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School of Pharmacy



PRECEPTOR News

Spring 2007 Experiential Education Newsletter

University of Connecticut

Message from the Director

During the fall 2006 semester we introduced some changes to our Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experiences (IPPE) for our P3 students in anticipation of the new Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) Standards 2007. The goal of these changes is to better prepare our pharmacy students for their P4 year Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences (APPE) and to acclimate them to working in interdisciplinary teams. One of the goals of this specific project was to cultivate an interdisciplinary environment where medical, pharmacy, nursing and premedical students interact and care for patients as a team. This not only gives the students from the various health professions an opportunity to care for the medically under-served, but to interact and work with students from other health disciplines.

“One of the goals of this specific project was to cultivate an interdisciplinary environment where medical, pharmacy, nursing and premedical students interact...”

problems. Migrant farm workers usually have difficulty accessing health care services due to rigorous work schedules, lack of transportation, and financial, linguistic, and cultural barriers.

Pharmacy students, in conjunction with their other health professions student partners, all work together to provide quality care for this medically under-served population. The free walk-in clinics are unique in that the patients are given extra attention and ample time to discuss their concerns or ask the students questions regarding their health. Students are supervised by a volunteer physician “preceptor” and members of the staff at the various clinics.

Pharmacy students are also involved with health education activities at the various free clinics. The theme of their activities provides the patrons of these various free clinics with consistent messages promoting access to health care and increasing their self-awareness about healthy choices. This gives pharmacy students the opportunity to work with medically under-served populations and to become familiar with health literacy issues and how poverty impacts our health care system.

Sincerely,

Students from various health professions and disciplines come together to participate in free walk-in clinics for the Eastern Connecticut Area Health Education Center (AHEC) covenant soup kitchen patrons and migrant farm workers and their families. In addition, we participated with the homeless shelter South Park Inn Medical Clinic located in Hartford. Patrons of the soup kitchens are generally homeless and very low-income earners with mental illness and substance abuse

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Dr. Philip Hritcko congratulates Preceptor of the Year, Devra Dang.

Shaping the Future of Pharmacy

Sharing your pharmacy practice setting with students can be very rewarding...

Are you mentor material?

Many schools of pharmacy are currently facing the challenge sustaining and finding sufficient experiential education offerings. Increased demand for high quality rotations has placed an increased need for pharmacy mentors in a variety of practice settings. to discuss our program objectives and expectations for our experiential rotations. ■

Students bring enthusiasm, interest, and eagerness to learn to your practice site. We often hear from preceptors that they find it very rewarding to participate in the experiential programs and that they feel good about shaping the future of the profession of pharmacy.

If you know of any pharmacists or other health care providers interested in participating in our experiential programs please have them contact our Office of Experiential Education

Save the Date!

5/23 - 5/24/07 Arthur E. Schwarting
Pharmacy Practice Symposium

9/25/07 Job Expo
Morosko Student Lounge

9/26/07 Interview Day
Rome Commons Ballroom

[Please visit our website for information on how to register.]

For more information on these and other upcoming events please visit our web calendar at www.pharmacy.uconn.edu



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Pharmacy Students Get to the Point

Each year an average of 90,000 Americans die of vaccine-preventable infections such as influenza and hepatitis B. In 2005, changes were made to Connecticut state guidelines to allow pharmacists throughout the state to administer flu vaccination. With the healthcare field predicting an imminent flu epidemic similar to the one that hit in 1918, it is important to have as many trained inoculation professionals as possible available to citizens.

At the UConn School of Pharmacy, Assistant Clinical Professor Lauren Schlesselman is currently certifying third year professional students in the administration of inoculations. She obtained certification at a two-day APhA training conference where the basics of immunology and vaccine administration were reviewed, the implementation and legal issues were discussed, and hands on vaccine training was provided. "Giving the vaccines to my colleagues bothered me more than receiving them," said Schlesselman regarding the experience. Back at the School of Pharmacy, she teaches the training to groups of fifteen to twenty students at a time. Class work involves both lecture and hands on experience.

Pharmacy student Jill Loser says, "Dr. Schlesselman's class was very challenging for me; especially the lab activities. Without the professor's motivation, I would have been apt to decline taking part in the laboratory. In the end, the immunization program turned out to be a huge success for me and I have applied much of the information I took away from the class in the community and during rotations."

Before students can even enter the classroom, they must complete twelve hours of self-study about inoculation and take a comprehensive test. Friendships and relationships are placed on the line in the laboratory as students carefully choose their practice partner. To successfully pass the course they must administer three saline placebo vaccinations to each other, two intramuscular and one subcutaneous. However, accepting a slight penalty in points, students are allowed to opt out of the hands on experience if they feel too uncomfortable with the sight of needles and blood. Pharmacy student Jill Loser says, "Dr. Schlesselman's class was very challenging for me; especially the lab activities. Without the professor's motivation, I would have been apt to decline taking part in the laboratory. In the end, the immunization program turned out to be a huge success for me and I have applied much of the information I took away from the class in the community and during rotations."

Many of the students, like Jill, finish the training confident and enthusiastic about their expanded ability to aid patients. Dr. Schlesselman believes the new vaccination training will benefit both the pharmacists and citizens of Connecticut. "Pharmacists will now be able to help inoculate patients who previously may have slipped through the cracks. The School of Pharmacy is ahead of the curve by training these students how to administer vaccinations and it will put them at the front line of improved patient care." ■

Pictured Above:

Pharmacy student Laura Landry administers a vaccination under the instruction of Dr. Lauren Schlesselman.

Spotlight ~ continued from page 5

pharmacy students' input is valued by staff. Eventually, students begin to cover their own patients after two weeks at the hospital. Each day, patients' files are printed and updated, and students meet with their preceptors to discuss medications, treatments, drug interactions, and medical decisions. At the end of their month at the hospital each student develops a presentation on some aspect of their rotation experience they would like to highlight or research further to present to a panel of pharmacists at the hospital.

The three students who completed their rotations at the facility in November, Aaron Denowitz, Bartosz Muskus, and Melissa Sireen, agree that Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center was a unique learning experience for them compared to other rotations they have completed. Bartosz Muskus comments, "My experience at Dartmouth has been very teaching and learning friendly. I feel my suggestions are listened to, and that I am part of a cohesive unit while on rounds." This sense of social connection is something preceptor Susan Burrill says the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center tries hard to maintain. "We want pharmacy students who complete rotations at the hospital to feel as though they are part of a team."

Clinical rotations are very important to sixth year pharmacy students as they finally are able to apply information from text books to real life experiences. Melissa Sireen comments, "I do not believe it would be possible for me to become a pharmacist without gaining experience in the clinical setting. Recalling a concept I have learned in class and then actually applying it to a patient is an imperative skill for me to possess in order to become a practicing pharmacist." Preceptors at Dartmouth help students make the transition from classroom to reality as smooth as possible. After students have completed a rotation at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, cardiologist preceptor Michael Saracino says, "I hope the students realize how very important a quality clinical rotation is."

When the facility fades into its haven of trees for the last time, students leave the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center with valuable clinical experience they did not possess when they first entered the hospital. Through close working relationships, open and collaborative communication, and an environment well suited for learning, students cross the state line back into Connecticut one step closer to their goal of becoming a professional pharmacist. ■



At left:

New Hampshire's rolling alpine mountains, dusted with a fresh covering of snow, create a charming backdrop for the genuine clinical experience that pharmacy students receive at Dartmouth.

PRECEPTOR News, the Experiential Education newsletter for the School of Pharmacy at the University of Connecticut, is published semiannually.

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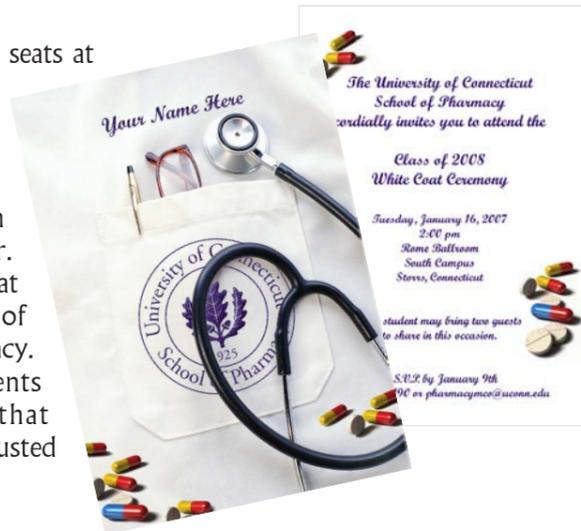
White Coat Ceremony

January 16, 2007 – The White Coat Ceremony was held at the South Campus Rome Ballroom today. This ceremony is a turning point for all pharmacy students, marking their completion of 2^{1/2} years of pharmacy school leaving them with only one more semester of classes until their rotations begin.

White coat candidates took their seats at the front of the room while family and friends filled in the rows behind. The room fell silent as Dean Robert L. McCarthy welcomed attendees. He stressed that as a professional pharmacist, students' main responsibility will be to their patients. Dr. McCarthy also reminded pharmacy students that their main goal and purpose is the service of humankind through the profession of pharmacy. A sense of pride filled the room as students receiving their white coats were told that pharmacists are considered to be the most trusted professionals in the nation.

The keynote speaker was Michael Starkowski, Commissioner of the Department of Social Services for the State of Connecticut who spoke about professionalism in public service. A major UConn fan and supporter, Mr. Starkowski urged students to work hard and excel in the health care field.

Following Mr. Starkowski, Dr. McCarthy led the students in the "Oath of a Pharmacist," a pledge from the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy which cites the main concerns of a pharmacist such as considering the welfare of humanity, and maintaining principals of moral, ethical, and legal conduct. Once the oath was administered, the P3 students were individually called to the stage where they were given a white lab coat. New medicine bags were donated by Brooks/ Eckerd, who graciously sponsored the event. Students and family were encouraged to stay for refreshments where they discussed their future plans and took pictures to mark this watershed moment.



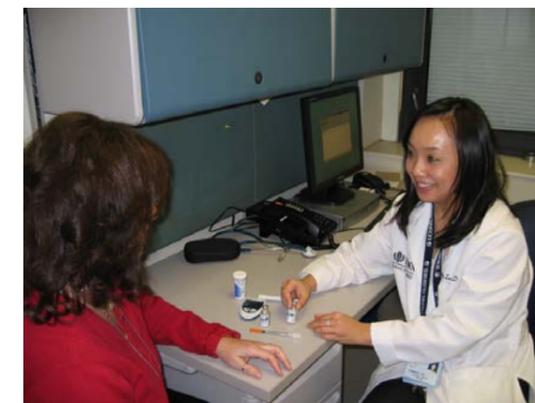
Above: P3 pharmacy students receive their white coats at the annual ceremony sponsored by our friends at Brooks/Eckerd Pharmacy.

Women's Health Center Serves Vital Role

By Katie Kurzawa

A student who distinguished herself by winning the Merck Award for Research Activity for the Pharm.D. Class of 2004, Dr. Jennifer Lee continues to add to her accomplishments. The Veteran's Association Women's Health Center in West Haven, Connecticut was in existence ten years ago but lacked a pharmacist. Dr. Lee joined the clinic in August of 2005.

Dr. Lee says she developed the idea to add a pharmacist to the Women's Clinic team because, "The VA system predominantly serves male patients, although there are a growing number of females enrolling. At VACT, there were already four clinical pharmacists in the ambulatory care clinics



but none in the Women's Health Center. Although they represent a smaller population, the female veterans deserve the same services offered to male veterans." The Women's Health Center at the VACT aids women in a range of areas. Services offered include counseling for post-traumatic stress disorder, primary care,

Continued on Page 4

Job Expo & Interview Day

Normally a quiet refuge for study and rest, the Morosko Student Lounge in the Pharmacy-Biology Building was crammed from corner to corner with people and tables late in the afternoon on September 26th for the annual Job Expo. The four-hour event allows professional students at all levels to develop an idea of the types of jobs that will become available to them upon their graduation from the UConn School of Pharmacy.

There was a broad range of businesses and organizations in attendance, including the Navy, Rutgers' University offering a fellowship, Bristol Meyers Squibb, and St. Raphael's Hospital. Many of the well known pharmaceutical chains such as CVS, Walgreens, OSCO and Brooks/Eckerd also attended. The representatives of the companies adorned their tables with captivatingly colorful displays, complete with informative brochures and pamphlets.

When the last classes of the day were completed, students began to slowly trickle and then stream into the fair. The noise level rose to a din as the recruiters welcomed every student. Representatives of businesses and organizations fished for students, baiting them with tempting giveaways. The array of free items included pens, water bottles, key chains, knapsacks, stuffed animals, candy, gum, and toys.

Many students chatted with vendors, leafed through books and pamphlets, and carried on impromptu conversations about careers in pharmacy and opportunities within the profession. All the representatives present strongly urged students to consider their companies upon graduation from the university. The representatives clearly recognize the strength of the UConn School of Pharmacy program and the high quality of students it produces.

At Right:

PSC President, Kristin Zimmerman, happily receives her white coat.



At left:

Dr. Jennifer Lee administers treatment to a patient at the Veteran's Association Women's Health Center in West Haven, Connecticut.

Pharmacy Preceptors Praised



The 5th Annual Preceptor Appreciation Dinner was held on November 2, 2006 at the Blake Street Cafe in New Haven, Connecticut. The School of Pharmacy would like to extend its thanks to Pfizer, Inc. for their generosity and support which made the event possible. Guests gathered to honor the two

Above:

Dr. Devra Dang graciously accepts her Preceptor of the Year award.

At Right:

James Sargianis receives his award from Dr. Philip Hritcko with his family looking on proudly.

Opposite Page:

The Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, nestled in the wooded hills of snowy New Hampshire, enthusiastically provides students with an opportunity for clinical experience.

preceptors being recognized by pharmacy students from the class of 2006. The individuals were chosen for this award based on their exemplary contributions to the educational development of future pharmacists by demonstrating high standards of professionalism, ethics, and clinical practice.



Following an excellent meal where business associates and colleagues reconnected and networked, the program opened with a greeting by Philip M. Hritcko, the director of experiential education, who then introduced Dean Robert L. McCarthy. Dr. Devra Dang, an assistant clinical professor at both the UConn School of Pharmacy and the Burgdor/Fleet Health Center in Hartford, was the first to graciously accept her award. James Sargianis, R.Ph. from Yale New Haven Hospital spoke about why he became a preceptor. He drew a chuckle from the crowd when he stated that he didn't decide to be a preceptor because he got free basketball tickets. He continued by saying he didn't decide to be a preceptor for the huge paycheck it provides. He insisted these incentives didn't interest him as much as his role as a teacher for aspiring pharmacy students. Sargianis declared, "Just the knowledge that I have motivated a student to pursue a career in clinical pharmacy is enough for me."

As Preceptors of the Year, both Drs. Dang and Sargianis are typical of the preceptors involved in the Experiential Education Program – invested in their students and in the future of their profession by reaching out to future generations of pharmacists with knowledge and encouragement. ■

Women's Health ~ continued from page 3

pharmacy, mental health, a breast clinic and gynecological care.

Female veterans enrolled in the VACT Healthcare System are referred to the Pharmacy Clinic for further management of diabetes, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, medication compliance/education, etc. Within the clinic, Dr. Lee collaborates with the physicians and medical resident to improve outcomes for the female veterans. Patients are scheduled for individual appointments with Dr. Lee to discuss medical issues. Dr. Lee reviews life style modifications and self monitoring techniques with the patients. She believes education is very important because it allows the patients to become more aware of their conditions, possible complications, reasons for medication use, and possible adverse effects. Dr. Lee also orders lab tests and reviews the results with her patients. A vital part of her practice involves follow-up visits with patients regarding their progress.

In addition, Dr. Lee and her students prepare a Women's Health Newsletter on a monthly basis to share with the affiliates of the clinic. The goal of the newsletter is to highlight issues relevant to women's health. Recent publications have focused on the new HPV vaccine, Osteonecrosis of the jaw, innovative oral contraceptives, and a story about bisphosphonates.

When asked what she finds most rewarding about her job, Dr. Lee says, "I really enjoy educating patients and helping them become more actively involved with their own care. It is very satisfying to see the change in the patients from the results of their hard work. Through life-style modifications and medication education and compliance, patients are able to get better control of their diabetes, hypertension, and cholesterol. Furthermore, patients learn more about their medications, why they are taking them, and how to take the medications appropriately. Most importantly, students are able to see what an impact pharmacists can make and hopefully build upon their experiences learned in the clinic." ■



"Spotlight" on

Professional Experience Sites

Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center

By: Katie Kurzawa



Nestled in a forest of pine trees, the sheer immensity of the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center is surprising as it emerges after turning off the main road in Lebanon, New Hampshire. Almost every month, up to three sixth year (P4) pharmacy students are welcomed by this view before they begin a rotation at the Center. Sixth year pharmacy students are required to complete a series of nine rotations; the possible selections range in location from close to home to across the country. The rotations allow for students to gain experience in the pharmacy field under the guidance of practicing pharmacists, or preceptors. The Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center offers unique and valuable experiences to students who choose the facility as one of their rotations.

On a clear day, Dartmouth Medical School can be seen through the trees surrounding the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center. Therefore, it is only natural that the center has emerged as a teaching hospital where over one hundred and thirty five residents practice under the supervision of doctors everyday. Within the wide carpeted corridors of the facility, pharmacy students gain crucial clinical experience. The UConn School of Pharmacy and the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center formed an alliance beginning in 1997 when UConn alum Bob Theriault, accepted a position as director of inpatient pharmacy at Dartmouth. The hospital has hosted primarily University of Connecticut students who complete rotations in oncology, general medicine, cardiology, infectious disease, medication safety, critical care, or pediatrics ever since. Although the rotation site is about a three hour drive out of state, housing is very affordable for students as most of the rent is supplemented by the center, and parking is free.

"Many of the preceptors agree the students' youthful energy and inquisitive minds with their healthy doses of skepticism help keep them on their toes and current in the rapidly changing field."



The medical center pharmacy department prides itself on the high quality preceptors offered to students who come to the hospital for a rotation. Theriault states, "The preceptors are well trained because they have significant experience, and they really want to teach." The preceptors themselves readily second this statement. Jeff Low, a preceptor in pediatrics says, "Being a preceptor is a beneficial experience for all involved. The students are always

learning, asking questions, and observing how we do things. When they challenge our practices, it allows us to learn new techniques being taught to students." Many of the preceptors agree the students' youthful energy and inquisitive minds with their healthy doses of skepticism help keep them on their toes and current in the rapidly changing field. They also try to set

aside as much individual time with students as possible. Brooke Eisenhower, an internal medicine preceptor says, "I make it a priority to speak with my students because I feel it is very important to have time with them to discuss what they have learned."

An average day for students on rotation at the hospital begins at 7 – 7:30 a.m. and ends at 5 p.m. Students are sent out on rotations along with a multi-disciplinary team of doctors, nurses, and medical staff. Due to the hospital's strong teaching focus, rounds are very collaborative in nature and

Continued on Page 7