

Prescriptives

School of Pharmacy News

School of Pharmacy Names First Research Laboratory after SOTAX Pharmaceuticals

By: Aloise Brewster

The University of Connecticut Board of Trustees recently dubbed the first named research laboratory in the School of Pharmacy the SOTAX Dissolution and Release Testing Laboratory, honoring SOTAX Solutions for Pharmaceutical Testing Co. for their generous donations to the school's research facility. The Switzerland-based company, which manufactures testing instruments and software for the field of pharmaceuticals, has donated dissolution research equipment valued at over \$100,000 over the past five years, earning them this recognition that was made official at a naming ceremony on January 20, 2010.

Lisa Brown, '99, associate director of development for the School of Pharmacy, said that in addition to the SOTAX Dissolution and Release Testing Laboratory, the School of Pharmacy has available several other laboratories and spaces that may be named to recognize donations of certain amounts. The gift minimums and naming approval are determined by the University of Connecticut's Board of Trustees. Donations can be in the form of pledges, (made over five years) cash gifts, equities, or a "gift in-kind," which is tangible personal property, like the equipment donated by SOTAX. This equipment's monetary value of \$114,000 surpassed the \$100,000 minimum required to name a laboratory, making SOTAX eligible for such recognition. "In addition to the equipment, they've donated their time and their service to keep [the instruments] calibrated and running well," Brown said.



Postdoctoral fellow, Jacqueline Morais, explains her research to a member of the SOTAX team.

Dr. Diane Burgess, Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor, professor of pharmaceutical science, and the overseer of all projects conducted in this laboratory, said the equipment donated are three USP Apparatus 4 instruments that are used to determine drug release rates from slow releasing drug delivery systems. These apparatuses are designed to essentially mimic the human body so that researchers can understand the performance of the drug products. Dr. Burgess' lab deals specifically with parenteral formulations, or injectable medications, versus the more common oral dosage forms of tablets or capsules. With eight graduate students and two post-doctoral fellows working in the laboratory at the same time, Dr. Burgess says that having

A Message from the Dean



Dear Friends:

One of the great joys I have as dean is to receive notes from patients, preceptors and many others telling me about the difference one of our students has made. Here is one such letter about P4 student Sara Miernicki:

"I know we all get very busy with our daily responsibilities and there seems to never be enough time, or at least that is how I feel most of the time. But I wanted to take a moment to let you know that I encountered one of your School of Pharmacy students recently at the CVS in Coventry and was quite pleased how she handled me as a customer. Her name is Sara Miernicki and about a month and a half ago I dropped off a few prescriptions. One of them when I picked them up was over \$50. I asked Sara why it was not covered and if I could get a generic brand. She was very helpful in explaining that the way my physician had written the prescription it was for a different one than I had received in the past and there was no generic available. She said she would contact the doctor's office for me and see if she could fill it how I usually have it filled.

About a month later I went back to pick up the prescription that had been filled with Sara's help and assistance but it had been too long and the medication had been put back into circulation. Coincidentally, Sara was there to assist me again. I had to drop another prescription off and let her

- Continued on Page 3 -

- Continued on Page 3 -

School of Pharmacy Launches Academic Partnership with University of Bridgeport

By: Colin Poitras - Reprinted from the UConn Advance

A new partnership between the University of Connecticut and the University of Bridgeport will qualify more students from Fairfield County for UConn's highly competitive School of Pharmacy. "This unique partnership between UConn and UB – a public and a private university – opens the doors for a broad range of students to prepare for one of the finest pharmacy programs in the nation so they can obtain jobs in the expanding field of health care," says University of Bridgeport President Neil Albert Salonen. Officials from both universities launched the partnership today with the official signing of a memorandum of understanding between the schools in the University of Bridgeport's Wahlstrom Library.



Marian Merced, vice president of UConn's Pharmacy Student Government, welcomes her Bridgeport peers into the UConn School of Pharmacy. Photo by Kazuhiro Shoji

Beginning in fall 2010, UB will offer a two-year pre-pharmacy program that complies with the rigid curriculum standards for UConn's Doctor of Pharmacy degree. Students who complete their pre-pharmacy requirements in Bridgeport will be

eligible to apply to the UConn doctoral program in pharmacy as part of the new partnership agreement.

"We are very excited about this partnership with our colleagues from the University of Bridgeport and having a UConn presence in the city of Bridgeport," said Robert L. McCarthy, dean of the UConn School of Pharmacy. "UB attracts a diverse group of students – many of whom are first-generation college students – and we look forward to providing these students with an opportunity to pursue a career in pharmacy."

We are very excited about this partnership with our colleagues from the University of Bridgeport.

The UConn School of Pharmacy, with its Doctor of Pharmacy degree and research-intensive graduate programs in medicinal chemistry, pharmaceuticals, and pharmacology/toxicology, has a reputation as one of the best pharmacy education programs in the nation and attracts some of the best and brightest national and international students.

Marian Merced, vice-president of UConn's Pharmacy Student Government and a third year pharmacy student, urged her Bridgeport peers to get involved in school organizations in order to gain valuable insight into the profession and hone their leadership skills. She described UConn's School of Pharmacy as a close-knit bunch of students and "a little school with a lot of heart."



David M. Brady, vice provost for the Health Sciences Division at the University of Bridgeport, [left] and Robert L. McCarthy, dean of the UConn School of Pharmacy, [right] sign a partnership between the schools. Photo by Department of Publications, University of Bridgeport

"The most important thing that pre-pharmacy students will gain, however, are relationships with the current pharmacy students, who will act like mentors throughout the entirety of their pre-pharmacy years," Merced said about the new partnership. "We are very excited for the UB pre-pharms to become involved in our professional student organizations, and we look forward to working closely with the students for a peer mentoring program in order to connect prospective students to the School of Pharmacy."

David Brady, vice provost for the Health Sciences Division at UB, said the collaboration "will expand pre-pharmacy education in the State of Connecticut and allow new opportunities for a wide diversity of well-qualified students to pursue pharmacy as a career. The UConn School of Pharmacy has been wonderful and enthusiastic in supporting the University of Bridgeport's desire to include expanded, quality pre-pharmacy education as part of its offerings in the health sciences." ■



Contributors:

Elizabeth Anderson, Aloise Brewster, Tom Buckley, Daniel Buttrey, Ellen Konspore, Daniel Leone, Robert McCarthy, Sara Muldoon, Colin Poitras, University of Bridgeport, Elizabeth Wood, and Megan Zabilansky.

three of these apparatuses is especially helpful in keeping projects moving simultaneously and at a quick pace. The goal of these projects is to come up with standardized testing methods to ensure safety and efficacy of drug products that can be used by all laboratories developing these types of products.

“We have collaborative projects with the USP [United States Pharmacopeia] and with the FDA [Food and Drug Administration] to develop performance testing methods for microspheres, liposomes, and nanoparticle dosage forms,” said Dr. Burgess. “There are recommended testing methods for more traditional dosage forms such as tablets and capsules, but right now there are no recommended testing methods for these novel types of products.” With the use of SOTAX’s Apparatus 4, she said, the lab has been designing such methods, and is currently in the process of patenting one modification to the USP 4 Apparatus flow through cell. SOTAX has purchased the rights to this patent, but any royalties that may be earned as a result will come back the University of Connecticut.

Dr. Burgess said SOTAX did not donate the equipment or become invested in UConn’s research for personal gain, but for the advancement of the entire field of pharmacy. Any positive results from the research conducted in Dr. Burgess’ laboratory will benefit everyone in this field of research and, ultimately, the patients. If such testing methods are developed, it will be easier to prove the safety and effectiveness of these types of parenteral medications and this will facilitate regulation and approval by the FDA.

The idea to name the laboratory after SOTAX first came up when Rolf Benz, the company’s chief scientific officer, came from Switzerland to visit their U.S. site in Hopkinton, MA. Benz, who co-owns the company with his brother Juerg, paid a visit to the University of Connecticut to see how



Bernhard Christen, CEO [left] and Dean Robert L. McCarthy commemorate the naming of the SOTAX Dissolution and Testing Laboratory.

the SOTAX equipment was being used, and was impressed by the School of Pharmacy’s building and laboratories. “It was at that meeting that the suggestion really came up... to name the lab,” Dr. Burgess said. Once she realized that the laboratory was eligible for naming, the process of making it official moved forward.

Ms. Brown said the process of naming a space at the School of Pharmacy begins after a donor has made a gift that meets the minimum required. The first step is to determine if the donor is interested in the naming opportunity. Once that decision has been made, and the donation is in the form of a gift in-kind, its value must be substantiated and if the gift is above \$5,000, the donor must have the property appraised to determine its financial worth. The Board of Trustees’ Building Naming Committee then decides, by vote, whether to approve the naming. As the committee only convenes once a quarter, the timing for such a decision depends on the time between the submission of a request and the next meeting. Once the motion is passed, the name is given for the life of the building, meaning that the SOTAX Dissolution and Release Testing Laboratory is the permanent name of that laboratory.

After the Building Naming Committee approved the request, plans for the naming ceremony commenced. Nine employees from SOTAX came to attend the ceremony in January. “It was quite the international event,” Ms. Brown said, noting the diversity of the attending employees from Switzerland, Germany, and France. ■

Dean’s Message

Continued from Page 1

know that I could pick them both up another time. It was pouring rain and I had three young children in the car (at the drive up window.) My daughter had just broken her arm and I needed to get her Motrin to help with the pain. I let Sara know that I knew it was not her responsibility to do this but asked if I could purchase the Motrin from the window instead of taking all three kids in the store in the pouring rain. She not only let me do this, she brought the three different flavors over to let my daughter choose the flavor she liked best. It was truly a wonderful demonstration of customer service!

Sara made a definite impression on me and my kids; my daughter wants to know more about the School of Pharmacy! It was such a nice experience to know that the pharmacists you train are good citizens and community members – in addition to being good pharmacists. Sara made a big difference to me on more than one occasion and I thought I should let you know.

From the time our professional and graduate students first matriculate, we remind them that their job is to care for patients; some will be doing so directly (as did Sara) others will be doing so indirectly though their research, but it’s what we expect of all UConn School of Pharmacy graduates.

I am very pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Debra Kendall, Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor, as head of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences effective July 1st. Dr. Kendall replaces Dr. John Morris who has decided to return to the faculty after 8 years of distinguished—and highly successful—service. Dr. Kendall is an internationally-recognized scholar whose work focuses on cannabinoid receptors. Her research has received

- Continued on Page 5 -

Focus on Faculty ~ Theodore Rasmussen Stem Cell Research

By: Sara Muldoon

Dr. Theodore P. Rasmussen has come a long way from washing glassware in labs during college. In fact, he has worked his way up from dishwasher to associate professor with his own lab, and an impressive number of other accomplishments.

So, where did it all begin? Most children do not announce that they want to work with embryonic stem cells and deliver seminars on the “Epigenetic Regulation of ES Cell Proliferation and Pluripotency.” Dr. Rasmussen was no exception (although he did give the aforementioned seminar at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in November 2009.) As a child, Ted was intrigued by fossils and the way things actually worked, and although, he entered the University of Washington as geology major, a biology class changed his course, and he graduated with a B.S. in biology. A few years later he departed from the University of Wisconsin with a Ph.D. in genetics followed by a postdoctoral fellowship at the Whitehead Institute at MIT. For six years he worked as an assistant and associate professor at the University of Connecticut in the Department of Animal Science and the Department of Molecular Science. He recently joined the School of Pharmacy as an associate professor in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences.



Culturing cells in Dr. Rasmussen's lab

The major focus of Dr. Rasmussen's professional career is his lab which includes nearly a dozen people from all over the world at various stages of their career. The overall focus of Rasmussen's research is directed towards the use of stem cells for cell-based therapeutics, the personalization of medicine, and the study of disease mechanisms with emphasis on the use of induced pluripotent cells (iPS) and embryonic stem cells. According to Dr. Rasmussen, the lab members have made good progress on mouse and human iPS cells, and have had five papers published or in press during the past year.

According to Dr. Rasmussen, the use of iPS for personalized medicine could help predict, in advance, an individual's reactions to medicine, which could save not only money and side effects, but their lives as well. A long term goal of the lab includes the “production of safe, immunocompatible, pluripotent cells for use in human cell-based therapies to alleviate human disease, and learn how to guide their differentiation to produce transplantable cells with therapeutic properties.”

This cutting edge research (iPS) has only been around for approximately two years, and uses many of the same techniques as cloning. To help support his research, the Connecticut State Stem Cell Research Program is currently providing him with a half-million dollar grant for the “Prevention of Spontaneous Differentiation and Epigenetic Compromise of Human ES and iPS Cells,” and over \$630,000 towards the study of the “Production and validation of patient-matched pluripotent cells for improved cutaneous repair”. Prior to these current grants, Dr. Rasmussen had also received support from prestigious organizations such as the National Institutes of Health.

Besides his own research and teaching, Dr. Rasmussen has been involved in multiple professional endeavors. He is a member of several professional societies, including the International Society for Stem Cell Research. In 2005, he published his



Dr. Theodore Rasmussen, intrigued by fossils and “the way things actually worked,” entered college as a geology major but became fascinated with biology and, later, genetics.

instructional material Stem Cells, Therapy, and Medical Research in The Way We Work With Life: Issues in BioTechnology. He has provided his expertise for the creation of state legislation regarding the permissance of stem-cell research as well as testimony in governmental matters, and he has given 37 special lectures and seminars. Dr. Rasmussen is one of the founding members of the University of Connecticut Stem Cell Institute and the University of Connecticut's Center for Regenerative Biology. In addition, he commits himself to grant reviews, mentorship, advising, committees, and public outreach.

Dr. Rasmussen has recently been asked to serve as a grant funding reviewer for the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM), which he regards as “an honor since it recognizes the expertise in stem cell research,” and is soon to be appointed on a grant review panel at the National Institutes of Health as a permanent member. ■

Dr. Urs Boelsterli's Lab has received a donation from Helsinn Healthcare SA, Switzerland of nearly \$100,000, for supporting research on mechanisms of drug-induced small intestinal injury.

Dr. Bill Baker has joined the faculty of the School of Pharmacy as an assistant clinical professor of pharmacy practice.

Dr. Marcy Balunas has joined the faculty of the School of Pharmacy as an assistant professor of pharmaceutical sciences in the medicinal chemistry discipline.

Mina Boone has joined the staff of the School of Pharmacy as administrative services specialist and assistant to the associate dean.

Lisa Brown has been promoted to associate director of development for the School of Pharmacy. Lisa has been with the UConn Foundation for the past two years as the assistant director of development.

Dr. Diane Burgess has been selected by the Academy of Pharmaceutical Science and Technology, Japan as the coming recipient of the APSTJ Nagai International Woman Scientist Award.

Dr. Bodhi Chaudhuri presented a poster entitled, "Assay based kinetic predictability study on cellulose effectiveness for fuel biomass or fiber hydrolysis" in the Biotechnology Division at the 239th American Chemical Society National Meeting and Exposition in San Francisco, CA. He also became a reviewer for both the "International Journal of Pharmaceutics" and "Powder Technology."

Sue Donnelly retired from the School of Pharmacy after 12 years of service to the school.

Dr. Megan Ehret's poster presentation was awarded the New Investigator Award from the College of Psychiatric & Neurologic Pharmacists for her work in correctional mental health.

Dr. Andrea Hubbard has been nominated for a 2010 Undergraduate Student Government Professional Excellence Award.

Dr. Sean Jeffrey was elected as vice-president of ASCP for 2011 – 2012.

Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor **Dr. Debra Kendall** has joined the School of Pharmacy as head of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Dr. John Morris was elected treasurer of the Society of Toxicology and was appointed to the NIH Nanotoxicology Study Section. He has also received a \$150,000 grant from the American Petroleum Institute to study the inhalation dosimetry of naphthalene.

Dr. Trinh Pham was promoted to associate clinical professor of pharmacy practice.

Dr. Michael Pikal received a NIH SBIR grant with Physical Sciences for Freeze Drying Process Analytical Technology.

Dr. Marissa Salvo has joined the faculty of the School of Pharmacy as an assistant clinical professor of pharmacy practice.

Paul Shea has retired from the School of Pharmacy after 9½ years of service to the school.

Dr. Marie Smith was tenured as a professor of pharmacy practice, was appointed as the first Dr. Henry A. Palmer Endowed Professor in Community Pharmacy Practice, and named assistant dean for practice & public policy partnerships. She was an invited presenter at the Health Affairs press briefing for congressional staff, policymakers, and health policy researchers on May 4, 2010 at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. Dr. Smith was appointed as an AACP representative to the Pharmacy Quality Alliance Workgroup on The Role of Medication Management Programs in Care Transitions and the Patient Centered Medical Home Workgroup.

Dr. Olga Vinogradova was promoted to associate professor. ■

funding from numerous prestigious granting agencies including the NIH, which has continually supported her work for over two decades. An accomplished teacher as well as scholar, we look forward to her leadership of one of the nation's most distinguished pharmaceutical sciences departments.

In May, we held our first Graduate Student Seminar Day focused on recognizing the research accomplishments of our graduate students. Developed by Assistant Department Head Dr. Amy Anderson, the program included presentations from one graduate student in each of our pharmaceutical sciences disciplines. Archana Rawat presented the pharmaceutics seminar, "Standardization of USP Apparatus 4 Method for Performance Testing of Microspheres"; Lalit Deshmukh presented the medicinal chemistry seminar, "αIIβ3: Tale of Two Cytoplasmic Tails"; Igor Gurevich presented the pharmacology/toxicology seminar, "Feedback Loop between Retinoic Acid Receptors and Novel Coregulator TNIP1."

As always, the events, teaching, research, outreach, and service activities of our faculty, staff, and students are far too numerous to mention in our publications. Make sure that you visit our website for the latest happenings. Send us your e-mail so that you can receive periodic updates from the school. We encourage you to attend our events, tell us your stories, and remain connected to the school. You are a part of the UConn School of Pharmacy family. ■

Blood Pressure Simulation Enhances UConn Students' Clinical Practice Experiences

By: Aloise Brewster

The University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy has improved its education and training of blood pressure testing by implementing four NASCO Life/Form Blood Pressure Simulators into its Patient Assessment Laboratories. These apparatuses allow pharmacy students to practice taking varying blood pressure and pulse measurements to help prepare them for real-life scenarios with patients.

Dr. Effie Kuti, who coordinated the Introduction to Clinical Practice course at the UConn School of Pharmacy last year, said that the use of the simulator arm expands students' practice of blood pressure and pulse testing because it provides them with a wider range of results with which they can familiarize themselves. In the past, students were only able to practice blood pressure measurements on their lab partners, which yielded repetitive results as most students are young and healthy, and therefore elicit very normal blood pressure readings. With the use of a simulator arm, students are able to gain experience and learn what to do in the event that blood pressure results are abnormal. "The simulator arm that UConn has allows the students...to elicit a blood pressure that we type into the system so it can be more realistic to what they would see in a clinical setting, like someone who has hypertension or may be undergoing a hypertensive emergency, for example," explained Dr. Kuti.

In each lab session, the instructors themselves input the numbers that they want their students to read to ensure that the students gain practice with a wide range of results. Without these kinds of variations, Dr. Kuti said, students could almost guess the numbers that a blood pressure test would yield, which would hinder their learning and familiarization with this essential aspect of patient assessment.

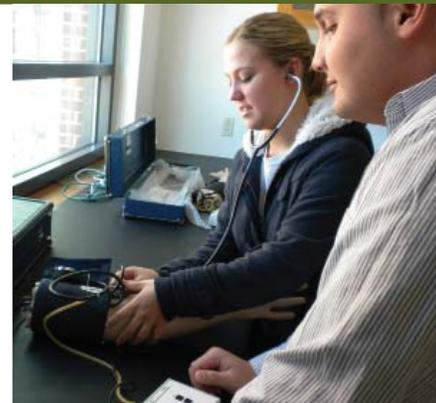
Before the implementation of these apparatuses, students and instructors relied on dual head stethoscopes that allowed both instructors and students to listen in on the same blood pressure tests performed on human arms. The stethoscopes were difficult to hear from, and therefore, the results these tests yielded were far less accurate than those performed with the simulator. "It was difficult to determine if the students really heard what we heard," said Dr. Kuti.

Now, thanks to the use of simulation technology, instructors know exactly what results their students should be getting, which heightens accuracy. "It's wonderful because we can actually put in a value...and know that's what the simulator is going to produce," said Dr. Kuti. "That's been a great reward."

After doing research on different products, the pharmacy practice faculty chose the NASCO Life/Form simulator because it has a very low chance of having a faulty reading. To further minimize the chance of this happening, instructors calibrate the simulators at the beginning of each two-hour lab session to ensure that the numbers are still accurate.

This particular machine contains other perks as well. Not only does it also allow students to practice testing heart rate, it can also mimic an auscultatory gap, an interval of pressure where Korotkoff sounds indicating true systolic pressure fade away and reappear at a lower pressure point during the manual measurement of blood pressure. Instructors can use a setting on the apparatus to plan this kind of gap in between simulated blood pressure sounds to help familiarize their students with these pauses so that they recognize them in human tests.

Another aspect that Dr. Kuti likes about the Life/Form simulator is the ability to adjust its volume. "For students who have difficulty hearing we can turn it up a little bit louder, and that way they can...get a really good idea of what it sounds like. When they move to the human arm they're listening more acutely for that noise," explained Dr. Kuti.



Students use the simulator to take blood pressure readings.

In a study done by the UConn faculty last year comparing how students learn on a human arm versus a simulator arm, researchers found that students were more likely to miss the first systolic beat when testing a human than when they used the simulator. By increasing the volume on the simulator, students recognize this systolic beat and can continue the test without having to start over, increasing time effectiveness. "It helps them to at least get comfortable with that first sound," said Dr. Kuti.

In each lab session, student pairs are given about 25 minutes each to practice simulation testing, and students also have the opportunity to come into the lab on their own for extra practice. Dr. Kuti commented that the simulator did not give the students practice with their patient communications skills, but the efficiency with which they practice their readings is an enormous benefit overall. Instructors instead evaluate the students' person-to-person skills when they run the same blood pressure tests on one another, so students can still get that real-world experience.

Due to the great success instructors and students have experienced with the use of the simulator arms, the school hopes to incorporate other simulation equipment into their labs to assist in practice testing of other parts of the body, starting with a chest to mimic lung sounds. The inclusion of more simulation equipment will undoubtedly benefit future pharmacy students' practice and educational experiences. ■

Pharmacists an Integral Part of the Patient-Centered Medical Home Model

By: Elizabeth Wood

The idea of a patient-centered medical home model is not a new one, but rather a variation of an old idea. Since the end of the days when family doctors made house calls, medical personnel have strived to not only cater to patients' needs, but to create an atmosphere of cooperation between doctors, medical staff, and the patient, working together towards the best possible patient care.

The role of the pharmacist in the patient-centered medical home is something that has been changing and evolving. As the pharmaceutical industry grows, and pharmacy students begin learning more about patient interaction and assisting in patient care, pharmacists are developing skills that make them an integral part of the medical home.

Dr. Stefanie Nigro, an assistant professor of pharmacy practice, and Dr. Fei Wang, associate clinical professor of pharmacy practice at the University of Connecticut, have been working to increase the role of the pharmacist in the medical home through their work in Connecticut medical facilities, as well as by teaching students about pharmacists and their role in the medical home.

Dr. Nigro practices at a federally-funded health center in Connecticut that primarily works with patients who are under-served, underprivileged, and, in most cases, are lacking adequate insurance. Dr. Nigro partners with the physicians and nurses, taking an active role in the medical home model. For Dr. Nigro, the medical home is "a fundamental way of thinking about coordinating continuous care for patients when they come to see their physicians." When pharmacists are integrated into the medical home, the patients benefit from the addition. One of the most important factors of the patient-centered medical home is the continuity of the care. When patients are seeing the same physician and the same pharmacist every time, they are able to develop a relationship with them.

Dr. Nigro currently has two UConn students on rotation working with her. In order to teach them more about patient care, the students accompany her to patient visits and assist in medication reconciliations. The students compile medication history and help with educating the patients, such as teaching them how to use blood pressure meters, insulin pens, inhalers, etc.

Dr. Nigro has also been starting groups that use the integrative approach to help patients who have common diseases work through their difficulties with people who have similar experiences. She is currently in the process of starting a diabetes group to help people who struggle with the disease learn more about it and provide techniques for managing their illness. This group would include a pharmacist, a physician and a diabetes educator or nutritionist.

Dr. Nigro believes that pharmacists could be further integrated into the patient medical home by changing legislation to allow pharmacists to have a collaborative practice. Pharmacists are currently limited in what they can do to help patients, but if pharmacists were able to make modifications to drug therapy it would be more beneficial to the patients.

Dr. Wang works at Hartford Hospital in a primary care teaching clinic which is affiliated with the UConn Schools of Medicine, Pharmacy, and Nursing. Like Dr. Nigro, she provides her pharmacy services as part of a team-based model of care to a mostly under-insured and under-served population.

Dr. Wang provides services in two different ways. She works with the physicians to see patients and she acts as a referral source for patient education. Dr. Wang cites her responsibilities as including "the development and implementation of new collaborative practice pharmacy services in the adult primary care practice."

Dr. Wang has developed programs such as a smoking cessation program and a cardiovascular risk reduction program in the areas of hypertension, hyperlipidemia and diabetes mellitus. She believes these programs are "a great complement to current physician and nursing staff services and provide another level of more individualized patient



Drs. Fei Wang and Stefanie Nigro bring the patient-centered medical home model into their practices.

care which motivates and empowers patients to better self-manage their chronic disease states."

Dr. Wang works closely with health care providers in the treatment of patients, assisting in interviewing, counseling and education of patients, identifying drug-related problems and non-compliant patients, and recommending appropriate action. UConn pharmacy students are integrated into this system, assisting Dr. Wang as well as reviewing patient information, learning to implement medication therapy management and developing essential communication skills through interactions with patients and physicians.

Dr. Wang would like to see more pharmacists working with physicians. In an ideal medical home model there would be enough pharmacists that every physician would have a pharmacist to accompany them into patient visits and they would work together to give each patient the best possible care available.

Dr. Wang and Dr. Nigro both believe that pharmacists could be more effective in the patient home model if they were considered "providers" of services. This would allow them to be reimbursed for the services they render, which Dr. Nigro believes will "strengthen the profession as we move toward a more integrated clinical role as opposed to the traditional dispenser." ■

President's Message ~ Ellen Kospore '79



Many think the UConn Pharmacy Alumni Association is just a source of information about fellow graduates and as the organizer of reunions. The reality is, it is much more. The Pharmacy Alumni Association has the responsibility of tending your professional roots. We keep track of the information you provide about your job and life changes and we help to keep you informed about events within the university. We encourage you to visit the university so others may benefit from your experiences and knowledge. The School of Pharmacy would like to tap into the wealth of professional experience and camaraderie that we have gained since we graduated. The Pharmacy Alumni Association continues to reach out to its members to fulfill this need.

The Pharmacy Alumni Association and the School of Pharmacy would like to involve you in activities that connect the school, alumni and students and benefit all involved. The school is looking for mentors to help students navigate the demands of school, college living, and internships. There is a great need for volunteers to help students master pharmacist/patient skills at health fairs and clinics. Preceptors are needed to work with students in professional settings to complete the educational process. All these activities make a degree from the University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy a degree of value. The level of education and experience that is acquired while at UConn gives our students an edge when they graduate. The reputation of our school reflects on all of us. We as graduates have an investment to protect and pay forward.

The mission of the association is to support the School of Pharmacy. While scholarships and mentoring are very important, we aim to go further. The Pharmacy Alumni Association is working to involve more of our alumni in endeavors that fulfill personal goals as well as professional goals. We offer you opportunities to expand your horizons through outreach programs within the community, mentoring programs with pharmacy students as well as the expected reunion and award activities we have always sponsored.

The Pharmacy Alumni Association can only be as involved as its members. Membership is open to all who graduated from the school and participation in any of the activities mentioned is encouraged. While alumni reunions and dinners are a great way to reconnect with fellow graduates there is so much more. Continuing education seminars, local conventions, and football games bring us back to the time, people and place we studied. Let us be part of the process for the school and the future graduates as well.

Your board members and the UConn staff all hope to see you at an event soon. We have the responsibility to help future students be successful and learn from our successes as well as the challenges we have faced.

Pharmacy Alumni Association Executive Secretary Dan Leone has notified the association's board of directors that he will not seek to renew his agreement to continue in the position after May 2011. If you are interested in applying for the position, a copy of the job description and minimum qualifications can be obtained by e-mailing daniel.leone@uconn.edu or writing the UConn Pharmacy Alumni Association, 69 North Eagleville Road, Unit 3092, Storrs, Connecticut 06269-3092. To be considered by the search committee, an applicant for the part-time position must be a School of Pharmacy graduate who fulfills the required qualifications.

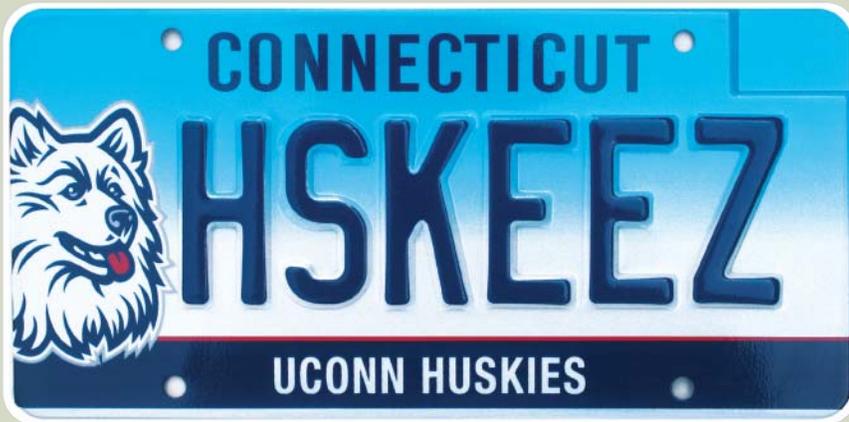
From the Executive Secretary ~ Daniel C. L



As I write this message, it is a beautiful fall day on the Storrs campus. A new school year has begun and we are making plans for an active schedule of alumni activity.

Here is some other exciting news: the UConn Alumni Association has launched a marketing campaign for the new University of Connecticut license plate. The license plates are traveling billboards that serve as continual reminders of UConn's enormous impact throughout the state. You can see the plate and obtain an order form at huskiesplate.com. Simply print and complete the form, and send it to the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles with your payment. Should you have any questions about the plate program or want more information, please contact the UConn Alumni Association at 860-486-2240 or e-mail them at huskiesplate@UConnAlumni.com.

We are seeking nominations for the school's 2011 Distinguished Alumni and Honorary Alumni Awards. Distinguished Alumni Awards are given for success and outstanding achievement in each of the following three categories: Academia, Industry and Pharmacy Practice. Honorary Alumni Awards are presented to non-alumni who comply with those requirements. If you would like to nominate someone for either award, go to the school's website www.pharmacy.uconn.edu to find a nomination form in the Alumni section of the website. The deadline for nominations is December 15, 2010.



UConn Husky License Plates are now available!

I am always looking for alumni who would be interested in serving on the association's Board of Directors. Board members are elected at the annual meeting and serve a 3-year term. Members are expected to attend the two board meetings held each year, usually in April and October at the CPA office in Rocky Hill, and attend the annual awards and reunion banquet or another pharmacy alumni event. If you are interested, give me a call at 860-486-0244 or e-mail me at: daniel.leone@uconn.edu.

In the last issue of Prescriptives, we listed the Super Star Alumni who supported student travel to the APhA convention in Washington DC. I would also like to add Dr. Mukhtar Shihabeddin MS '84, Ph.D. '84 to the list. Dr. Shihabeddin, the director general of ACDIMA in Amman, Jordan made a very generous contribution which arrived after the issue was printed.

Periodically, I send e-mail messages from the alumni office about pharmacy alumni activities and other school news. Also, we are always looking for alumni who are interested in supporting our students by working with them at health fairs and at the migrant worker clinics in the Hartford area. If you are not receiving these messages and would like to be included in the mailing list, send your e-mail address to me.

We always like to hear about your personal and professional honors, marriages, new babies, other everyday events of which you are proud and also your address changes. Use the What's New With You form in this issue or go to the school's website and click on the Alumni and Friends link and then the Address Changes and Alumni Updates link to send us the information. We'll print it in the next issue of Prescriptives.

University of Connecticut Pharmacy Alumni Association

Officers 2009 -- 2011

President

Ellen Konspore '79

Vice President

Donald Zettervall '79

Secretary

Karen B. Rubinfeld '87

Treasurer

Austin Bebyn '86

Executive Secretary

Daniel C. Leone '53

Board of Directors

Term Expires May 2011

Edgar Albuja '93

Robert J. Bianchi '61

John Capuano '73

David J. Cooper '75

Alicia A. Gudaitis '01

George J. Perchak '81

William P. Ward '66

Term Expires May 2012

Robert J. Bepko, Jr. '77

Robert Dana '63

Sandra J. Grillo '84

Keith Lyke '92

Edward Sklanka '74

Peter Tyczkowski '78

Elliott Tertes '62

Term Expires May 2013

Martha L. Asarisi '81

Kevin Chamberlin '03

Margherita Giuliano '75

Jennifer Judd '04

Jill Loser St. Germain '07

David St. Germain '98 '03

Thomas J. Thompson '78

Student Representatives

Carlie Hershgordon '11

Marian Merced '12

Alumni Update

Donald McGlooin '51 writes that he is amazed at the fantastic changes that have taken place in pharmacy in the 59 years since he graduated. He obtained his Texas license after a long stint working in Connecticut. He now is a pharmacy consultant to the six clinics of the South Texas Family Planning and Health Corporation which is active in five counties of south Texas. He says it is interesting work and keeps him going after 59 years as a pharmacist.

Anthony Bartholomeo '75 received the 2010 Professional Pharmacy Performance Award at the CPA Annual Awards and Installation Banquet.

Jacqueline Murphy '78 received the 2010 Wyeth Bowl of Hygeia Award at the CPA banquet.

Sister Patricia Toce SND '75 gave the invocation and benediction at the CPA banquet.

Richard Carbray, Jr. '75 received the UConn Alumni Association's Service Award at the association's annual awards celebration October 1st.

Peter Tyczkowski '78 was installed as CPA treasurer at the banquet.

Emmett Sullivan '93 was installed as president of CPA at the banquet. He was sworn in by **Daniel Carpenter '94**.

Tracie (Sannicandro) Osgood '96 and her husband, David, are proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Bella Pearl, who was born on August 13th at East Cooper Regional Medical Center in Mt. Pleasant, SC. Bella Pearl weighed 8 lbs. 4 ozs. and was 20 inches long.

Alicia Gudaitis Beninati '01 and her husband, Larry, are the proud parents of a baby girl, Autumn Pearl, born on 9/30/10. She joins her older brother, 18 month-old, Noah. ■



[From left to right] Karol G. Wollenburg '75, Distinguished Alumna in Pharmacy Practice; Sherman Gershman '51, Exceptional Service Award recipient; Dean Robert L. McCarthy; Susan M. Cady '77 Distinguished Alumna in Industry; and Marion Ehrich '75, Distinguished Alumna in Academia were recognized at the Pharmacy Alumni Association's Awards and Reunion Banquet in April 2010.



[Left] Alumnus Joe Dipiro '78 executive dean of the South Carolina College of Pharmacy at the University of South Carolina and the Medical University of South Carolina, was the keynote speaker at the Doctor of Pharmacy Commencement.

[Below] Alumnus Joe Palo '73, president of JD Pharma, LLC was the speaker at the Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy Studies Commencement.



In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our alumni and friends.

Joseph Aitable '44
May 18, 2010

Donald R. Gourd '56
June 11, 2010

Joseph J. Levesque '53
July 16, 2010

Edward O. Heacox '59
July 22, 2010

Richard Shellman '55
August 28, 2010

Burton C. Theriault '56
September 7, 2010

Residency Conference Named for Alumnus

By: Aloise Brewster

In 2007, Hartford Hospital's Director of Pharmacy Services Michael Rubino organized the first annual Greg Gousse Connecticut Residency Conference, designed to give residents of Connecticut a unique opportunity to network with other residents, pharmacists, faculty and pharmacy students. Rubino, who graduated from the University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy in 1975, decided to name the conference after his predecessor and fellow UConn alum Greg Gousse in honor of his 27 years of service at Hartford Hospital, during which he started its current pharmacy residency program and served as one of the longest running residency program preceptors in the state.

Greg Gousse, MS, R.Ph, graduated from the UConn School of Pharmacy in 1971 and was leaning towards a career in hospital pharmacy when he was interviewed by the assistant director of pharmacy representing Yale-New Haven Hospital's residency program. He decided to become involved in the program, a decision that he said changed his life: "It made my career," he stated with enthusiasm.

Gousse's experience in the residency program helped him to realize just how important and influential these programs can be in the budding careers of pharmacy graduates. Gousse left Yale-New Haven Hospital in 1979 to join Hartford Hospital's staff as associate director of pharmacy services and immediately noticed the lack of a residency program at his new location. He felt very strongly that this was something to be remedied and made it his personal project to start a program at the hospital, an idea that Director of Pharmacy Charles Nightingale, Ph.D. strongly supported. "Starting a program and meeting the ASHP's [American Society of Health-System Pharmacists] accreditation requirement was challenging," he said. "It's more programmatic today than it was back then because the ASHP's tools for these programs have matured."

Gousse reflected that when he was finishing college, residencies "were

in their infancy [and] were not all that organized." Even so, he said he was lucky that the Yale program was exceptional for the time and truly helped to jump-start his career. This is why he was so motivated to establish a program at Hartford Hospital.

Gousse said that the residency at Hartford Hospital, like all residencies, capitalizes on the strength of its organization. According to the description of the program on the hospital's website, "All positions [of the program] provide opportunities for residents to enhance their abilities to provide effective pharmaceutical care in a wide variety of settings," which include "acute patient care, primary care, drug information and practice management." Gousse adds that residency programs elevate a hospital's standing in the pharmacy field because "they really stimulate the staff and departments to be more visible to our professionals." While the programs take a lot of time, attention and extra work, Gousse said the benefits far outweigh the challenges. Among these benefits are the networking opportunities that residency programs provide, which Gousse says are particularly useful in the field of pharmacy. "I think our profession is extremely unique in terms of networking," he said, adding that residencies can introduce students to many key practitioners in the field, including their preceptors. Gousse's preceptor at Yale-New Haven Hospital was Donald Beste, who he said was a true institutional pharmacy leader. In an effort to enlighten students on the multitude of benefits these programs offer, Gousse came to UConn each fall for many years with colleague Mike Rubino to provide information and recruit prospective residents. "The goal of our profession is to expand residencies to maximize post-graduate experiences," he said, saying that these trips to UConn served to achieve that goal. He said now that technology has made such information sharing easier, schools like UConn are able to get helpful information to students electronically.

The program at Hartford Hospital is sponsored and accredited by the ASHP, which lists a set of criteria that each institution must meet in order to receive endorsement. Thanks to ASHP's standardization method and informative website, Gousse said it is much easier for current students to find a residency that meets their interests and that



Alumnus Greg Gousse '71 believes in the value of residencies. "This one year is worth three to four years of experience as a staff pharmacist," says Gousse.

pharmacy students should strongly consider taking advantage of these opportunities. He said that being a part of residency programs is enormously beneficial in finding employment opportunities because just having them on one's resume implies a wide-range of experience. "This one year [as a resident] is worth three to four years of experience as a staff pharmacist," he said, noting that residents gain knowledge of the administration as a whole, meet a lot of key people with whom career-long relationships are common, and become well-rounded in the field in a short amount of time.

In 2006, Gousse left Hartford Hospital after 27 years to work as an internal consultant for VHA (Voluntary Hospitals for America), a not-for-profit organization that works with affiliates of hospitals all over the country to improve their clinical and economic performance. In his position, Gousse travels to member hospitals and makes recommendations for improvement for pharmacy services,

- Continued on Page 13 -

UConn Alumnus Jim Sok is Restoring Patients' Lives

By: Megan Zabilansky

University of Connecticut Alumnus James E. Sok works passionately to restore patients' lives. Currently president and CEO of Sheltering Arms Rehabilitation center, Sok's dedication to helping people in need is evident in his president's message. "No matter what the illness or injury, at Sheltering Arms, we are committed to helping you find the Power to Overcome," stated Sok.

This commitment to health care stems from his days as an undergraduate at UConn when the encouraging words of his mentor and role model Dr. Harold G. Hewitt, dean of the School of Pharmacy from 1947 to 1969, put him on the path to success. "Dean Hewitt taught me that everything you do, as a professional going out into the world, matters. You have to strive to be your best," recalled Sok.

Sok took Dr. Hewitt's wisdom to heart, and after graduating from UConn in 1969 with a Bachelor of Science in pharmacy, he sought to make a difference in the world as a pilot for the United States Air Force. Not willing to give up pharmacy, however, he switched from flying to medicine and soared to a successful career in health care. Sok continued to pursue higher education and earned a master's degree in management from the Hartford Graduate Center in 1982. He then obtained his MBA from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1985.

Unlike the majority of pharmacy graduates, Sok began his profession in hospital pharmacy. He started as a staff pharmacist at Sharon Hospital in Connecticut, where he then worked his way to become the director of pharmacy. Sok maintained the path of management as he went on to hold the position of president of the hospital for twelve years. After contemplating a career change, he left to work at the Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Center in Allentown, Pennsylvania as executive



Alumnus Jim Sok '69 with his wife Debbie

vice president for eight years before assuming his current position at Sheltering Arms.

Having worked in both the acute care and rehabilitation sectors of health care, Sok reveals that there is little disparity between the two. The approach is the same, but the product is different. "Hospitals do a great job of saving lives, but if you can't restore [patients'] function, you haven't really restored their lives," said Sok.

On top of his professional success, Sok has found time to have a fulfilling family life. In 1973, he married his wife Debra. They have two children: Allison, 29, has a bachelor's degree in communications and is currently pursuing a second degree in pharmacy as a PI, and Greg, 27, holds a position at Sikorsky as a senior analyst, materials global logistics. Although Sok shifted from piloting to further pursue medicine, he still enjoys flying his own private Beechcraft Bonanza airplane from his work in Virginia to his home in Lakeville, CT to visit his family.

Over the years, Sok has found that education and a will to succeed have allowed him to save patients' lives and restore their health. But, he has not forgotten the people who helped him to reach his aspirations at the University of Connecticut. To the current undergraduates striving for success, he has his own words of wisdom. "Never stop learning. Learning is a lifelong process. Use all your skills and talents to advance in your profession; and, make a difference in the lives of people." ■

Peter Tyczkowski '78 Wins

By: Aloise Brewster

Peter Tyczkowski '78, the educational outreach coordinator for the University of Connecticut's School of Pharmacy, was recognized by the Connecticut Pharmacists Association (CPA) for his outstanding community service with the Bowl of Hygeia Award. The award, sponsored by Wyeth Pharmaceuticals, honors one pharmacist per year from each state for exceptional service both within and outside of the pharmaceutical community.

Mr. Tyczkowski began taking an active role in the Connecticut pharmacy community soon after he graduated from the University of Connecticut with a Bachelor of Science in pharmacy in 1978. He feels that he began to truly understand the value of volunteering and community service after graduation. "Volunteers are needed to do a lot of things that otherwise wouldn't get done," he stated. "Once you start realizing that, you feel like you ought to be one of those people...you get hooked. It dawns on you that there's a purpose for [volunteering]."

After coming to this realization, Mr. Tyczkowski became involved in his community through various types of volunteer work. He joined the CPA in 1978 and has been an active member since then, serving as president from 2006-2007. He is also an active member of the American Pharmacists Association since 1995, has spent nine years on the board of the YMCA of Greater Hartford, and is involved in his church community as a member of the men's club and a Eucharistic minister.

Among the many avenues of service that he has explored, however, Mr. Tyczkowski stated that he is most proud of the ten years he spent as a pharmacist on a hospice team in Glastonbury, CT. The team met once a week to review cases and furnish ideas on how to improve their patients' lives. Mr. Tyczkowski said he was honored to be a part of a group that helped people in such a large way. He also commented on the importance of opening up such opportunities for future volunteers to allow other people to experience the kind of pride such service can generate. "I do believe that you shouldn't be in

s the Bowl of Hygeia

any one of these positions forever," he mused. "You should open up spaces for other folks to come in and do things. It's not yours."

Mr. Tyczkowski's interest in helping others reap the benefits of volunteering has extended to his career at the UConn School of Pharmacy as an educational outreach coordinator. In this position, which he has held for five years, he works closely with pharmacy students and experiential education, preparing rotation sites for the upcoming year and finding events for students to attend to increase their practical experience. "A part of my job is getting students involved in activities out in the community," said Mr. Tyczkowski. Such activities have included Cornucopia Fest, the NBC 30 Health and Wellness Festival, the Diabetes Expo, and the National Association of Free Clinics' C.A.R.E. Clinic in Hartford, CT. In this way, his duties as educational outreach coordinator have allowed him to merge his love for volunteer work with his interest in student affairs.

His continuing involvement in the community over the past thirty years was publicly recognized when he was given the Bowl of Hygeia Award in October 2009. Mr. Tyczkowski said he was extremely grateful to those who nominated him for the award, and to his family who have always supported him in his passion for community service. The experience generated a wide range of emotions in him. "There are a lot of different feelings you get," Mr. Tyczkowski reflected. "You're surprised, you're humbled, and you're grateful."

Mr. Tyczkowski said he strongly supports the idea of recognizing people for their acts of service, especially if it helps to motivate people to become involved in their communities. He hopes that the Bowl of Hygeia Award will continue to be granted to deserving candidates. "There are a lot of people who probably do more than I did and maybe they're just not known," he humbly stated. "It would be good to make more folks aware that volunteering is a good thing, and you can get recognition for it." ■

Greg Gousse

Continued from Page 11

but he also maintains his keen interest in residency programs. "As a consultant, if I go to a place where I think a residency program should be initiated, I'll recommend it," he said.

In addition to the professional accomplishments he has made over the years, Gousse has found time to lead a fulfilling personal life. He has been married to his wife Elaine for nearly 39 years, and together they have three children: Bryan, Kevin, and Karen.

"As a consultant, if I go to a place where I think a residency program should be initiated, I'll recommend it."

Meanwhile, the program he initiated at Hartford Hospital continues in the expert hands of his successor Mike Rubino. The program continues to be successful and has even expanded recently from having two positions available to three. It is because of Gousse's dedication to create and maintain such a program that benefits both students and hospital staff that Rubino chose to name the annual conference after him. Gousse said that in a field where everyone is more devoted to the greater good than to the respect their work can generate, it is a great feeling to be formally recognized for one's efforts. "I was shocked! This was really quite an honor," he said. "I really appreciated the recognition."

The Greg Gousse Connecticut Residency Conference has taken place at Hartford, Yale-New Haven and St. Francis Hospitals in the past three years, and is set to take place at the Hospital of St. Raphael in New Haven, CT this fall. In addition to these hospitals, VA Connecticut and Waterbury Hospital, the other two of the current six, hospital residency programs in Connecticut, also participate. About 60 people attend the event, including Connecticut pharmacy residents, hospital staff, preceptors from each organization or program, and faculty from the University of Connecticut, which accredits the conference. Hospitals considering residencies are always invited to attend and get some first-hand advice on the value, challenges and regulations required for accredited residency programs. Gousse hopes that this conference will help to continuously give students the opportunity to learn about residency programs and accept opportunities to be a part of one. ■

What's New With You?

We want to hear from you! Please use this form to tell us about address changes, personal and professional honors, or everyday events that we can use for the Alumni Update column. Mail To: University of Connecticut, School of Pharmacy Alumni Association, 69 North Eagleville Road, Unit 3092 ~ Storrs, Connecticut 06269-3092, or e-mail us at: daniel.leone@uconn.edu

Dr. Mr. Mrs. Ms. Other _____

Name: _____ Class Year: _____

Maiden/Former Name: _____ Spouse Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: () _____ Work Phone: () _____

E-Mail Address: _____ Green Me!

Employer/Business Name: _____

Title: _____

Business Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

News: _____

School of Pharmacy Fun Run Benefits Memorial Scholarship

By: Megan Zabilansky

On Saturday, March 27, 2010, nearly three hundred students, faculty, alumni and members of the local community came together to honor James T. Malaney at the School of Pharmacy's 4th Annual Pharmacy Fun Run, organized by the Pharmacy Student Government. Malaney, a member of the Doctor of Pharmacy Class of 2010, passed away in January 2010 after battling cancer.

"This year's race was at least double the size of past races. A lot of that had to do with the race being in honor of Jim. The cause was a lot closer to home for a lot of people," said Colleen Teevan '10, and one of the organizers of the race.

The event was sponsored by Walgreens, who donated the breakfast provided by UConn Catering, t-shirts for race participants, and gift basket prizes for winners. All of the proceeds from registration, dedications, or donations, which amounted to approximately \$4000, went directly to benefit the James Malaney Memorial Scholarship, created by Malaney's family and friends.

According to Rosana Oliveira, an organizer of the event, the Malaney family was present at the race, supporting and cheering on its participants. "They were extremely grateful and appreciative of the event," said Oliveira.

The generosity of Dean Robert L. McCarthy was also greatly appreciated, said Teevan. He pledged to make a donation for every runner who placed before him in the race, a total of 131 people, to support the cause.

Third time Fun Run veteran Erica Lepkowski was excited about the success of the event.



UConn's Army ROTC is one of the groups that ran in the PSG Fun Run in support of the James Malaney Scholarship Fund. The race drew double the amount of participants from previous races. Walgreens sponsored the event that raised nearly \$4000 for the fund.

"You could notice the difference in this year's Fun Run right away," she said. "Many more people were interested in participating, and people were signing up in large groups to support the James Malaney Scholarship Fund. Everyone was excited to be there and show the Malaney family our support!"

Lepkowski placed first in the female division under 40. The overall winner of the race was Alex Dunn, and the male winner over 40 was Pete LaFontaine. Lynn Mardon won for females over 40.

The School of Nursing and the Reserve Officer Training Corps also came out to show their support. Forty-two ROTC members and instructors ran the event in formation, chanting cadences along the way.

"Morale was high on race day and there was tons of excitement. It was really great to have an ROTC group running and chanting," said Teevan.

In the past, proceeds from the School of Pharmacy Fun Run went to Susan G. Koman for the Cure. Although the Pharmacy Student Government has not officially discussed it yet, with the success of this year's race, they are considering naming future events in honor of Malaney. ■

Doctor of Pharmacy Students

Brian Bachyrycz was selected as a 2010 AACP Wal-Mart Scholar from among a very competitive pool of candidates. Dr. Fei Wang is Brian's mentor.

The **APhA-ASP** chapter was awarded a Project CHANCE grant. The Project CHANCE program supports projects focused on enhancing pharmacy care within a 340B-eligible entity. Approximately thirteen P3 and P4 students worked with Drs. Diana Sobieraj and Stefanie Nigro at the Community Health Center in Meriden to provide MTM services to patients with hypertension. The student-faculty teams achieved a statistically-significant improvement in blood pressure control. A poster of their work was presented at the APhA Annual Meeting in March.

Michael Lanosa [Pharm.D.] and **Dan Willis** [Graduate Program] both completed honors thesis work with Dr. John Morris. Their work, "Role of Metabolic Activation and the TRPA1 Receptor in the Sensory Irritation Response to Styrene and Naphthalene," has been accepted for publication in *Toxicology Science*: MJ Lanosa, DN Willis, S-E Jordt, JB Morris. (2010).

Gabrielle Richterman and **Melissa Kuhn**, both P2 students from Bodhi Chaudhuri's Lab were selected to participate in the Summer Internship Program of NIH and Study Abroad Program (Florence, Italy) respectively.

Graduate Students

Archana Rawat and **Ken Qian** will receive the 2010 IPEC Foundation Graduate Student Scholarships at the upcoming AAPS meeting. This is a competitive award in pharmaceutical technology and it is wonderful honor. Archana also received the School of Pharmacy Jackson Award and Ken was accepted as an AAPS Northeast Regional Discussion Group presenter. ■

Honors and Undergraduate Research Programs: An Opportunity for Exploration

By: Megan Zabilansky

Students in the School of Pharmacy endure rigorous course requirements and demanding labs. They emerge with esteemed degrees and go on to have successful careers in the thriving field of health care. There are, however, undergraduates whose pursuit of knowledge cannot be obtained in a classroom. They desire to understand from where the information they are taught originates, and how it applies to life outside a textbook. These students then discover just the right venue for their aspirations: the Honors and Undergraduate Research Programs.

These programs are designed to give highly motivated students the opportunity to explore an area of interest outside the traditional curriculum. Students are advised by Drs. Gerald Gianutsos, Amy Anderson and Jeffrey Aeschlimann of the Honors and Undergraduate Research Committee. They work closely with a faculty member to complete research and compose a thesis upon the culmination of their project, which will be presented in a pharmacy research seminar.



Michael Lombardo was able to learn more about what really interested him - antibiotics cancer drugs.

Honors P3 student, Michael Lombardo, wrote his thesis in 2009 entitled, "Staphylococcus Aureus: Explaining Trimethoprim Resistance and the Development of New DHFR

Inhibitors." This project topic, which relates to problems in health care due to staph bacteria's quick development of resistance to antibiotics, allowed Lombardo to delve deeper into a fascination garnered in his favorite course, a chemotherapy class. He was able to learn more about what really interested him, antibiotics and cancer drugs. "Doing a research project in itself helps students to think differently and become a problem-solver. It is about understanding the challenges and pitfalls of research, and also enjoying the elation of achievement," said his advisor, Dr. Anderson.

Christine Kohn, an honors P2 student researching the problem of clogged feeding tubes in hospitals, enjoyed the benefit of learning first-hand how information is obtained. While reviewing literature on gram positive and gram negative bacteria with her research advisor, Dr. Robin Bogner, Kohn was also taking a microbiology course and studying these same bacteria in her labs. "While all these Ph.D.s in scientific literature were talking about this, [seeing it in my research] made it real," recalled Kohn.

Kohn's positive experience with research instilled in her a desire to "foster scientific thought," a goal of the school's own research program. She wanted to give other students the chance to have similar encounters with information. This vision for both her own academic pursuits and those of her peers led her to launch the Society of Pharmacy Research in the fall of 2009. "Pharmacy school is very clinical and research for pharmacies is not very visible...Society of Pharmacy Research exists to promote research for pharmacy students and allow them to see what's going on. It really is unbelievable what is going on in our field," said Kohn.

As a mentor, Dr. Bogner knows the rewards of witnessing Kohn and her past students take off on exciting research ventures. "It's like being a parent. You guide in little bits and these students who didn't realize their potential, do things that they're surprised about. I don't feel responsible for that, I just opened the door," said Dr. Bogner.



Dr. Robin Bogner, in the lab with her students, says, "You guide in little bits and these students who didn't realize their potential, do things they're surprised about. I don't feel responsible for that, I just opened the door."

Students also find that the potential they discovered doing research can guide them to a fulfilling career. UConn alumna Dr. Rachel Sykes, now a clinical assistant professor with a specialty in pediatrics at Rutgers, wrote a thesis in 2005 entitled, "Retrospective Comparison of Lipid Amphotericin B Complex (ABLC) and Liposomal Amphotericin B (L-AMB) in the Pediatric Population." Doing this project gave Dr. Sykes important insight into her future field and experience as a pharmacy student researcher before she began her residency.

Dr. Sykes advised current pharmacy students to "take in the experience." "Even if you do not go on to do research, the experience is invaluable. Because of my honors research project, I became familiar with people in the field with whom I am now working."

Although research may not appeal to everyone, as Dr. Gianutsos said, "it is an opportunity to work closely with people who are very well known and very active in the field, to learn didactic material, and to do research with faculty." Honors and Undergraduate Research projects open many doors for UConn's pharmacy students to explore a field of interest, learn the application of their studies, and discover their hidden potential. ■



263700
 School of Pharmacy
 University of Connecticut
 69 North Eagleville Road, Unit 3092
 Storrs, CT 06269-3092

NON-PROFIT ORG
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 STORRS, CT
 PERMIT NO. 3

School of Pharmacy and School of Nursing Students Discuss Health Care Reform Bill



Over 100 faculty, staff, and students from the Schools of Pharmacy and Nursing gathered with Congressman Joe Courtney to discuss Health Care Reform and how the provisions of recently passed legislation will impact providers and patients in Connecticut and across the nation.

Pharmacy Students Assist in Drug Disposal



More than 9,000 pills and patches, plus nearly 350 pounds of other pharmaceuticals, were collected by a group of UConn Health Center pharmacists, UConn pharmacy students and other volunteers at a medication drop-off event on the Health Center campus. Chris DeFrancesco's full story can be accessed from the School of Pharmacy's website or in the archives of Health Center Today at: today.uconn.edu.