



School of Pharmacy NEWS CAPSULE

Spring 2009 · Vol. 3, No. 1

A newsletter for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends · West Hall · Loma Linda, California · (909) 558-1300 · Website: pharmacy.llu.edu

From the Dean...

As you might suspect, our School of Pharmacy 'team' was delighted to get the news from the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education that the School is fully accredited through June 2013. Satisfying accreditation requirements is more than a 'knee jerk' reaction that occurs every six years—it's a commitment to CQI (continuous quality improvement). In decades past, the accreditation process for professional schools was akin to the life of a soldier—one filled with long periods of boredom, and short periods of terror. But in recent years, accreditation—both regional and professional—has come to involve ongoing and dynamic processes to promote CQI. Well-defined outcomes that are systematically assessed, complete with data and analytics, provide the mechanism that insures CQI—so you think you have a good PharmD program ...prove it! What are the metrics that are monitored to insure that Loma



Loma University School of Pharmacy continues to have a quality program? Here are four of the many 'dashboards' that our team systematically assesses. If you were driving your car and looked at the 'gauges' on the dashboard below there's one gauge that you'd be concerned about, and its pretty easy to spot. Why? Fifty-three percent of our SP Staff and Faculty contribute to one or more of the many philanthropic SP funds, and although their num-

bers are small, in 2008 Faculty and Staff contributed ten times the dollar amounts as alumni. So when given the opportunity to support your alma mater, throw us a 'bone'—\$1, \$10, \$100 or more—and guaranteed the next dashboard you see will have the gauge reading in the green! Your opportunity to give will come in a couple of weeks when the next

appeal letter goes out. Look closely; there is an opportunity to double your donation with a matching gift from Dr. Mack. Thank you for continuing to help make our school and program stronger.



School of Pharmacy celebrates major step in achieving six-year ACPE accreditation

On Monday, March 2, 2009, Billy Hughes, PhD, dean of the Loma Linda University School of Pharmacy (LLUSP), demonstrated how grateful he was to the more than 100 members of the School's faculty, staff, volunteer preceptors, students, and their family members by treating them to

an evening of friendship, food, and fun at Gourmet Pizza Shoppe in Redlands.

The School has a lot to celebrate this year. Although it's only officially been open for business since 2002, administrators recently received news that the Accreditation Council for

Pharmacy Education (ACPE) extended its accreditation from the initial two-year status to a full six-year accreditation. Bottom line: The School is fully accredited to educate pharmacists through June 2013.

The ACPE news is just one of the

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School of Pharmacy celebrates six-year accreditation...

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reasons the School was celebrating: The National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP)—the independent, international, and impartial standards enforcement agency—just released its triennial report ranking the LLU School of Pharmacy well above state and national averages.

“LLU scored high on the NAPLEX test among both first-time test-takers, and total candidates,” Dr. Hughes reports. NAPLEX is a standard examination created by NABP to help state boards of pharmacy assess a prospective pharmacist’s competency and knowledge so that he or she may be given a license to practice. The scores of LLU students ranked significantly higher than both California averages and the national scores. “Needless to say, we’re very proud of our students!” Dr. Hughes affirms.

How did they do it? Dr. Hughes says the School has been blessed. Dr. Hughes gives credit to the four-year program’s students for applying themselves to academic excellence and service. Preceptors were commended for their dedication to providing clinical training and oversight to students.

In commenting on the School’s recent successes, Dr. Hughes says there were a number of challenges on the road to accreditation since he became dean in January 2007. “Prior to that, my life was going in one direction”—referring to his previous assignment as director of educational support services for the University—“and the next week, it was going in another.”

It didn’t take long for Dr. Hughes and his team to set the School on target for success. “Within five months, with the diligent work of the accreditation steering committee, led by Eric

Mack, PhD, associate dean for academic affairs, the situation was turned around,” he notes.

“The School’s commitment to continuous quality improvement is a core responsibility of Nancy Kawahara, PharmD, MSEd, associate dean for assessment and professional affairs,” he continues. “Also, a large part of our success is a direct result of the solid relationship with the LLU Medical Center, to provide introductory and advanced clinical experiences for students. Paul Norris, PharmD, associate dean for clinical affairs, with support from Ruthita Fike, MA, CEO and administrator of LLUMC, is committed to ensuring this critical part of a student’s education.”

But grateful as Dr. Hughes and his team were for the initial accreditation, they knew there was still important work to be done. When ACPE officials returned to the School for a follow-up focused visit on October 21 and 22 of last year, they gave the

School a green light to extend to a full six-year accreditation at their January 2009 board meeting.

In commenting on the School’s excellent showing among American pharmacy schools in only its seventh year of operation, Roger Hadley, MD, dean of the LLU School of Medicine, and Rick Williams, PhD, vice president for enrollment management and student services for LLU, called the School’s success “a gift,” but said the University does not covet the highest ranking. “Our goal is not to be ranked No. 1,” Dr. Hadley observes.

“It’s difficult to talk about rankings without thinking about GPA,” Dr. Williams states. “There are 125 academic medical centers in the United States. Just a handful of those are faith-based. It’s easy to find students who are smart—to recruit only the smartest students—but to find people who are smart and interested in service, that’s much harder. That’s what we’re after.”



Billy Hughes, PhD, dean of the Loma Linda University School of Pharmacy, hosts a party for his team. More than 100 of the School’s faculty, preceptors, staff, students, and family members celebrated the good news from the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education.

Pharmacy undertakes initiative to help campus go green

Loma Linda University School of Pharmacy has undertaken an initiative to provide methods of transportation to faculty and staff that use fewer fossil fuels and encourage exercise.

Billy Hughes, PhD, dean of the School of Pharmacy, notes, "Transportation is a potential bottleneck to productivity. By providing green alternatives to this challenge, we can facilitate efficiency while doing what is right for our planet."

A 2009 Nissan Altima Hybrid was purchased in April primarily for the use of the experiential education faculty and staff. They frequently travel across California to evaluate and assess clinical rotation sites for pharmacy students.

The most-recognizable Columbia electric cart on campus was purchased in June. Its bright red color, shiny wheels, and low-profile tires are easy to spot. It is available to all pharmacy faculty and staff to get around campus. This street-legal vehicle is DMV-registered and may be driven on any road with a posted speed limit up to 35 miles per hour.



Ramon Gonzalez, store manager at Cyclery USA, Redlands, presents Billy Hughes, PhD, dean of the School of Pharmacy, with two Trek bicycles. The automatic transmission three-speed bicycles complement the transportation options for faculty and staff.

Rounding out the green transportation initiative are two bicycles and two tricycles. The Trek™ Lime and Trek™ Lime Lite bicycles were donated by Cyclery USA, Redlands. They are unique in that they have automatic three-speed transmissions. The bicycle monitors speed and pedal pressure to determine which gear is best. This gift was made possible by Cyclery USA, Redlands owner Craig Kundig, store manager Ramon Gonzalez, and Trek Bicycles regional manager, Greg Johnson.

Walmart donated two tricycles, complete with behind the seat baskets for hauling items. This donation was made possible by Todd Williams, former pharmacy district manager. In addition, helmets were also provided.

Dr. Hughes says, "I'm delighted that our corporate partners have stepped up to the plate and assisted our efforts to advance this green initiative. Together we can improve our workflow while doing something to benefit our environment."



Dr. Hughes, PhD accepts two tricycles from Walmart as part of the Schools initiative to provide eco-friendly transportation for faculty and staff. Pictured with Dr. Hughes are Walmart representatives Day Gooch, PharmD, MBA, regional talent specialist, and Todd Williams, former pharmacy district manager.

Students, faculty inducted into Phi Lambda Sigma

Nine School of Pharmacy students, one faculty member, and one honorary member were inducted into Phi Lambda Sigma, Gamma Beta chapter, on September 28. The induction banquet, held at Wong Kerlee International Conference Center, honored those who were chosen by their peers for their exemplary leadership skills.

The nine students included (class of 2009) Noela Ndrekaj, Nga Nguyen, and Norela Ocampo; (class of 2010) Thu

Hoang, Alice Khong, Tiffany Royer, and Larry Rutebuka; (class of 2011) Scott Glenn and Caroline Nguyen.

The inducted faculty member was Rebecca Cheung, PharmD, assistant professor in the department of pharmacotherapy and outcomes science. The inducted honorary member was Brian Hodgkins, PharmD, director of pharmacy at Desert Regional Medical Center.

Dr. Hodgkins was also the guest speaker for the event. Total current

membership in Phi Lambda Sigma, Gamma Beta chapter includes 17 students, 12 faculty, and three honorary members. Phi Lambda Sigma was founded in 1965 to honor leadership.

For students to be eligible for membership, they must be of "high moral and ethical character," have successfully completed at least one professional year in a recognized pharmacy program, and demonstrated exceptional leadership qualities.

LLUSP faculty member awarded AACP grant

School of Pharmacy assistant professor of pharmacotherapy and outcome sciences Elvin A. Hernandez, DrPH, CHES, is the recipient of a \$10,000 grant from the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy.

Dr. Hernandez was one of 15 recipients from a pool of 70 proposals—and the only individual in California—to receive the new investigator award from the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy.

The new investigator program is designed to stimulate research among schools of pharmacy faculty members who work at educational institutions accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education.

Concurrently, Dr. Hernandez received a \$10,000 seed grant awarded to School of Pharmacy faculty members.

Dr. Hernandez is conducting research on “The Role of Patient-Pharmacist Communication Regarding Health Disparities: Minority Patient Attitudes and Perceptions in Clinical Settings.”

“Communication between patients and pharmacists in a clinical setting is extremely important for positive outcomes for the patient,” Dr. Hernandez says.

“Patient-provider communication is an essential relationship that may foster collaboration between the health care professional and the patient that leads to optimal health outcomes.”

Research specifically examining communication factors between patients and health care providers abounds, according to Dr. Hernandez.

“But research has rarely been conducted examining pharmacist-patient communication processes and how those processes influence patient health outcomes,” he says. “Those communication processes will be the focus of my research.”

New faculty member appointed in department of pharmaceutical sciences

A new faculty member has been appointed at the School of Pharmacy in the department of pharmaceutical sciences.

Dave J. Weldon, PhD, assistant professor of medicinal chemistry, received his BS degree in forensic chemistry from the University of Mississippi in 2002. In 2008, he earned a doctor of philosophy degree in medicinal chemistry from the University of Mississippi.

During his graduate studies, Dr. Weldon completed a two-year National Science Foundation (NSF) fellowship studying the interface of the science and business worlds. His dissertation involved the synthesis of small molecules as anti-malarials through the inhibition of falcipain-2, a critical enzyme that is necessary for the progression of malaria.

Dr. Weldon will continue his research of developing small molecule anti-malarials in the Cancer Institute, located in Chan Shun Pavilion. He will also play an integral role in instructing the medicinal chemistry series of the PharmD curriculum.

Dr. Weldon is married to Abby Weldon, a School of Medicine graduate student, and has two Labrador retrievers—Chandler and Titus.

He enjoys playing with his dogs outside and looks forward to the snow-skiing season.



Dave Weldon, PhD

The objective of Dr. Hernandez’s pilot study is to investigate the communication between pharmacists and their patients that will enhance understanding of how those communication factors may influence health outcomes and disparities among minority populations.

Dr. Hernandez’s study will be conducted in two phases. The first phase will concentrate on focus groups, while during the second phase, a self-administered questionnaire will be disseminated to a diverse ethnic population. Many of those patients who are expected to participate in the project will be from the SACHS–Norton clinic and East Campus hospital.

“We plan to conduct our study in internal medicine and ambulatory care settings where opportunities for patient-pharmacist interaction are more readily available,” Dr. Hernandez states.

“We hope the study results may lay the foundation for future patient-pharmacist communication research in clinical settings—particularly among minority populations.”

Co-investigators on the project with Dr. Hernandez include Joycelyn Mallari Yamzon, PharmD, assistant professor of pharmacotherapy, and LaDonna M. Jones, PharmD, assistant professor of pharmacotherapy.



Elvin A. Hernandez, DrPH, CHES

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School of Pharmacy makes gains with philanthropic support

It has been said that it takes a village to raise a child. Well in the current economic climate, it takes many philanthropic supporters to maintain the School of Pharmacy.

The philanthropic story at the School of Pharmacy began in 1997 with donor Richard Chao presenting a gift of \$500,000 to the fledgling school. With those seed funds, the School was able to make capital improvements including the construction of a pharmaceutical sciences laboratory in the Chan Shun Pavilion.

"In 2002, we started seeing several of the retail pharmaceutical chains becoming involved in supporting our School through scholarship support and funding student events," says Jim Pinder, JD, MBA, director of development and alumni affairs and assistant professor of pharmacy law.

"Walgreens has been one of the School's most consistent supporters over the past several years," says Mr. Pinder. "A recent contribution provided funding for a student laboratory.

In addition, Walmart has provided generous support for the School's annual Whitecoat Ceremony followed by dinner for the graduating students.

Another company providing support to the School of Pharmacy is the Allergan Pharmaceutical Company and The Allergan Foundation with funds for equipment and funding for post-doctoral fellows at the School in the research area.

"With the School's young alumni base unable to support the School as they will be able to do in future years, we must look to additional sources," Mr. Pinder continues.

"We do see our alumni as a critical base of support in future years. To date, 12 percent of our alumni are supporting the School through annual giving. We feel this level of support is very good considering that the School has only had four graduating classes.

The School has put together program that the administration feels will yield exceptional benefits in future years.

"The Dean and the School's administration feel that the philanthropic future of the School will be in large part due to loyal alumni," Mr. Pinder says. "The School provides many amenities to the students throughout

the school year and at graduation."

Continuing in the philanthropic support of the school are the faculty and staff of the School of Pharmacy. "In 2007, when we first approached the faculty and staff about an annual giving program, 17 percent

chose to support the School.

"However, the following year (2008) when we made another appeal to faculty and staff, 53 percent of our faculty and staff supported the School through an annual giving program. We expect even greater participation from our next appeal.

For further information on School of Pharmacy philanthropic opportunities, please

contact Mr. Pinder at (909) 558-4967.



A gift from the Chao Family help fund a School of Pharmacy research laboratory located in the Chan Shun Pavilion.



Receiving a check for \$25,000 is Jack J. Chen (third from left), PharmD, associate professor, movement disorder clinic, School of Pharmacy. The check was presented by Mercedes Maruscak (left), MSN, senior medical science liaison, Ovation Pharmaceuticals, Inc. The grant was presented to Dr. Chen for a research project on tetrabenazine (a recently approved FDA drug for Huntington's chorea). Dr. Chen and his colleagues will review the drug for its efficacy and safety in the treatment of various hyperkinetic movement disorders. Pictured with Ms. Maruscak and Dr. Chen are Billy Hughes (second from left), PhD, dean, School of Pharmacy; David Swope (second from right), MD, associate professor of neurology; and Khashayar Dashitpour (right), MD, PhD, instructor of neurology. Drs. Swope and Dashitpour are co-investigators in the project.

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School of Pharmacy

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School of Pharmacy professor receives life support certification

One of the few pharmacists in the country to receive advanced certification in cardiac life support is Javad Tafreshi, PharmD, professor of pharmacotherapy and outcomes science.

As an outcome of this certification, Dr. Tafreshi is encouraging his pharmacy students to follow suit.

“Generally, it is uncommon for a pharmacist to be certified in this area,” Dr. Tafreshi says, “but for pharmacists working in a hospital setting, it is very useful.”

Dr. Tafreshi was certified by the American Heart Association following an intensive two-day course.

“A pharmacist is very useful in a ‘code blue’ situation,” Dr. Tafreshi states.

“Because a pharmacist is trained in the interaction and reaction of media-



Fourth-year pharmacy students Tanida T. Vidhyarkorn (left) and Rommy V. Davalos (right) are among the first Loma Linda pharmacy students planning to certify in cardiac life support education. With the students is their professor, Javad Tafreshi, PharmD.

tions, a pharmacist on the team could mean the difference between life and death for a patient who is in a life-threatening situation.”

Of all of the pharmacy schools in the United States only 10 to 15 schools offer programs leading to a cardiac life support education certificate as part of their regular curriculum.

Dr. Tafreshi received his doctor of pharmacy degree from the University of Southern California in 1992. He completed a cardiovascular specialized residency at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, Iowa City.

Prior to joining Loma Linda University School of Pharmacy, Dr. Tafreshi was on the faculty of Midwestern University, Glendale, Arizona.

Alumni notes...

- ♦ **Tony Eid, PharmD, SP'06:** I have been working at Travis Air Force Base for about five months now. I am the pharmacotherapist which essentially means I respond to the needs of the patient by providing drug therapies in consultation with a health treatment team. I work with the health care team to visit the patient both prior to and after treatment as well as provide information on new medicines and drug therapies that may impact or significantly increase the successful recovery or treatment of the patients. I currently run anti-coagulation services for our institution and am the preceptor for the University of the Pacific and Touro schools of pharmacy. We are the proud parents of an 18-month year old baby boy, Alexander Tony Eid.
- ♦ **Tina Liu, PharmD, SP'07:** Since graduating in 2007, I have completed a PHY1 residency in general practice at St. Joseph's Medical Center in Stockton. I am now completing a PHY2 cardiology residency with Western University of Health Sciences. After finishing my PHY2 residency, I plan to find a stimulating job.
- ♦ **Edward Clement, PharmD, SP'08:** I am currently a staff pharmacist at NeighborCare, which is a division of Omnicare. We dispense IV meds for home infusion. I like working here because my responsibilities are both clinical as well as traditional (dispensing, etc.).

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Summer 2009 · Vol. 3, No. 1
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