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A MESSAGE FROM GARY M. POLLACK



December 2017

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

In November, Washington State University's Board of Trustees approved a change in the name of our college from the "Washington State University College of Pharmacy" to the "Washington State University College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences."

This nomenclature is in alignment with our comprehensive and balanced mission:

To advance human health through excellence in collaborative research, scholarship and clinical education, and to develop outstanding health care professionals and scientists.

This seemingly small change actually is quite significant, as it highlights the fact that we have a robust presence in the pharmaceutical sciences, encompassing both faculty-led research and graduate education.

One concern that arises when considering a name change of this sort is the potential interpretation that there are "winners" and, by extrapolation, "losers." This is, of course, a short-sighted analysis.

While we are most closely identified with the portion of our mission dedicated to the preparation of health care practitioners. After all, without our professional education program there are many things that we could be, but a college of pharmacy would not be among those possibilities. Nevertheless, there should be no tension between activities directed towards practice and those directed towards research. Indeed, in a healthy academic environment each mission element should inform, support and leverage all others. Our faculty have established such an environment.

Although we have a very traditional pharmaceutical sciences department, which is oriented primarily towards bench research, "pharmaceutical sciences" is actually a very large tent that encompasses the full breadth of the sciences that serve as the foundation for pharmacy as a profession.

Many of our faculty in the Department of Pharmacotherapy are research-active in the "pharmaceutical" space. For example, we recently established a pharmacy practice research unit led by Dr. Kim McKiernan, a clinical assistant professor of pharmacotherapy. We envision that the activities of this unit will be informed by trends in the practice of pharmacy, will inform the continued development of our professional education program, will catalyze collaboration between faculty in our "clinical" and "basic science" departments, and will be a foundational element for pharmaceutical research (broadly spoken) in our college.

We will begin using “College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences” as our “official” name in August 2018 with the beginning of the next academic year.

Best wishes to all for a relaxing and enjoyable December, with all the holidays it contains, and a happy and successful 2018.



Gary M. Pollack
Dean, College of Pharmacy
Washington State University

Editor's note: This is the final newsletter for the 2017 calendar year. The next CougaRx News will be published in February 2018. Happy Holidays!



UPCOMING EVENTS



**CougaRx Reception
at ASHP**
Orlando, Florida



**Holiday CougaRx
Reception**
Spokane, Wash.



**Graduate
Final Defense**
PBS 101
1:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.



**Graduate Research
Seminar**
PBS 101
12:00 p.m.

[More college events >>](#)

COLLEGE NEWS

WSU Center for Pharmacy Practice Research

The teaching faculty for the Doctor of Pharmacy program at WSU make up a diverse mix of academic and professional backgrounds. Student pharmacists at WSU learn from a mosaic of brilliant minds, whose backgrounds range from genomic cell biologists and medicinal chemists within pharmaceutical sciences, to practicing clinical pharmacists within pharmacotherapy, to health policy entrepreneurs within health administration. This variety is important to ensure that graduates are practice-ready for the dynamic world of health care.

In order to develop outstanding health care professionals, the competencies and skills that make successful pharmacists in the professional world need to be incorporated into the academic curriculum. To facilitate this “knowledge feedback loop” so success in practice contributes to

teaching the next generation of practitioners, academic programs will often hire pharmacists with extensive expertise in patient care and clinical practice to teach in its Doctor of Pharmacy program.

A hurdle often faced for pharmacists new to the academic environment is the transition from patient care, regulatory compliance and financial viability to the faculty charge of teaching, service and research.

This is why the WSU College of Pharmacy has formed a new center that will connect faculty at the College of Pharmacy in Yakima and Spokane to research resources, aimed at increasing the amount of high-quality pharmacy practice research conducted in our community.

This objective directly relates to the university's Grand Challenges initiative, specifically addressing sustaining health and the challenges of chronic health problems and health care costs. The research this new center seeks to promote will directly impact the translation of new and innovative health care practices to the broader health system by providing the evidence needed to successfully advocate for and justify change.

Additional objectives for the center include creating new opportunities for collaborative research across WSU units focused on the specific issue of pharmacy practice, and providing resources for qualitative research related to this important topic.

College of Pharmacy Dean Gary Pollack announced the creation of the Center for Pharmacy Practice Research on November 1, and also the appointment of Dr. Kimberly McKeirnan as director of the center.

"The activities envisioned for the center are of obvious relevance to our professional degree program and the students it serves, as well to a broad segment of faculty on WSU's Health Sciences campus. I anticipate that this will be viewed as a significant resource for our academic community and selected partners in the years to come," Pollack said.

McKeirnan used her experience as a National Association of Chain Drug Stores Faculty Scholar to develop a foundational plan for the center. She now has her sights set on building a place to mentor excellence in methodology and share best practices surrounding research in the clinical pharmacy setting.

"Our faculty already excel at research, so my goal is to provide resources and opportunities to make things easier to foster connection and collaboration between our departments," she said.

The center is similar to initiatives the college has already rolled out in Spokane and Yakima to help successful pharmacy professionals transition into, and be successful within, health education. In fact, one of the charges of the center is to collaborate with the college's Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence to conduct research related to teaching and learning.

"Our faculty are doing such great things in their classrooms. In collaboration with the new center, my hope is to turn those classroom innovations into scholarship opportunities for our faculty," said Connie Remsberg, the college's director for teaching and learning excellence.

An additional program started earlier this year to increase the amount of interprofessional and team-based activities used in the classroom, and to ultimately improve health care delivery through teaching team-based care, is called Success with Interprofessional Practice and Education, or "SWIPE".

McKeirnan also plans to leverage the Office of Research within the College of Pharmacy, directed by Associate Dean Andrea Lazarus. The pharmacy research office provides grant submission support, assistance navigating the IRB process, and provides training on research tools like Red Cap. The bulk of these resources focus on translating basic science discoveries into new treatment approaches.



McKeirnan

“There are a lot of resources available to our faculty, but people don’t necessary know where to go. Andrea can play a big role in that connection,” McKeirnan said.

According to McKeirnan, the new center will promote research that focuses on the qualitative side, connecting the “why” behind patient and pharmacist perspectives that allow a deeper understanding beyond just the numbers. These elements are often key influencers behind whether or not a new treatment catches on, or how successful an innovative process can be within a broader health system.

McKeirnan anticipates initial resources offered in early 2018 to include knowledge-sharing events like brown bags to connect faculty so they can collaborate and teach each other, and providing research methodology tools and templates.

Washington State University has identified faculty development, excellence in teaching, and the delivery of a transformative student experience as keys to the success of its strategic initiative called the Drive to 25, an effort to grow WSU’s reputation as a top 25 public research university. The WSU Center for Pharmacy Practice Research supports both this institutional strategic plan and the College of Pharmacy mission by providing an additional avenue for demonstrating how the ground-breaking and transformational research happening at WSU can have a real-world impact at the community pharmacy level.

WSU graduate student showcases rheumatoid arthritis research

The chronic inflammatory disease rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is debilitating.

“RA patients experience pain that can make daily tasks difficult, and almost all RA patients find it difficult to even discuss pain because they feel disconnected from people without the disease,” says Sabrina Fechtner.

“I chose this research topic because my findings may improve the daily lives of numerous RA patients.”

Sabrina Fechtner is a graduate student in the pharmaceutical sciences Ph.D. program at Washington State University in Spokane. Under the mentorship of Pharmaceutical Sciences Associate Professor Salah-Uddin Ahmed, Fechtner is looking to understand how protein-induced inflammation can be influenced through the endocannabinoid system by using a synthetic compound as a signaling agent.



Fechtner

“If successful, this research will provide the foundational knowledge for a potential novel pain-management therapy treatment option,” Fechtner said. “The next step is to validate my findings in an animal model of arthritis. I will be looking for improvements in swelling, mobility and sensitivity.”

While this is a step forward, the path to turning this foundational science into a therapeutic option for patients has a long road ahead, including clinical testing and FDA approval.

Excellence in her work so far has landed Fechtner a Medical and Graduate Student Preceptorship Award from the Rheumatology Research Foundation, one of the largest charitable organization in the US dedicated to advancing treatment for patients living with rheumatic disease. This award includes a stipend of \$4,000 over the next year to continue her research and a \$1,000 travel grant to attend and present her work at the American College of Rheumatology (ACR) annual meeting in San Diego, California.

“By attending the ACR conference, I was able to share my work with the scientific community and receive useful feedback from other researchers in academia and industry from all around the world. In addition, I learned about other rheumatic diseases, like osteoarthritis, gout, and systemic sclerosis, where the endocannabinoid system may also play a role,” Fechtner said.

Fechtner is from Denver, Colorado, and graduated magna cum laude from the University of Colorado at Boulder with bachelor's degrees in biochemistry and molecular biology.

"I wanted to pursue a Ph.D. related to health sciences research," she said, which is what brought her to the WSU College of Pharmacy in Spokane. Fechtner is part of the first class of Ph.D. students to be admitted into the pharmaceutical sciences graduate program when it moved to Spokane with the consolidation of the college in 2013.

"Not many people can say they were one of the first Ph.D. students here, which I have to admit is pretty cool. Besides that, the whole health science campus itself is a new addition to Spokane. Local residents are pretty excited about the new campus because it provides new infrastructure, brings in cultural diversity, and creates opportunities for students to give back to the community," Fechtner said.

After graduation, she plans to continue research within the broader field of autoimmunity in her post-doctoral training. Her goal is to be an independent investigator, leading a team of researchers to characterize inflammatory signaling pathways and explore novel therapeutic options for autoimmune diseases.

"None of this would be possible without the support that I have received here at WSU, including the staff in the graduate office and grant office," Fechtner said. "I would like extend a special thank you to my colleagues of the Ahmed lab (Dr. Singh, Dr. Kim, Kelly, Solomon, and Mahamudul) for their continuous support, and finally Dr. Ahmed for his mentorship and guidance."



Dear Alums, Colleagues and Friends of Pharmacy,

As the season of giving is upon us, it is a wonderful time to thank those who have graciously given their time and support, which has had such a positive impact on our students and the college. But I cannot write about contributions to our college without Keith Campbell's name immediately coming to mind.

By now, I'm certain you've heard the terrible news that Keith passed away in his sleep on November 11, 2017 while attending a meeting of the Washington State Pharmacy Association. As word of his passing spread, the condolences started rolling in, including a wonderful tribute from our Dean:

"There is not a corner of the CougaRx Nation and pharmacy community that Keith did not impact in some

way through his teaching, mentorship, leadership, and friendship. Our thoughts and deepest condolences are with the Campbell family.”

- Gary Pollack, Dean
WSU College of Pharmacy

“It’s the end of an era.”

- Debbie Hansen, class of 1979

“I am devastated by the news and cried so much when I heard. Keith made such a tremendous impact on my life and he was always so empowering to everyone. He will be greatly missed.”

- Kathy Hirano, class of 1986

“What a warm, kind, gentle, generous, loving, accomplished gentleman. May we all pray for him, his family, and ask God to help us understand these tragedies...and may we all count our blessings, every day.”

- Ed Schweitzer

We also received a wonderful message of sympathy from the University of Washington:

“I write to express our collective profound sorrow on the sudden, unexpected passing of Dr. Keith Campbell. Many of my UW faculty colleagues and our alumni throughout the region have benefited from Keith’s teachings and mentorship over the years. He was a giant amongst the most progressive innovators in pharmacy practice. His enduring legacy will be the students he impacted and the profession he helped shape.”

- Sean Sullivan, Dean
University of Washington School of Pharmacy

Keith touched so many lives and had such an impact on generations of pharmacy students during his 45-year career at WSU. If there is any good news in this tragedy, it is that we were able to honor his personal and professional accomplishments at the Crimson Gala just three weeks before he passed away. At the Crimson Gala, Keith received the first Lifetime Achievement Award from the College of Pharmacy and we will carry his memory forward through the R. Keith Campbell Lifetime Achievement Award, since it will be named for him in perpetuity. We are also on track to name the R. Keith Campbell Applied Patient Care Laboratory in our building. A bookshelf will be constructed outside the laboratory and many of the awards and accolades that Keith received during his lifetime will be there, along with his photo and an overview of his accomplishments. Keith did not want to be forgotten and we want to make sure his legacy lives on.

In planning the Crimson Gala to honor Keith, he took the time to put together a list of all of his many awards, career roles, and achievements. But at the end of this two page document, in big bold letters, he summed up his entire career in one sentence:

“My greatest joy was advising, teaching, mentoring, and befriending students and young faculty.”

We hope you can join Keith’s family, the College of Pharmacy, and the entire pharmacy community, for “A Celebration of Life” to honor R. Keith Campbell on April 21, 2018 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Spokane. We will continue to provide details on the Facebook page we set up to share condolences about Keith. Please visit this page and post photos, memories, stories, or anything else you’d like to share about Keith. Here is the link: <https://www.facebook.com/rememberingRKC>.

May you and your loved ones have a wonderful holiday season. Wishing you peace and joy.



Linda Garrelts MacLean, BPharm, RPh
Vice Dean of External Relations
Clinical Professor

ALUMNI NEWS



CAREER FAIR

Thank you to everyone who attended our Career Fairs at the Spokane and Yakima locations! [View the photos](#) from the Spokane fair and reception.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Rhonda Rhyne, class of 1983, presented the “5 Keys to Career Success” to the Association for Women in Science (AWIS) in October. [View photo](#) »



GENEROSITY

Edward and Beatriz Schweitzer made a gift of \$65,000 to help name the R. Keith Campbell Applied Patient Care Lab. “Keith has been a true champion for the College of Pharmacy and worked tirelessly to advance patient care in the area of diabetes,” Ed Schweitzer said.

ALUMNI UPDATES

- David E. Bell, class of 1976, has a wonderful new (volunteer) job as brewery ambassador for Fish Brewing Company, which is based in Olympia and is known for its Fish Tale Ales and Leavenworth Biers. According to David, the pay isn’t much, but the side benefits are pretty good!
- Shelby Denney Williams, class of 2017, is currently a clinical veterinary pharmacy resident at North Carolina State University. She and her dog got in the Halloween spirit this year. [View photo](#) »

Want to be listed in our alumni updates? Send us your career information or let us know what you’ve been up to! gocougs@pharmacy.wsu.edu



FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP

Publications

- Pharmacotherapy Clinical Professor [Jean-Baptiste O. Roulet](#), Pharmacotherapy Professor [K. Michael Gibson](#) and nine co-authors published, “Incidence and geographic distribution of Succinic Semialdehyde Dehydrogenase (SSADH) deficiency,” in the peer-reviewed Journal of Inherited Metabolic Disease (2017;34:111-115). [Read abstract](#) »
- Pharmaceutical Sciences Associate Professor [Salah-uddin Ahmed](#) and three co-authors published, “RANTES/CCL5 induces collagen degradation by activating MMP-1 and MMP-13 expression in human rheumatoid arthritis synovial fibroblasts,” in the peer-reviewed open access journal Frontiers in Immunology in October 2017. [Read article](#) »

Presentations

- **Salah-uddin Ahmed**, Pharmaceutical Sciences Research Associate **Anil K. Singh** (Ahmed Lab), Pharmaceutical Sciences Research Intern **Kelly Kopczynski** (Ahmed Lab) and one co-author presented the poster, “Regulation of interleukin-1 β signaling by inhibition of O-Glc-Nacase in rheumatoid arthritis synovial fibroblasts,” at the American College of Rheumatology annual meeting in San Diego, Calif., on November 5, 2017.
- **Salah-uddin Ahmed** and one co-author presented the poster, “Cannabinoid receptor 2 agonist (JWH-015) inhibits interleukin-1 β -induced inflammation in rheumatoid arthritis synovial fibroblasts,” at the American College of Rheumatology annual meeting in San Diego, Calif., on November 6, 2017.
- **Salah-uddin Ahmed** and two co-authors presented the poster, “Role of syndecans in cytokine mediated inflammation in rheumatoid arthritis synovial fibroblasts,” at the American College of Rheumatology annual meeting in San Diego, Calif., on November 6, 2017.
- **Salah-uddin Ahmed**, Pharmaceutical Sciences Research Associate **Eugene Kim** (Ahmed Lab) and one co-author presented the poster, “Ursolic acid promotes apoptosis of rheumatoid arthritis synovial fibroblasts by upregulating noxa expression and recruiting E3 ligase mule to degrade Mcl-1,” at the American College of Rheumatology annual meeting in San Diego, Calif., on November 6, 2017.
- Pharmaceutical Sciences Chair and Boeing Distinguished Professor **Philip Lazarus** and three co-authors presented, “Characterization of UDP-glycosyltransferase (UGT) 3A enzymes and their potential role in tobacco carcinogenesis,” at the 2017 Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) conference in Salt Lake City, Utah, on October 20, 2017.
- United States Transuranium & Uranium Registries (USTUR) Director and Associate Research Professor **Sergei Y. Tolmachev** and USTUR Assistant Research Professor **George Tabatadze** conducted a one hour seminar titled, “Radiochemical analysis of plutonium in tissues from former nuclear workers,” at Oregon State University on November 27, 2017.

Service

- **Salah-uddin Ahmed** served as an expert reviewer for the Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases study section meeting at the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Institute of the National Institutes of Health on November 1-3, 2017, in Washington, D.C.
- Pharmaceutical Sciences Assistant Professor **Zhenjia Wang** was appointed as a voting member of Washington State University’s Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. He will serve a three-year term.
- Pharmacotherapy Clinical Associate Professor **Megan Willson** was chosen to be a member of the Provost’s Leadership Academy cohort. [Read article »](#)

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) students

- **Ana Vergara** (pharmaceutical sciences, Lazarus lab) received a travel award to attend the 2017 SACNAS conference in Salt Lake City, Utah, on October 19 - 21, 2017.
- **Ana Vergara** with faculty co-author **Philip Lazarus** and one additional co-author presented, “Characterization of UDP-glycosyltransferase (UGT) 3A enzymes and their potential role in tobacco carcinogenesis,” at the 2017 SACNAS conference in Salt Lake City, Utah, on October 20, 2017.

- **Solomon A. Agere** (pharmaceutical sciences, Ahmed Lab) with faculty co-author **Salah-uddin Ahmed** and two additional co-authors published, “RANTES/CCL5 induces collagen degradation by activating MMP-1 and MMP-13 expression in human rheumatoid arthritis synovial fibroblasts,” in the peer-reviewed open access journal *Frontiers in Immunology* in October 2017. [Read article »](#)
- **Mahamudul Haque** (pharmaceutical sciences, Ahmed lab) with faculty co-author **Salah-uddin Ahmed** and two additional co-authors presented the poster, “Regulation of interleukin-1 β signaling by inhibition of O-Glc-Nacase in rheumatoid arthritis synovial fibroblasts,” at the American College of Rheumatology annual meeting in San Diego, Calif., on November 5, 2017.
- **Sabrina Fechtner** (pharmaceutical sciences, Ahmed lab) with faculty co-author **Salah-uddin Ahmed** presented the poster, “Cannabinoid receptor 2 agonist (JWH-015) inhibits interleukin-1 β -induced inflammation in rheumatoid arthritis synovial Fibroblasts,” at the American College of Rheumatology annual meeting in San Diego, Calif., on November 6, 2017.
- **Solomon A. Agere** with faculty co-author **Salah-uddin Ahmed** and one additional co-author presented the poster, “Role of syndecans in cytokine mediated inflammation in rheumatoid arthritis synovial fibroblasts,” at the American College of Rheumatology annual meeting in San Diego, Calif., on November 6, 2017.
- **Solomon A. Agere** with faculty co-author **Salah-uddin Ahmed** and one additional co-author presented the poster, “Ursolic acid promotes apoptosis of rheumatoid arthritis synovial fibroblasts by upregulating noxa expression and recruiting E3 ligase mule to degrade Mcl-1,” at the American College of Rheumatology annual meeting in San Diego, Calif., on November 6, 2017.
- **Xiaomeng Jiang** (pharmaceutical sciences, Pollack lab) successfully defended to earn a Master of Pharmaceutical Sciences with the presentation, “Statistical approaches for optimizing outcome measures and covariates for the development of disease progression modeling in Huntington’s Disease,” in July 2017.

JOBS

- Clinical Assistant Professor: Pharmacotherapy - Providence St. Peter Hospital Olympia
- Clinical Assistant Professor: Pharmacotherapy - Virginia Mason Memorial Hospital
- Clinical Assistant Professor: Pharmacotherapy - WSU Spokane
- Clinical Assistant Professor: Pharmacotherapy - WSU Spokane



College of

Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

Washington State University
College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
PO Box 1495, Spokane, WA 99201
www.pharmacy.wsu.edu