

# PharmDigest

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## Champions of Healthcare

The Champions of Healthcare Awards Dinner was held on October 23, 2015 at the Infinite Energy Arena. Faculty and students were recognized for their outstanding achievements in teaching, research, and merit.



Congratulations Hannah Southerland (Class of 2019) for receiving the GA-PCOM Student Award Fund.

## Career Day

Career day was held on October 27, 2015. Pharmacy students interviewed with representatives and learned more about opportunities after pharmacy school.



Stephanie Theard (Class of 2016) speaking with representatives from Georgia Public Health Department.

## Journey to Pharmacy

Dr. Dusty Lisi, M.S., Pharm.D.

Assistant Professor of Pharmacy Practice

When asked to write an article about my path to becoming a pharmacist, I began to think about all of the events that have formed me into the clinician that I am today. I was born and raised in a small coal-mining town in Southwestern Virginia. From a very young age, I was enamored with math and science. Math provided the foundation of predictability, while science facilitated insight into creation, development, and evolution. I knew early in my life that I wanted to be involved in healthcare or the research to advance the treatment provided to patients. After graduating from high school, I completed my Bachelor's degree in Biology at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Virginia. I then completed a Master's degree in Human Genetics at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York to facilitate my training and insight in the areas of patient care and research.



Upon graduation, I worked as a Prenatal Genetic Counselor. I frequently met with women who had an exposure or had taken one or more medications during pregnancy that posed the threat of causing congenital abnormalities. During my research and evaluation of an herbal product exposure for one of my patients, I worked with a community pharmacist. He was able to gather detailed information on the product's active ingredients

## Open House

On December 11, 2015, PCOM held an open house for the pharmacy and physicians assistant programs. Student pharmacists informed prospective students about the organizations that are available and their benefits.



Erish Malonzo, Chelsea Davis, and Kineta Naidu (Class of 2018) at open house.

## Step Out and Walk

APhA-ASP members from Operation Diabetes fundraised for the diabetes walk hosted by the American Diabetes Association. They raised over \$1,000, which ranked their team 3rd in the Top Fundraisers for Clubs/Organization Teams.



## ASHP Midyear

Student pharmacists participated in ASHP's Midyear Clinical Meeting from December 6-10, 2015 in New Orleans, LA. Students presented posters, talked to residency representatives at the showcase, and visited the exposition.



Dean Okamoto and PCOM students at dinner during ASHP Midyear.

## Journey to Pharmacy (continued)

and assist in determining the potential risk associated with the exposure. From that moment, I knew that I wanted to be a pharmacist.

I then completed my Doctorate of Pharmacy degree at Mercer University College of Pharmacy. Whether it was working with the patients in the community, drug information in pharmaceutical industry, medication therapy management in ambulatory care, or order entry and dispensing in the hospital, with each area of pharmacy, I found a new love, a new opportunity.

I decided that I wanted to begin my career as a pharmacist working clinically alongside physicians and medical staff. This led me to completing a pharmacy practice residency at Grady Health System and working as a clinical pharmacist in cardiology and anticoagulation at Wellstar Health System. During the process of providing continuing education training to the pharmacy staff and various inservices for the hospital personnel, I was inspired to pursue a career in academia. I not only wanted to impact my patients as a pharmacist, I wanted to make a difference in the field of pharmacy by sharing the information that I had learned to help prepare other eager students striving to become a pharmacist. The most essential piece of advice that I could give to anyone pursuing a career in pharmacy is that you have to make the patients welfare and suffering your primary concerns.



Pharmacists have the opportunity to see their patients on a regular basis while they are obtaining refills or just visiting the pharmacy, store, or hospital where we are working. We need to be deliberate to extend compassion to them as we do not know what difficulty they may be experiencing physically or personally. I have learned that when you take the time to reach out and form lasting relationships you are able to provide support and healing far beyond the medication alone.

# Live Your Why

George Adams

Class of 2017, APhA-ASP Policy Vice-President

Being a third year student, and missing the opportunity to attend the APhA Midyear Regional Meeting (MRM) the previous year, I was determined to attend this year. Being the chapter's Policy Vice-President and chapter representative, I was excited to bring to Nashville the shared value and perspectives of our school. We arrived on Friday night at the Sheraton Music City for the opening kickoff session and the Friday night social which the theme was a western county fair.



George speaking on behalf of PCOM's chapter in the proposal forum.

At the opening session, we learned about the APhA theme "Live Your Why" and why it is important for each pharmacist to find their "why." Saturday was a whirlwind of a day filled with leadership training seminars, informative sessions with APhA platforms such as Generation Rx, induction of regional officers and the APhA proposal forum.

The proposal forum is one of the main reasons I was there, and it is the most interesting. You get a front row seat of the challenges that other pharmacy students are facing in your region and the ideas that each school in is creating to improve the pharmacy profession as a whole. Topics ranged from safety for females from handling teratogenic medications, to pharmacy schools having veterinary medicine added to their curriculum. There was even a resolution about proper robbery procedures and ways to keep patients and the



Student pharmacists at the welcoming social.

*Live Your Why (continued on page 4)*

## Happy Holidays!

In spirit of the holiday season, a raffle was held. Students either searched the campus to take a selfie with the secret snowman or made a bookstore purchase. JT Rust (Class of 2018) won a PCOM blanket.



Laurice Mata (Class of 2019) taking a selfie with the secret snowman.  
\*Photo credit: Laurice Mata

The 10th Annual Holiday Luncheon was held on December 4, 2015. Student pharmacists felt the holiday spirit while enjoying the musical stylings of their peers.



Galandou Ikpeme and Tenicia Johnson (Class of 2017) singing a duet.

Students had some festive fun on December 10, 2015 as they painted ornaments and decorated gingerbread houses.



Jenny Chen (Class of 2019) painting an ornament just in time for the holidays.

## Congrats PCOM!

GA-PCOM celebrated receiving the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) award on December 14, 2015.



Kineta Naidu (Class of 2018) congratulated PCOM on receiving the HEED award.

## Rho Chi Academic Honors Society

Rho Chi welcomes 18 new members on December 16, 2015 at the 1818 Club in Duluth. New officers for the upcoming year were also installed for the Epsilon Delta chapter.



Rho Chi members and Dean Okamoto at the initiation ceremony.

## Blood Drive

Kappa Psi and Sigma Sigma Phi held a blood drive for the American Red Cross on January 8, 2016. They exceeded their goal of 20 pints of blood.



Students donating blood.

## Live Your Why (continued)

pharmacy safe. All resolutions submitted to the region are discussed and critiqued using Robert's rules of order and held in a meeting forum (Think of it as our own APhA congress). Chapters can change or revise their recommended resolutions before the big vote on Sunday.

Another big topic of MRM is advocacy and how can you become involved in advancing the profession of pharmacy. Ways attendees could get involved it by either via the Political Action Committee (PAC) and/or locally through involving your chapters to become familiar with their state representatives. Wrapping up on Sunday, was the election of our regional officers and the regional closing forum where each chapter has a representative vote on the resolutions submitted by each chapter. If approved, the resolution will be voted on again at annual on whether or not it will be supported by APhA.



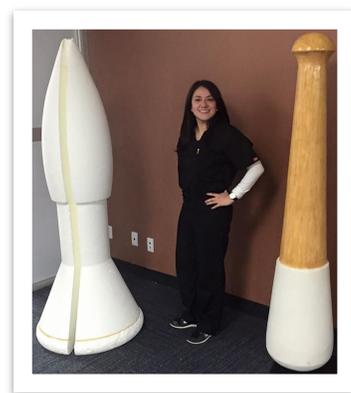
GA-PCOM chapter of APhA-ASP with Brian Donahue, PharmD at MRM.

What I have gained from this experience is that MRM affords students the ability to join other like-minded students in the ultimate goal of protecting our profession and to continue to strive for the advancement in the career of pharmacy. I was honored to be a part of it this year and have already made plans to attend next year.

## The Daily Dose: Compounding

Angie Amado  
Class of 2018, NCPA Treasurer

Professional Compounding Centers of America (PCCA) was established over three decades ago when an over-the-counter medication was no longer commercially available and the treating physician presented the dilemma to a practicing pharmacist. With the help of a



Angie getting ready to compound.

***Daily Dose: Compounding (continued on page 5)***

### Daily Dose: Compounding (continued from page 5)

network of pharmacists, the prescription was successfully compounded. Realizing the demand for compounded medications, PCCA was found in 1981 in attempt to meet the rise in patient needs for specialty medications. Serving as a resource for today's independent compounding pharmacy, PCCA not only provides equipment, chemicals, and consulting services for their members but also provides ACPE-accredited training and education. Alongside providing these services for their members, they also offer an Introductory Compounding Boot Camp (ICBC) for all students currently enrolled in pharmacy school.

The ICBC spans two full days, consisting of both lecture and lab work. During the lab, students complete eleven dosage forms utilizing basic tools and skills in contemporary compounding. Led by licensed pharmacists, students are introduced to the world of compounding, the many possible outcomes in meeting a variety of patient needs, and the vast possibilities available when entering the compounding field as an independent pharmacy owner.

Initially I attended the ICBC to further develop the necessary skills needed for the wet lab component on the state board exam. I quickly learned that I would receive much more while attending PCCA.

Their mission was clear from the minute we were welcomed: to educate students in a field of pharmacy that they are passionate about. Not only did they provide us with vast knowledge in compounding but also exposed us to many possible career fields within pharmacy such as ownership, drug information, and possible internships in academia. They eagerly answered any question we had and

### Daily Dose: Compounding (continued on page 6)



Angie practicing the compounding techniques she learned.



Compounded gels, suspensions, and lollipops.

### Global Health Outreach

The PCOM colony of Kappa Psi received the Philanthropic award. They were recognized for raising and donating the most OTC supplies to the Global Health Outreach's mission trips amongst all of the chapters in the Atlantic Region.



Kappa Psi members holding the Philanthropic award they received.

\*Photo Credit: Nicholas Tomlinson

### McKesson Tour

Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy (AMCP) went on a tour of the McKesson distribution center on February 3, 2016 in Duluth, GA. Students learned about what goes on in a distribution center and the opportunities for pharmacists.



Curtis Sell and student pharmacists at the McKesson Corporation.

### Nepal Coat Drive

NCPA, APhA-ASP, Kappa Psi, IMC, ACOFP, AMSA, and PLAY clubs held a coat drive for the victims of the earthquake that took place last year in Nepal. They collected, packed and shipped 5 boxes of clothes.



Students packed boxes to send to Nepal.

\*Photo Credit: Angie Amado

## Bowling League

Team Pharm took first place in GA-PCOM's winter bowling league season hosted by Phi Chi on February 2, 2016.



Lance Semien, Colleen Heer, Nick Hernandez (Class of 2019), and Dr. Eric Wang taking a break to pose for the camera.

## Counsel On!

APhA-ASP held their annual National Patient Counseling Competition on January 29, 2016. The winner, Allyson Anglin (Class of 2016), competed in the national competition at APhA Annual in Baltimore, MD.



Nerea Irusta (Class of 2018) counseling April Lawson (Class of 2016) on her medications.

## Day at the Dome

On February 16, 2016, student pharmacists gathered at the Gold Dome for GPhA's annual Day at the Dome. They were able to spread the word to legislators about the issues that are important to pharmacists.



Celebrating VIP Day at the Capital.

## Daily Dose: Compounding (continued from page 5)

encouraged creativity, which I learned is essential in compounding!!! Obtaining that first-hand experience in the lab with additional dosage forms that were not covered in our curriculum helped me tremendously. This experience boosted my confidence in compounding and taught me more about an evolving aspect of pharmacy.

Healthcare in its entirety is a growing field that provides many of us with wonderful prospects in our future. However, if we do not give back to it, it will fizzle out eventually. It is great

to see companies, like PCCA, train future pharmacists and allow them to develop the necessary skills to continue the practice of compounding.

The *Daily Dose* is a recurring section in the PharmDigest featuring a pharmacy student's life while in school and highlighting one of their experiences.

Want to be featured?

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## Research Lab

Eva Karam

Class of 2017

One of the classes we were required to take in our first year of the pharmacy program at GA-PCOM was Pathophysiology. It was in this class that Dr. Rayalam introduced us to the concept of potential therapy targets for obesity treatment. I was immediately interested in learning more about this topic due to the current obesity epidemic and its impact on our health care system.

I joined Dr. Rayalam's lab in Fall 2014 and worked on a project studying the effect of the phytochemical resveratrol, a compound commonly found in the skin of grapes, on white adipose tissue. There are two types of adipose tissue: brown and white. Obesity is associated with the pathological expansion of white adipose tissue whereas brown adipose tissue is more metabolically active and involved in keeping us warm. Scientists are now interested in figuring out ways to possibly induce white adipose tissue

**Research Lab (continued on page 7)**

### **Research Lab (continued from page 6)**

to mimic brown adipose tissue, a phenomenon known as “browning”. Therefore, our lab was studying the effect of resveratrol on “browning”.

It is important to have an experimental model and in our lab we used a cell line that I maintained on a weekly basis. We induced adipogenesis that allowed the cells to differentiate into adipocytes. Next, we treated them with resveratrol and finally performed experiments such as Western Blot to see if important proteins found in brown adipose tissue were present in our treated cells. I was able to present this work at GA-PCOM’s student research day and I also was a co-author on an abstract that was accepted by the 2015 Experimental Biology Conference.

As a pharmacy student, you are primarily taught about the end product: the drug. Sometimes one can easily lose sight of the research and time it took for that drug to end up on our pharmacy shelves. Basic science research helps complete the picture and it has been a rewarding experience that has helped me appreciate my future profession.

## **Let’s Get Clinical**

Renzo Gonzales, Mirium Lulusa  
Class of 2016

ASHP-SSHP’s Clinical Skills Competition involved taking a patient case, prioritizing all medical problems, and developing the most effective pharmacotherapeutic plan to address all issues. It was very similar to case studies from class, but with some subtle differences. The patient was presented along with all the pertinent subjective and objective data. In addition, the differential diagnosis was also provided. We had to format our answers similar to

**Let’s Get Clinical (continued on page 8)**



Eva Karam (Class of 2017).

### **HIV Day**

APhA-ASP gave away goodies and information pertaining to HIV in observance of National Black HIV Day on February 17, 2016.



Ilbeth Charles (Class of 2018) educating students on HIV.

\*Photo credit: Hershika Patel

### **Flint Water Crisis**

AMCP held a Valentine’s fundraiser for the water crisis occurring in Flint, MI. They donated over 2,000 bottles of water.



Oliwier Nowak and Bernadett Boronea (Class of 2019) selling Valentine’s Day candy grams.

### **APhA in Baltimore**

APhA Annual Meeting and Exposition was held in Baltimore, MD from March 4 - 7, 2016. This year’s theme is “Together We Can.”



When not at the convention, Kevin Moy (Class of 2018) and Allyson Anglin (Class of 2017) explored Baltimore’s harbor.

\*Photo credit: Allyson Anglin

## Important Dates:

April 19 - 22, 2016

AMCP Annual Meeting  
San Francisco, CA

April 30, 2016

APhA-ASP: DEA Drug Take Back  
Snellville Police Department, GA

May 13, 2016

APhA-ASP: Relay For Life  
Gwinnett County Fairgrounds

May 13, 2016

Dinner with a Pharmacist

May 21 - 25, 2016

ISPOR Annual Meeting  
Washington D.C.

May 27, 2016

Commencement  
Infinite Energy Arena

May 30, 2016

Memorial Day Holiday

June 3 - 6, 2016

APhA Institute on Alcoholism and  
Drug Dependencies  
Salt Lake City, UT

June 4 - August 14, 2016

Summer Break

June 3 - 6, 2016

APhA-ASP Summer Leadership  
Institute  
Washington D.C.

June 3 - 6, 2016

Georgia Pharmacy Convention  
Hilton Head Island, SC

July 15 - 17, 2016

GSHP Annual Summer Meeting  
Amelia Island, FL

August 8 - 12, 2016

Orientation

August 15, 2016

Fall Semester Begins

## Let's Get Clinical (continued from page7)

what is done in a SOAP note, except we only had to focus on the assessment and plan. When making the assessment, the patient's problems were ranked in order of severity. Number one was the most urgent problem that



Renzo and Mirium (Class of 2016) at AHSP Midyear 2015.

needed to be immediately addressed, whereas number three was a problem(s) that could be handled later on an outpatient basis. The resources available during the competition were an iPad with Lexicomp and unrestricted internet access, and hardcopies of the Dipiro pharmacotherapy textbook and other tertiary resources.

We were given two hours to complete the assessment and plan. Even though the format was similar to a SOAP note, the emphasis was put on developing a thorough Plan, which included goals of therapy, pharmacotherapeutic recommendations, and thorough monitoring parameters. The worksheet we were given came formatted with specific rows and columns, so all we had to do was fill in the information. The only inconvenience about completing the worksheet was that it had to be handwritten.

Being able to represent PCOM at the national ASHP Clinical Skills Competition was a rewarding experience. It has also changed the way we now analyze patient cases. It is relatively simple to identify all the problems that need to be resolved when looking at a patient case, but it is important to prioritize the problems based on how urgently they need to be addressed. In addition, when making a plan and recommendation, it is important to develop an effective monitoring plan for safety and efficacy. Remember to keep these two things in mind when writing SOAP notes in case studies.



Student pharmacists taking the written portion of the Clinical Skills Competition at ASHP Midyear 2015.