

# Preceptor News



*Students and Preceptors  
in the Community*

# From the Office of Experiential

The underlying themes of this edition of *Preceptor News* are collaboration, interprofessional education (IPE) and team work. Many of the articles in this issue show the emphasis on team-based and IPE activities our students encounter during many of their experiential rotations. As we enter a new era of health care in the United States, the education and training of students in the health professions needs to evolve so that they are properly prepared to practice in this new environment. As you read some of the articles in this *Preceptor News* you will understand why our experiential program is focusing on many new and innovative practice settings for UConn student pharmacists.

While many health profession students interact with other health professionals during their rotations we cannot assume that they are learning to function effectively as a team in all of these settings. The Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) Standards 2016 place an emphasis on pharmacy curricula so that we must prepare all of our student pharmacists as a contributing member of an interprofessional team. In addition, the ACPE Standards 2016 indicate that all students must participate in “experiential education activities with prescribers and other team members that are designed to advance interprofessional team effectiveness.” Thus we need to understand where opportunities for team interactions already exist within our experiential program and how we can identify and develop new team based activities for our students.

I would also like to bring to your attention an article in this edition of *Preceptor News* regarding UConn alumnus and preceptor James Sarigianis, R.Ph. and Yale New Haven Hospital clinical pharmacist. Jim was recently awarded the Master Preceptor Recognition by the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. This is a national award that recognizes the exemplary preceptors in the

academy who support our schools/colleges of pharmacy and our student pharmacists. This recognition is limited to very few preceptors each year and this is a very competitive award for any preceptor to receive. Jim is the first preceptor in the State of Connecticut to receive this recognition and it is well-deserved.

As you can imagine we are extremely proud of all of our UConn pharmacy students who were involved with many of the projects that we highlighted in this edition. Their success in helping the citizens of Connecticut will help them in their future roles as pharmacists. Becoming good citizens and team players as health professionals within their communities is one of the goals of their education at the UConn School of Pharmacy.

I would also like this opportunity to express, on behalf of the UConn School of Pharmacy Office of Experiential Education, (OEE) my sincere appreciation to everyone for all of your hard work and dedication to the UConn School of Pharmacy and our students. We would be unable to provide UConn pharmacy students with high quality experiences without your involvement and participation in our experiential programs. We appreciate the continued commitment from everyone who participates in our various Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experiences (IPPE) and Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences (APPE) programs.

I again offer our sincere thanks to all of our preceptors who enhance the education of the UConn pharmacy students and are dedicated to the development of the next generation of pharmacists.



***Preceptor News* is the official magazine of the UConn School of Pharmacy Office of Experiential Education.**

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**On the Cover:** Students are out in the community with their preceptors at senior centers, compounding pharmacies, migrant farm worker clinics, and so many more! **At right:** Students at the New Haven Coalition for Senior Medication Safety. The coalition just received a grant to fund the program for the next 5 years, so expect to see our students in action!

Have a precepting story to share? Email us at [pharmacy@uconn.edu](mailto:pharmacy@uconn.edu)!

# al Education

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# In the Age of the Impersonal, Raskauskas Seeks Communication

In the age of digital friendships, automated transactions, and often impersonal doctor-patient relations, Dr. Thomas Raskauskas aims to revolutionize the health care system. Raskauskas, president and CEO of St. Vincent's Health Partners, is establishing a new program that will benefit his patients.

A board certified obstetrician and gynecologist, Raskauskas is interested in population management and health care reform. With the hopes of establishing a more personal relationship with his patients, he has created the Pharmacy Population Health Management elective rotation where students will "identify and implement best practices in medication management and medication reconciliation at the time of discharge from the acute and post-acute setting." He detects the challenges facing the health care community and aims to deliver care through collaboration and clinical integration.

Raskauskas looks for ways to combat the disconnect between patients and their doctors. He describes health care as a transactional service in which a patient goes in for a doctor visit, shows his or her insurance card, pays a co-pay, allows insurance to pay the rest, and the payment is then received by the care provider. "Transactions have depersonalized the experience and further distanced the patients from their doctors," says Raskauskas. He and his team are looking for ways to improve these episodic transactions. In order to improve patients' experiences, he is also exploring the coordination of care, or the special attention doctors provide in order to ensure that all of the patient's needs are met with the assistance of a primary point of contact. "It's not right that people aren't getting good care," Raskauskas said. "Instead of doctors working independently, we are trying to pull in health care providers."

are expected to identify one element of success and one barrier to care, as well as propose solutions. As he urges health care providers to streamline service, he compares the current state to a debit card transaction.

"Imagine having an ATM card and it only works at your bank, it's not like that," he said. "It's all connected. That's what we are trying to do with health care."

Alexa Sanna recently completed an Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience with Raskauskas. "My rotation at St. Vincent's Health Partners was an experience like no other," says Sanna. Working with Dr. Raskauskas, I was truly able to see the impact a pharmacist can make in a clinically integrated network ensuring better outcomes for an entire population."

In order to orchestrate coordination among providers, Raskauskas is working with his doctors to create co-dependent relationships among one another. This is quite the task for doctors who have been trained to work independently. As doctors become better versed in teamwork and collaboration, they discuss customer service, which Raskauskas says may not have been a doctor's priority. "With their focus on medical solutions, doctors often forget the importance of patient communication and satisfaction," he said. Understanding the patients' concerns and needs are crucial to improving care and implementing strategies to target these concerns.

Raskauskas is also looking for ways to embed pharmacists in the hospital setting, where they can improve patients' medicinal literacy. He urges pharmacists to communicate with patients by asking them how effective the medications are and by using medication therapy management to decrease hospital readmissions. Raskauskas notes that many of the patients are readmitted to the hospitals without planning. He looks to decrease the number by collaborating with pharmacists to administer the highest-quality care.

At Left: A passionate Raskauskas aims to streamline quality care with the development of communication at the bedside and in the collaboration room where doctors work to ensure excellence. He is pictured here with UConn student Lauren Croll who was on rotation with him in July.

Students enrolled in the rotation will propose solutions to these daunting challenges. At the end of the month, students



# Pharmacy 5

Five fun facts about.



Married her high school sweetheart and they are celebrating 32 years of wedded bliss

Her daughter performed at Carnegie Hall as part of the High School Honors Performance Series



Returned to school and recently graduated Summa Cum Laude from Bay Path University with a degree in executive management

Has a new hobby... vegetable gardening



Used To show quarter horses in Western Pleasure classes

Mary Ann Phaneuf  
Assistant Director of Experiential Education



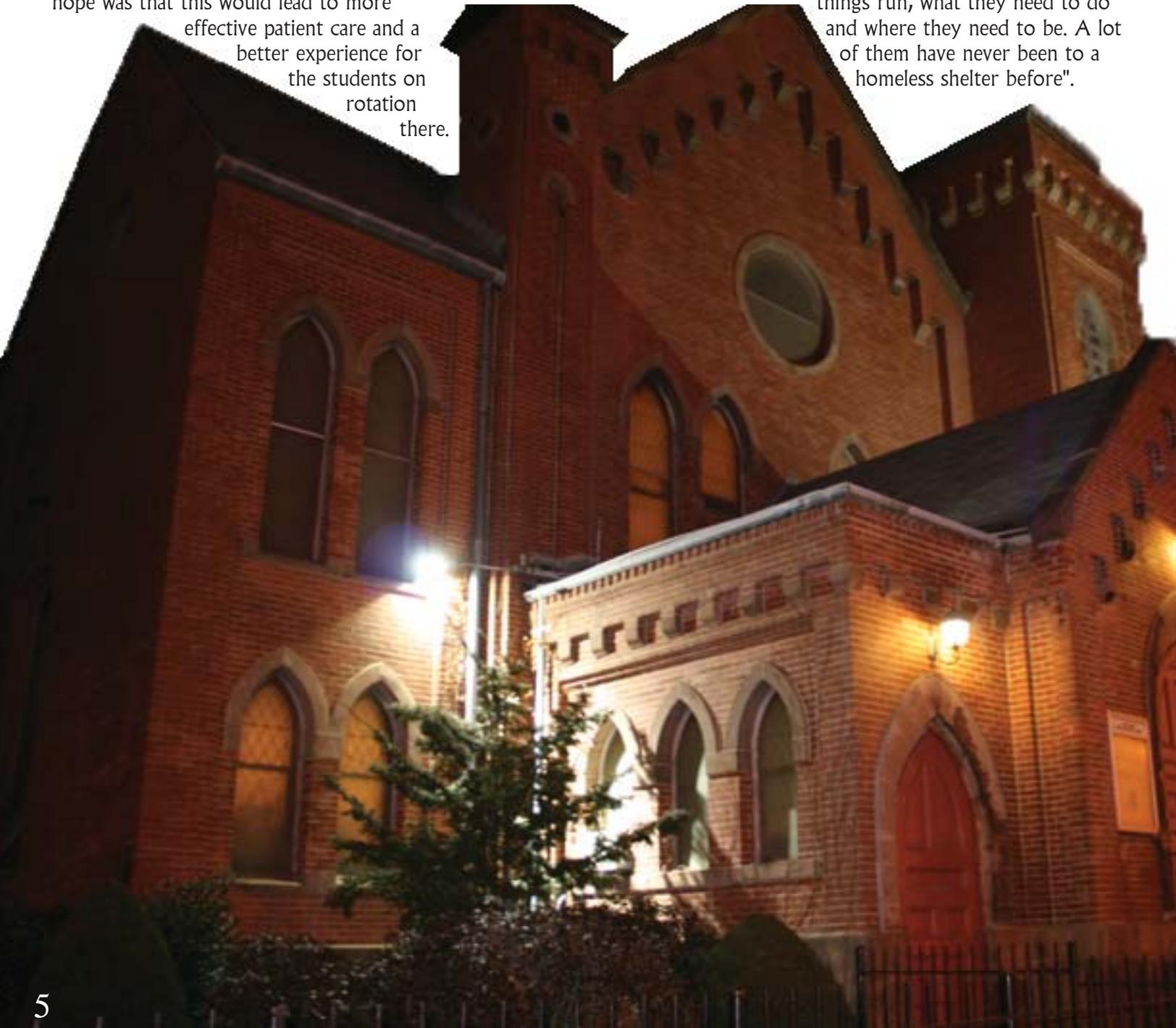
# SERVICE

## Education is an Essential Tool for Helping Those in Need

The South Park Homeless Shelter is run a little differently to many of its counterparts; it is directed largely by students. For the longest time, these students were mostly medics, but for the past several years, pharmacy students from UConn also are serving these patients. Former students, Gina Shah, Elizabeth Nguyen and Huong Truong, served on the shelter's Pharmacy Student Board of Directors during their time at UConn. Their focus was on the representation of pharmacy students at the shelter. This included overseeing that pharmacy and medical students were well integrated and working together. Their hope was that this would lead to more effective patient care and a better experience for the students on rotation there.

"Since we were one of the first groups of pharmacy board directors, we kind of had to start from scratch," Shah explained. "Obviously most of the directors and students on rotation up to that point had been medical students, so our big focus was on pushing for collaboration between them and our pharmacists, making sure we had a voice".

"This is such an inter-professional space. It's a great opportunity to get ourselves and our classmates involved out in the field," said Nguyen. "Initially, we guided the pharmacy students new to the rotation, showing them how things run, what they need to do and where they need to be. A lot of them have never been to a homeless shelter before".





While the six directors help acclimatize students for whom the homeless shelter environment is a new experience, some of the board members initially came into the experience equally fresh. "My background was one where health care was relatively easy to come by, so going to the homeless shelter was a new experience for me too," said Shah. "But I wanted to get out of my comfort zone and help people who really needed it. I also love patient interaction, so this was a good way to do that while also collaborating with other people in the medical field."

Nguyen and Truong have different stories. "I grew up in an urban area and I'd volunteered before so it was a familiar environment for me," explained Nguyen. "My interests are on the clinical side of pharmacy too, so South Park was really a natural progression for me."

"I grew up in Hartford, and I did a lot of work on the Urban Service Track, so I was comfortable in that environment," added Truong. "I wanted to advocate for the patient, but also for the pharmacist; I wanted to make it known that we pharmacists contribute a lot more than we are given credit for, especially on the medical side, and generally, I want to make our role more appreciated."

This desire can certainly be seen in these young women's day-to-day work. "We attend meetings with the medical board students where we discuss issues like fund-raising and patient assignments," said Truong. "We see these meetings as an opportunity to make ourselves and our classmates on rotation known. It's where we can create the opportunities for pharmacists to show what we can do." The three feel that by being in these directorship positions they were able to help other students on rotation take advantage of these opportunities much more effectively. Shah added, "They're our classmates after all; we knew their personalities. We knew who was going to be a little shy and need more attention. We also knew those who are more outgoing and confident and could be allowed to stretch their wings a little more."

Of course, with so many students to oversee and targets to achieve, the board needed to remain highly organized. "When we made a decision we made sure we communicated with one another," said Shah. "It's hard to get everyone on the same schedule, we wanted to have as many of the board members there as possible".

But that hard work is rewarding. The most memorable part of the experience for Nguyen was knowing that they were able to provide the best care for their patients, despite the limited resources of a student run facility. "There was a point where I realized how far I'd come and how much I'd learned," she said. "I answered a lot of medical queries patients had, something which was much more of a struggle when I first started."

The directors were learning all the time. Whether it was personal, clinical, or leadership skills, it was through their efforts at the South Park Shelter that this growth happened.



# CPA Advocates for Pharmacy

As executive vice president of the Connecticut Pharmacists Association (CPA), Margherita Giuliano aims to promote and advocate for the practice of pharmacy while fostering a passion for advancement. The organization of over 750 members from across the state, is involved in voting on policies that would impact state legislation. Together, licensed pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy students work closely with the health care community and numerous institutions to identify the quality of public health.

Each member of the board has a voice in its policies, administration and positions. As a pharmacy student member, University of Connecticut's, Tom Walczyk, is involved in plans and projects to promote the profession. He produced a video, discussing how the CPA benefits pharmacists. "We encourage the role of the students as the future of the profession. I hope that they are able to observe and get something from the meetings."

During meetings, a group of students sits in on a leadership discussion and offers their input regarding the latest policies and legislation. The CPA takes these votes to the State Capitol and to Washington D.C. to ensure that the practice of pharmacy is protected. The organization helps members monitor these issues, attends legislative meetings, and testifies at legislative public hearings concerning proposed bills. As dozens of bills are introduced each year, the CPA weighs the positive and negative impacts of each.

In hopes of creating new opportunities for pharmacists within the state, the CPA continues to encourage its members to educate themselves about the profession and new developments in the field. Each fall, the CPA and Massachusetts Pharmacists Association (MPA) jointly host a convention, promoting new jobs for pharmacists. With over 700 attendees, the organizations work to promote continuing education.

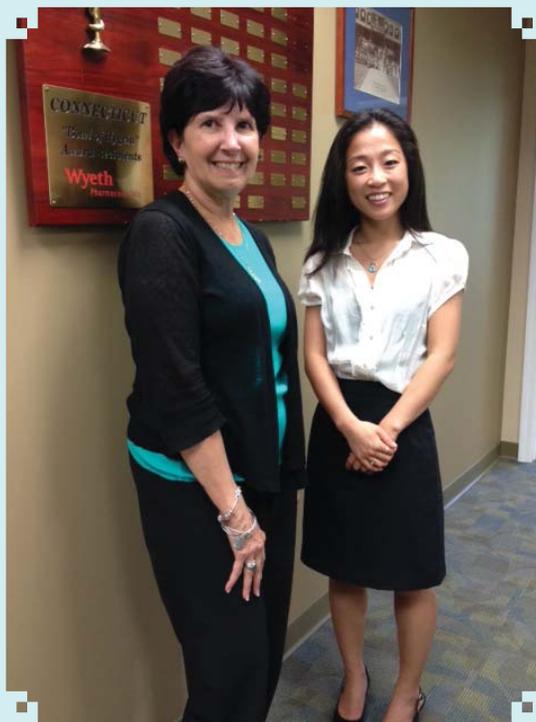
The CPA has worked on various projects to reach their goals. In 2008, the Department of Social Sciences serviced a pilot program sponsoring the collaboration of UConn and CPA. As part of the program, the two teams worked to provide medicine management assistance and create job opportunities within the pharmacy community.

As the CPA strives for advancement, its continued collaborations thrust it closer to ground-breaking legislation. Currently, the organization is working to pass medical marijuana legislation. They are looking to work closely with dispensaries made up of pharmacists to create a compassionate care and research program. While the project is in its early stages, pharmacists from Yale are already looking at how different marijuana products affect patients. Also in progress, the CPA is a project with the New England Quality Innovation Network to examine adverse drugs effects, especially in nursing homes where they can track high-risk medications. The collaboration is in its beginning stage of the 5 year program.

As demonstrated in its collaboration with prominent health organizations and a strong presence at both the State Capitol and Washington D.C., the CPA's diligence is cultivated by the belief that pharmacy has a bright future. Giuliano says she looks forward to the future roles of pharmacists. "I'm very excited about the future of pharmacy," she said. "I think that there will be many opportunities; the opportunities are endless. As there is more and more recognition that pharmacists are essential in healthcare, we see that pharmacists are most qualified to

manage patients' medication."

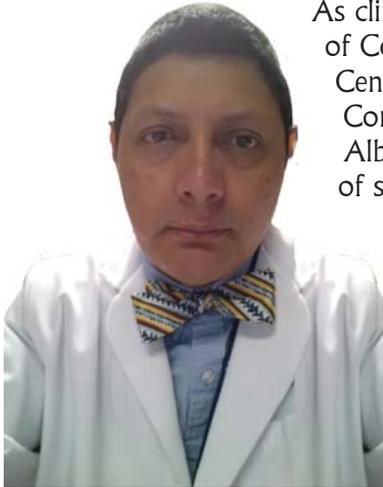
"I'm excited about what the future holds. I think that many of us have been waiting for this. It's just over the horizon."



UConn alumna and CPA Executive Vice President Marghie Giuliano precepted P4 student Elena Ko in July.

Story: Tianna Duquette

# Cornell Scott Hill Health Center



Clinical Pharmacy  
Coordinator Edgar Albuja

As clinical pharmacy coordinator of Cornell Scott Hill Health Center and University of Connecticut graduate, Edgar Albuja provides an array of services. Along with coordinating clinical aspects of ambulatory care, Albuja monitors the use and administration of patients' drug regimens and provides direct observational therapy which serves as a resource for providers, nurses and other staff. While one-quarter of his work is retail pharmacy, he regularly assists patients.

Albuja says he enjoys connecting with patients, ensuring that their needs are met.

As a member of the first community health organization in Connecticut, Albuja serves New Haven neighborhoods, which are some of the most underprivileged in the state. Under 340B, a drug pricing program that enables health care organizations to care for patients at a discounted price, he is able to provide his patients with the clinical care they require. As an instructor, he precepts University of Connecticut and Saint Joseph pharmacy students on ambulatory care rotations.

Albuja hosts an anti-coagulation clinic, where he and students monitor patients' infusion-associated reactions and recommend dosages accordingly. A clinic in its early stages, focuses on aiding diabetic patients in their transition from medication to insulin. Albuja says because diabetes is complex, he looks to educate patients on healthy eating, reducing their risks, and exercising. He says medication literacy is low, so education and understanding are a priority. "There are cultural barriers, economic factors, and psycho-social factors," he said. "We have to help people transition into this life-long disease."

Albuja says he hopes to get the family members of diabetic patients involved as well as the community in order to gain support. "What we have to tell them is overwhelming. Diabetes can be psychologically debilitating," he said. "[Education] is the future of what I see."

Albuja wants students to take the time required to understand their patients. "I want them to see it the way the patients see it," he said. "We have a lot of information and we have to figure out how to give that to patients. The patients have a diverse background so we have to present the information in a diverse manner. How can we make them understand what we know?"

In regards to his time spent in college, the alum says he felt very prepared to enter the health care field after graduation and is proud to be a UConn graduate. As for keeping in touch with the staff, Albuja says he has always been thankful for Educational Outreach Coordinator Peter Tyczkowski's guidance. Without his support, Albuja says, he would not have been introduced to his current employer of four years. He hopes to provide pharmacy students with similar guidance and support.

## Congratulations

Alumnus Jeff Messina from Fort Hill Pharmacy in Groton, Connecticut was named "Best Pharmacist" in *The Day's* "2015 Best of Readers' Choice Awards." Alumna Lisa Bragaw from McQuade's in Mystic, Connecticut took the second place prize. Lisa's yoga studio, Zen & Now, took the top place in that category. Just another day of accolades for our preceptors!

# UConn Students and Preceptors Make a Difference in the Community

Keeping track of medication can be very difficult. It may be manageable when you only have to take two or three medications a day, but when it begins to get upward of fifteen, it becomes overwhelming. This is especially true for the elderly, who are the most likely patient population to be effected by multiple diagnoses.

Brown Bag events, like the ones run by Ruth LaCasse from UConn Health, aim to alleviate this problem by sitting down with patients, in groups and one-to-one sessions, and clarifying their medical requirements.

Open Bag events such as these have a two part structure. Initially, the patients are taken as a group to watch a PowerPoint presentation, in which the more general issues are addressed. "This includes things like correct carrying procedure," says LaCasse. "We also go over things like how to use an inhaler properly." Having completed the presentation, the patients then move to a one-to-one environment where they can go into detail about their personal medication problems. According to LaCasse, the meetings are held between patients and student volunteers. Patients can go over the list of their medication, learn about safety and routine, as well as how to handle their medication efficiently. This structure ensures that everyone gets access to the broader information they need to know, as well as specific information for them personally.

Events like these certainly create access to interesting cases. "One of our visitors was on a lot of herbal medication for example," comments LaCasse. "A surprising amount really. It definitely perplexed our student volunteers, but together we were able to sort her out." The big case of that event was a patient who needed to be guided through her inhaler use after the presentation, while also being talked through her multiple prescriptions. "She required a lot of attention and was there for a while after everyone else had left," LaCasse said. "However, she was quite satisfied with both her inhaler and medication by the end. It was a lot of hard work, but very rewarding for everyone involved."

The first time that the program was rolled out in Newtown, Connecticut, the team was met with some bad weather. "This meant that a few of our most elderly patients were deterred from coming out, but this is only the first of the Brown Bag events that we had lined up," said LaCasse. "I suppose in a way it was good to be able to test the event with more limited numbers. It was certainly a great success for those that managed to make it out". LaCasse built on this success by focusing on access to the event. "We try to schedule events on a monthly basis. Our volunteers are mostly students so during exam season we schedule the event every two months." In addition, LaCasse also encourages the patients to book their medical appointments as close to the event as possible. "That way the patient has the information fresh in their mind when they come in to see us, which helps us clarify issues for them."

It is interactions like this that most benefit the student volunteers. "Events like these are great for pharmacy students," LaCasse says. "It gets them out of their comfort zone, out of the usual academic sphere and into the real world so they can get a taste of actual work with patients. As this program progresses, we literally want to get the show on the road and bring students out to all sorts of different places."

Events like this have the highest potential to help both patients and students when the event itself begins to expand. "It will help us get the word out, collaborate with the local area and get more people involved," said LaCasse. For those who have a long list of medications, events like these will certainly make the future a little brighter.

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Above: A community outreach program in New Britain run by UConn students on rotation with Ruth LaCasse and Kevin Chamberlin.

# UConn Alumnus Named Master Preceptor by the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy

Guidance, compassion, motivation, and interest are words Chris Federico uses to describe UConn alumnus Jim Sarigianis. He is, says Federico, “the quintessential preceptor.” The American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) agrees as Sarigianis was named in the second class of the organization’s Master Preceptor Recognition Program.

Preceptors supervise student pharmacists in a clinical setting, and play a critical role in shaping a student’s future career through teaching and mentoring. “The AACP Master Preceptor Recognition Program recognizes the exemplary preceptors in the academy who support our institutional members and future practitioners,” said Lucinda L. Maine, executive vice president and CEO of AACP. “AACP introduced the Master Preceptor Program to offer our members another tool for recognizing and rewarding our best preceptors who contribute so much to our students’ learning.”

In 2006, the UConn School of Pharmacy named Sarigianis “Preceptor of the Year” after he was nominated by students that had just graduated from the program.

“Jim places a high value on experiential teaching at his practice site and involves his students in every aspect of his practice. Students actually experience the concepts taught in the classroom and make the transition into practice,” says Philip Hritcko, assistant dean of experiential education at UConn.

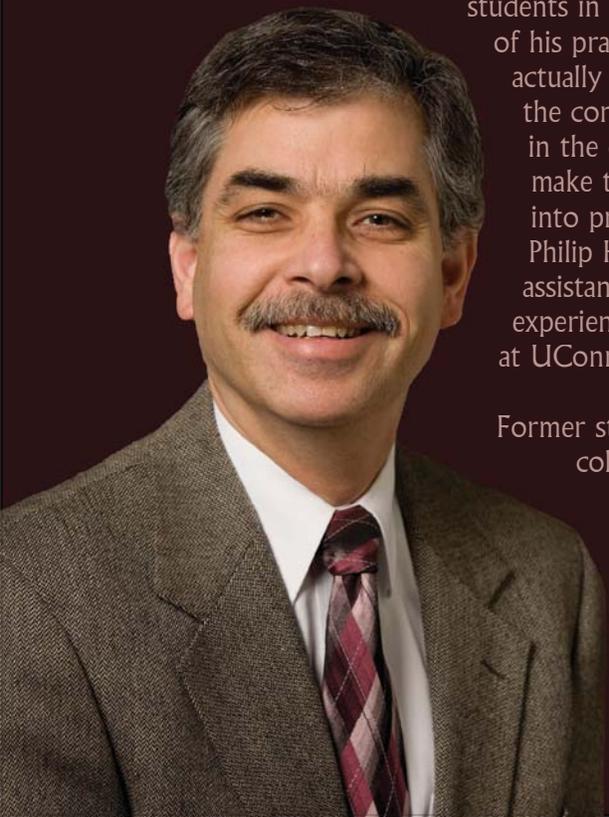
Former students and colleagues describe Sarigianis as

“exceedingly intelligent, wise, well spoken, and genuine.” Nominator Tom Kalista said, “When he spoke, everybody – attending physicians to wide-eyed pharmacy students alike – listened.” Eric Tichy, a former student turned colleague, explained, “He has developed a world class clinical practice and he is consistently held in the highest regard by physicians, nurses, patients, and colleagues. However, his greatest achievement is that he always has time to mentor students and without fail, his students develop a passion for clinical pharmacy.”

Sarigianis, a clinical pharmacist at Yale-New Haven Hospital, credits much of his success to paying close, personal attention to the students and making himself easily accessible to them throughout the day. “I make it very clear to them that they are a very high priority and that I am available to them no matter how busy I may seem,” he says. “In essence, I treat all of my students as I would expect a preceptor to treat my own children.”

AACP estimates that 82 percent of schools use faculty who are jointly-funded by practice sites, and up to 60 percent of total Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience rotations are provided by adjunct or volunteer faculty. The MPRP seeks to recognize preceptors who are not full-time employees of a pharmacy school, but who are critical in creating practice-ready pharmacists. “Experiential learning is more than 25 percent of the curriculum and requires the dedication of so many excellent practitioners,” says Maine.

The master preceptors announced by AACP on April 29 are: James S. Sarigianis, B.S.Pharm., University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy; Lisa Hammond, Pharm.D., Shenandoah University; Bernard J. Dunn, Pharm.D., St. Louis College of Pharmacy; Susan Miller, Pharm.D., MBA, BCPS, FCCP, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Eshelman School of Pharmacy; Edward Sheridan, Pharm.D., Purdue University College of Pharmacy; Deanna McDanel, Pharm.D., The University of Iowa College of Pharmacy; Stephen Clement, R.Ph., St. Louis College of Pharmacy; Christopher L. Greer, B.S.Pharm., Washington State University College of Pharmacy; Andrea Hinton, Pharm.D., University of the Pacific; Thomas J. Long, Pharm.D., Thomas J. Long School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. Sarigianis is the first preceptor from Connecticut to be recognized by AACP.



# UConn

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