MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Happy summer! We at the college welcomed the summer solstice (June 21) with a two-day all-college retreat. There is a reason that the first day of the retreat felt so long—it was indeed the longest day of the year! A bunch of us went bowling after our first retreat day and I was highly impressed with the bowling prowess of our faculty and staff. On the other hand, I won the award for the “most dangerous bowler” mainly because I rolled a ball while the pin setter was still down. The retreat was truly a great opportunity to reconnect with our faculty from all over the state and reflect as we prepare for the next academic year and our reaccreditation site visit in October.
During the retreat, we made a deep dive into our curriculum, mapping out some of the benefits and drawbacks of certain approaches. There was lively discussion among faculty and staff. While we respectfully debated the various facets of our academic offering, what heartened me the most was that our students were front and center of our discussions. Faculty and staff thoughtfully discussed ways to help our students thrive, absorb material, and grow in the profession. Our passion to help students succeed is what unites us and I’m very grateful for all the attention that our college puts into creating a quality learning experience for our students.

We also held our first alum event at Cougar Crest winery outside Walla Walla, hosted by owners Debbie (’79) and Dave Hansen, who graduated from the WSU College of Veterinary Medicine in 1977. I was fortunate to reconnect with Art Griff (class of 1951 and a 50-year donor to the college) and Liz Baird (’63). Art owned Tallman's Drugs in Walla Walla for decades and gave me my first intern job in the summer of 1981. I worked with Liz for a couple of years at St. Mary Medical Center, also in Walla Walla. It was great visiting with Cougar pharmacists in the region, particularly those who helped me gain my first experiences in the profession. I am always so amazed by the generosity of our alums to help future generations of Cougar pharmacists succeed. Whether they are contributing time, knowledge, or financial resources, our alums are always the first to ask, “How can I help?” Debbie, Art, and Liz are great examples of that.

I hope you all are enjoying some rest and recuperation in July. The summer months allow us time to plan for the next academic year, but it is also the start of our new recruitment cycle for the class of 2026. If you know of a promising student, don’t forget to remind them that we have an awesome PharmD program with some stellar faculty and alums. Applications open on July 14!

Until next month, I hope you all enjoy your summer.

Sincerely,

Mark Leid

Mark Leid, Professor and Dean
WSU College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
First-year student pharmacist Amanda Whitehead, age 33, is one of five students in the inaugural class in the rural health track. The track is part of the college’s Rural Health Initiative to recruit, educate, and embed pharmacists in rural communities across Washington state.

As someone who has always lived and worked in rural areas throughout my life, I am truly passionate about bringing much needed health care resources to underserved populations. Living in a close-knit, small town has always been a great comfort to me and I want to support the people in my community in my future pharmacy career in a rural area.

I grew up in Eatonville, a small rural town that is about a 90-minute drive south of SeaTac Airport. The population of Eatonville is roughly 3,000 people and from 2009 to 2012, I served as a volunteer firefighter and EMT (emergency medical technician) in South Pierce Fire and Rescue. I was given the opportunity to experience first-hand how lack of access to health care resources can negatively impact people’s lives. As an EMT serving residents in my district, I found great joy and fulfillment knowing that I was providing people with the care and education they needed to live healthier lives.

Part of my duties as an EMT included visiting people’s homes in the middle of nowhere to offer medical care. This could be a trailer in the middle of the woods where the closest medical facility is a 45-minute to 1.5-hour drive. Cell service and internet is non-existent in many places. People living with diabetes, heart disease, or other chronic conditions face major challenges in seeking the care that they need.
I became interested in pharmacy while volunteering as a firefighter and EMT. As the lead medications aide at a local assisted-living community, I worked closely with geriatric patients and learned a great deal about medications and disease states that affect our elderly population. A few years later I earned a position at our local hospital as an emergency room technician where I provided medical care, compassion, and health education to my patients. This included conscious sedation, helping stroke patients, and much more. During this time, I found my love for how medications can save lives and positively change patients’ health. I truly admired the pharmacists that I was given the privilege to work beside daily and was inspired to pursue a career as a pharmacist.

Amanda Whitehead with her two daughters Ava and Brooke. Her husband, a diesel mechanic, supports the family while Amanda pursues her Doctor of Pharmacy degree. She is currently finishing her first year in a the four-year program.

I plan to pursue a career in a rural setting and continue to explore and learn about all the possible pathways in pharmacy. My interests are in tribal and veterans’ health. It seems that veterans and tribal members in rural areas have limited access to health care and I would love to help make a change that will serve these populations better in the future.

My goal is to bring more health resources to people in rural communities and to improve their quality of life. I grew up in a family of first responders. My father, grandfather, and uncle were all firefighters so in a way it is part of my DNA and culture. Thanks to their influence, I thrive under pressure, and have performed well with emergency medicine. I could never imagine working or living anywhere other than in a rural community. Though there may be physical distance between residents in rural areas, we are a close-knit community offering support to one another in times of need. We don’t have all the resources available to us, so it feels natural to rely on neighbors.

Going through pharmacy school with two young daughters (ages 3 and 5) is definitely challenging but I make sure to try my best to only do school work when they are asleep or at daycare three days out of the week. This sometimes means that I miss out on sleep but it’s worth it to me so that I can make sure my girls get the attention they deserve. My husband is the sole provider for our family and works hard as a diesel mechanic to provide for us. I moved away from all of my friends and family in western Washington about four years ago while I was 20 weeks pregnant with my youngest daughter but my parents have been extremely supportive and have gone to great lengths to come stay with me and help with my
daughters whenever they can. I also have a network of amazing neighbors who help me out whenever they can—part of the perks of living in a rural area. By becoming a pharmacist in a rural area I hope to be a role model for my daughters and give them the opportunity to grow up in the same environment I had the privilege of growing up in.
PHARMACY STUDENTS’ LAW A GAME CHANGER FOR PATIENT CARE

JULY 12, 2022 CONNIE YOUNG

Brandy Seignemartin (’20) had just completed her third year of pharmacy school when a bill she worked on with fellow WSU Health Sciences students and faculty was officially signed into law by Gov. Jay Inslee. It was May 7, 2019, and the perfect exclamation point to end the school year. Less than one year later the world would go into lock down as COVID-19 quickly spread from country to country and the law that she helped to set in motion would have a significant impact on the health of Washingtonians across the state and COVID-19 testing and vaccinations for years to come.

“It is awesome that this law change had such a beneficial impact during the pandemic. When we were considering the many opportunities that allowing interdisciplinary precepting would foster, we considered opportunities to serve rural and underserved communities as a top priority. We of course did not predict that the COVID-19 pandemic was right around the corner, but keeping with the university’s land grant mission our goal of changing the law was to increase the ability of our health science students to serve our communities,” said Seignemartin who currently serves as the Executive Director of the Alaska Pharmacists Association and as a clinical assistant professor at the University of Alaska Anchorage/Idaho State University doctor of pharmacy program.

The legislation allowed students studying to become pharmacists, nurses, and physicians to be precepted by professionals across these disciplines. Before the law was enacted, a student pharmacist could only be precepted by a pharmacist if they want to administer vaccines or point of care tests, like those used during the COVID-19 pandemic. Now a student pharmacist can be precepted by a physician, nurse or a pharmacist in order to take part in these point of care activities. In addition, student physicians and nurses can be precepted by a pharmacist when the activity is within their scope of practice.

“Before we even had a vaccine for COVID-19 or understood anything about the novel coronavirus, our students were on the frontline at mass testing sites, helping to administer nasopharyngeal swabs. This was partly possible because a licensed nursing, medicine, or pharmacy faculty member could help to oversee our students,” said Associate Dean of External Relations Julie Akers who mentored Seignemartin and helped to push the legislation through. “At the time, I don’t think we realized the impact this legislation would have on the profession.”
Seignemartin and Akers recently published a manuscript detailing the impact of this legislation. In the report, they outline the deeper understanding and knowledge preceptors and students across disciplines gained from collaborating during one of the drive-through COVID-19 test sites in Pullman, Washington in September 2020. They surveyed students and preceptors following the experience and learned that medicine and nursing preceptors expanded their understanding of a pharmacist's scope of practice. Students also benefited from the experience with increased confidence in their ability to perform COVID-19 testing and work with providers from different health disciplines.

The significance of this law has played out across Washington state but could have implications nationally as pharmacies have become the center of COVID-19 vaccination efforts. These learning opportunities could help to enhance access to care for communities such as immunizations, health assessments, HIV and Hepatitis C screening, as well as chronic disease management.

“The pandemic has really shined a light on the many services that pharmacists in all practice settings can provide for patients. I anticipate that pharmacists’ roles will continue to grow and change, reimbursement for non-dispensing patient care services will create sustainability for every health care team that includes a pharmacist,” said Seignemartin.
Approximately one in five adults in the United States live with a mental illness and a survey published by the CDC found that 16.5% of American adults have taken prescription medication for their mental health. As the medication experts of the health care team, pharmacists are uniquely positioned to have an impact in mental health.

In the final Career Seminar presentation of the 2021-22 academic year, College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences doctor of pharmacy alums Glen Chase ('15) and Aubrie Duke ('16) from Comprehensive Healthcare in Yakima, Washington talked to WSU doctor of pharmacy students about pharmacy roles in psychiatric care.

Chase and Duke are both prescribing pharmacists with a collaborative practice agreement which allows them to perform psychiatric evaluations, initiate and modify medications as appropriate, and order any necessary lab work.

“I think the most rewarding part is that we get to personally make decisions that improve our patients’ lives,” said Chase.

Chase provides psychiatric care for the Yakima County Department of Corrections and provides intensive care to those with severe mental illnesses (including schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, and bipolar disorder) for the Program for Assertive Community Treatment (PACT)—a high intensity team comprised of providers from several disciplines working together to care for patients.

Through PACT, Chase sees between five to ten patients per day in 30-minute to one-hour appointments. PACT appointments often entail the provider traveling to see
the patient in the community for those who have difficulty coming in for appointments.

Chase explained that by seeing them where they live, “You can really see a very, very clear reflection of their mental illness and how their stability is doing, based on the environment they’re in and how that interplay occurs.”

Duke is a medication provider who manages patients with mental health and substance use disorders in both outpatient and inpatient settings. In the outpatient setting, Duke explained that the goal is helping patients manage symptoms in the long term. Duke has a caseload of 315 outpatients who she sees at regular intervals usually anywhere from every month to three months. In a typical day, Duke sees up to 16 patients during 30-minute appointments where they review any medication, lifestyle, or behavior changes discussed during previous visits.

“This is my favorite part of my job. I get to work one on one with my patients. They’ll bring in a problem, we work on the solution to that problem together, and then they get to go implement that solution,” explained Duke. “Then they come back, and they tell me if it worked, and if it didn’t, we problem solve again.”

Duke works in an inpatient setting approximately once a month, where she will see eight patients in a day. Often these patients are acutely psychotic manic or suicidal and are detained to the unit until they are stabilized and ready to return home.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit and restrictions on in-person appointments were put in place Chase and Duke found themselves forced to alter how they interacted with their patients.

Duke’s appointments moved largely to video and phone where she learned to ask different kinds of questions to make up for the inability to pick up on the same visual cues as during face-to-face appointments. “It’s really tough to tell somebody’s mood over the phone,” said Duke.

Due to the nature of PACT, as long as they could do so safely, providers such as Chase continued to see patients in person, often outside with appropriate PPE.

“You can’t count on someone who’s a poor historian to appropriately report symptoms over the phone,” explained Chase. “You have to be able to lay eyes on them. I have patients that most of my medication decisions actually has to do with what I see, not what they’re telling.”

Both Chase and Duke also said they saw heightened anxiety and depression among their patients during the pandemic.
“When you don’t challenge anxiety in a particular area, it can get bigger and after a while, where going to the store used to be really anxiety provoking now just going out of the house is anxiety provoking,” explained Chase.

For current pharmacy student interested in pursuing psychiatric pharmacy, Chase said it takes ambition and a willingness to take professional risks by demonstrating the value of pharmacists. He also recommended doing a psychiatric rotation as a great way to start getting a specialty certification. Chase explained that for other providers the specialty certification can serve as a common language showing standardized extra training.

The presentation was part of the Preparing for Change Career Seminar Series, which the college coordinates to introduce student pharmacists to career opportunities and leaders in the pharmacy profession.

The seminars are funded through the WSU CPPS Dean’s Fund for Excellence and our community partner, the Spokane Teachers Credit Union. For information on participating in the Career Seminar Series, or to contribute to the Dean’s Fund for Excellence, contact the CPPS advancement office at gocoug@pharmacy.wsu.edu or 509-358-7651.
A NOTE FROM JULIE AKERS

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Congratulations to those of you who completed a residency or fellowship on June 30. While I am certain the past year has been a challenging one, those very challenges have provided you with a robust experience that will guide your career. To those who just started this journey in the past week, know that you will find in yourself determination and grit at a level you didn’t know you had. Appreciate every opportunity provided and know that your Coug pharmily is here to support you.

Phoenix in the summer isn’t where I would normally be excited to travel, but the ASHP Annual Meeting in June was exceptional. ASHP, while mainly health systems focused, has a fairly new section of community pharmacy practitioners in addition to their established ambulatory care group. It was inspiring to see the level of communication and collaboration in meeting sessions, with both inpatient and outpatient/community pharmacists focused on how to achieve the best patient outcomes. The conference also provided a great opportunity to network with alums such as Director of Market Access at Amplity Health Steve Riddle (’84), Assistant Professor at University of Arizona Mandana Naderi (’16), fourth-year student Diana Kang, and our dean, Mark Leid (’83). While in Phoenix, Dean Leid and I were fortunate to tour a Walgreens micro-fulfillment.
center and a store location in Gilbert, Arizona which includes a VillageMD provider clinic. Thank you to my friend and colleague Lorri Walmsley, director of pharmacy affairs for Walgreens, and to the teams at both locations who made the tour happen. We came away with a much better understanding of the importance of supply chain management in health care as well as seeing an innovative example of how interprofessional collaboration under one roof can transform patient access to care.

June wrapped up with a CougaRx Nation event in Walla Walla. Thank you to Debbie ('79) and Dave Hansen, who graduated from the WSU College of Veterinary Medicine in 1977, for hosting at Cougar Crest Winery. Debbie joked that she put in a request for good weather after all the rain we had in May and June, and it worked! The venue couldn’t have been more beautiful! The Coug pharmily showed up and had a great time reconnecting and enjoying, literally, the fruit of the Hansen’s labor!

Senior Director of Alumni Relations Kelly Sylvester and I visited with alums Jessica Zering ('16) and Elizabeth Jensen ('02) at Astria Sunnyside Hospital before returning home from central Washington. It amazes me to see the work done at small, rural critical access hospitals and rural clinics. They truly must know how to do more with less, to innovate, and to adapt. I am even more convinced the Rural Health Initiative is exactly what the WSU pharmacy program needs to advance access to clinical services in underserved communities.

I wish all of you a lovely July filled with sunshine, family, and friends.

With my best and, as always, Go Cougs!

Julie Akers, Associate Dean of External Relations
WSU College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Spotlight on Success

Join us October 7-8, 2022 for Pharmacy Reunion Weekend!
All Coug pharmacists, family and friends are invited as we come together to celebrate everything it means to be part of the Cougar pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences family.
Learn more or register »

Remember to send in your Wave the Flag photos
Send in photos of yourself and your loved ones as you “Wave the Flag for Pharmacy!” for the chance to win a can of Cougar Gold cheese and bottle of Dedication Red wine* from Cougar Crest Winery.
See photos & full rules »

Do you love the doctor of pharmacy program as much as we do?
Share the love and help us grow our CougaRx Nation by referring a friend, colleague, student or family member.
Refer a Future PharmD »

PHILANTHROPY FOCUS
A memorial scholarship is being established at the college in honor of John Antich, class of 1974, who passed away on July 4 after a 10 year battle with cancer. He was 70 years old and is survived by his wife Betzi and daughter, Katie. John was the owner of the Medicine Shoppe in Spokane Valley, mentored numerous WSU pharmacy students for decades, and was a leader in the Spokane Pharmacy Association. The memorial scholarship is being established by his family, as well as his good friend Rich McKinney, a Carson College of Business alumnus from the class of 1973.

Read John’s obituary and learn about the scholarship
Alum Updates

Congratulations to Steve Riddle, PharmD, MS, BCPS, FASHP, FWSPA (’84), for his new role as Director of Market Access at Amplity Health.

We recently held our first CougaRx Nation events in Walla Walla, Washington and Boise, Idaho giving us the chance to catch up with some alums in those communities. You can make sure you’re invited to events near you by updating your contact information.

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

IN MEMORIAM

Timothy Yale (’69) passed away in June. He was a classmate and friend of Bill Gaskins and attended their Golden Grads reunion in 2019. He spent the last few years of his career as a clinical pharmacist at Catholic Healthcare West in Sacramento, California.
FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP

PUBLICATIONS

United States Transuranium and Uranium Registries (USTUR) Director and Professor Sergei Tolmachev and two co-authors published “Quadrupole and multi-collector ICP-MS analysis of 226Ra in brain from a radium dial painter,” in the Journal of Analytical Atomic Spectrometry.

Pharmaceutical sciences and molecular medicine students Deepak Ahire (Prasad lab), Laken Kruger (Prasad lab), and Sheena Sharma (Prasad lab), with faculty co-authors Pharmaceutical Sciences Research Associate Vijaya Saradhi Mettu (Prasad lab) and Pharmaceutical Sciences Associate Professor Bhagwat Prasad and one co-author published, “Quantitative Proteomics in translational absorption, distribution, metabolism, and excretion and precision medicine,” in Pharmacological Reviews in July 2022.

Laken Kruger, with faculty co-authors Pharmaceutical Sciences Associate in Research Guihua Yue (associate in research, Prasad lab), Vijaya Saradhi Mettu, Bhagwat Prasad, and two co-authors published, “Differential proteomics analysis of JEG-3 and JAR placental cell models and the effect of androgen treatment,” in the June 2022 issue of The Journal of Steroid Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, a peer-reviewed scientific journal covering all aspects of steroid metabolism.


SERVICE

Bhagwat Prasad has been named senior editor of the journal Pharmacology Research & Perspectives, serving a three-year term. The bimonthly, open-access journal is jointly published by the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET), the British Pharmacological Society (BPS), and publishing company Wiley.

GRANTS & AWARDS
Bhagwat Prasad has been awarded a $150K contract with Takeda Millennium, a pharmaceutical company focused on the discovery and development of medications for cancer treatment. The funding supports a project that is part of the Proteomics-based Research Initiative for Non-CYP Enzymes (PRINCE), a research collaboration between Washington State University and pharmaceutical companies Genentech, Gilead, and Takeda. The project is aimed at improving the predictability of drug metabolism and drug interaction of new candidate drugs. Non-cytochrome P450 (non-CYP) enzymes play an important role in the metabolism of many drugs. When drug metabolism findings in non-CYP enzymes cannot be reliably extrapolated from an in vitro environment (i.e., test tube or petri dish) to in vivo (a living organism), this results in unpredictable pharmacokinetics and safety of drugs. To address these challenges, Prasad and his team will test a novel in vitro to in vivo extrapolation approach in both an in vitro system and human tissues.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES AND MOLECULAR MEDICINE STUDENTS

Deepak Ahire (Prasad lab), Laken Kruger (Prasad lab), and Sheena Sharma (Prasad lab), with faculty co-authors Pharmaceutical Sciences Research Associate Vijaya Saradhi Mettu (Prasad lab) and Pharmaceutical Sciences Associate Professor Bhagwat Prasad and one co-author published, "Quantitative Proteomics in translational absorption, distribution, metabolism, and excretion and precision medicine," in Pharmacological Reviews in July 2022.

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Other News

**Future Type 2 Diabetes Drugs: Exciting and a Little Scary**
Pharmacotherapy Vice Chair & Allen I. White Distinguished Professor Joshua Neumiller joined the Medscape InDiscussion Type 2 Diabetes Podcast to share promising future treatment options for type 2 diabetes.
Listen to the Medscape InDiscussion Type 2 Diabetes Podcast

**Gleason Institute awards neurodegenerative disease grants**
Pharmaceutical Sciences Assistant Professor Travis Denton’s research team was among four teams to receive more than $160,000 in seed grant funding from the WSU Spokane Steve Gleason Institute for Neuroscience.
Read more from the WSU Insider

**New discovery could pave the way for more effective cancer immunotherapy**
Recent research out of the lab of Pharmaceutical Sciences Assistant Professor Hui Zhang suggests a type of white blood cell previously known only as a helper in the immune system may also be the instigator of the body’s defenses against cancerous tumors. The discovery could lead to more effective cancer immunotherapy, a promising treatment which uses the body’s own immune system, rather than radiation, to attack cancer cells.
Read more from The Medical News