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## A MESSAGE FROM GARY M. POLLACK



April 2019

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

This past week, WSU conducted its university-wide Three-Minute Thesis (3MT) competition. The idea for a competition based upon graduate students explaining their research work, in lay terms and within three minutes, was developed by the University of Queensland 11 years ago. The [history](#) of this competition is fascinating and worth a quick read.

This year's WSU 3MT champion was Xinyue (Sheena) Dong, a student in our pharmaceutical sciences graduate program. The working title for Sheena's doctoral dissertation is, "Nanoparticles targeted to brain for improved therapies of ischemic stroke and glioma." In pursuing this project, she is developing nano-scale vesicles from cell membranes to ferry therapeutic agents across the blood-brain barrier. Dr. Zhenjia Wang, who will be [promoted](#) this year to the rank of associate professor with tenure (congratulations, Zhenjia!) is serving as her faculty advisor. We are extremely proud of Sheena's accomplishment, and the entire college offers its congratulations.

It is worth noting that students from the pharmaceutical sciences program have competed in four of the five years that WSU has held a university-wide 3MT competition. In those four years, our representative has taken the top prize three times. This is an amazing track record of excellence for a graduate program that is of modest size, and speaks to the commitment of our college to the development of young professionals and scientists.

The improvement and growth of our graduate program over the last several years is an excellent case study of how development of a focused strategy, combined with appropriate investment and a commitment to excellence, yields positive results. I could not be prouder of our graduate program than I am today.

With best wishes,

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



## UPCOMING EVENTS



### **Celebrating Generosity - Yakima**

5:00 - 7:00 p.m.  
Apple Tree Resort



### **Celebrating Generosity - Spokane**

4 p.m. CE, 5 p.m. reception  
Health Sciences Building



### **Honors Research Day**

12:00 - 5:00 p.m.  
PBS Lobby  
Spokane, Wash.



### **Commencement**

The FOX  
Spokane, Wash.

[More college events >>](#)

## COLLEGE NEWS

### **Pharmacy alumna to speak at commencement May 2**

Merrie Kay Alzola, class of 1993, senior account executive, Novo Nordisk, will be the keynote speaker at the commencement ceremony of the Washington State University (WSU) College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (CPPS) on Thursday, May 2.

“Merrie Kay’s devotion to the profession of pharmacy is phenomenal. She is committed to identifying opportunities for student pharmacists to network and build relationships with alumni and other thought leaders. A shining example of how Cougar pharmacists give back to the college, I am excited to have her speak at commencement.” said Linda Garrelts MacLean, vice dean for the college.



Merrie Kay has been recognized for leadership and contributions to the profession. She received the WSPA Pharmacist of the Year award in 2014, the Pharmacy Leadership award for the State of Washington in 2011, was named Distinguished Young Pharmacist of the Year in 2002, and the Innovative Pharmacist of the Year in 2001. She was honored by the CPPS as the 2014 Outstanding Alumna of the Year in recognition for her contributions toward helping to establish the college’s Alumni and Student Mentor Program.

Merrie Kay Alzola’s selection as the commencement speaker for pharmacy maintains the college’s practice to bring thought leaders to campus. Her record in pharmacy shows a dedication to the college’s mission to lead in advancing, promoting and protecting human health.

Full details on the WSU College of Pharmacy commencement ceremony can be found online at <http://www.pharmacy.wsu.edu/commencement>.

## McKeirnan to receive national honors for work in pharmacy practice

The American Pharmacists Association announced that WSU's Kimberly McKeirnan will be honored for her work and research in clinical pharmacy at its annual meeting later this month.

McKeirnan, a clinical assistant professor at the WSU College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (CPPS), was selected for the APhA's Academy of Pharmacy Practice and Management 2019 Distinguished Achievement Award in Pharmacy Practice.

McKeirnan was selected for the award for her work to increase access to vaccinations, an issue very current in the state of Washington. Part of her work at WSU includes running a vaccine administration training program for pharmacy technicians, along with conducting research that supports expanding clinical services that can be provided in a community pharmacy.

"She works diligently to inspire other pharmacists and future pharmacists to expand patient care services that can benefit the community," the APhA announcement stated.

The APhA also announced the recipients of their 2019 Immunization Champion Awards. McKeirnan was named its national winner for individual practitioner. The Immunization Champions Awards recognize individuals and organizations who have made extraordinary contributions toward improved vaccination rates within their communities.

McKeirnan will receive her awards at the APhA meeting, March 23–24 at the Washington State Convention Center in Seattle.

Last fall, McKeirnan also received the Distinguished Young Pharmacist of the Year Award from the Washington State Pharmacy Association for her work in immunizations. Her contributions to expanding access to care is an example of how faculty-led research at WSU is at the forefront in advancing the health and wellness of our nation.

In addition to her research, McKeirnan teaches in the WSU Doctor of Pharmacy Program. Prior to joining WSU in 2013, she practiced pharmacy in the Spokane area. She is a Board Certified Ambulatory Care Pharmacists and holds additional certifications in travel medicine, immunizations, and as an immunization trainer. In 2015, she was named a National Association of Chain Drug Stores Faculty Scholar.



## Akers recognized with profession-wide award

The American Pharmacists Association (APhA) announced that WSU's Julie Akers will receive one of its profession-wide awards at the annual meeting later this month.

Akers, a clinical assistant professor at the WSU College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (CPPS), was selected for the APhA's 2019 Good Government Pharmacist-of-the-Year Award. She was nominated by WSU faculty colleague Jennifer Robinson for her contributions to the pharmacy community through her involvement in the political process.

"Julie has helped me see the importance of politics and policy when advocating for our profession and for our patients. Julie has had this



same effect on countless other pharmacists, student pharmacists and community members,” Robinson said in her nomination. “Her excitement about the political process and her passion for advocating for our profession could motivate a rock to get involved.”

Akers demonstrates this excitement in her role as the Washington State Pharmacy Associate (WSPA) faculty advisor. Akers works with WSPA student leadership to educate student pharmacists on state level health care legislation. As part of this effort, she helps organize an annual Legislative Day. During the event each spring over 100 student pharmacists travel to Olympia, Wash. to meet with members of the state legislature to discuss current bills and advocate for the practice of pharmacy.

Akers has also served on the Washington State Pharmacy Association (WSPA) Board of Directors for over ten years and served as president of the association in 2012. She serves on the American Pharmacists Association (APhA) government affairs committee, and has represented the State of Washington as an APhA delegate for several years. For the past 3 years, Akers has represented the college at the state Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission meetings where she works to advance the role of pharmacists in Washington through both the legislative and rule-making process.

Akers will receive her award at the APhA meeting, March 23–24 at the Washington State Convention Center in Seattle.



Dear friends, colleagues and fellow alums,

Our student pharmacists, residents, fellows and faculty continue to make our college proud! Many of these individuals have just returned from the annual APhA meeting held in Seattle. It was wonderful to see many of you there, especially those of you who came to our CougaRx Nation Alumni and Friends reception on Sunday. We appreciate all of the networking and student mentoring that occurred at that event! Other highlights:

- Our APhA Academy of Student Pharmacists president Yongmin Ko and vice-president Julia Kim encouraged attendance and prepared our student pharmacists to take advantage of this event that unites pharmacists from all experience levels and practice settings including community, research, academia, government and health systems.
- Maggie Godsey, class of 2021, ran as a National President-elect Candidate. Although Maggie did not win this race she represented us well, delivering an exceptional speech to the Student House of Delegates. This experience prepares her for a future campaign for office with APhA when she is a pharmacist!
- David Bunch, class of 2019, as a member of the National Policy Standing Committee, participated extensively in meetings.

- Majid Nazir, class of 2021, served as the Region 7 delegate.
- Cody Damman, class of 2020, represented us as the WSU chapter delegate.
- Joanna Gourley, class of 2020, served as the National Patient Counseling Competition representative from WSU. While Joanna did not take the top honor, she competed admirably.
- WSU CPPS faculty member Kimberly McKeirnan, PharmD, BCACP received the 2019 APhA-APPM Distinguished Achievement Award. Her acceptance speech delivered to the general session was excellent. Later the same day, she was recognized as the 2019 APhA Immunization Champions Award.
- WSU CPPS faculty member Julie Akers, PharmD, BCACP, was awarded the 2019 Good Government Pharmacist of the Year Award. The remarks she gave at the PAC reception were inspirational. Our WSU student pharmacists, faculty and Washington state colleagues filled the room to support her as she received this recognition!

Finally, I want to invite you to join us again in Seattle at the Columbia Tower Club on May 10 for the annual Celebrating Generosity event. In appreciation of your support to the College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, we will celebrate you and provide an opportunity for you to meet the students who benefit from your support!

With Cougar Pride,



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

## ALUMNI NEWS



### STUDENT PHARMACIST TO SERVE FOR APhA-ASP

M. Majid Nazir will serve as a regional delegate for the American Pharmacists Association Academy of Student Pharmacists.

[Full story on page 6 »](#)



### GRADUATE STUDENT WOMAN OF DISTINCTION

Pharmaceutical sciences graduate student Yadira Xitlalli Pérez-Páramo was selected for WSU’s 2019 Graduate Student Woman of Distinction award.

[Full story on page 7 »](#)



### APHA PHOTOS

Cougar pharmacists, students, faculty, staff and friends flocked to Seattle for the APhA annual meeting.

[View photos »](#)

## ALUMNI UPDATES

- John Oftebro, class of 1965, was named president of the board of directors for the Redmond Historical Society. [Read more »](#)
- Dr. Darrell Jackson, Ph.D., class of 1990, checked in from the University of Montana, where he has spent this past semester teaching two undergraduate classes (Cellular and Molecular Neuroscience, and Neuroanatomy); a Physical Therapy Neuroscience class; and advising a Ph.D. and four undergraduate students working in his lab. He also serves as the University of Montana's Brain Initiative chairman, director of graduate education for the College of Health Professions and Biomedical Sciences, and is a member of the undergraduate of neuroscience steering group. His current research involves investigating the underlying mechanisms responsible for the delayed neuronal death associated with ischemic stroke injury.

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](mailto:gocougs@pharmacy.wsu.edu).

### WSU student to serve regionally for national pharmacy group

SPOKANE, Wash.—Student pharmacist M. Majid Nazir was elected as one of eight regional delegates, nationally, for the American Pharmacists Association Academy of Student Pharmacists (APhA-ASP). The elections were held at the APhA-ASP midyear regional meeting in Boise, Idaho, earlier this fall.

“I am looking forward to directly working on resolutions that will help advance the profession of pharmacy and make life-long connections with this position,” Nazir said.

Over the next year he will be working with APhA-ASP chapters in Region 7, which includes pharmacy programs in Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, and Nevada. He will be promoting advocacy and political awareness by regularly providing updates to the chapters in his region.

“I hope to inspire future student pharmacists to get involved and help advocate for the profession of pharmacy. I can't wait to see what the next year brings. Go Cougs!” Nazir said.

Another part of his duties include serving on the APhA-ASP Resolutions Committee. In this role, regional delegates review all proposed resolutions for the APhA-ASP and rank them based on which issues are the greatest concern to their student pharmacist constituents. The reviews are then published in the APhA's Student Pharmacist Magazine. Nazir will moderate the resolutions discussion during the mid-year regional meeting in 2019.

“I will be representing all of the different students from our region and pushing for issues that we believe will help advance the profession of pharmacy. I hope to advocate for issues not only personal to me, but also to the students I will be representing,” Nazir said.

The Washington State University (WSU) College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (CPPS) has a reputation of developing outstanding health care professionals and leaders in pharmacy. This is an example of how the college supports opportunities for students to participate in leadership and advocacy activities, and gain experience and recognition at the state and national levels.

Nazir is in the class of 2021 of the Doctor of Pharmacy program at WSU in Spokane. He is from Federal Way, Washington, and completed his undergraduate coursework at the University of

Washington. He was drawn to Spokane for the opportunities provided on campus to current students, and for the family environment created by the current students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

In addition to being active in APhA-ASP, Nazir is also serving as a 2018-19 Associated Students of WSU Spokane senator and serves as a CPPS student ambassador. After graduation, he is interested in working as a pharmacist in a long-term care facility, with a focus on geriatrics.

“I find it extremely rewarding spending time with the elderly and learning from their experiences in life, while providing them the necessary medical care they deserve,” Nazir said. “I could see myself working in the VA or IHS system. Both of these organizations allow pharmacists to work closely with other providers and provide treatment to patients.”

## Graduate student recognized as WSU Woman of Distinction

SPOKANE, Wash. — Yadira Xitlalli Pérez-Páramo, a graduate student in the Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Program at Washington State University (WSU) in Spokane, was selected for the 2019 Graduate Student Woman of Distinction award. She received the award at a ceremony in Pullman on March 4, 2019, along with five other women recognized by the university.

The WSU Women of Distinction and Woman of the Year Awards are presented annually during National Women’s History Month to recognize the achievements and contributions of women to the academic and local community, and to our society.

Pérez-Páramo is a Fulbright Scholar who came to WSU from the Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo Leon in Monterrey, Mexico, where she completed her master’s degree in molecular biology and genetic engineering. This is not the first time Pérez-Páramo has been recognized for her work, within the past year she has received recognition from several international research organizations for excellence in collaborative research and scholarship.

She works in the research lab of Philip Lazarus, and together they are studying how genetics effect the body’s reactions to and removal of nicotine, the addictive agent in tobacco products, and tobacco carcinogens, and if these genetic factors can be used as markers of tobacco addiction or cancer risk. If her research is successful, Pérez-Páramo could be able to determine how likely a smoker will develop nicotine addiction or cancer based on his or her own DNA.

In addition to her studies in pharmaceutical sciences, Pérez-Páramo is active in her local community and the scientific community. She serves as the programs director for the WSU chapter of the Association for Women in Science (AWIS), which was recognized for its activity in STEM advocacy this past year. She also serves as a mentor for the NY Academy of Sciences program, “1000 Girls, 1000 Dreams,” that helps to empower high school girls that are interested in STEM from undeserved areas in Mexico.



**#COUGSGIVE  
APRIL 10**

Help share the message of philanthropy at WSU  
Become a Cougar Ambassador!

## FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP

### Publications

- Pharmacotherapy Professor and Associate Dean of External Professional and Continuing Education Danial E. Baker published, “Sufentanil citrate sublingual tablets (Dsuvia),” in Wolters Kluwer Health’s The Formulary Monograph Service (FMS) in March 2019. Wolters Kluwer Health is a drug and health information publisher, the FMS is a resource used in the formulary decision making process for hospitals and managed care systems on recently released and investigational drugs.
- Daniel Baker and Pharmacotherapy Research Associate Jesse Dinh published, “Drug evaluation – glasdegib (Daurismo),” in the FMS in March 2019.
- Daniel Baker and Pharmacotherapy Clinical Professor Terri L. Levien published, “Drug evaluation – revefenacin (Yupelri),” in the FMS in March 2019.
- Daniel Baker published, “Drug evaluation – dacomitinib (Vizimpro),” in the FMS in March 2019.
- Daniel Baker published, “Drug evaluation – rifamycin (Aemcolo),” in the FMS in March 2019.
- Daniel Baker published, “Drug utilization evaluation – revefenacin (Yupelri),” in the FMS in March 2019.
- Pharmacotherapy Instructor Kyle Frazier, Pharmacotherapy Clinical Assistant Professor Kimberly McKeirnan and Pharmacotherapy Clinical Assistant Professor Lisa Woodard with one co-author published, “Rural patient perceptions of pharmacist-provided chronic condition management in a state with provider status,” in the peer-reviewed Journal of the American Pharmacists Association in March 2019. [Read article »](#)

### Presentations

- Allen I. White Distinguished Professor Joshua Neumiller delivered the opening seminar, “Update in treatment strategy in Type 2 Diabetes: ADA/EASD algorithm,” at the American Diabetes Association’s 66th Advanced Postgraduate Course (ADA) on February 22, 2019, in New York, New York.
- Josh Neumiller with two others presented, “Panel discussion on new medications: Which to use and when?” at ADA on February 24, 2019.
- Josh Neumiller presented the live webinar, “Update on recommendations for use of glucose-lowering agents in Type 2 Diabetes,” for Power-Pak on February 27, 2019.
- Danial Baker and Jesse Dinh with two others presented the informative review, “Systematic process in responding to drug information requests: panel discussion,” for the Gulf Medical University College of Pharmacy in Ajman, United Arab Emirates via video conference on March 13, 2019.
- Josh Neumiller with one other presented, “Insulin bootcamp: dosing, monitoring, titrating, and care coordination,” at the 2019 Annual Meeting of the American Pharmacists Association (APhA) on March 23, 2019, in Seattle, Wash.

### Service

- Pharmacotherapy Clinical Assistant Professor Julie Akers and three others served on the panel, “Law-med panel: religious issues in healthcare,” at the Gonzaga University School of Law on February 25, 2019.
- Pharmacotherapy Academic Fellow Nicole Perea contributed to the article, “Nicole Perea: As Washington state moves to address the opioid crisis, prescribers must lead locally,” published in the Spokesman Review on February 28, 2019. [Read article »](#)

- Josh Neumiller was elected to serve a two-year term on the National Rho Chi Society Executive Council as the region VII counselor.
- Pharmacotherapy Clinical Assistant Professor Cheyenne Newsome was cited in the article, “A transformative process for pharmacy and patients: transgender and gender-nonconforming patient care,” in Pharmacy Practice News on February 6, 2019. [Read article »](#)

## Awards

- Kimberly McKeirnan received the APhA Academy of Pharmacy Practice and Management 2019 Distinguished Achievement Award in Pharmacy Practice at the APhA annual meeting March 22-25, 2019, in Seattle, Wash. [Read more »](#)
- Kimberly McKeirnan received an APhA 2019 Immunization Champion Award at the APhA annual meeting on March 24, 2019, in Seattle, Wash.

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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

- Yadira Perez-Paramo (pharmaceutical sciences, Lazarus lab) received the 2019 Washington State University Graduate Student Woman of Distinction award at the WSU Women of Distinction and Woman of the Year Awards on March 4, 2019, in Pullman, Wash. [Read more »](#)

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

- Sorosh Kherghehpoush with faculty co-authors Kyle Frazier, Kimberly McKeirnan and Lisa Woodard published, “Rural patient perceptions of pharmacist-provided chronic condition management in a state with provider status,” in the Journal of the American Pharmacists Association in March 2019. [Read article »](#)
- Ryan Leman and Rachel Lindgren with faculty Danial Baker and Jesse Dinh presented the informative review, “Systematic process in responding to drug information requests: panel discussion,” for the Gulf Medical University College of Pharmacy in Ajman, United Arab Emirates via video conference on March 13, 2019.



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