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Amy C. Anderson, Ph.D.
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Associate Department Head and Associate Professor
Leslie LeBel, B.A.
Administrative Services Specialist and Graduate Program Coordinator
Laura A. Burnett
Administrative Services Specialist

Dr. Gerry Gianutsos and Dan Leone receive dedicated yearbooks from Pharmacy Student Government.
A Message from the Dean

Robert L. McCarthy, Ph.D.

I am pleased to submit my ninth annual report as dean. Despite the ongoing challenges posed by our difficult economic times, we were able to make significant progress in implementing the action steps of our current strategic plan.

We continued to make great strides on the school’s three-year Diversity Plan. A large component of the committee’s work is focused on building a more diverse pipeline of students interested in a career in pharmacy. We maintained close ties with pre-pharmacy students at UConn branches with visits and open houses. New this year was the addition of visits with pharmacy alumni to our new partner pre-pharmacy program at the University of Bridgeport.

Students volunteered to organize and facilitate several of our high school initiatives, including a visit by New Haven UConn GEAR UP students that featured hands-on activities in the compounding lab and pharmacy care center. A team of professional and graduate students offered a laboratory activity in the compounding lab for students with autism. Designed to build a bridge between these students and their pharmacists, this hands-on activity engaged parents and our university’s LEND program resources and expertise.

Committee members participated in or arranged for alumni participation in a number of career day presentations as well as continued involvement in both the Hartford/UConn HPPI program and the electronic mentoring program run in conjunction with the Stratford Public Schools.

Our student SPhA chapter organized another successful Unity Week building upon different aspects of diversity. Highlights of the week’s activities included an interactive exchange between retired pharmacists and students discussing the changes in pharmacy practice over the years and a program on American Sign Language for Pharmacists.

The 2010-2011 academic year also marked the third and final year of implementation of our new professional curriculum. The faculty held a retreat to review feedback about the new curriculum. As a result, some adjustments will be made in organization, content, and scheduling.

Despite the current financial climate, the school had a highly successful year in development. Over $1.3 million was raised including new scholarships, planned giving, and our annual fund, which is used to support students and faculty. We are pleased that nine school activities/events received extramural support this past year. Absent such support, the school would be hard pressed to continue these signature events given our ongoing financial challenges.

We are very grateful to the Pharmacy Alumni Association for contributing scholarships for professional students; support for students attending the American Pharmacists Association Annual Meeting, and support for students completing a traditional Chinese medicine course at Peking Medical University.

Alumni, again this year, participated in and served as mentors for students at migrant farm worker clinics and other events including health fairs, expos, and immunization clinics. After more than 14 years of dedicated service, Daniel Leone retired as executive secretary of the Pharmacy Alumni Association. Dan’s accomplishments are many, including achieving a higher percentage of alumni as members than the university association.

Our Office of Pharmacy Professional Development continued its focus on practice-based educational programming. The office’s Immunization Program has raised the visibility of the School of Pharmacy as a continuing education provider and as a partner in expanding the scope of practice in the state. Our Anticoagulation Traineeship expands on these gains and marks the first public-private partnership [with Backus Hospital] of its kind in the state.

School of Pharmacy faculty continued to demonstrate success in research and other scholarly activities this year. Approximately $7 million [direct costs] in extramural funding was attracted, similar to last year’s total and impressive in an increasingly challenging funding environment.

The Department of Pharmacy Practice attracted $2.1 million in extramural funding; published 52 full-length, peer-reviewed articles, twelve technical reports, sixteen book chapters, and 69 conference papers; and delivered 84 scholarly presentations at national/regional/state meetings.

The Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences attracted nearly $5 million in extramural funding—an increase of more than 30% over the previous year—continuing an upward trend over the last several years. Five faculty received new grants in excess of $1 million each. In addition, faculty published 57 full-length, peer-reviewed articles, eighteen book chapters and 86 conference papers, and delivered 59 scholarly presentations at national/regional/state meetings.

Overall, the school continues to succeed despite our economic challenges. I attribute this success to the quality and dedication of our faculty, staff, students, alumni, and our practice and corporate partners.

Respectfully,

Robert L. McCarthy
Dean & Professor

New Faculty

Marcy J. Balunas, Ph.D., joined the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences as an assistant professor of medicinal chemistry. After receiving her Bachelor of Arts Degree in chemistry and biology at the University of Rochester, she received her Master of Science Degree in plant ecology at the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry. She continued on to receive her Ph.D. in pharmacognosy at the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2007.

Dr. Balunas completed a marine natural products chemistry postdoctoral joint fellowship at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography and the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute. Working with the International Cooperative Biodiversity Groups (ICBG) based in Panama, her
Laura Burnett is an alumna of the University of Connecticut. She received her Bachelor of Science in Dietetics in 1996 through the Allied Health Program and went on to complete her Masters in Allied Health Administration in 1999. She returns to the university as an administrative services specialist in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Prior to her return to the university, Ms. Burnett worked to enhance science and technology in the state of New Hampshire through a research infrastructure improvement grant from the National Science Foundation. The Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) at the University of New Hampshire partners with academia, government and business to leverage resources in order to support technology-based economic development. The goal of these partnerships is to stimulate local action resulting in lasting improvements to the state’s academic research infrastructure and increased national research and development competitiveness. Ms. Burnett contributed to the development of new partnerships with state government, state agencies, industry leaders, nonprofit organizations, as well as two- and four-year colleges to advance economic development, STEM education and workforce training.

In her new position, Ms. Burnett will coordinate and provide support for proposed and ongoing research with faculty in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences.

University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy alumna, Mary Ann Gilroy Dolan ’86, has joined the staff as director of the Office of Alumni Relations and executive secretary of the UConn Pharmacy Alumni Association. She will serve as a liaison between the school, the University of Connecticut Alumni Association and the not-for-profit University of Connecticut Pharmacy Alumni Association.

In addition to communication with School of Pharmacy Alumni, maintenance of alumni records and processing of annual and life memberships, Dolan will coordinate the annual reunions and Pharmacy Alumni Association Awards.

In addition to her professional experiences, Ms. Dolan is a life member of the Portland Historical Society where she has served as vice president, board member, and docent coordinator for the Callander House Museum of Portland History.
Lisa Holle, Pharm.D., joined the Department of Pharmacy Practice as an assistant clinical professor. She received both her B.S. in Pharmacy and her post-baccalaureate Pharm.D. degree from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. She completed her ASHP Accredited Oncology Pharmacy Specialty Residency at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas.

Dr. Holle coordinates a Patient Assessment course with Dr. Marissa Salvo, in which students are introduced to clinical skills necessary for patient analysis. Dr. Holle commented, “The class is a cross between the didactic and real work,” as students are both taught and given real patient situations to analyze.

Debra Kendall, Ph.D., is the head of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences and a professor of medicinal chemistry at the School of Pharmacy. Dr. Kendall joined the University of Connecticut in the fall of 1989 as an assistant professor in molecular and cellular biology. She was promoted through the ranks, ultimately to the level of Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor in 2003. She spent almost five years as associate dean for research and graduate education in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and was the first woman in almost two decades to be elected chair of the Senate Executive Committee in 2003.

Dr. Kendall’s lab is focusing on the structure and function of membrane-interactive proteins, including components of the protein translocon in bacteria and G protein coupled receptors of the cannabinoid receptor system. In both projects, Dr. Kendall hopes to gain a deeper understanding of how the system works so that they may be optimized for healthcare and disease treatment. For her science contributions she was elected a fellow of the AAAS in 2008.

For her research, Dr. Kendall has two National Institute of Health (NIH) grants, one of which she has had continuously renewed for over two decades. She has also obtained an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) supplement for her work. While excited about her research endeavors, Dr. Kendall is thrilled to take on the challenges of her newly appointed position and “guide an already excellent program to become even stronger.”

Prior to her work at UConn, Dr. Kendall received her undergraduate degree in biochemistry from Smith College and earned her Ph.D. at Northwestern University. Pursuing her keen interest in research, Dr. Kendall completed her postdoctoral training at Rockefeller University in peptide modeling and protein structure. At Rockefeller, Dr. Kendall was promoted to the rank of assistant professor and continued to conduct research in her lab.

Kathleen Koji has joined the School of Pharmacy staff part-time in the receiving and stockroom department as a storekeeper. Ms. Koji is responsible for making sure that everything that comes into the stockroom gets handled in the proper way, and is distributed correctly. She describes her work there as especially rewarding due to the kind reception she receives from the other staff and faculty. “I find working here enjoyable,” she says of UConn. “The School of Pharmacy has a friendly atmosphere.”

As a team-oriented individual, Ms. Koji was impressed by the work environment in the School of Pharmacy, which was conducive to her work style.
Koji enjoys conversation, and her work provides her the opportunity to talk to people who pick up their packages, and to establish work relationships that are both rewarding and fun.

Her secondary education began with two years at Mitchell College in New London, Connecticut, after which she transferred to UConn to finish her Bachelor of Science degree. Prior to her employment at the School of Pharmacy, Ms. Koji was self-employed in the printing industry, and held various other positions. She describes herself as someone who enjoys new and challenging experiences, and as such feels at home in her current position.

Alumna Joanne Nault joined the School of Pharmacy as an administrative specialist in the Office of Pharmacy Professional Development. She received her Bachelor of Science in biology and chemistry from the University of Illinois and worked toward her Master of Business Administration at the University of Connecticut.

In her new position, Mrs. Nault works on the continuing education program with colleague Dr. Jill Fitzgerald. Pharmacists in the State of Connecticut must complete 15 hours of continuing education each year in order to maintain their license and UConn is accredited to offer the necessary courses. Courses are not specifically for UConn alumni; pharmacists from around the country participate through seminars and online courses accredited by the University of Connecticut.

Mrs. Nault is responsible for ensuring that the programs and courses offered comply with the national standards set up by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), a national agency for the accreditation of professional degree programs in pharmacy and providers of continuing pharmacy education.

She is also responsible for all of the administrative tasks associated with the programs such as maintaining data and arranging venues. “I am happy to be back at the University of Connecticut and really enjoy working with Dr. Fitzgerald,” stated Mrs. Nault.

Marissa Salvo, Pharm.D., joined the Department of Pharmacy Practice as an assistant clinical professor. After receiving her Doctor of Pharmacy degree with a minor in leadership studies from the University of Rhode Island, she completed a PGY-1 residency at the St. Louis College of Pharmacy. Her practice site was the St. Louis County Department of Health.

Dr. Salvo completed a residency research project, which assessed the impact of a pharmacist-managed insulin titration program compared to standard care on glycemic control and preventative care measures in an indigent population with diabetes. The primary outcome was glycemic control, while secondary outcomes included attainment of preventative care measures and change in weight and total daily insulin dose. She presented her poster at the 2010 American College of Clinical Pharmacy meeting.

While her research interest focuses on ambulatory care, Dr. Salvo also has a keen interest in pursuing pharmacy reinforcement. Separate from her research, she is also a member of various pharmacy organizations, including the American College of Clinical Pharmacy, the American Pharmacists Association, and the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists. She is also a sister of Lambda Kappa Sigma, a well known pharmacy fraternity.

Dr. Salvo is currently working in the Community Health Center in Meriden, Connecticut, where she is providing clinical pharmacy services. She is “excited to participate in the UConn Pharmacy program.”
We gratefully acknowledge the alumni, corporations, foundations, friends, and parents who made gifts to the school between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011. Your continued commitment provides very important resources to our students and faculty.

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~ Miriam Beard

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Dawn Belden - Pharm.D.
Class of 2011

Dawn Belden Pharm.D. ’11, is just one of the many students who will go on to become a leader in the field of pharmacy. Belden, a New England Scholar, was not the average college student. Not only did she accomplish a great deal academically, but she was also involved with several activities within the university community. These activities include the acapella group UConn Chordials and the Alpha Lambda Delta National Honors Society. She also spent time as a representative for Pharmacy Student Government (PSG). “I always have felt that keeping myself busy forces me to be organized, motivated and proactive about what things need to be done. Developing strong time management habits help to make it less overwhelming,” explained Belden.

Belden also enrolled in the Army ROTC, a decision she made as a senior in high school. “The challenging coursework, real world preparation, and benefits are what attracted me to the Army ROTC, and ultimately UConn,” said Belden. Having always been interested in serving her country and having the ability to make a difference made Army ROTC “the logical choice.”

While completing her Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience rotations, she realized solving problems in clinical practice is not always clear and concise. “I used to think in science, like math, there was a right answer and everything else was considered wrong, but now I understand there are shades of gray.” She admits that she has enjoyed realizing this fact. “To be honest, I kind of like it that a strict formula is not the only way to solve problems. Where is the fun in exact science? I also really came to appreciate the work of colleagues.” In the past, Belden preferred doing work on her own; however, as she points out, “In practice I have seen that working cooperatively as a team will result in a better quality of care for our patients.”

Belden said that rather than the rotations helping her decide on the field in which she would like to pursue a career, the opposite occurred. “I enjoyed a number of the rotations. I found this experience has served to expand rather than narrow my interests.” After graduation, Belden assumed her commission with the U. S. Army.

Dawn, is pictured top right, receiving an award from Dean McCarthy for services to the school.

Continued on Page 17
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Doctor of Pharmacy Class of 2011

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Laura Ash - Long Term Care
Olusegun Awodele - Walgreens
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Patricia Cutting - Residency
Rupangi Datta - Residency
Justine Dickson - Residency
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Lindsy Murphy - Target
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Duquesa Nacpil - Rite Aid
Carmen Nobre - Residency
Master of Science & Doctor of Philosophy Class of 2011

Daniel Albaugh
Master of Science, Pharmaceutical Sciences: Pharmacology & Toxicology
Thesis: Prediction of HPLC Retention Index Using Artificial Neural Networks and IGroup E-State Indices
Major Advisor: Dr. David F. Grant

Kavita Jerath
Master of Science, Pharmaceutical Sciences: Pharmaceutics
Thesis: Electrostatic Interactions in High Concentration Protein Solutions
Major Advisor: Dr. Devendra S. Kalonia

Meegan O’Connor
Master of Science, Pharmaceutical Sciences: Pharmacology & Toxicology
Thesis: The Use of Gene Array Analysis to Define Potential Pathways Associated with Changes in Acetaminophen Toxicity Following Several Treatment Conditions
Major Advisor: Dr. José E. Manautou

Ekneet Sahni
Master of Science, Pharmaceutical Sciences: Pharmaceutics
Major Advisor: Dr. Bodhisattwa Chaudhuri

Lalit Deshmukh
Doctor of Philosophy, Pharmaceutical Sciences: Medicinal & Natural Products Chemistry
Doctoral Dissertation: Integrin, IIb ß3: Tale of Two Cytoplasmic Tails
Major Advisor: Dr. Olga Y. Vinogradova

Kristyn Greco
Doctor of Philosophy, Pharmaceutical Sciences: Pharmaceutics
Major Advisor: Dr. Robin H. Bogner

Archana Rawat
Doctor of Philosophy, Pharmaceutical Sciences: Pharmaceutics
Doctoral Dissertation: Electrostatic Interactions in High Concentration Protein Solutions
Major Advisor: Dr. Diane J. Burgess

Sandeep Yadav
Doctor of Philosophy, Pharmaceutical Sciences: Pharmaceutics
Doctoral Dissertation: Systematic Investigation of Factors Affecting the Viscosity and Self-Association Issues in High Concentration Monoclonal Antibody Solutions
Major Advisor: Dr. Devendra S. Kalonia

Congratulations Class of 2011
Pharmacy Student Government
Rosana Oliveira
President

This year, PSG hosted its first Alcohol Awareness Week. The P3 students prepared informational posters about alcohol and other drug use, which were displayed in the School of Pharmacy. A pharmacist who has struggled with addiction also came to share his story during a Lunch and Learn. With the help of Alcohol and Other Drug Services and Counseling and Mental Health Services on campus, we were able to reach out to our students during their normal class time.

The 5th Annual James Malaney Pharmacy Fun Run had over 300 runners pre-registered, including about 50 members from the UConn ROTC program. The support has really been overwhelming. All proceeds are donated to the James Malaney Memorial Scholarship, which is made possible through generous sponsorship by Walgreens. Before the race, almost $4500 had been raised for this great cause.

The mission of the AAPS University of Connecticut Student Chapter serves to increase student awareness of career opportunities and the latest discoveries in the pharmaceutical sciences. The chapter provides students with opportunities for professional advancement and leadership development, and fosters participation in outreach activities that further the goals and objectives of AAPS.

The chapter organized a “Welcome Lunch” which was sponsored by the School of Pharmacy. We successfully recruited new members from multiple disciplines including pharmaceutical sciences, pharmacology, medicinal chemistry, chemistry, and material sciences.

Members participated in the “2010 School of Pharmacy Research Symposium.” Forty-eight abstracts were collected including 25 abstracts from pharmaceutical sciences, and 23 abstracts from pharmacy practice. All the collected abstracts were printed in a handbook.

It was an honor to invite four outstanding scientists from industry or academia to visit UConn: Dr. Irina Kazakevich (October 22nd, 2010), Dr. Patrick Marsac (November 9th, 2010), Dr. Michael Siedler (March 3rd, 2011), and Professor Vladimir P. Torchilin (April 6th, 2011). Each speaker presented their research and shared their professional experience with our students.

Department of Pharmacy Practice Residents and Fellows Academic Year 2010 - 2011

Wendy Chen
Outcomes Fellow
Hartford Hospital
Preceptor - Craig Coleman

Jennifer Colby
Outcomes Fellow
Hartford Hospital
Preceptor - C. Michael White

Soyon Lee
Outcomes Fellow
Hartford Hospital
Preceptor - C. Michael White

Jennifer Scholle
Outcomes Fellow
Hartford Hospital
Preceptor - C. Michael White

Atula Vachhani
Primary Care Fellow
Pharmacy Practice Resident
Burgdorf Primary Care Clinic
Preceptor - Devra Dang
Over the past year, APhA-ASP has accomplished many things. Our involvement in patient care projects grew throughout the year. Operation Heart was launched this summer. We set up blood pressure clinics and informational tables at Lake Compounce, Stop & Shop, and throughout campus. GenerationRX was another program launched to allow students to get involved in activities promoting awareness about medication abuse. Students presented at RA training in the winter. We collaborated with PSG and their Alcohol Awareness Week and organized a Lunch and Learn with a pharmacist recovering from addiction. For the Heartburn Awareness Challenge, we set up an educational booth at the homecoming football game in the fall.

Students also went to the Manchester Senior Center to have a discussion about heartburn with the seniors. Operation Diabetes was a great success for us throughout the year as well. We submitted diabetes friendly recipes to the dining hall and set up a display case in the Student Union about diabetes awareness. Our biggest project under Operation Diabetes was a Diabetes Day at the Rolling Hills Community; we presented medications and techniques for diabetic equipment along with students from the nursing and nutrition schools to provide a complete overview for those that attended.

This year at our annual meeting, we won the regional award for Operation Immunization. Students helped at university flu clinics, tabling in the Student Union and at Bradley International Airport to promote healthy habits to protect yourself during flu season, and used the advertisements during union sponsored movies to remind people to get their flu shots. We also set up a table during the study abroad fair to help students find out which vaccines they need to get before taking their trips.

Our chapter had great success with International Pharmaceutical Student Federation (IPSF) this year. We had a wonderful speaker join us to talk about HIV/AIDS. Students also educated others about TB at the study abroad fair. The IPSF committee has also worked on establishing programs about tobacco cessation. One of our students was also selected to participate in the student exchange component of APhA in Barcelona this summer. The committee has also worked hard to set up an exchange site at UConn. This will hopefully give more of our students a chance to go to another country as part of the exchange program. Our former IPSF committee head, Eric Zaccaro, was elected National Student Exchange Officer-elect. He will help with IPSF projects and help in the process of selecting students to participate in the exchange programs. He will take over as National Student Exchange Officer in October.

Thirty students attended our Midyear Regional Meeting in November. A total of 25 students attended the APhA Annual Meeting in Seattle.

The UConn ASCP Chapter had an extremely productive year. Students visited the Alzheimer’s Resource Center several times a week to visit with patients and complete activities that are geared towards enhancing the physical and mental functioning of the residents. The students are very dedicated to learning more about dementia and helping to improve the quality of life of the patients they see at the center.

Students are split into groups that visit the VA in West Haven each month to shadow Drs. Jeffery and Daub at their respective practices. Students sit in on outpatient clinics to visualize what the role of a geriatric pharmacist is and what skills are needed to be successful with this patient population. Students also are shown the Long Term Care side of the VA, where patients stay for extended periods of time to receive care or for rehabilitation purposes.

Thirteen students attended the annual meeting in Orlando, Florida. This is the largest group we have sent to a meeting. We were able to bring back with us many new ideas for national projects and community service based activities that we hope to implement in the future.

The chapter also assists with the Senior Symposium, an event that educates professionals who deal with elderly patients in their profession. Student members attend the two-day forum and are able to split their time between volunteering and attending sessions. The chapter volunteers at File of Life, a mini medical history that is placed in each patient’s wallet and on their refrigerator, making it easy for emergency medical teams to accurately give care to patients who may be unresponsive or unable to recall their medications or illnesses.
More Student News

AZO
Alpha Zeta Omega
Nu Chapter
Katelyn Parsons
President

The 2010-2011 year has been an exceptional one for the UConn CSHP chapter. We continued to see an increase in membership from previous years and more active participation in chapter events. Furthermore, our relationship with the state chapter has grown even stronger as student members were given the opportunity to attend state meetings and network with other pharmacists.

As in previous years, we hosted various shadowing opportunities with different pharmacists at their practice sites that allowed student members to get a taste of some of the different roles hospital pharmacists play. Through our extremely successful pharmacy mug fundraiser, we have also continued our tradition of funding our P4 students to attend the ASHP annual midyear meeting.

CSHP feels it is important to give back to the community and has, therefore, created several events that help members gain necessary healthcare experiences, while positively impacting the local community. Our biggest event is Poison Prevention, which has been designed to be a fun and interactive program for 1st and 2nd graders in local elementary schools to teach them the dangers of poisons and drugs. We have also continued our community involvement in Breast and Testicular Cancer Awareness Week, the Connecticut Children’s Medical Center Toy Drive, and new for this year, HIV/AIDS Awareness Week. CSHP will continue to evolve and expand both our contributions to the community and our contributions to pharmacy in the upcoming years.

Kappa Psi has focused the past academic year on brother bonding and brother development to ensure the continuing success of the fraternity. This led to a decreased public presence of the fraternity but we are confident that this will result in a large increase in our involvement next year.

Kappa Psi enrolled 22 new students into membership and many of these new brothers elected to sober drive for the UConn volunteer service “Guard Dogs.” Older members also partook in the activities of those selected “Guard Dog weekends” which included free food, fun, and of course, escorting the UConn student body to and from parties.

We also raised a substantial amount of funds for our public philanthropy, the

This fraternal year was another very successful year for the Nu Chapter of Alpha Zeta Omega! After inducting 20 new fraters, Nu Chapter is now the largest it has been in five years with 51 current fraters. We participated in the 1st Annual Pharmacy School Trivia Night for Charity and held our own charity basketball tournament, “Bank for the Panc,” to benefit the Lustgarten Foundation for pancreatic cancer research. In addition, we continued our main patient-care project from last year, presenting at local senior centers on pharmacy-related topics; this year, however, we were honored to have the opportunity to coordinate these presentations for the entire P3 pharmacy class for IPPE service learning hours. We co-hosted Rotations Night with Phi Delta Chi and participated in the James Malaney Pharmacy Fun Run and HuskyThon, an all-night dance marathon to benefit Connecticut Children’s Medical Center. We also hosted a speaker on breast cancer, participated in Relay for Life, and held fundraisers for the National Breast Cancer Foundation and Japan relief efforts.

This year we were very busy increasing our AZO involvement at the national level. Seven of our fraters attended the National Winter Convention in Delray Beach, Florida, and we participated in many chapter visits with other undergraduate chapters throughout the year. We also continued our efforts to further bridge the gap between Nu Chapter and the Connecticut Alumni Chapter through numerous joint dinner meetings. Overall, the Nu Chapter of Alpha Zeta Omega has had a very successful and productive year, and we are extremely excited to be co-hosting the National Summer Convention in Mystic, Connecticut!
Phi Lambda Sigma recognized and inducted 13 new members into our chapter, Alpha Gamma. These new inductees included ten students and three faculty members. Phi Lambda Sigma worked with Dr. Bogner to host UConn’s first Student Compounding Competition. Teams of three students worked together in a three-part competition that encompassed clinical practice, regulation standards, and formulation development. The winning team, Preston Noon, Kevin Keller, and Daniel Dimeo, traveled to the University of Florida to compete on a national level. Although they did not place first, the competition was a great success as the University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy was one of only five schools in the national competition! The trip was partially funded by the School of Pharmacy and the Undergraduate Student Government.

Four students from Phi Lambda Sigma traveled to Seattle for the APhA Annual Meeting. At the meeting we had a delegate from our chapter vote in the Phi Lambda Sigma house of delegates. This was a great networking tool as our members talked with other chapters and developed leadership projects in our school. This trip was funded by the Undergraduate Student Government.

Phi Lambda Sigma was hard at work with the Future Pharmacy Leaders elective course. We had 16 students enroll in this class to develop leadership skills. As part of the class, the students traveled to Hartford for Pharmacy Day at the Capitol. It was a great way to learn to interact with our lawmakers. The student presence was also important to help lobby for pharmacy laws.

The Lambda Kappa Sigma Social Committee planned several events. The fall Night Out for Project Hope raised $450 for our charity. Several sisters went to a haunted house in Willimantic and we held our annual holiday party. The theme was “Uggs and Ugly Sweaters.” The members rented out a volleyball court for some friendly competition, and the chapter held a dinner at Margarita’s.

The chapter is working on reforming an alumni chapter of LKS. Sisters and alumni went to the Michael J. Fox talk at UConn. Sisters met up with alumni before the event in the pharmacy school and had some snacks beforehand. We are working on getting alumni information to send out birthday cards to each of our alumni so get in touch with us if we don’t have your information. We also worked with “almost alumnae” P4 students to document their thoughts and experiences on their rotations.

Alpha Beta also participated in several community service events. We sold ribbons for breast cancer; $42 was raised and donated at the Breast Cancer Walk. Several sisters volunteered at Mansfield Rehabilitation. Members also made Veteran’s Day Cards that were delivered to the VA in Northhampton, MA. Sisters tabled at Towers Dining Hall, handing out information about the flu and collected items for donation to the Willimantic Soup Kitchen. Valentine’s Day cards were made for veterans. The sisters also tabled at Towers Dining Hall for Cover Your Clover and arranged for clover-grams with condoms and safe sex tips to be sent to residents in Towers residence hall. Ribbons for Japan were sold in the School of Pharmacy and in the Student Union.

Our professional committee was also busy. Several sisters participated in the Health Fair on campus presenting information about skin care and Plan B/one step. A time management workshop was held with Dr. Fitzgerald. A workshop about how to get into pharmacy school and alternatives to pharmacy school was held for pre-pharmacy students. A residency talk was held with one of our alumni which was open to the public.

“Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric Aids Foundation.” Non-volunteer/philanthropic activities included a sober alternative party for UConn Spring Weekend and various trips to restaurants including Willington Pizza, Red Rock, and Ted’s, to facilitate brotherly bonding.

The brothers of Kappa Psi plan on raising upwards of $1,000 for our chapter charity in addition to $150 for our regional charity. We are also tasked with organizing the 2012 spring regional meeting in which 13 other chapters will be extended an invitation to UConn to discuss fraternal matters. We plan on continuing our progression towards increased brother bonding and increased brother enrollment.
This past year, Rho Chi has continued its peer tutoring program. Students were tutored in a number of courses including immunology, bio-organic chemistry, the autonomic nervous system module, and the psychiatric module.

Rho Chi also developed and held endocrinology review sessions this year. Prior to each endocrinology exam, review sessions were held in the format of a Jeopardy game where students competed for a small prize, while also preparing for their upcoming exam.

The 2010-2011 academic year marks the second year of the Society of Pharmacy Research (SPR) at the University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy. This year SPR was able to obtain group status and funding from the university. SPR sponsored the “2010 University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy Research Symposium” as part of our larger mission designed to acquaint Pharm.D. students with research-oriented opportunities in the field of pharmacy. With more than 44 abstracts and posters from students and professors in the School of Pharmacy, this event heightened awareness of research conducted at our school; students were able to discuss research, ask questions, and develop a greater understanding of recent past and current research endeavors.

During this past year, UConn's Student National Pharmaceutical Association chapter participated in a variety of events focused on serving the under-served populations of Connecticut. We held blood pressure screenings in Willimantic and Storrs community pharmacies, represented the School of Pharmacy in the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation Symposium, and helped out at on-campus flu clinics. Our biggest events included this year's Unity Week, themed "Diverse Population Expectations within Healthcare." Our speakers discussed the expectations of retired pharmacists, the deaf community, as well as war refugees. As always, Unity Week included a potluck dinner, dance performances, and the art show. We also held another Gear Up program event aimed at mentoring New Haven area high school students, encouraging them to pursue health-related careers.

Another philanthropy to which Phi Delta Chi contributes is Relay for Life, a nonprofit event dedicated to raising money for cancer research and prevention, as well as recognition for those who have survived their battles with cancer. To raise money for Relay for Life, we held a bake sale where we took donations and a bar night where all of the money made at the door went specifically to our Relay for Life team's funds. Our bar night was done in conjunction with Alpha Zeta Omega, another pharmacy fraternity on campus. A second bar night, held in conjunction with Rho Chi, was in honor of James Malaney, one of our brothers that passed away from cancer on January 1, 2010. The money raised throughout the night went towards a newly founded scholarship fund in his name. We also sent a box to a group of troops overseas with useful food and supplies to thank them for their service. Finally, we participated in a walk for breast cancer held in Hartford, Connecticut.

Phi Delta Chi sold T-shirts and sweatshirts with UConn Huskies Pharmacy printed across them. We also held a Rotations Night in conjunction with Alpha Zeta Omega, where current P4s were able to come back and talk to the P1-P3s about their experiences with rotations thus far.

Phi Delta Chi is a co-ed professional pharmacy fraternity that accepts both pre-pharmacy and pharmacy students. Phi Delta Chi’s primary philanthropy is with St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, a nonprofit located in Memphis, Tennessee devoted to research and treatment of cancer and other severe pediatric diseases. No child is ever turned away based on race, religion, or even ability to pay. Every year, our chapter sends out letters to family, friends, and others to raise money for the hospital with the goal of building new pharmacy facilities and improving the care of the children in the hospital.

Guest speakers taught us about opportunities for research, the importance of
Students Participate in RxImpact Day in Washington, D.C.

Several Pharm.D. students traveled to Washington, D.C. during spring break to take part in the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) RxImpact Day on Capitol Hill. Their goal was to help NACDS by lobbying senators and representatives to support the Medication Therapy Management (MTM) Empowerment Act.

Medication therapy management refers to the wide range of services provided by pharmacists in which they work, through various avenues of reviewing and consulting with a patient, to find the medication regimen that best benefits the patient. Currently, the health care bill only allows MTM for patients who are taking eight prescriptions and have been diagnosed with at least three chronic diseases, such as heart disease and diabetes. Passing this new act will expand coverage to allow a patient who only has one chronic disease to receive MTM and the ability to choose their pharmacy.

The pharmacy students who travelled to Washington, D.C. were John Stiles, Allan Costa, David Lee, Elizabeth Casserly, Katherine Richardson, Nancy Jaser, and Agnya Desai. The first day of the trip included a preparation and networking dinner. This allowed the students not only to network with companies involved with NACDS, but also advised them on how to speak with members in Congress in order to gain their support for the act. “[NACDS] doesn’t want you going in without any preparation,” explained Stiles. “They teach you how to talk to lawmakers because representatives and senators only have time for you to get to the point.”

The second day centered on lobbying for the Medication Therapy Management Empowerment Act. The students’ goal was to explain to legislators that this bill would allow for, among other things, getting the most effective medication to patients. During this day, it was the students’ responsibility to remind Congressmen how the bill would benefit them, as well as patients receiving MTM, because it would take a financial burden off of the citizens they represent.

The bill could save up to $290 million annually. The students described how this fact helps with lobbying because sometimes legislators do not necessarily understand the practice of pharmacy, but they understand the financial effect the bill would have on health care.

Many of the students claimed they had at the event were extremely beneficial for finding possible career options in the future. With the district heads of corporate pharmacies, such as Rite Aid, in attendance, the students were able to meet people who had great influence within their companies. “They see you’re motivated which shows that you’re taking steps to move ahead with a profession in pharmacy,” said Stiles. Students also learned that NACDS offers rotations geared towards policy making for P4 students, providing a different kind of environment that pharmacy students can explore when completing their rotations.

The students agreed that there needs to be more advocacy for pharmacy in Congress. Many noticed that pharmacists are still viewed by some people within the government as people who fill prescriptions, though, pharmacists are as crucial to health care as doctors and administrators.
In alignment with federal and state health reform initiatives, Buckley’s research is proving that pharmacists are an integral part of a medical home team. He feels his research can show that pharmacists, as the most accessible health care provider, can link up with people who have the least access to care.

Buckley has always been interested in health disparities, combining his passions for pharmacy and public health. He has been driven by the question, “How can we get a pharmacist, and the public, to realize they are an essential member of the public health team?” After completing an International Rescue Committee Global Health Fellowship working with Burmese refugees at the Mae Tao Clinic in Thailand, he returned to the United States and found that KHA patients had similar cultural and health issues to the Burmese. He felt it was important that pharmacists and pharmacy students should understand how specific cultural attributes of diverse groups can affect how a person both seeks out and responds to health care.

Buckley recalls a patient’s appreciation, “This is the first time I’ve ever cared about my health before” and describes the feeling as very rewarding. The most gratifying part is seeing how patients become involved with the patients and their care. He can see the passion rising in his students to help the most marginalized patients in society, and how appreciative they are to receive it.

His work with Cambodian Americans and KHA is worthwhile and he continues to benefit the School of Pharmacy and its students with his knowledge and experiences. The influence he leaves with his students he hopes will inspire them to work with high-risk patients, creating a lasting impact on the profession of pharmacy.

“These patients have incredible appreciation of the care that we’re giving them,” explains Buckley. “The most satisfying thing we see is they are able to help themselves, even a little bit of information we provide empowers them to move forward and take control of their lives.”
Focus on Faculty

**Drug Solubility**

Dr. Robin H. Bogner  
Associate Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences

Dr. Robin H. Bogner, associate professor of pharmaceutics, has been engaged in research involving dissolution enhancement of drug solubility, rapid screening of dissolution solid forms formulations, and predicting product quantity performance variation due to process variation through the University of Connecticut’s School of Pharmacy since the early 1990s. Her research has led her to a recent flow-cell patent in February 2011.

At UConn, Dr. Bogner is currently mentoring graduate and honors students in her laboratories, while teaching pharmacy courses and graduate courses in her research area of pharmaceutics. Describing herself as curious, Dr. Bogner’s curiosity and interest in her research continually benefits the School of Pharmacy and the students whom she supervises.

A University of Connecticut Teaching Fellow and former School of Pharmacy Teacher of the Year, Bogner has a rapid screening of dissolution solid forms formulations, and predicting product quantity performance variation due to process variation through the University of Connecticut’s School of Pharmacy. Her research has led her to a recent flow-cell patent in February 2011.

Dr. Bogner first became interested in studying pharmacy in high school because it combined both her love of science and helping people. She went on to study pharmacy at Rutgers University. While in school, she was introduced to research during a summer job at Johnson & Johnson where she studied tablets and capsules. Her interest in how things worked led her to continue her research, and she pursued pharmaceutics at both Rutgers University and the University of Iowa.

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Recently, Dr. Bogner, along with a UConn research team, was awarded a patent on a flow-cell device. The device aids in studying the dissolution of poorly soluble drugs. It allows for observation of solids and liquids during dissolution, particularly when the pharmaceutical solid undergoes some type of transition and/or unusual behavior. By using the device, Dr. Bogner is looking at the solids and liquids in a controlled way. She measures what comes out of the other end of the flow cell in a precise way rather than simply shaking a vial and estimating the numbers. This provides measurements that previous research was unable to generate.

Dr. Bogner was grateful for the opportunity to work and learn with the engineers that helped design the flow-cell. “It’s great to work on an interdisciplinary team,” she comments. “You learn to think in new ways.” She’s also currently collaborating on projects with colleagues at the Health Center.
A decade ago, Dr. Alex Makriyannis, now retired, became the school’s first Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor joining University of Connecticut Teaching Fellow Dr. James Henkel, also retired, in the ranks of eminent faculty. These awards, established in 2000 and 1993 respectively, honor UConn faculty for excellence in their field.

Since that time, the school’s reputation has grown along with its ranks of eminent faculty. In 2005, Dr. Michael Pikal became the Pfizer Distinguished Endowed Chair in Pharmaceutical Technology, the school’s first endowed faculty position. In 2007, Dr. Urs Boelsterli became the Boehringer Ingelheim Endowed Chair in Pharmaceutical Sciences and Dr. John Morris was named as such in 2011. Dr. Marie Smith became the Department of Pharmacy Practice’s first endowed faculty member when she was named the Dr. Henry A. Palmer Endowed Professor in Community Pharmacy Practice.

These eminent faculty members bring recognition to the school through their excellence in teaching, research, and service. Named faculty positions provide sustained funding for research in particular areas of expertise and bring with them scientific advancement in those fields of study. Junior faculty members benefit from the mentorship of these talented individuals. Most importantly, these eminent faculty are representative of the excellence of our faculty overall.

The 2010-2011 academic year brought three, new eminent faculty members to the School of Pharmacy. Dr. Debra Kendall, a Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor, joined the school as head of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Dr. John Morris was named as such in 2011. Dr. Marie Smith became the Department of Pharmacy Practice’s first endowed faculty member when she was named the Dr. Henry A. Palmer Endowed Professor in Community Pharmacy Practice.

These eminent faculty members bring recognition to the school through their excellence in teaching, research, and service. Named faculty positions provide sustained funding for research in particular areas of expertise and bring with them scientific advancement in those fields of study. Junior faculty members benefit from the mentorship of these talented individuals. Most importantly, these eminent faculty are representative of the excellence of our faculty overall.

Doctor of Pharmacy Student Named RA of the Year

Aimee Dietle exudes compassion, understanding, hard work, and perseverance in her job as an RA. She cites a desire to help and educate others as a primary motivation for working hard. These qualities make her an exemplary resident assistant. As such, she was named the Resident Assistant of the Year for 2011. It is a job with many responsibilities and students are held to high standards. This award therefore, is significant for Ms. Dietle as a student and community leader.

Dietle served as an RA in the Pre-Pharmacy Learning Community at UConn from August 2007-May 2011 giving her a unique opportunity to grow and learn along with her residents. Her four years of experience allowed her to expand her knowledge about the community while her own experiences within the pharmacy community also grew. “I spent time with the P3 students learning about pharmacy school. I had to learn very quickly otherwise my freshmen would have been missing out on many experiences that they deserved.”

Her achievements are a positive reflection on this learning community and this, Dietle explains, is extremely important. “I could never settle for being an average RA who just was there and did the bare minimum to get by and get a paycheck [because] I also really felt my residents deserved an RA who put in more than ‘average’ effort. I am very appreciative of winning this award because I feel it is a representation of all the students I have helped over the years.”

Being a resident assistant allowed Dietle to connect and help her residents in a more personal way. “I have a really strong desire to help and teach others. In the learning community I do that by being able to help freshmen navigate the transition to college, pre-pharmacy course work, and then application, and hopefully acceptance, into pharmacy school.” She credits her abilities to personal experience and to the resources, knowledge and skills she was taught through the RA training process.

Dietle’s desire to teach and learn diffuses to her studies as she pursues a career in ambulatory care. “My favorite thing in pharmacy is to counsel patients and I am interested in pursuing a career in ambulatory care. In the pharmacy world, that means teaching patients drug information or demonstrating how to use certain medications that I have been taught in pharmacy school and am starting to gain real life experience with on my rotations.”

She can also attribute the skills she gained as an RA to her success in pharmacy. “A lot of the interviewing techniques when you are talking to a patient about their medications I had previously learned from being an RA. When I was an RA, I would have to talk one-on-one with students about their struggles with eating disorders or alcohol misuse. Now I am speaking to patients about their struggles with diabetes or asthma. It’s the same skills you learn just with different topics. It taught me really how to listen and how to help people help themselves.”

As she works to manage her school responsibilities, Dietle maintains a consistent regard for her residents. “I facilitate my passion as a pharmacy student to my residents simply by talking to them and leading by example. We frequently speak about what I’m doing in classes or how much I love pharmacy school. We talk about different careers that you can have as a pharmacist.” Her dedication is clear when she asserts, “I don’t think I attended a single event without thinking or asking, I wonder if my pre-pharmacy students would be able to come to this.”
A great teacher provides insight, understanding, and help to their students while also pushing them to work harder and do better. In the undergraduate programs, it is the teaching assistants who fulfill a vital role in teaching and helping the students in the School of Pharmacy. For this reason, the Outstanding Graduate Assistant Award is a significant way in which TAs are recognized for their contributions to UConn’s undergraduate programs. This year, the award was given to Mamta Kapoor, a dedicated second-year TA and fifth-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Kapoor attended the College of Pharmacy (DIPSAR) in New Delhi, India, and received her M.S. at the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER) in Mohali, Punjab, India. Although originally interested in medicine, Kapoor’s education provided her with the credentials necessary to teach students at UConn. When she attended college in India, Kapoor recalls, she learned by memorization and reciting the information back for exams. At UConn, she was taught concepts and ideas that she had to remember forever, not for one exam.

This new way of learning influences the way she now teaches. She explains how, when a student doesn’t know something, she helps them get to the answer by asking them simpler questions. “I don’t give them the answer, I don’t spoon feed it to them, I provide the direction they need to take to answer it,” says Kapoor.

As a teacher, Kapoor does her best to work together with her students, to be available to them when they need help and to provide support in their classes. One fact that Kapoor stresses in terms of teaching is approachability. “The comfort level you establish with the students is extremely important. I really feel that I should help them learn to develop their thinking abilities and problem solving. They get groomed here and learn more and they become better students,” Kapoor describes. That quality, Kapoor believes, is one of the reasons she was recognized for this award. She stressed how she tries to connect with her students and not seem too authoritarian because, “it builds that mutual trust and confidence and makes them perform better. I’m happy when they do well, it makes me proud.”

Her TA responsibilities are challenging because she is responsible for the lectures and lab preparations. Even so, the courses she helps teach coincide with her own interests in pharmacy, namely gene delivery. Kapoor works in Dr. Diane Burgess’s lab focusing on siRNA delivery. She explains, “siRNA uses liposome formulation developments to help treat fatal diseases.” Pharmacy interests her because the work she is doing will benefit others. “I am deeply inspired by my professor, Dr. Diane Burgess and have learned a lot from her teaching style.”

Though the challenge of managing research with her teaching can sometimes be overwhelming, Kapoor knows that she was awarded this honor because she excels at it. She relays her passion and research to her students in her lecture on gene delivery. “I like when students tell me they’re interested in this topic and I try to give them the basics and meet with them later if they want more information.” Despite her immense workload, she smiles and readily says she enjoys teaching students. “Whatever time I spent and things I did outside of what was required… it helped me be motivated as a TA. This second year I feel more responsible because of this recognition but it means I take my job more seriously and it makes me feel good to be recognized; to have students say hello and remember me.”

In the future Kapoor hopes to work in the pharmaceutical industry in research, and eventually in management. For others hoping to achieve this award, she has a few last words of wisdom; “For this award, develop an intention to help students. To be the best TA, you have to have knowledge in what you are teaching and be approachable. Most of all the air needs to be positive, this is crucial so that the students trust you. Eventually things will fall in place.”

Mamta Kapoor receives the TA of the Year Award from Associate Vice Provost Keith Barker

“The fact that two students in our small school garnered two university-wide awards is a testament to the quality of our people.”

~ Robert L. McCarthy ~
Dean
Alumni Association Awardees 2011

The Pharmacy Alumni Association honored three alumni in academia, industry and pharmacy practice who have distinguished themselves in our profession. The awards were presented at the 40th Annual Pharmacy Alumni Awards and Reunion Banquet.

Shankar Musunuri, awardee in the field of industry obtained his Ph.D. in Pharmaceutical Sciences from the University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy in 1993. Prior to that, he received his B. Pharm (Hons) from the Birla Institute of Technology and Science, India. He also holds an MBA from Duke University’s Fuqua School of Business. In his early career, Dr. Musunuri worked at Amylin Pharmaceuticals and McNeil Consumer Products. He then spent about fourteen years at Pfizer and Wyeth in various roles with increased leadership responsibilities in the areas of strategy, global manufacturing, business development, R&D, and commercial teams. His efforts contributed to several product launches during his tenure, including Prevenar 13, one of Pfizer’s top three products, and the number one global vaccine based on revenues.

Currently, Dr. Musunuri is chief executive officer of Nuron Biotech, in Exton, PA. He is a company founder and a member of the Nuron Biotech Board of Directors. Since initiating operations in April 2010, the company has been focused on bringing to market innovative and improved specialty biologics and vaccines, and is currently working on products for the treatment of Multiple Sclerosis and wound healing.

Dr. Musunuri has authored numerous publications, and has contributed to several patents as a co-inventor. He served as Biotech section chair for the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists, and was also the founding chairman of the San Diego Pharmaceutical Forum. Dr. Musunuri actively supports a non-profit organization, Shakti Foundation, which was founded by his wife, Sailaja Musunuri, M.D., in order to provide care and enrichment for children with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

David R. Taft, awardee in the field of academia, received his Ph.D. in Pharmaceutical Science from the University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy in 1993. Prior to that, he obtained his B.S. in Pharmacy, with Highest Distinction, from the University of Rhode Island College of Pharmacy. His graduate work at UConn was followed by a postdoctoral fellowship in pharmacokinetics at the University of North Carolina School of Pharmacy. In June 1994, Dean Taft joined the faculty of the Arnold & Marie Schwartz College of Pharmacy, Long Island University, as assistant professor in the Division of Pharmaceutics and Industrial Pharmacy. He became associate professor, with tenure, in 2000, and director of the Division of Pharmaceutical Science in January 2008. In September of the same year, he was appointed as professor and dean of the Arnold & Marie Schwartz College of Pharmacy.

Dean Taft has supervised eleven doctoral students during his academic career, and has chaired, or been a member of, a number of college and university committees. He also serves on the editorial boards of the Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Drug Development and Industrial Pharmacy, and Current Drug Discovery Technologies, and has reviewed manuscripts for a dozen other pharmaceutical publications. He is a member of the Rho Chi Society, Phi Lambda Sigma Leadership Society, American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists, American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy, and International Society for the Study of Xenobiotics.

Beginning with his time as a UConn graduate student, Dean Taft has published over 85 articles, books, book chapters and abstracts concerning pharmacokinetics. He has also been awarded almost 20 research grants, and was the recipient of the 1998 American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists New Investigator Grant Award in Pharmacokinetics, Pharmacodynamics, and Drug Metabolism.

Richard H. Gannon, awardee in the field of pharmacy practice, received his B.S. in Pharmacy, Summa Cum Laude, from the University of Connecticut in 1977, and began his pharmacy career as a poison information pharmacist at the UConn Health Center in Farmington, CT. Following a pharmacy residency at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia, he received his Pharm.D. degree from the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy & Science, and subsequently returned to Connecticut in 1980 as a clinical pharmacist practicing at Yale-New Haven Hospital. In 1984, Dr. Gannon moved to Hartford Hospital, and within a few years he was assistant director for clinical services and director of pain control services. His career at Hartford Hospital has evolved over the years, and he has been a clinical specialist in pain control since 2002. As a pharmacist clinician, Dr. Gannon has developed a pain service that includes direct patient contact for every consult that is performed. Dr. Gannon joined the University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy as assistant clinical professor in 1984.

Since his early career, he has instructed UConn Pharmacy students, as well as pharmacy residents, medical students, medical residents, and mid-level practitioners. In recent years he has conducted a Pain Management Rotation for the University of Puerto Rico, and he led a pain rotation for French pharmacy students in 2008. Dr. Gannon is known as an outstanding pharmacy preceptor, and his Pain Management Rotation consistently ranks as a top elective rotation.
Dr. Gannon has given numerous presentations to pharmacists, physicians, nurses, and health-care consumers, and is widely published in the pharmaceutical literature. He is a member of The Rho Chi Society, Connecticut Society of Hospital Pharmacists, American College of Clinical Pharmacy, and International Association for the Study of Pain. He is also a volunteer with the American Cancer Society. He has received many honors during his career, including a Distinguished Service Award from Hartford Hospital, the Paul G. Pierpaoli Award (2006) from the CT Society of Hospital Pharmacists, and the 2009 Innovative Pharmacy Practice Award from the National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations.

Diana C. Stanzione, RN, named an honorary alumna trained in New London, CT at Lawrence and Memorial Hospital, finishing her nursing degree in 1970. In her early career, she worked in the hospital setting and also as a nursing director for a LTC facility. Later, she joined Syntex Pharmaceuticals as a sales representative for eastern Connecticut. The University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy was within her territory, so she frequently would visit the school, and was also involved in selecting students for awards given by Syntex. This is when Mrs. Stanzione became familiar with the medicinal herb garden in the courtyard of the Harold G. Hewitt Pharmacy Building. Syntex later became Roche, and she was with the company for 20 years. In 2000, Mrs. Stanzione decided to pursue the Master Gardener Program offered by the UConn Cooperative Extension System. The Master Gardener Program is a public service program that provides university training to volunteers for the purpose of enabling them to serve their communities through horticulture, gardening, and management. As part of the curriculum, Mrs. Stanzione chose the medicinal herb garden as her community project. She pulled weeds, transplanted plants back to their original areas, and identified plants from a botanical and medicinal perspective. Mrs. Stanzione completed additional training, and became an advanced master gardener. For several years, Mrs. Stanzione encouraged other master gardener candidates to consider the garden as their community project, and along the way there were other gardeners who pitched in. Mrs. Stanzione also recalls encouragement from Dean McCarthy and faculty and staff of the School of Pharmacy.

Today, the 50-year-old medicinal garden is a memory, as is the HG Hewitt Pharmacy Building. Before the demolition, Mrs. Stanzione saved plants and original bricks, with the hope of placing them in a new medicinal herb garden adjacent to the current Pharmacy-Biology Building. Plans for that garden are currently on hold, awaiting the demolition of a nearby building.

In addition to the hundreds of hours to nurture and preserve the medicinal herb garden, Mrs. Stanzione is also a member of the Mystic Garden Club and a volunteer with the garden division of Mystic Seaport. She currently works for a rehabilitation facility, Groton Regency, and plays flute and piccolo in a couple of bands that entertain residents at local LTC facilities.

Michael P. Starkowski, named an honorary alumnus, received his B.S. degree in accounting from Central Connecticut State University in 1974. He began his career with the Connecticut Department of Social Services the following year as a Connecticut careers trainee, and then an accountant. Over his 35 year tenure with the state, he served in various capacities with the Connecticut Department of Social Services and the Connecticut Department of Human Resources, ultimately becoming commissioner of the Department of Social Services in 2007. In 2011, he retired from the commissioner position.

Mr. Starkowski’s accomplishments on behalf of Connecticut residents include being a policy maker in the creation and implementation of HUSKY Plan (Healthcare for Uninsured Kids and Youth,) which continues to be an exemplary health coverage program, serving over 360,000 Connecticut children, teenagers, parents and caregivers. He also coordinated the design, integration and implementation of benefits provided by state pharmaceutical programs, in conjunction with the Medicare Part D drug benefit. As commissioner, he administered over 90 programs in a $55 billion agency responsible for serving more than 750,000 people who rely on safety net programs, primarily Medicaid. He is known as a leading authority on public financing of health care for children, elders and citizens with disabilities.

In April 2011, Mr. Starkowski co-authored a health affairs article with Dr. Marie Smith the Dr. Henry A. Palmer Endowed Professor in Community Pharmacy Practice and assistant dean at the UConn School of Pharmacy, and Margherita R. Giuliano, executive vice president of the Connecticut Pharmacists Association. The article presented findings from a recent Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services demonstration project involving nine pharmacists in Connecticut who identified drug therapy problems and resolved them with significant savings on medication claims and medical, hospital, and emergency department expenses.

Mr. Starkowski is a Constitution Circle member of the UConn Foundation Founder’s Society. During his career, he has been the recipient of many awards, including honors from the Connecticut Pharmacists Association, the Radiological Society of Connecticut, and the Connecticut Association of Optometrists. In 2009, the Wheeler Clinic Foundation selected Mr. Starkowski for the Fostering Positive Change Award, in recognition of outstanding advocacy, service and commitment to human services and fostering positive change in the lives of individuals, families and our communities.
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