



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

JULY 2014

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Dear Friends and Colleagues:

Academicians often refer to the “three-legged stool” to symbolize balance. The American Association of University Professors utilizes the analogy that tenure, academic freedom, and shared governance are the “legs” that support a robust professoriate; academic medicine has teaching, patient care, and research as its “legs”. Our college uses this analogy with the somewhat more general description of teaching, scholarship, and service. Of course, one aspires for all three legs of a stool to be of equal length (to avoid tipping when using it to, say, change a light bulb in your office) and sufficient strength (to avoid an embarrassing collapse when, for example, reaching for “elevensies”). It is with this thought in mind that I offer the following:

- We have completed our first year of competency-based examinations with nearly-real-time opportunity to re-engage students. This appears to have had the desired effect: progression improved and students met the challenge (as we knew they would) of navigating a higher “bar”. I am proud of them and of the faculty who made this philosophical and operational transition seamlessly and gracefully. Faculty also have embraced a modest restructuring of our curriculum to significantly improve integration of concepts and more than double opportunities for elective coursework. Finally, we have created the position of “Director, Advancement of Teaching and Learning Excellence”, and I am pleased to announce that Dr. Connie Remsberg will fill this role. Connie is an outstanding instructor with interest in the scholarship of education, and will be a strong leader of this effort. Initially, Connie will head a committee to examine various aspects of teaching and learning, with particular attention to curricular delivery options for our future students in Yakima. Our long-term goal is to have a center or similar unit in our college to house this effort.
- The American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy recently released extramural funding rankings. These are used as simple, albeit somewhat flawed, measures of scholarly productivity. In terms of NIH funding, we improved from 56th in FY2012 to 35th in FY2013; when adjusting for faculty number, we are 27th.

While there is much room for growth, the new rankings represent significant improvement. I am especially pleased that the increase has been balanced between funding transferred with new faculty recruits and funding obtained by faculty who already were with the college. There are, of course, other aspects of faculty scholarship that we could use to demonstrate a rapidly-improving culture of discovery. This is simply an easily-digestible bit of information. Our trajectory is very good.

- Our faculty continue to be engaged with the professional community, particularly with respect to the role pharmacists can play in a rapidly-evolving health care environment. As a recent example, Linda Garrelts MacLean is among a select group to participate in discussions with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on opportunities presented by the Affordable Care Act for pharmacists to deliver a variety of preventive services. Some of the priority areas for consideration are immunizations, cessation of tobacco use, management of chronic conditions (including pain), and preventive screening. Each of these represents an opportunity for pharmacy to make significant new contributions to the health and well-being of Americans, and we are proud that Linda brings WSU's perspective to these discussions. the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education. We are looking forward to ACPE's site visit to both Spokane and Yakima, which will occur in late September, and to the feedback we will receive from our accrediting body.

Best wishes for Independence Day and the remaining summer months.



Gary M. Pollack

Dean, Washington State University College of Pharmacy

## Dr. Connie Remsberg

*WSU College of Pharmacy furthers excellence in education with new faculty designation*



Dr. Connie Remsberg

To underscore the Washington State University College of Pharmacy's commitment to providing the very best in pharmacy education, Dean Gary M. Pollack is establishing a new faculty role dedicated to connecting the College's pharmacy educators with more teaching resources.

Connie Remsberg, a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, has been appointed as the new director for the advancement of teaching and learning excellence. In her new role, Remsberg will help her faculty and graduate teaching assistant colleagues further their skills in teaching excellence.

"I will be here to make sure we, as faculty, are using all the tools that we can to achieve excellence in teaching," said Remsberg. This will not only involve

coordinating teaching workshops and communicating the availability of self-directed resources, but also assistance with implementing technology and incorporating different teaching styles in both classroom and laboratory based curriculum.

Remsberg has experience implementing innovative teaching techniques. She has incorporated elements of a “flipped” teaching style into her pharmaceuticals laboratory class where first-year student pharmacists learn the art of compounding. A “flipped” teaching style refers to a model of teaching where students prepare for class in advance, commonly by watching lecture material through online videos, completing assigned reading and reviewing case studies. Then the time spent in class can be better utilized for open discussion with the professor, discussing the finer details of the material and answering questions.

“I think what I’m most excited for in this role is the chance to have a bigger impact than just me teaching, I’ll be helping to improve teaching college wide,” said Remsberg.

Remsberg anticipates having the role defined and resources available to the faculty beginning next spring,



Dr. Remsberg coordinates the pharmaceuticals lab where first-year student pharmacists learn the art of compounding.

starting with some teaching workshops.

Remsberg will also be involved in the successful implementation of the Doctor of Pharmacy program that will be offered in Yakima, Wash., in partnership with the Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences. The College is based on the WSU Health Sciences campus in Spokane, Wash., and ensuring that the quality of education is consistent across program locations is an important initiative for the College.

“We want to ensure our students are as prepared as possible for the world of pharmacy upon graduation.

We can do this by giving our students the best education possible,” Remsberg said.

“Developing outstanding health care professionals is an important part of the mission of the WSU College of Pharmacy,” Pollack said. “This new position will formalize our commitment to exploring innovative approaches to preparing our students and to sharing what we learn with the broader community.”

As a member of the College faculty, Remsberg also coordinates the pharmaceuticals (compounding) lab and teaches the pharmaceuticals and pharmacy calculations classes. She was selected as a Teacher of the Year for 2013-14 by the first-year Doctor of Pharmacy students.

Previous to joining the faculty at the WSU College of Pharmacy, Remsberg spent two years as a clinical pharmacology fellow at the University of California San Francisco. She graduated from WSU with a Pharm.D. in 2010 and with a Ph.D. in 2011.

# Dr. Zhenjia Wang

*New pharmacy researcher working on nanoparticle drug delivery*



Dr. Zhenjia Wang

Zhenjia Wang has spent much of his working career exploring life forms too small to see with a normal microscope.

In his current research, he uses multicolor fluorescent microscopy to map the biological trafficking of specific nanoparticles, and the powerful microscope he needs for this will be installed soon at the WSU College of Pharmacy in Spokane.

Wang is working toward designing and creating ways to deliver therapeutic drugs to prevent and treat cardiovascular inflammatory diseases.

“Nanoparticles are valued for their potential to differentiate cells and tissues,” Wang said. “They release drugs in a controlled manner and

efficiently deliver a combination of different drugs.”

Much of his work of late has been focused on getting the nanoparticles across the semi-permeable cell barrier that exists between the blood and diseased tissue in the lungs.

He believes he has discovered what size nanoparticle will work, but another issue then is finding the exact “address” in the lung he wants to target so the nanoparticles are not swept away by the liver.

Wang was the lead author on a research paper published on the subject in March 2014 in the journal *Nature Nanotechnology*. Co-authors were three research colleagues from the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Medicine, where Wang spent the last six years before joining the College of Pharmacy in Spokane as an assistant professor in January 2014.

“I like the opportunity that is here for me to develop my career,” Wang said. The Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences is being re-established and growing after moving from the main WSU campus in Pullman last year.

“The weather here is nicer than Chicago,” Wang said, although Chicago cold weather was similar to the northeastern China city of Shenyang where Wang grew up, only without the wind.

Children growing up in China during Wang’s time were encouraged in the sciences and that likely influenced his decision to follow an educational path that led him to achieve a Ph.D. in physics from the Changchun Institute of Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Although biology was not an opportunity for him at the Institute of Physics, he saw enough of it that it piqued his interest and he found a good fit for himself in the Department of Chemistry at the University of Rochester

in New York. He became a postdoctoral fellow there in 2001 and spent five years studying a particular nanoparticle while learning from his colleagues there the different methods of research in biology.

Wang wanted to pursue his interests in medicine, so he found a job at University of Illinois at Chicago and began working with an internationally known scientist, Asar B. Malik, who is an expert in acute lung injury. It was there that Wang started to develop his research projects on nanoparticle-based drug delivery.

Since joining the faculty at WSU in Spokane, Wang has set up his own laboratory. He employs one postdoctoral fellow with a Ph.D. in biology and a second postdoctoral fellow with a Ph.D. in pharmaceutical sciences will be joining him in July. Wang's research is funded by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, which is an agency of the National Institutes of Health.

Wang, his wife, Qian Ding, and their 12-year-old son, Peter, live on the South Hill in Spokane.

## Pharmacy staff recognized for contributions to College initiatives

*Susan Wright honored as WSU Spokane's administrative professional for 2014*



Dr. K. Michael Gibson (left) and Professor Brenda Bray (right) pictured with Susan Wright (center).

Susan K. Wright, an assessment analyst in the WSU College of Pharmacy's Assessment Office was selected for the 2014 Administrative Professional Contribution Award at WSU Spokane.

This annual award is given to an administrative professional employee to recognize contributions made to WSU and the employee's respective work area or unit that have had a far reaching, impelling or compelling impact.

Wright was presented with the award during the June Administrative Professional Advisory Council (APAC)

meeting on the WSU Spokane campus in June.

Wright was nominated by pharmacy faculty colleagues Dr. K. Michael Gibson and Professor Brenda Bray for her contributions as well as her willingness to assist all units of the College to develop sound assessment methodologies and data collection tools as the College prepares for the re-accreditation process. Additionally, during spring semester Wright assumed critical support functions for the College of Pharmacy's computer based testing program at a time when a team member was suddenly not available.

“She is the ‘right hand’ person for the College of Pharmacy director of assessment, and respected throughout the college for her expertise and knowledge in data management and analysis,” Bray said in nominating Wright.

## Other College News

### FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP

#### Publications

- Experimental and Systems Pharmacology Associate Professor **Sue Marsh** and one co-author published, “The role of O-GlcNAc transferase (OGT) in regulating gene transcription of developing and failing hearts,” in the journal *Future Cardiology*.
- Pharmacotherapy Associate Professor **Joshua J. Neumiller** published, “Empagliflozin: a new sodium-glucose co-transporter 2 (SGLT2) inhibitor for the treatment of type 2 diabetes,” in the journal *Drugs in Context* (2014; 3: 212262).
- Pharmacotherapy Professor Emeritus **William E. Fassett** and two co-authors published, “Professionalism in pharmacy,” in *Boh’s Pharmacy Practice Manual, 4th Ed., 2014*; New York: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.
- **William Fassett** published, “The law and the clinical practice of pharmacy,” in *Boh’s Pharmacy Practice Manual, 4th Ed., 2014*; New York: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.
- **William Fassett** published the book titled *Washington Pharmacy Law: A User’s Guide 2014*.
- **William Fassett** published, “Washington is latest state to enact PBM statute, requires PBM registration and MAC list clarity,” in the March/April edition of the American Society for Pharmacy Law newsletter *Rx Ipsa Loquitur*. [read more](#)
- Pharmacotherapy Professor and Associate Dean for External Professional and Continuing Education **Danial Baker** published, “Drug Evaluation – Elosulfase alfa (Vimizim)’” in *Wolters Kluwer Health’s The Formulary Monograph Service (FMS)* in May. Wolters Kluwer Health is a drug and health information provider, the FMS is a resource database for hospitals and managed care pharmacists that provides information on recently released and investigational drugs.
- Pharmacotherapy Research Associate and Specialty Resident in Drug Information Practice **Kyle Ingram** and **Danial Baker** published, “Drug Evaluation – Droxidopa (Northera): Updated Evaluation,” in *The FMS* in May.
- **Danial Baker** with one co-author published, “Drug Evaluation – Ramucirumab: Preliminary Evaluation,” in *The FMS* in May.
- Pharmacotherapy Research Associate and Specialty Resident in Drug Information Practice **Jasen Cong** and **Danial Baker** published, “Drug Evaluation – Vorapaxar: Preliminary Evaluation,” in *The FMS* in May.
- **Danial Baker** with one co-author published, “Drug Evaluation – Pimavanserin: Preliminary Evaluation,” in *The FMS* in May.
- **Danial Baker** published, “Drug Utilization Evaluation – Droxidopa (Northera),” in *The FMS* in May.
- **Danial Baker** with one co-author published, “Drug Evaluation – Metreleptin (Myalept),” in *The FMS* in June.
- **Kyle Ingram** and **Danial Baker** published, “Drug Evaluation – Miltefosine (Impavido): Updated

Evaluation,” in The FMS in June.

- **Kyle Ingram** and **Danial Baker** published, “Drug Evaluation – Evolocumab: Preliminary Evaluation,” in The FMS in June.
- **Kyle Ingram** and **Danial Baker** published, “Drug Evaluation – Apremilast (Otezla): Updated Evaluation,” in The FMS in June.
- **Danial Baker** with one co-author published, “Drug Evaluation – Sweet Vernal, Orchard, Perennial Rye, Timothy, and Kentucky Blue Grass Mixed Pollens Allergen Extract (Oralair),” in The FMS in June.
- **Danial Baker** with one co-author published, “Drug Utilization Evaluation – Apremilast,” in The FMS in June.
- Pharmaceutical Sciences Associate Professor **Grant Trobridge** and several co-authors published the article, “A novel approach to identify driver genes involved in androgen-independent prostate cancer,” in the journal *Molecular Cancer* in May.
- Pharmaceutical Sciences Assistant Professor **Gregory Poon** and two co-authors published the article, “Mechanistic heterogeneity in DNA site recognition by the structurally homologous ETS-family transcription factors Ets-1 and PU.1,” in the *Journal of Biological Chemistry*.
- **Gregory Poon** and two co-authors published the article, “Prodrug Applications for Targeted Cancer Therapy” in the *American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (AAPS) Journal*.
- Pharmaceutical Sciences Dorothy Otto Kennedy Distinguished Professor **Gary G. Meadows** and three co-authors have published the article, “Synthesis and anti-cancer activity of new flavonoid analogs and inconsistencies in assays related to proliferation and viability measurements,” in the *International Journal of Oncology*, Volume 45, Issue 2. [read more](#)

## Presentations

- **Joshua Neumiller** presented, “To D or Not to D? That is One of the Micronutrient Questions” at the 74th Scientific Sessions of the American Diabetes Association (ADA) on June 14th, 2014, in San Francisco, Calif.
- **William Fassett** presented, “An Allergy Primer,” at the Northwest Pharmacy Convention, Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, on May 31, 2014.
- **Joshua Neumiller** presented, “Considerations for Managing Older Adults with Type 2 Diabetes,” at the 2014 Northwest Pharmacy Convention. Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, on May 30, 2014.
- Pharmaceutical Sciences Clinical Assistant Professor **Travis Denton** presented research findings with one co-author titled, “Central nervous system lanthionines: Functional sulfur amino acid metabolites and framework for novel therapeutics,” at the 2014 Northwest Regional Meeting of the American Chemical Society in Missoula, Mont., on June 22-25, 2014.

## Service

- **Sue Marsh** was appointed to the American Physiological Society’s Women in Physiology Committee for a three year term from January 1, 2015, through December 31, 2017.
- **Sue Marsh** was appointed to the American Physiological Society’s Cardiovascular Section Nominating Committee for a three year term from May 1, 2014, through April 30, 2017.
- **Joshua Neumiller** was featured in the article, “Mission to Heal,” in the June issue of *InHealth*, a publication of the *Inlander Magazine*, highlighting his service in diabetes management education. [read more](#)
- Pharmacotherapy Clinical Associate Professor **Lisa Woodard** and Nutrition Exercise & Physiology Clinical Associate Professor **Judy Knuth** delivered an interprofessional workshop on the WSU Health Sciences

campus in Spokane on May 28-29, 2014. This training prepared faculty and one student to serve as Certified Group Lifestyle Balance™ Coaches.

### Grants

- Pharmacotherapy Adjunct Research Professor **Carol Wysham** has received a grant from Quintiles Inc. who represents the sponsor Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals for a project titled, “A multicenter, international, randomized, parallel group, double-blind, placebo-controlled Cardiovascular safety & Renal Microvascular outcome study with LINagliptin, 5 mg once daily in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus at high vascular risk (CARMILNA).” The award is for \$93,531 over five years.

### Awards

- Pharmacotherapy Clinical Assistant Professor **Kimberly McKeirnan** was selected for the MEDEX “Golden Apple” speaker award for the 2014 spring quarter.
- Pharmaceutical Sciences Clinical Assistant Professor **Connie Remsberg, Kimberly McKeirnan, William Fassett**, Pharmacotherapy Professor and Chair **John White**, and Pharmacotherapy Clinical Professor and Associate Dean for Professional Education **Brian Gates** were selected by Doctor of Pharmacy students to receive Teacher of the Year awards for 2013-14. [read more](#)
- Pharmacotherapy Clinical Associate Professor **Colleen Terriff** was selected for the Spokane County’s Excellence in EMS Special Services Award by the Spokane County EMS and Trauma Care Council. The council coordinates the emergency medical services system for Spokane County.

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

### Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) students

- **Heidi Medford** and one faculty co-author published, “The role of O-GlcNAc transferase (OGT) in regulating gene transcription of developing and failing hearts,” in the journal Future Cardiology.
- **Alissa Underhill** has received two awards to fund her research: The Dean Fletcher Graduate Fellowship Award and the Alberta Hill Academic Excellence Award for a total of \$5,000. Underhill’s research is focused on diabetes prevention.
- **Kari Gaither** presented an abstract of her research with faculty co-authors **Gary Meadows** and **Hui Zhang**, graduate student co-author **Alex Little**, and three others titled, “Response of Melanoma-Bearing Normal and Alcoholic Mice to Sunitinib Malate and ATL-803 Treatment,” at the 15th International Biennial Congress of the Metastasis Research Society Meeting at the German Cancer Center in Heidelberg, Germany, on June 28-July 1, 2014.
- **Kari Gaither** won an ASWSUS travel grant and a WSU College of Pharmacy travel grant to attend the 15th International Biennial Congress of the Metastasis Research Society Meeting at the German Cancer Center in Heidelberg, Germany.

### Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) students

- **Cassandra Song, Bridget Mummey, Mark Goff, Sekinah Samadi, and May Myngoc Chung Son** each received \$5,000 scholarships from Cardinal Health. [read more](#)

- **Rachelle Albay** received the Larry Bettesworth Scholarship in the amount of \$2,000 from the Providence Health Care Foundation.
- **James Leonard** with faculty co-author **Danial Baker** published, “Drug Evaluation – Ramucirumab: Preliminary Evaluation,” in The Formulary Monograph Service in May.
- **James Leonard** with faculty co-author **Danial Baker** published, “Drug Evaluation – Pimavanserin: Preliminary Evaluation,” in The Formulary Monograph Service in May.
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- **James Leonard** with faculty co-author **Danial Baker** published, “Drug Utilization Evaluation – Apremilast,” in The Formulary Monograph Service in June.
- **Irene Giang** with faculty co-author **Gregory Poon** and one student co-author published the article, “Prodrug Applications for Targeted Cancer Therapy” in the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (AAPS) Journal.

## Coming Events

- July 12, 2014  
The National PKU Alliance (NPKUA) has invited **K. Michael Gibson** to present at the 2014 NPKUA Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah.
- September 21, 2014  
U.S. Transuranium and Uranium Registries Associate Research Professor **Sergei Tolmachev** has been invited to present research findings at the 2014 Radiation Research Society Meeting in Las Vegas, Nev.



College of Pharmacy

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