Charles "Chuck" Kneip (B.S. '92) and Jim Rutan (B.S. '92), and second place, Thomas Chen, Donald Lackey (B.S. '81), Kip Lackey and Louis Williams; and Low Net — First place, Clayton Boyd (Pharm.D. '10), Frank Hawthorn, Paul Lott (B.S. '84) and Frank Hawthorn, and second place, Patrick Birney (M.S. '14), David Curlee, Dan Metzen and Jimmy Washburn.



Winners of the individual competitions were: Closest to the Pin — Clayton Boyd (Pharm.D. '10); and Longest Drive — Sarah Theriault.

In addition to the paid sponsorships, several individuals and businesses provided in-kind gifts in support of the tournament: Beautiful Day Spa, Chipotle, Liz Coyle, Doug Eikenberg, Golf Galaxy, Houston Rockets, Kendra Scott Rice Village, Chip Lambert, Luxy Lashes and Skin, Pot Belly, Salata, Sweet Moment Nail and Pedi Spa, and Vincent Ford Custom Apparel.

## FOR THE LOVE OF THE GAME

### Golf's Life Lessons, Tournament Impact Drive Harrison's Longtime Sponsorship

Mading Society member Jeffrey B. Harrison, Pharm.D. ('05), has been the top sponsor for the UHCOP Golf Classic tournament for several years. When asked why he has been such a loyal supporter of the tournament, Harrison stated:

"No other single scholarship/funding source for students at the college has helped so much during its tenure. Most students and alumni truly don't understand how much this tournament does for all UH student-pharmacists. This yearly process taught us leadership, networking and communication skills, which have proven to reach far outside the world of pharmacy and are critical to our success today.

"We feel truly honored to be in a position to help provide the same opportunity for our future UHCOP colleagues. Our hope each year when giving to the golf tournament is simple: We hope to spark more UHCOP family and friends to give to the cause, for all that it has done, and will continue to do for all of us. To everyone who has ever been involved, and especially those who have given so much time and effort behind the scenes, you will forever have our gratitude."



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## ALUMNI & FRIENDS RECEPTIONS



Ben Fry ('72) and J.R. Hinojosa ('72)



Aimen Naveed, Devlin Smith ('18), Jake Burkhalter, Achsah Philip ('12, '14), P.J. Lin ('16, '18), and Linda Haines ('11), and, seated, Megan McGugan, and Laura Stokes ('15, '17)



Lesa Thornton ('11), David Wallace ('98), and Ngoc (Jennifer) Phan ('11)



Sunny Bhakta, Dean Lamar Pritchard, P.J. Lin ('16, '18), and Joe Ickes ('73)



Jake Burkhalter, Erica Morales, Rafael Valadez, and Diane Dreucean