



The Dean's Newsletter



From
College of Pharmacy Dean
Gary Pollack, Ph.D.

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Dear Friends and Colleagues:

Well, it is summer again (at least as defined by our academic calendar), a time when faculty everywhere take well-earned vacations, catch up on writing grant proposals and manuscripts, and give thanks for easier access to parking, food services, restrooms, and other amenities for which they often compete with their students. The faculty in our college have an additional item on their summer to-do list: preparing for delivering the first year of our professional curriculum in an active- and collaborative-learning format. Several of our faculty and staff also will be busy preparing to welcome our inaugural cohort of students on the Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences campus in Yakima. So, there is not much slowing down for us as the calendar flips from May to June.

Our college made excellent progress during the past academic year. We continued to strengthen our faculty and staff with several key additions in both Spokane and Yakima. We completed the second year of our three-year journey to embrace competency-based curricular delivery and student assessment, and the positive impact on student progression continues to be encouraging. We successfully navigated the re-accreditation process. The university's Board of Regents gave formal approval for extension of our Doctor of Pharmacy program to Yakima. Our extramural funding continued to increase, as did our rankings. In the most recent QS World University Rankings, we are ranked 25th among U.S. colleges or schools of pharmacy, and in the top 25 percent of "pharmacy and pharmacology" programs worldwide. (This is the first year that our college has been ranked in the top 50 percent, and so we view this as quite an achievement.)

The academic year was, of course, capped by our commencement activities. We were indeed fortunate to have Dr. Richard Carmona, a former United States Surgeon General, provide our graduates with an inspirational commencement address. The perspectives he has gained during a truly extraordinary career are compatible with the mission of our college and the health sciences campus on which we reside. In particular, Dr. Carmona told our graduates:

"I think you're coming into pharmacy at no better time in the history of pharmacy. I've been very closely aligned with the pharmacy profession for many years, including my time as surgeon general. The pharmacists were some of my best leaders, not just as pharmacists but as leaders in the diverse set of opportunities that came up."

Dr. Carmona would make an outstanding dean of pharmacy, and we thank him again for taking the time to visit with our students and faculty. Because we value preparing our students to become leaders, as Dr. Carmona highlighted, we will watch carefully as our newly-minted alumni begin to take on those roles. We are enormously proud of each and every one of them.

Best wishes for an enjoyable summer,



Gary M. Pollack
Dean
Washington State University College of Pharmacy

ESSB 5557

Washington pharmacists celebrate landmark legislation

The Washington State University College of Pharmacy celebrated May 11 with pharmacy colleagues from across the state as Gov. Jay Inslee signed Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 5557 into law. The new law, sponsored by Senator Linda Parlette, requires health insurance carriers to recognize pharmacists in the same way as other providers such as physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants.

"ESSB 5557 opens doors that will allow pharmacists to be integral members of the patient care team alongside the primary care provider. We believe utilizing pharmacists' training and expertise at the fullest extent of licensure improves patient outcomes as well as reduces overall costs to the healthcare system," said Julie Akers, a clinical assistant professor at the College of Pharmacy.

Since 1995, Washington state has required commercial health plans to include every group of health providers. Within the state, pharmacists can dispense medications and provide patient care, as allowed by their scope of practice. While commercial health plans recognized pharmacists for dispensing medications, they routinely refused to include pharmacists in their participating provider networks. ESSB 5557 requires commercial health plans to treat pharmacists as patient care providers, consistent with the Every Category of Provider law and the Washington attorney general's opinion statement released in 2013. The new law effectively closes the loophole commercial health plans have used to deny patients access to pharmacist provided care.



Washington state Gov. Inslee signs ESSB 5557 into law. Photo by Jacqueline Garza, class of 2016

Akers and pharmacy faculty colleague Jennifer Robinson were present in Olympia for the signing of the bill that marked a milestone in the profession of pharmacy. The two have been involved in the discussion, led by the Washington State Pharmacy Association, to determine what infrastructure will be needed and the processes and guidelines that should be in place in order for pharmacists to obtain the credentialing required by insurance companies to receive reimbursements.

The law, which goes into full effect by January 2017, does not change the pharmacists' scope of practice or allow them to independently prescribe or modify medications. Collaborative Drug Therapy Agreements are still required and patients will still need to maintain visits to their family physician or regular health care provider.

"This law doesn't change the pharmacist's scope of practice," said WSPA CEO in a statement to members. "It allows pharmacists to apply to participate in health plans and be treated the same as other providers."

"We are looking forward to the additional opportunities that will be available to our graduates in the state of Washington as a result of this legislation," said Gary M. Pollack, dean of the College of Pharmacy.



Dr. Carl Mikota

Pharmacist joins teaching team at WSU PharmD Yakima extension



Carl Mikota, Pharm.D., is a new clinical assistant professor for the WSU College of Pharmacy in Yakima, Washington.

This August, the first group of student pharmacists will begin the Doctor of Pharmacy program at the extension location on the Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences campus, and Mikota will be part of the WSU pharmacy faculty teaching there.

“I look forward to leading any labs or discussions that I can be involved with in the classrooms at the PNWU campus,” said Mikota. “One thing I struggled with in pharmacy school was trying to figure out what was truly important during class and what I needed to know to be successful in the real world. Being able to share the insight of what I’ve gained from years of practice really appeals to me, and the new teaching model we will be using at the College of Pharmacy really supports this.”

Mikota has a Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago, and is a registered pharmacist in Illinois and Washington. He holds additional certifications in pharmacy-based immunization, advanced cardiovascular life support, and pediatric advanced life support.

Mikota’s pharmacy background is in critical care and pharmacy information technology, both in the intensive care unit and emergency department. Prior to Yakima, he spent five years as a staff pharmacist at Little Company of Mary Hospital in Evergreen, Illinois, where he also served as a pharmacy preceptor for the Colleges of Pharmacy at Chicago State University and University of Illinois at Chicago. He is currently a member of ASHP and APhA.

Mikota came to Yakima in November 2013 as a clinical pharmacist at the Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital. He began his appointment with WSU this March, and will keep dual appointments with the college and the hospital where he is currently running a cardiac risk assessment clinic.

“There is so much interprofessional sharing of information, countless education opportunities to perform with patients, and pharmacists as well as technicians who are working to expand our roles and provide services that are truly meaningful to our patients and providers. You really feel challenged and engaged coming to work here each day,” said Mikota. “I really feel that we have something to offer the students as far as introductory and advanced pharmacy practice training.”

Mikota comes from a family with several WSU graduates. “Cougars run in our family,” he said. But what attracted him to working at the College of Pharmacy was the quality of the program.

“I’ve been really impressed with the caliber of students that come from WSU. I look forward to training with them and watching them become colleagues that continue to carry the profession of pharmacy forward.”



AACP Master Preceptor

WSU pharmacy preceptor receives national teaching award



Dr. Chris Greer

Pharmacy Manager Christopher L. Greer of Spokane was one of eight pharmacy preceptors nationally to receive the Master Preceptor Recognition from the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy this year.

Preceptors supervise student pharmacists in clinical settings, where students gain experience in pharmacy practice with real patients. Preceptors can play a critical role in shaping a student's future career.

Greer was selected as an AACP Master Preceptor for his commitment to creating a learning environment where each student pharmacist receives the appropriate level of teaching, coaching and mentorship to enhance and solidify their knowledge, skills and abilities during the learning experience in preparation for entering the profession of pharmacy.

Greer was honored during an awards luncheon on Wednesday, May 6, as part of the college's 2015 Commencement Ceremony festivities in Spokane. Along with the certificate of recognition Greer will receive a \$500 honorarium and complimentary AACP membership.

He was nominated by his colleagues at the Washington State University College of Pharmacy for his humility, genuine care for people, integrity, passion for pharmacy, and servant leadership. The nomination included letters from WSU student pharmacists, the College of Pharmacy faculty and staff, and the chief nurse executive at St. Luke's Rehabilitation Institute where Greer works.



Chris Greer is presented with the Master Preceptor Award

Greer received his pharmacy degree from WSU. After graduation he completed a pharmacy residency specializing in adverse drug reactions. He spent three years as a staff pharmacist in Olympia, Washington, before returning to Spokane. He has been with St. Luke's Rehabilitation Institute since 1995, working his way up to pharmacy manager in 2009.

In addition to managing pharmacy for the rehab center at St. Luke's, Greer is the president for the Spokane Pharmacy Association.

Greer has been a preceptor for student pharmacists at WSU since 2003. He supervises fourth-year student pharmacists in acute care and institutional pharmacy rotations, second-year student pharmacists in introductory institutional pharmacy, and job shadowing experiences for first-year student pharmacists.



Planning the 2015 Commencement Ceremony

College staffer's leadership contributes to event success

Wild hairs escaping under a square hat, a panicked student pharmacist in a funny black robe approaches, eyes wide with anxiety. After a few broken sentences forced out through a tightening throat, relief floods her eyes—the whole hallway seems to get larger.

“It’s OK, we have extra graduation hoods,” are the magic words. Crisis averted.

Five minutes later an usher wanders by armed with the thought-to-be-lost essential commencement accessory. “Is someone missing this?” the usher asks. Now, all is right with the world again and the graduates go back to being excited for the ceremony beginning in 20 minutes.

The college staff volunteering at the event anticipated this scenario, and many others. They were prepared, ensuring another successful commencement ceremony and another year of happy grads with proud families busily snapping photos. What most people do not see are the hours and hours spent over the five months leading up to the event that college staff and faculty dedicate to planning and preparing.

Every year, the Washington State University College of Pharmacy holds a special commencement ceremony dedicated to its Doctor of Pharmacy and Ph.D. graduates. This ceremony is in addition to the main WSU spring commencement ceremony in Pullman, in order to better honor and celebrate the achievements of our graduates. This year, 30 staff and 40 faculty members participated in and contributed to the commencement ceremony that honored 82 Doctor of Pharmacy and three Doctor of Pharmaceutical Sciences graduates at the Martin Woldson Theater in downtown Spokane.



Lisa Price

“On the commencement committee, I get to work with staff and faculty that I don’t normally have an opportunity to work with, and I really enjoy that,” said Lisa Price.

Price is an administrative assistant for the college and is among the 18 faculty and staff that serve on the commencement planning committee. This year, Price took on the additional role of committee coordinator.

“Lisa has been an integral part of the entire planning process,” said Brian Gates, the commencement committee chair and this year’s emcee. “Her leadership on the planning committee has kept the group motivated and organized, and her support has allowed us to achieve way more than we had thought possible.”

In her day-to-day role, Price provides administrative support to the associate dean for professional education, which includes the college’s affiliated pharmacy residency programs and resident teaching certificate, the

honors program for the Doctor of Pharmacy degree, the faculty peer teaching evaluation program, and support for the college's extension to Yakima. Price also provides administrative support to the associate dean for graduate education, along with committee coordination and support for college-hosted lectureships, seminars and guest speakers.

"Lisa's friendly smiles brighten everyone's day. Her attention to detail is remarkable, and is particularly critical with respect to commencement planning," said Kay Meier, who is one of the two associate deans Price works for.

A Spokane native, Price spent a short time in California and then moved to Boise, Idaho, where she worked for Hewlett Packard in their customer support center while finishing her bachelor's degree at Boise State University. Price and her husband returned to Spokane in 1997 and she worked in administration for the Community Colleges of Spokane. She came to WSU in December of 2013.

"The College of Pharmacy would not be able to achieve such success without dedicated staff like Lisa consistently providing exemplary support to our students, faculty and programs," said Gary M. Pollack, dean of the college.

"I love managing projects and the variety of things I'm involved in. I've always loved education, being a part of a higher education institution, and being able to help students," said Price. "Being able to support people in their efforts to better themselves is something I enjoy. It is a unique opportunity."

In addition to her contributions to WSU, Price actively participates in the Spokane community. Price and her husband, Rod, received the Paul Harris Award from the Spokane Rotary Club last year, for their involvement with the Rotary's high school programs. The couple are now in the process of starting a venture group, with help from Rotary International and the Boy Scouts of America, to provide "high adventure" programming opportunities that incorporate community service or civic engagement elements for teens and young adults.

"I'm looking forward to continuing to take a leadership role in my position in ways that would be helpful to the College of Pharmacy, and I am excited about the volunteer opportunities my husband and I will be involved in," said Price.



Other College News

FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP

Publications

- Pharmacotherapy Research Associate and Specialty Resident in Drug Information Practice **Ross J. Bindler** published, “Inpatient and outpatient pharmacy monitoring of oral antineoplastic medications,” in the independent peer-reviewed journal Hospital Pharmacy (2015; 50(2): 91 – 92. PMID: 25717200).
- Pharmacotherapy Research Associate and Specialty Resident in Drug Information Practice **Jasen Cong** and Pharmacotherapy Professor and Associate Dean for External Professional and Continuing Education **Danial E. Baker** published, “Ferric citrate,” in the journal Hospital Pharmacy (2015;50(2):139-151).
- **Danial Baker** and one co-author published, “Netupitant/palonosetron,” in the journal Hospital Pharmacy (2015;50(4):310-325).
- **Danial Baker** published, “Approvals, submission, and important labeling changes for U.S. marketed pharmaceuticals,” in the journal Hospital Pharmacy (2015;50(4):329-332). The article presents information on new drugs and indications as well as dosage forms and safety-related changes in labeling or use approved by the U.S. FDA. [read article](#)
- **Danial Baker** published, “ Approvals, submission, and important labeling changes for U.S. marketed pharmaceuticals,” in the journal Hospital Pharmacy (2015;50(2):154-166). The article presents information on new drugs and indications as well as dosage forms and safety-related changes in labeling or use approved by the U.S. FDA from November 16, 2014 through December 12, 2014. [read article](#)
- **Danial Baker** and **Ross Bindler** published, “Ledipasvir/sofosbuvir,” in the journal Hospital Pharmacy (2015;50(3):224-234).
- **Danial Baker** published, “Approvals, submission, and important labeling changes for U.S. marketed pharmaceuticals,” in the journal Hospital Pharmacy (2015;50(3):238-242). The article presents information on new drugs and indications as well as dosage forms and safety-related changes in labeling or use approved by the U.S. FDA from December 13, 2014 through January 18, 2015. [read article](#)

Presentations

- Pharmacotherapy Clinical Associate Professor **Lisa J. Woodard** presented the poster, “Healthy people 2020: Global assessment of pharmacist’s involvement,” with five co-authors at the APhA annual meeting in San Diego, California, in March.
- Pharmaceutical Sciences Research Technician **Jonah Hocum** presented the poster titled, “A clinically relevant approach for retargeting foamy viral vectors into heterochromatin,” at the 18th annual American Society of Gene and Cell Therapy meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, on May 15, 2015.
- Pharmaceutical Sciences Research Technician **Miles Olszko** presented the poster titled, “Foamy viral vector integration sites in SCID-repopulating cells after MGMTP140K-mediated in vivo selection,” at the 18th annual American Society of Gene and Cell Therapy meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, on May 15, 2015.
- Pharmacotherapy Associate Professor **Joshua J. Neumiller** presented, “Management of Type 2 diabetes with comorbid obesity,” to The Metropolitan New York Association of Diabetes Educators (MNYADE) in New York on May 20, 2015.

Service

- **Lisa Woodard** served as the research advisor for Ph.D. in nutrition and exercise physiology candidate Alissa Underhill, who passed her preliminary exam in May.
- **Josh Neumiller** and five others served on the writing and development committee for the American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE) practice synopsis titled, “Healthy eating.”
- Pharmaceutical Sciences Professor and Associate Dean of Graduate Education **Kathryn E. Meier** participated in the annual meeting of the FASEB Publications and Communications Committee on May 19, 2015, in Washington, D.C. The PCC oversees publication of the FASEB Journal.

Awards

- Doctor of Pharmacy Preceptor **Christopher Greer** received the 2015 AACP Master Preceptor recognition from the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. [read article](#)
- Pharmaceutical Sciences Clinical Assistant Professor **Connie Remsberg** was voted 2014-15 Teacher of the Year by College of Pharmacy first-year student pharmacists. [read article](#)
- Pharmacotherapy Clinical Assistant Professor **Kimberly McKeirnan** was voted 2014-15 Teacher of the Year by College of Pharmacy second-year student pharmacists. [read article](#)
- **Joshua Neumiller** was voted 2014-15 Teacher of the Year by College of Pharmacy third-year student pharmacists. [read article](#)
- Pharmacotherapy Clinical Professor and Associate Dean for Professional Education **Brian J. Gates** was voted 2014-15 Teacher of the Year by College of Pharmacy fourth-year student pharmacists. [read article](#)
- **Brian Gates** was named an honorary member by the pharmacy leadership fraternity Phi Lambda Sigma, WSU chapter, for his service and dedication to helping student pharmacists develop their leadership skills.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) students

- **Alexander Little** (Zhang lab, pharmaceutical sciences) presented the poster titled, “Immune cell responses to combined treatment of murine melanoma with ALT-803 and Sunitinib in normal and chronic alcohol consuming mice,” on May 10, 2015, at the American Association of Immunologist meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana. Poster authors: Pharmaceutical Sciences Dorothy Otto Kennedy Distinguished Professor **Gary G. Meadows**, Pharmaceutical Sciences Associate Research Professor **Hui Zhang**, **Kari Gaither** (Liu lab, pharmaceutical sciences), **Faya Zhang** (Zhang lab, pharmaceutical sciences), **Amity Platt** (Lazarus lab, pharmaceutical sciences), and five others.
- **Alexander Little** received a \$500 travel grant from the Associated Students of WSU Spokane and a \$500 travel award from the College of Pharmacy’s Sue Harriet Monroe Mullen Graduate Fellowship to attend and present at the American Association of Immunologists meeting May 10, 2015, in New Orleans, Louisiana.
- **Solomon Agere** (Ahmed lab, pharmaceutical sciences) was voted 2014-15 Teaching Assistant of the Year by College of Pharmacy student pharmacists. [read article](#)

Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) students

- **Kirin Brar** was a co-author with 10 others on the research poster titled, “Immune cell responses to combined treatment of murine melanoma with ALT-803 and Sunitinib in normal and chronic alcohol consuming mice.”
- **Sean Leonard** received the Larry G. Bettsworth Health System Pharmacy Student Award from the Providence Health Care Foundation. [read article](#)
- **Kim Paulson** was selected to serve a two-year term on the Student Leadership Council of the National Community Pharmacists Association. She will join **Patrick Stolz** (currently in the second year of his term) at the SLC during the NCPA meeting in the fall.
- **James Leonard** with faculty co-author **Danial Baker** published, “Netupitant/palonosetron,” in the journal Hospital Pharmacy (2015;50(4):310-325).

Coming Events

- August 21, 2015
The College of Pharmacy will host a white coat ceremony for the incoming class of 2019 at the Martin Woldson Theater at the Fox in Spokane, Washington.
- August 27, 2015
The College of Pharmacy will host a white coat ceremony for the incoming class of 2019 at Butler-Haney Hall on the Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences campus in Yakima, Washington.



College of Pharmacy

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