

# PITT Pharmacy

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

FALL 2009





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## DEAN'S MESSAGE

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Dear Friends,

As I write this letter, I am taking a break from the “i-dotting and t-crossing” for the School’s Self-Study Report to the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education—a report that the School prepares in anticipation of the site visit.

Most of us have probably been amazed by our personal or professional accomplishments when we have taken a retrospective view of the past year. I take pleasure each year in the School’s annual report that shows the marvelous cumulative effect of simply doing our work one day at a time. A seven-year retrospective is quite another story.

The ink is now drying on one of the final documents in the report: the summary of progress and changes since the last accreditation site visit in 2002. The changes are remarkable.

To put 2002 in perspective, Dr. Randy Juhl had just been named vice chancellor; I was the newly named interim dean. As the School evolved, we chronicled some of the changes in the Pitt Pharmacy News. Beloved faculty have retired or moved on to new opportunities; new faculty have joined us, bringing with them expertise and excitement for their disciplines.

We have initiated closed-file standardized interviews for applicants to the PharmD program and established the Curran Center for Pharmacy Students to make it easier for our students to access staff assistance.

Faculty members have incorporated human patient simulators (lifelike mannequins), standardized patients, and interactions with real patients into courses. Students have their own remotes for the personal audience response system (as in the “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire” poll-the-audience technique) so as to facilitate classroom engagement.

Continuous quality improvement is embedded into the culture of the School—and also into the curriculum. Through systematic course reviews and periodic thematic reviews of specific curricular themes, faculty members identify opportunities for meaningful change. Database-driven curricular maps facilitate the reviews. As a result, the faculty has the tools to make deliberate, thoughtful analyses to strengthen and enhance the curriculum.

Likewise, the School’s resources have increased. The School’s total budget has increased 1.4-fold since 2002. In that same timeframe, thanks to your generosity, the endowment to support scholarships and the work of the faculty has more than doubled, with a current book value of more than \$13 million.

When the University began tracking alumni engagement with the School and University, our School ranked #1 in two of the three years of the ranking; we ranked second in the other year.

While few of you will have engaged in the work of assembling the School’s Self-Study Report, all of you have had a role in shaping the tradition of excellence, innovation, and leadership that is evident in the report.

Thank you.

P.S. I invite you to take a look at the Self-Study Report:  
[www.pharmacy.pitt.edu/about/pubs](http://www.pharmacy.pitt.edu/about/pubs)

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Graduating students Shannon McLaughlin and Katherine Bacci check their notes as they prepare for the hooding ceremony at the School's annual Graduation Dinner and Hooding Ceremony. More than 600 family members, friends, faculty, and staff attended the event held at the Hilton Pittsburgh on April 26, 2009, following the University's commencement ceremony.

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#### On the Cover:

*Wen Xie is the associate director of the School of Pharmacy Center for Pharmacogenetics. His lab studies the role of nuclear hormone receptors in drug metabolism and human diseases He recently edited and published the book, Nuclear Receptors in Drug Metabolism.*

*Pharmacy student-athletes who earned grade-point averages of 3.0 or higher during the spring 2008 and fall 2009 semesters were recognized at the Alumni Association's annual Scholarship-Athlete Awards Breakfast.*

*Edward P. Krenzelo (right) was honored as the first recipient of the Dr. Gordon J. Vanscoy Endowed Chair of Pharmacy. The endowment was established by Gordon Vanscoy (BS '84) (left) associate dean of business innovation and associate professor of pharmacy and therapeutics.*

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## On Call

Poison center director stays one page ahead



Dr. Krenzelok in his office at the Pittsburgh Poison and Drug Information Center.

When callers reach out to the Pittsburgh Poison Center, they're giving out almost as much information as they're getting — even if they don't realize it.

Pittsburgh is one of just two U.S. poison centers that use an automated response system to assist callers in the identification of their medications. The automation reduces workload and increases efficiency. The other, in Denver, operates via telephone keypad, but Pittsburgh's system is an advanced voice-activated system.

"The interactive voice response system, also known as an IVR, is revolutionary from the standpoint of staff efficiency and giving them

more time to answer poison information calls, rather than spending an inordinate amount of time on medication identification calls," says Dr. Edward P. Krenzelok, director of the Pittsburgh Poison and Drug Information Center and professor of pharmacy and pediatrics at the University of Pittsburgh. Prior to the implementation of the IVR, the Center responded to approximately 56,000 medication identification requests each year. "Automation has reduced the number of requests that require professional assistance from his staff to 6,000 per year," says Krenzelok.

Through voice recognition, callers provide their age, gender, zip code, and the numbers and letters

on their medication container. The system then identifies the medication and states the primary use of the medication (e.g., pain reliever); but it also saves the information in a computer database. Though no caller identifying data are saved, the center is able to use the data to track trends of prescription drug abuse.

"We have a very good perspective on the type of prescription drug abuse that's going on in our community," says Krenzelok. "The IVR has helped us to provide information to the authorities on these types of public health problems."

**"The interactive voice response system is revolutionary from the standpoint of staff efficiency"**

**—Ed Krenzelok**

Not only are the data used in Pennsylvania, but the Pittsburgh Poison Center also participates in a national prescription drug surveillance program that collects information on substance abuse, allowing authorities to track trends related to a particular drug.

The system, which was implemented with funding from a federal grant obtained by Krenzelok, can also be used to help enhance the surge capacity of the center during a terrorism incident. Krenzelok published his work about IVR innovation at the Pittsburgh Poison Center in a recent issue of the journal *Clinical Toxicology*.

In November, Krenzelok will have spent 26 years at the helm of

**"I learn something new every day. Every day there are new chemicals, new scenarios. There's always a new twist to an old problem, and that's what keeps me excited about doing this."**

**—Ed Krenzelok**

the poison center, bringing it from a debt-saddled agency to a self-sustaining, 24-hour resource with corporate partners and a national reputation for excellence.

Hard to believe he got his start in an office that was roughly the size of a broom closet in Minneapolis' Hennepin County Medical Center. Newly graduated from the University of Minnesota's PharmD program, Krenzelok arrived at his first day on the job working in the emergency room when he was asked to fill in for the poison center's director.

The center "had seven books, and a microfiche system with seven pieces of microfiche in it," he says.

He took 30 calls that day: "I sent everybody to the hospital, because I didn't really know what else to do."

That bought him some time; then he read through the resources he had, called ahead to the hospitals and offered recommendations for when the callers arrived. By the end of the week, Krenzelok was able to start giving advice over the phone. That was fortunate, because within a few months, the real director quit.

The hospital asked Krenzelok to run the poison center until they found a replacement.

"The rest is history," he says. "There were no formal training programs in clinical toxicology at the time. Everything you learned,

you learned through experience — through reading, through writing, and so on."

He came to Pittsburgh in 1983, telling his wife, Nancy, that he expected to stay in Pennsylvania five to seven years at the most. But they wound up raising their two children there, and Krenzelok became something of a legend in poison control. He serves on an advisory committee to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, is a fellow in the American Academy of Clinical Toxicology, and has written hundreds of scientific articles and book chapters.

Krenzelok was honored recently by being named the inaugural Dr. Gordon J. Vanscoy Chair of Pharmacy.

"I was just thrilled and honored," Krenzelok says. "It was a very generous gift by Dr. Vanscoy, and it provides an opportunity in an era when dollars are kind of tight."

In his joint posts at the School of Pharmacy and School of Medicine, Krenzelok tries to imbue his students with that same enthusiasm for toxicology. He quotes the Swiss toxicologist Paracelsus, who said, "All substances are poisons," adding, "The right dose differentiates a poison from a remedy."

Drugs "can be therapeutic marvels or toxic hazards, depending on how they are used," he says, referring to the pharmacy students. "They walk out of that classroom with something they can apply."



*Dr. Krenzelok takes time for a photo on the Pitt campus.*



# On Call

Poison center director stays one page ahead



*Dr. Krenzelok consults with a specialist in poison information.*

He also trains students through a rotation at the poison center, urging them to cut down on his business. But in the event that a patient does become ill, “if they don’t know the answer, there’s always someone they can turn to for help,” he notes.

He marvels at the fellowships and other toxicology resources available to students today, and wishes they had been available when he first started out. But he continues to try and stay a page ahead.

“I learn something new every day,” he says. “Every day there are new chemicals, new scenarios. There’s always a new twist to an old problem, and that’s what keeps me excited about doing this.”



*Dr. Krenzelok at the reception to celebrate his being named the inaugural Dr. Gordon J. Vanscoy Chair of Pharmacy. Pictured left to right: Professor Regis Vollmer, Dr. Ed Krenzelok and his wife Nancy.*

## Poison Centers: An Endangered Species?

Because of funding cutbacks, poison centers are rapidly becoming something of a rarity, a fact of which Ed Krenzelok is acutely aware. The first center opened in Chicago in 1953; within 25 years, there were 800 of them spread out across the United States.

Today, that number has dwindled to 60, owing to the rising cost of health care and the subsequent reduction in hospital budgets. Four centers in California are in danger of closing, as are centers in Oregon, Washington, Arizona, and Tennessee. Funding for Pennsylvania’s two centers has dropped.

Thanks to the corporate partnerships Krenzelok was able to build with AstraZeneca, Bayer, Colgate-Palmolive, ICI Paints, and others, the Pittsburgh Poison Center remains safe—for now. But Krenzelok remains vigilant, reminding anyone who will listen that every dollar invested in the center saves \$7 to \$15 in health care costs.

# Calorie Counters

Research finds promising link for obesity and diabetes treatment

Every day, more headlines address what has been labeled an epidemic of obesity—and a related complication, type 2 diabetes—affecting all populations in the United States.

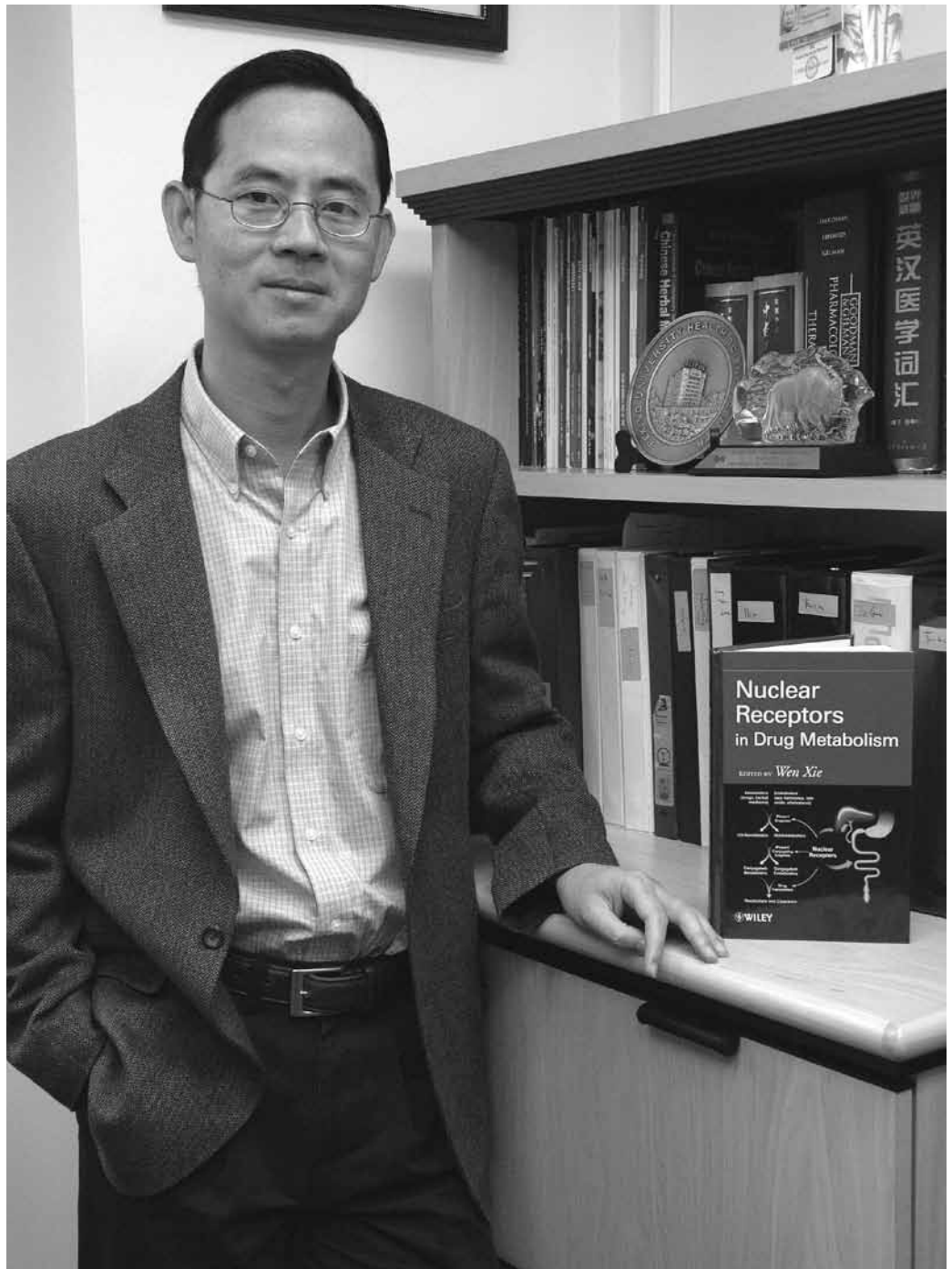
Experts have blamed increasingly sedentary lifestyles, an over-reliance on high-calorie and high-cholesterol fast food, and a lack of time and willpower for the problem. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that approximately two-thirds of U.S. adults and one-fifth of U.S. children can be classified as either obese or overweight, using body mass index as a gauge.

So when Wen Xie's research at the Center for Pharmacogenetics showed promising results in preventing and treating obesity and type 2 diabetes through drug therapy, the results were startling, to say the least.

"We are extremely excited," says Xie, an associate professor of pharmaceutical sciences and pharmacology, who adds that obesity "is everywhere—not only in the U.S., but it's an increasing health issue worldwide. The impact for the general population could be dramatic."

Statistics indicate the time is right for Xie's research. A CDC conference labeled Weight of the Nation was held in July, signaling a national focus on the obesity problem and how best to address it as part of the Obama administration's health care reform package. One study pegged the cost of obesity at \$147 billion annually, nearly double what it was 10 years ago. And the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has committed \$500 million to reducing childhood obesity by 2015.

The discovery grew out of the research Xie's laboratory has done for years on the constitu-



*Dr. Xie in his office at the School of Pharmacy's Center for Pharmacogenetics. In the foreground is the book Nuclear Receptor in Drug Metabolism that Dr. Xie recently edited and published.*

# Calorie Counters

Research finds promising link for obesity and diabetes treatment

tive androstane receptor, or CAR, which was originally thought to control the production of drug metabolism enzymes and transporters. This regulation factors broadly into drug metabolism, interactions between drugs, and drug toxicity. The same enzymes and transporters also are responsible for the homeostasis of body substances such as cholesterol, lipids, bile acids, and bilirubin.

As part of the CAR research, Xie's group noticed the new function affecting obesity and diabetes in animal models about three years ago.

"When we did those experiments, the impact of CAR on obesity and diabetes came as a surprise. It's a completely new function for this receptor," explains Xie, whose research is supported by the National Institutes of Health. "What we have found is if you activate this receptor using drugs, you basically can prevent obesity from happening, or inhibit pre-existing obesity."

Mice fed with a high-fat diet ("kind of the equivalent of the Western diet, if you went to

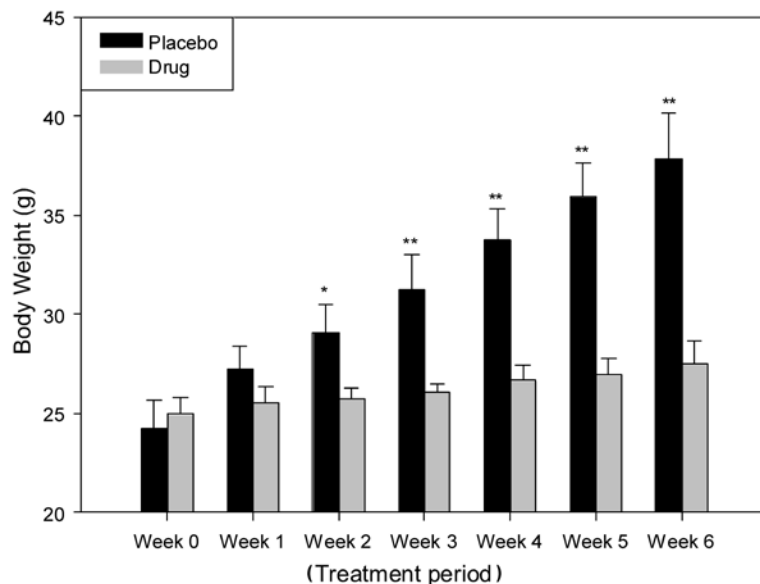
McDonald's every day," says Xie.) were divided into two groups with one group receiving a placebo and the other group receiving a drug that activates the CAR receptor. Xie's lab found that mice that received the drug did not gain weight compared to their placebo counterparts. And mice that were already obese were able to stabilize and gradually lose weight. In addition to preventing obesity, the CAR-activating drug also effectively relieved the diabetic symptoms associated with the obesity. The CAR-activating drug was equally effective in relieving diabetes in the ob/ob mice whose obesity was caused by a genetic defect in the leptin gene.

In July, the group's paper outlining the research was published online ahead of print by the *Journal of Biological Chemistry*. The next step, according to Xie, is to explore the human implications. That research also will acknowledge genetic causes for diabetes and obesity in addition to dietary factors.

"Those are some of the issues that will be the focus of future

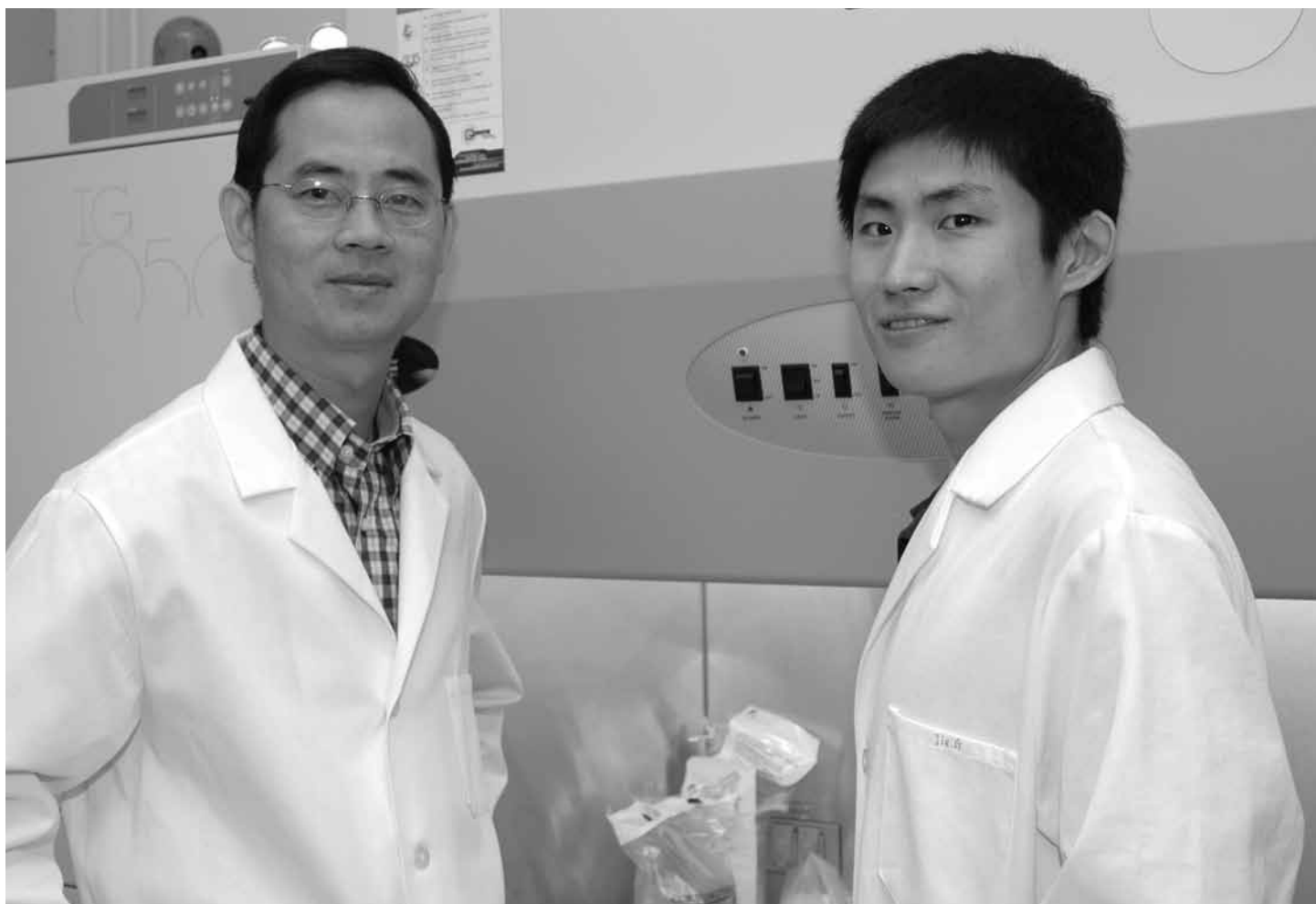
**"What we have found is if you activate this receptor using drugs, you basically can prevent obesity from happening, or inhibit pre-existing obesity."**

*—Wen Xie*



A CAR receptor-activating drug prevents the Western diet-induced obesity. In this experiment, both groups of mice were fed with a high-fat or Western diet. Simultaneously, one group (black bar) received placebo, and the other group (light gray bar) received a drug that activates CAR. Six weeks after HFD, the mice on placebo became fat, whereas the drug-treated mice remain lean.





*Dr. Xie and his graduate student Jie Gao, who is the leading author of the paper published in the Journal of Biological Chemistry.*

study to demonstrate the human relevance," says Xie.

Xie believes human trials could occur within two to three years after publishing findings relevant to human cells. And while development of a drug that is ready to go to market may be far off, "it would be a good start, I think, if there are [drug] companies willing to give it a chance," he says.

In addition to developing anti-obesity drugs, another potential exciting finding of this research is that CAR may represent an excellent target for the dietary or nutraceutical management

of obesity. For example, CAR-activating activities have been found in certain Chinese herbs that have been used as a remedy for jaundice in infants for thousands of years. Because the therapeutic benefit of the herbs is already established, as is their safety for human consumption, it is tempting to predict that the same herbs may find their utilities in managing obesity and diabetes.

"If you can deliver some herb medicine or nutraceuticals that could be proven as safe as vitamins, the social impact could be more dramatic than prescrip-

tion drugs," he says. "The medical issue is important. There is good evidence for intervention in the near future."

# Great Teachers Honored



Left to right:  
Neal Benedict,  
Sharon Connor,  
Billy Day, Raman  
Venkataramanan

## Benedict receives teaching award

Neal Benedict, assistant professor in the Department of Pharmacy and Therapeutics, has been named the 2009 Stanford I. Cohen Teacher of the Year at the School of Pharmacy.

Benedict joined the School of Pharmacy's faculty in July 2005 after completing a residency in critical care at UPMC Presbyterian. He also has a primary clinical practice site in the hospital's trauma/surgical intensive care unit.

Benedict is involved with both the cardiovascular and the critical care curricula at the School of Pharmacy. He precepts pharmacy students as well as pharmacy practice and specialty residents.

The award, presented by the graduating class for outstanding teaching during the classroom portion of the professional curriculum, is named in honor of the late Stanford Cohen, who served on the faculty of the School of Pharmacy from 1979 to 1998.

## Connor named ASP Faculty Member of the Year

The executive board of the School's American Pharmacists Association–Academy of Student Pharmacists organization has honored Sharon Connor, an assistant professor in the Department of

Pharmacy and Therapeutics, as Faculty Member of the Year for 2009.

Connor coordinates the course Pharmaceutical Care to Underserved Populations, which uses service learning to teach students about pharmaceutical access. She actively promotes service learning through internships such as Bridging the Gaps and the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship Program.

Among her research projects are implementation of a smoking cessation service and outcomes assessments of common disease states, such as hypertension, often seen in underserved populations.

## Rho Chi recognizes two professors

Two professors have been recognized for their accomplishments both in the classroom and in the laboratory by the School's Alpha Omicron chapter of the Rho Chi Society, an academic honor organization for pharmacy students.

Billy Day, a professor in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, was honored with the organization's Outstanding Scholarly Contribution Award.

Day, who has taught at the University of Pittsburgh since 1991, holds secondary appointments in the Department of Chemistry, the Department of

Environmental and Occupational Health, and the Department of Computational Biology. He is also scientific director of the Proteomics Core Lab for the schools of the health sciences.

Day's research focuses on the synthesis of potential anti-tumor, anti-HIV, and organ damage-reversal agents.

Raman Venkataramanan, a professor in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, was honored with Rho Chi's Innovation in Teaching Award. He also holds a joint appointment as a professor of pathology in the School of Medicine and is the director of the Clinical Pharmacokinetics Laboratory. Venkataramanan joined the School of Pharmacy's faculty in 1980.

His research seeks to identify factors that optimize drug therapy in organ transplant patients.

Rho Chi members, along with a panel of volunteer faculty members, choose award recipients from nominations submitted by students, faculty, alumni, and administrators.



## Verkleeren teaches skills, work/life balance as Preceptor of the Year

When Nicole Verkleeren first made the transition from resident to clinical pharmacist, she found it hard to pull herself out of work mode.

"When eight hours was up, I didn't know what to do with myself. I felt like I still needed to be here and work," explains Verkleeren, who graduated with her PharmD from Pitt in 2005 and now works at West Penn Hospital's Forbes Regional Campus.

Gradually, she learned how to balance her job with her family life, a skill she mastered so well that she served as a role model to one of the School of Pharmacy students she mentored.

"Nikki takes on more work than I would have thought possible by a young pharmacist," wrote student Krista Lipchik. "The part that amazes me is that she has mastered time management. She can complete all her work thoroughly while still managing to have a family life. The goals and values that she has set for herself are similar to my own."

Verkleeren, one of two winners of the School of Pharmacy's Preceptor of the Year award, mentored Lipchik in the summer of 2009. It's a job she has taken on ever since completing her residency.

"I get so much back from students; they keep you on your toes," Verkleeren says. "You really have to know what you're talking about, or they call you on it—and I like that."

## Geriatric pharmacy specialist teaches students to manage complex clinical situations

Within 20 years or so, the number of adults who are 65 and older will increase to more than 70 million, or about one-fifth of the U.S. population.

With those numbers in mind, Christine Ruby wants to ensure that her students will know how to best manage the often complex medical issues of a senior patient, regardless of their eventual practice setting.

That's why Ruby gives her students so much hands-on training during their rotations with her at Benedum Geriatric Center, a hospital-based clinic that is part of UPMC Montefiore.

"I feel it's imperative to prepare our PharmD students to meet the needs of our aging population," she explains. "It's very important for pharmacy students to experience patients who have several serious illnesses and [learn] how to optimize the medications necessary to comprehensively treat these conditions."

Ruby earned her bachelor's degree from the School of Pharmacy in 1990 and was a member of Pitt's first PharmD class, graduating in 1994. She completed a specialty residency in geriatrics in Durham, N.C., and went on to a fellowship and faculty position at Duke University before returning to Pitt in 2005.

She began precepting as a means of giving back some of the valuable lessons she learned when she was a student.

"I wanted to make sure I passed that on to others," she says.

For her efforts, Ruby—who also serves as an assistant professor at the School of Pharmacy, with a secondary appointment in geriatrics at the School of Medicine—is one of two recipients of the 2009 Preceptor of the Year award.

Sarah Providence, who completed a rotation under Ruby as a student in August and September 2008, nominated her mentor for the award.

"While she gives students a fair amount of responsibility, she makes her expectations clear from the very beginning, and she always takes the time to review students' work thoroughly and provide meaningful feedback," Providence wrote in her nomination letter.

*Left to right:  
Nicole Verkleeren,  
Christine Ruby  
Scelsi*



# Renée K. Juhl

## Distinguished Alumnus 2009



When Renée Juhl, PharmD ( BS '78) was selecting a college, she knew the University of Pittsburgh would be the best fit. A native of Uniontown, Pa., Renée was looking for the top pharmacy program close to her hometown. "Being in a small school in a BIG university really felt like I had the best of both worlds," she remembers.

After she received her bachelor's degree in pharmacy from Pitt, she continued her education by completing her doctor of pharmacy degree at the University of Cincinnati and residency at Bethesda Hospitals in Cincinnati, Ohio. Renée soon returned to Pitt—but this time as a faculty member. Since 1980, Renée has held faculty positions at Pitt's School of Pharmacy and School of Medicine. "It has been a pleasure to come back to the University and work with such bright students. Knowing that I have been able to unravel some of the mystery of a disease state or help prioritize options of a career decision has made it rewarding," she explains.



Tom Seighman, Pam Seighman, Renée Kubacka Juhl and Randy Juhl

**"During each of these opportunities, I was equally fortunate to have accomplished these goals with the help of extremely talented colleagues, and this made the journey all the more rewarding."**

**—Renée Juhl**

Renée also spent several years as the education director of clinical pharmacology at the University of Pittsburgh Family Practice Residency Program and then became the director of pharmacy at UPMC's Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic. Currently, Renée is a senior director in Pfizer's global medical department and provides medical support for U.S. government and corporate customers. "I have been fortunate to help build or expand many new roles throughout my career," she explains. "During each of these opportunities, I was equally fortunate to have accomplished these goals with the help of extremely talented colleagues, and this made the journey all the more rewarding."

Renée and her husband Randy, who is the former dean of the School of Pharmacy and currently serves as vice chancellor for research conduct and compliance at the University of Pittsburgh, have lived in Pittsburgh for the better part of the last three decades. With all of her past successes, Renée considers her family life one of her greatest accomplishments. "My marriage to my husband, Randy, and seeing our sons do well in their careers and happy in their homes with their wives is really what makes me so happy,"

# Nancy R. Zahniser

Distinguished Alumnus 2009



*Nancy Rutledge Zahniser and husband Chris Wing*

While Nancy R. Zahniser, (PhD '77), is currently a professor in the department of pharmacology and the neuroscience program and associate dean for research education at the University of Colorado Denver School of Medicine, her journey began a long way from the Rockies. After receiving a BA in chemistry from the College of Wooster in 1970, Nancy spent time in India where she taught in a private school for a few months before teaching ninth-grade science and chemistry at a mission boarding school at the foothills of the Himalayas.

When she returned to the States, Nancy knew she didn't want to continue studying strictly chemistry, but wanted to include something biological. After much

thought, she realized that what she really wanted to pursue was pharmacology. "I started looking at pharmacology programs and the first choice was Pittsburgh," Nancy remembers. "I was so excited to be accepted into the program because I was given the opportunity to do research rotations."

During these rotations, Nancy discovered she was most interested in studying the nervous system and diseases that protected the nervous system—in particular, psychiatric and neurological diseases. "Pitt was a perfect fit for me. Interacting with the faculty and other graduate students was always so enjoyable because you could tell they really cared and gave me such great personal attention," Nancy remembers.

After graduating from Pitt, Nancy completed postdoctoral work in the department of pharmacology, University of Colorado School of Medicine. There, she quickly became a tenured professor. Nancy's current research interests include understanding how brain dopamine systems contribute to the differential sensitivity of individuals to cocaine-induced brain plasticity and addiction, as well as identifying cellular mechanisms that regulate brain dopamine transporter activity and expression.

Over the years, Nancy has been committed to mentoring younger scientists as she was in her years at Pitt. "I take such great satisfaction in seeing graduate students and postdoc trainees that I've mentored blossom and become independent researchers," she says. "That truly has been one of the most satisfying aspects and real joys of my career."



**"I take such great satisfaction in seeing graduate students and postdoc students trainees that I've mentored blossom and become independent researchers"**

*—Nancy Zahniser*

# Photographic Memories

RxTravaganza 2009 Celebrating with Grace



To see more photos from Rxtravaganza Gala 2009 visit  
[www.pharmacy.pitt.edu/about/Gala/about.html](http://www.pharmacy.pitt.edu/about/Gala/about.html)





Guests at RxTravaganza 2009 Celebrating with Grace enjoyed a wonderful evening of dinner, music, reunions, and camaraderie at the Hilton Pittsburgh. Thanks in large part to the generosity of our alumni and friends, the event raised more than \$70,000 to support the Grace Lamsam Program for the Underserved, a program that provides medications and pharmacy care for the homeless, uninsured, and underinsured in the Pittsburgh region. Under the direction of our faculty, the program annually provides more than 5,000 individuals with care and medications that would otherwise have been outside their reach.

See page 31 for captions.

# Our School



Students and residents at Pennsylvania Pharmacy Legislative Day left to right: P3 students Patrick Pugliese, Lauren Costa, Aly Brown; P4 students Amanda Simpson, Julie Lauffenburger, Christina Martin, Matthew Felbinger; Resident Community Practice Residents 08-09 Maria Osbourne and Shara Elrod

Representatives from the School traveled to Harrisburg to attend Pennsylvania Pharmacy Legislative Day on March 25, 2009. At the event, participants met with legislators and staffers to discuss important issues currently affecting the pharmacy profession. Pitt School of Pharmacy participants provided attendees with information about collaborative practice in community settings, hypertension assessment, and blood pressure screenings.

The Pennsylvania Pharmacists Association (PPA) held its 2nd Annual Government Relations Advocacy for Student Pharmacists (GRASP) program at the Association's Harrisburg office the weekend of March 6-8, 2009. P3 students **Ashley Craig, Matthew Felbinger, Yardlee Kauffman, Tina Khadem, Julie Lauffenburger,** and **Amanda**

**Simpson** were the six University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy students selected by PPA to attend. This program is a three-day legislative conference that focuses on government relations, legislative action, media training, and regulatory process. The program provides students with a broader outlook on the legislative side of pharmacy practice and encourages them to remain politically active throughout their pharmacy careers.

The School of Pharmacy won three national awards from APhA-ASP: Membership achievement for greater than 90 percent membership, Project Chance (first place national award), and Innovation in Programming for Smoking Videos (first place national award). Our students won the innovative program award for their smoking cessation project, organized by **Kat Kingston.**

The 2009 Koch Lecture featured **Gary Matzke**, associate dean and professor at Virginia Commonwealth University School of Pharmacy. Matzke spoke to a packed auditorium about the pharmacist factor in health promotion and patient management.

A new core facility, housed in the School of Pharmacy, has been approved by the University to support biomarker assessment for human clinical studies. This core laboratory is associated with the Center for Clinical Pharmaceutical Research in the School of Pharmacy and is supported by the University's Clinical and Translational Science Institute. The laboratories in the core provide specific expertise and equipment (UPLC-MS/MS) necessary for the discovery and quantitative measurement of small



molecular weight biomolecules (such as arachidonic acid metabolites) in clinical samples. The highly sensitive and specific techniques employed will allow the clinician to accurately measure multiple biomarkers in the same sample, maximizing the ability to link basic science with clinical outcomes.

**Samuel Poloyac** (BS '93), associate professor, is the director of the core, and **Beth Minnigh** (PhD '79), assistant professor, is the supervisor. For more information: [www.biomarkers.pitt.edu](http://www.biomarkers.pitt.edu)



Members of the new core facility, left to right, staff members, Patrick Oberly and Yi Chen Wu, director Samuel Poloyac and supervisor Beth Minnigh.

Dean **Patricia Kroboth** (MS '80, PhD '83) and the faculty hosted the School's Board of Visitors from March 30 to April 1, 2009. The visit was structured around the three academic elements of the School's Long-Range Plan: education, research, and patient care. Board members were impressed with the high quality of the educational, research, patient care, and service programs at the School.



Michael Smith (P3) with guest lecturer Gary Matzke, at the School's 53rd annual Julius A. Koch Memorial Lecture. Matzke's lecture was titled "The Pharmacist Factor in Health Promotion and Patient Management."

On Friday, May 29, 2009, the Annual Graduate Program Awards Dinner was held at the Herberman Conference Center. The invited guest speaker was **Nancy R. Zahniser** (PhD '77), 2009 Distinguished Alumna. The award recipients included **Shashi Sriram**, a student mentored by Dr. Yong Tae Kwon who, for the second consecutive year, won the Teaching Assistant Award. Dr. Rober Bies' student, **Yuyan Jin**, was presented with the Graduate Student Excellence Award. **Jeremiah Momper** (PharmD '06), mentored by Dr. Raman Venkataramanan, received the Randy and Renée Juhl Pharmacy Graduate Scholar Award.



The School hosted the Board of Visitors on March 30-April 1, 2009. Board members held a series of discussions with faculty and students and provided meaningful input into the School's strategic directions. Pictured are: (front, left to right) Rosalie Sagraves and Coleen Kayden; (back, left to right) Richard Bertz (PhD '95), Patrick Quinn, John Pieper, John Tighe, William Bailey, and David Rotella (BS '81). Not pictured: Donald Abraham, Daniel Cobaugh (BS '87), John Innocenti, and Victoria Roche.



## Residents



From Left: Doctors John (Jay) Martello, Sarah Yost, Tiffany Jade Kreys, and Van-Anh Lee, from the Class of 2008–2009.

**Maria Osborne**, community practice resident received a \$20,000 grant from the Community Pharmacy Foundation to support her research project, "Recruiting pharmacists in Pennsylvania to provide community-based patient care services as part of a statewide network: The Network Project." Additional members of the research team are **Margie Snyder** (PharmD '06); **Deanne Hall** (BS '96, PharmD '98); and **Melissa Somma McGivney** (PharmD '98).

School of Pharmacy pharmacy practice management residents have been appointed to five of six 2009–2010 American Society of Health-System Pharmacists New Practitioner Advisory Groups.

Three of the residents will chair committees. The appointments are as follows:

**Benjamin Anderson**, Chair of Membership and Outreach. This committee identifies new potential member audiences and increases the awareness of membership benefits to assist new practitioners with career development and daily practice needs.

**Nicole Cerussi** (PharmD '07), MPH—Chair of Public Affairs and Advocacy. This committee encourages new practitioner involvement in ASHP grassroots advocacy efforts through collaborating with the ASHP Government Affairs Division and working with the ASHP Public Relations Division to promote ASHP initiatives.

**Jeffrey Little**, Chair of Communications and Technology. This committee works to enhance the Forum's image and outreach using various electronic communication tools. He is also the New Practitioner on the Council for Public Policy.

**Stephen Davis**—Member of Leadership and Career Development. This committee identifies topics addressing career and leadership development.

**Meredith Mulvanity** (PharmD '08)—Member of Professional Practice. This committee identifies Web content pertinent to new practitioners' practice needs and highlights new practitioners who have demonstrated practice success.

## Postdoctoral Fellows

**Jinhan He**, who works in the laboratory of Associate Professor Wen Xie, was selected to receive the 2009 American Liver Foundation (ALF) Irwin M. Arias, MD, Postdoctoral Research Fellowship. Only eight scholars nationwide are selected for this fellowship each year. ALF fellowships support research on liver functions and diseases and encourage promising young scientific investigators. He also received a grant award from the American Heart Association for "Regulation of CD36 by the Aryl Hydrocarbon Receptor (AhR) and Its Implication in Fatty Liver Disease." Because this research deals with the mechanistic role of the aryl hydrocarbon receptor and CD36 scavenger receptors in fatty liver disease, it is likely to make a highly significant impact on understanding this disease. He and fellow postdoctoral research associate **Bin Zhang** received travel awards from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive

and Kidney Diseases to attend the NIH Chemical Approaches to Nuclear Receptors and Metabolism Workshop last April.

**Prema Iyer** received a \$500 travel award from the University of Pittsburgh's Postdoctoral Association for her poster presentation, "Synthesis and Characterization of Minor Groove Binding Methylating Agents." She received the award, in recognition her exemplary presentation, at the 2009 Postdoctoral Data & Dine Symposium. Iyer works in the lab of Professor Barry Gold.

**Kenya Kamimura** received a travel award to attend the American Society of Gene Therapy 12th Annual Meeting. Kamimura works in the laboratory of Professor Dexi Liu.

**Manjori Ganguly**, who works with Professor Barry Gold, received a travel award from the American Chemical Society

Division of Chemical Toxicology, to attend and present at the 2009 ACS National Meeting and Exposition in Washington, D.C., in October.

**Wei Wang**, who works under Professor Alexander Doemling, was invited to speak at the inaugural Graduate Research Seminar of the 2009 Gordon Research Conference on Combinatorial Chemistry, held in New Hampshire on June 6. Wang spoke about his groundbreaking work on the efficient synthesis of bioactive natural product Bacillamide C and derivatives and novel p53/mdm2 antagonists, a novel class of potential anti-cancer agents with better therapeutic potential and less side effects.



Postdoctoral Fellows, top, Jinhan He, bottom, Kenya Kamimura

Postdoctoral Fellows, left to right, Manjori Ganguly, Prema Iyer, Wei Wang



## Our Faculty



Faculty members engage in conversation and share ideas during the annual faculty retreat in June.

New faculty appointments and promotions: **Philip Empey** and **Pamela Havrilla Smithburger** have joined the Department of Pharmacy and Therapeutics as assistant professors. **Janice Pringle** has been promoted to the rank of research associate professor.

**Jan Beumer**, research assistant professor, was selected to join the Editorial Board of *Cancer Chemotherapy and Pharmacology*. Editorial Board membership is offered to clinicians and scientists who have made significant academic contributions to the field.

**Sandra Kane-Gill**, associate professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, has been elected as a fellow of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP) and will be recognized at the ACCP Annual Meeting in October 2009.

**Joanne Kowiatek** (BS '77), adjunct assistant professor in the

Department of Pharmacy and Therapeutics, has been invited to serve as the chair of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists' Section for Inpatient Care Practitioners, Section Advisory Group on Medication Safety.

**Edward Krenzelo**, professor of pharmacy and therapeutics and director of the Pittsburgh Poison and Drug Information Center, was a member of an expert panel convened by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration on June 29 and 30 to discuss concerns over acetaminophen safety. The primary topic area for discussion was how to address the public health problem of liver injury related to the use of acetaminophen in both over-the-counter and prescription products.

**Melissa McGivney** (PharmD '98), assistant professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, was elected as a fellow of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy. This fellowship recognizes and rewards

the highest levels of excellence in the practice and science of clinical pharmacy and is the highest honor that ACCP can bestow on its members. McGivney will be inducted at the ACCP Annual Meeting in October in Anaheim, Calif. McGivney was appointed to a second three-year term as an ACCP representative to the Pharmacist Services Technical Advisory Coalition (PSTAC). PSTAC is a coalition of seven national pharmacy organizations founded to improve the coding infrastructure necessary to support billing for pharmacists' professional services.

**Scott Mark**, assistant professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, was invited to serve on the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy 2009–2010 Finance Committee.

**Susan Meyer**, professor and associate dean for education, received funding from Highmark



Foundation and Pfizer for "The Pennsylvania Project: Preparing Pharmacists for Patient-Centered Care." Highmark provided funding to develop and implement education and training resources to facilitate pharmacist and student pharmacist development of requisite knowledge and skills for medication therapy management. Pfizer provided funding to expand patient access across Pennsylvania to medication therapy management services and, ultimately, higher quality care, provided by specifically trained pharmacists. Significant funding from the DSF Charitable Foundation for this project was previously highlighted.

**Susan Meyer** and colleagues **Helen Burns**, School of Nursing, and **Hollis Day**, School of Medicine, received funding from the Office of the Provost for their innovative teaching project "We Need to Talk: Facilitating Improved Interprofessional Communication Through the Use of Standardized Colleagues." The project is aimed at improving interprofessional communication among pharmacists, nurses, and physicians. The approach will be based on the schools' current use of a standardized-patient teaching strategy where health professions students learn patient-assessment and communication skills by working with an individual who is trained to act as a patient.

**Samuel Poloyac** (BS '93) spoke at the 11th International Consensus Conference in Intensive Care Medicine: "Therapeutic Hypothermia – To Cool or Not To Cool?" His presentation was titled "Implications of Hypothermia on Drug Metabolism and Interactions." Poloyac was one of 20 expert panelists that presented to a scientific advisory committee

aimed at evaluating the available scientific information concerning the clinical use of therapeutic hypothermia. The conference took place in April in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

**Amy Seybert** (BS '94, PharmD '96), associate professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, has been invited to serve on the *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education* (AJPE) Editorial Board. AJPE is the official publication of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. Its purpose is to document and advance pharmaceutical education in the United States and internationally.

**Kristine Schonder**, PharmD, assistant professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, has been appointed to the American College of Clinical Pharmacy Educational Affairs Committee. The committee will make recommendations on re-engineering the delivery of experiential education to increase student involvement in direct patient care and to increase student impact on the preceptor's practice productivity. Schonder was also appointed to the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy Council of Faculties Faculty Affairs Committee. The committee will create an inventory of existing faculty development programs and will categorize best practices and successes.

**Raman Venkataramanan** was one of four recipients of the University's 2009 Provost's Award for Excellence in Mentoring, an award that recognizes faculty for their mentoring accomplishments and commitment to training doctoral students.

**Robert Weber**, associate pro-



*Susan Meyer, professor and associate dean for education*



*Jan Beumer, research assistant professor*

fessor and chair of the Department of Pharmacy and Therapeutics, was an invited presenter at the plenary session, "Learning from Medication Error Management: Improving Patient Outcomes," at the 2009 American College of Clinical Pharmacy/European Society for Clinical Pharmacy International Congress on Clinical Pharmacy, which was held in Orlando, Fla., on April 24-28, 2009. Weber was also invited by the chair of the Pennsylvania House Professional Licensure Committee to testify in Harrisburg in April on behalf of HB-1041, allowing for drug therapy management in a private setting.

## Our Students

Pharmacy students were among the 283 student athletes recognized during the University's Alumni Association Scholar-Athletic Awards Breakfast in Alumni Hall on March 4 for earning a grade-point average of 3.0 or higher during the spring 2008 and fall 2009 semesters. Awards winners included **William Conklyn** (P3), **Jeremy Stultz** (P4), and **Megan Sculley** (P2) (swimming); **Lauren Hunt** (P2) and **Amanda Tomich** (P2) (cheer and dance

team); and **Carlie Smith** (P4) (tennis). Conklyn was one of only 25 scholar-athletes honored for achieving a perfect 4.0 GPA.

The members of the School's APhA-ASP chapter voted **Kat Kingston** (P4) student of the year.

**Ayman Akil**, graduate student, received a certificate of appreciation from the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists for his outstanding performance as the

student chair of the School's AAPS chapter.

**Jennifer Bonner**, PhD candidate, received a renewal of her T32 fellowship from the University's Clinical and Translational Science Institute for 2009–2010. The fellowship in supports her research in intestinal first-pass metabolism of drugs in small bowel and multivisceral transplant patients.

### APhA-ASP "Gets in the Zona"



Steven Zona (P3)

At last April's national meeting of the American Pharmacists Association Academy of Student Pharmacists (APhA-ASP), Steven Zona (P3) was elected as the organization's president-elect. The APhA-ASP is composed of more than 30,000 student pharmacists and is represented at every school and college of pharmacy across the United States and Puerto Rico. It serves as the collective voice of student pharmacists and aims to provide opportunities for professional growth, to improve patient care, and to envision and advance the future of pharmacy.

Since coming to the School in 2007, Steve has assumed many leadership roles including membership on the Dean's Advisory Board and the Experiential Learning Committee. He has been actively involved with Phi Lambda Sigma and Rho Chi and served as the 2008–09 chapter president of the Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy. Before his appointment to the APhA-ASP National

Executive Committee, Steve was president-elect of the School's chapter of APhA-ASP but had to relinquish this role to fulfill his obligation on the national level.

Steve is grateful for the role his chapter played in helping him win the election. "This wouldn't have been possible without all of the support and enthusiasm from my chapter," says Steve. "My favorite part was seeing everyone with Get in the Zona t-shirts at the Friday night social at the national meeting."

As president, Steve's primary goal will be to increase APhA-ASP's collaboration with other health professional student organizations and the various organizations within the pharmacy profession. He will also serve on the APhA Board of Trustees. Steve's term as president begins at the next APhA-ASP annual meeting in Washington D.C. in March. The School of Pharmacy takes great pride in Steve's accomplishments, and we wish him all the best in his new and very prestigious role.

**Mark Donnelly**, PhD candidate, received a travel award and a poster award at the 11th International Winter Eicosanoid Conference in Baltimore, Md.

**Nisanne Ghonem**, PhD candidate, received a renewal of her T32 fellowship from the University's Clinical and Translational Science Institute for 2009–2010. Ghonem also received a fellowship from the Office of the Provost. Her research explores the ability of an investigational agent to protect against ischemic-induced hepatic injury in orthotopic liver transplantation.

**Rebecca Hammond**, graduate student, received a two-year National Research Service Award from the National Institute on Aging for the project The Role of GPR30 in Mediating Estrogen Effects on Neurons and Cognitive Performance. Hammond works in the laboratory of Professor Robert Gibbs.

**Sarah Krahe** (P2) and **Melissa Ruminski** (P2) were chosen as Pittsburgh Schweitzer fellows and are part of the program's 22-member class of 2009–2010. Schweitzer fellows are chosen annually to work in underserved communities in the Greater Pittsburgh area. The program fosters leadership and professional development.

**Julie Lauffenberger** (P4) and **Christina Martin** (P4) were named to the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists Student Forum National Advisory Groups for the 2009–2010 academic year. Lauffenberger is a member of the Communications Advisory Group and Martin is a member of the Membership Advisory Group.

**Julie Lauffenberger** and **Alexa Ray** (P3) were two of 11 University students who received student global health award travel grants from the University's Center for Global Health. The awards support travel expenses for advanced degree students pursuing international



Julie Lauffenberger (P4)

health research. Lauffenberger was involved with a community clinic formulary in Malawi. Ray will help to conduct the research project "Surveillance of Folic Acid Usage and Maternal Education" at the Shoulder to Shoulder site in Honduras next summer.

The University of Pittsburgh chapter of the Student National Pharmaceutical Association (SNPhA) was represented at the National Convention meeting in Chicago, Ill., on July 17–20 by ten student members. Through the hard work and efforts of the

Representing the University of Pittsburgh chapter of the Student National Pharmaceutical Association (SNPhA) at the National Convention meeting in Chicago from left to right: Ritu Kannekanti (P3), Rachel Wagner (P3), Yardlee Kauffman (P4), Jerry Mascara (P3), Zack Snyder (P3), Bethany Petrik (P3), Ashley Tylavsky (P3), Sheena Teckchandani (P3), Adam Martin (P2), Melissa Ruminski (P2)





# Our Students



*The University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy welcomes the Class of 2013 to the PharmD program. The diverse class includes students from nine states, the countries of Cameroon and South Korea, and 17 different undergraduate institutions (seven AAU institutions), including 83% from the University of Pittsburgh.*

students during the past year in underserved communities through numerous outreach events, the Pitt chapter was recognized with three major awards at the convention: 2008–2009 National Community Service Award Trophy–Best Small Chapter Membership of Region 1, Certificate of Recognition for Outstanding Participation and Achievement in Region 1, Certificate of Participation for Poster Presentations: “Medication Therapy Management for Underserved in Pittsburgh” by P3 students **Gerard Mascara, Eric Gardner, and Zachary Snyder.**

**Matthew Sapko** (PharmD '09) presented the paper “Tenets of Professionalism for Pharmacy Students” at the American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP) national meeting in Louisville, Ky. in October 2008. He and other

members of the 2008 ACCP National StuNet Advisory Committee prepared the commentary. This was the first time that a student presented at an ACCP national meeting.

**Michael Smith** (P3) was one of four Pitt students and 44 top student leaders from across the United States, Canada, and abroad chosen to participate in the inaugural Hesselbein Student Leadership Summit in July sponsored by Pitt’s Hesselbein Global Academy for Leadership and Civic Engagement. These students received training from global experts on effective, ethical, and innovative leadership.

**Zachary Snyder** (P3), chosen by the Association for Prevention Teaching and Research for the 2009 Paul Ambrose Scholars

Program (PASP), was one of 45 students who participated in the 8th annual PASP Symposium in Washington, D.C., in June. More than 30 presenters and mentors shared their expertise and offered inspiration. PASP introduces health professions students to influential public health professionals and empowers them to be leaders in addressing the nation’s public health challenges.

**Nicholas Wytiaz** (P2) was awarded the Clinical and Translational Science Institute Short Term Access to Research Training at the University of Pittsburgh (Start UP) Trainee Grant. Associate Professors Sandra Kane-Gill and Amy Seybert are his mentors.

## Class of 1959



*Seated, Left to Right: Salvatore Gaetano, Regina Zeolla Summerville, Herbert Stein, Rouzeberry Bell, Charles Liken, Patricia Neal Gearhart, Carole Finelli Ladik. Standing, Left to Right: William DuVall, Robert LeWinter, Joseph Mazur, Albert Gardill, Norbert Cronin, Laurence Sykes. We thank the Class of 1959 for joining us at RxTravaganza 2009 Celebrating with Grace*



*Top to bottom:  
Marie A. Croyle  
John T. Tighe III  
Nicole L. Cerussi  
Trish Flint Klatt*

**Nicole Cerussi** (PharmD '07, MPH '08) is the new manager of the Falk Pharmacy. Cerussi completed her two-year residency in Health-System Pharmacy at Pitt. She had been serving as the interim manager at Falk since April 2009.

**Maria Croyle** (BS '92), associate professor of pharmaceutics at the University of Texas at Austin College of Pharmacy, received grants from the National Institutes of Health and the Canadian National Microbiology to develop a vaccine against Ebola virus infection.

**Julie Gambaiani Fike** (PharmD '99) has been named the 2009 Distinguished Young Pharmacist of the Year in

Minnesota. The award is presented annually to a pharmacist in each state for individual excellence and outstanding contributions in state pharmacy association activities, community affairs and in professional practice. The award is sponsored by Pharmacists Mutual Companies.

**Trish Flint Klatt** (BS '92) visits area high schools and Boys & Girls clubs to educate young people about topics such as asthma awareness and proper nutrition. She has arranged for UPMC to donate medicines to treat diabetes, asthma, hypertension, and depression to three of its local family health clinics. When patients cannot afford the drugs needed to manage their conditions, they will not have to go without them.

**James Mastrian** (BS '65) past NACDS Board of Director member, received the Sheldon W. Fantle Lifetime Achievement Award for exceptional accomplishments and contributions to the chain drug industry.

**Larry Merlo** (BS '78) was elected to serve as vice chairman of the NACDS 2009–2010 Board of Directors.

**Dwight Stiff** (BS '81, PhD '89) executive director of AAI Pharma has been living and working in Germany for the past 12 years. AAI Pharma is a CRO specializing in Phase I clinical trials, bio analysis, product testing, and small scale manufacturing of solid oral dosage forms.

# Our Alumni

## In Memoriam

Mario Esposito '48  
 Tammy S. Ferringer '91  
 Robert M. Fry '52  
 Donald N. Myers '55  
 James E. Peterman '42



*Dr. Venkat's reunion participants, left to right: Present students Wen Chen and Kelong Han, doctors, Anil D'Mello'86, Shimin Zhang '02, Arun Swaminathan '97, Raman Venkataraman, Karen Habucky '87, '92, Vinod Ramachandran '01, and student Shringi Sharma*

On June 4, 2009, **John Tighe III** (BS '78) received the Walter M. Aikman Entrepreneur of the Year award at the Mid-Atlantic Capital (MAC) Alliance annual luncheon in Philadelphia, Pa. The award recognizes entrepreneurs for their success in the development of a venture-backed business with significant growth in sales, market impact, and value.

Several of Professor **Raman Venkataraman's** students gathered for a reunion in New Jersey in July 2009 to celebrate his years in the School of Pharmacy and his recent mentoring awards. Since joining the School of Pharmacy in 1980, Venkataraman has been the major advisor for 28 graduate students. His former students currently have positions in academia, industry, and the government.



*Alexandra Sassi and Haitao Yang, School of Pharmacy PhD graduates, hold their caps high as they celebrate after the commencement ceremony at the Petersen Events Center on Sunday, April 26, 2009.*



# Thrift Drug Founder Reuben Helfant Honored at Dean's Brunch

At the Dean's Brunch this past May, an annual event that has become a fixture of the School of Pharmacy's RxTravaganza weekend, we had the pleasure of listening to our alumni as they shared stories about their lives and their careers as pharmacists. At the brunch, Dean Kroboth introduced the elegant woman in pearls who had been delighting the guests throughout the morning. "I know that some of you have had the opportunity to meet Ethel Helfant Feldman," said the dean with a smile. "However, I'm not sure how many of you know that Ethel was the wife of one of the School of Pharmacy's most prestigious alumni, Reuben Helfant (PhG '23), co-founder of Thrift Drug."

Almost everyone in the room immediately recognized the name of one of the great leaders in pharmacy. In 1937, Helfant and Philip Hoffman founded Thrift

Drug and soon turned it into one of the largest pharmacy chains in the world. At the time of Helfant's death in 1968, Thrift operated 165 stores in 10 states. When Thrift was merged into Eckerd (now Rite Aid) in 1996, it had expanded to 550 stores in 11 states, and also ran 102 Kerr Drug stores and 272 Fay's Drug stores.

Helfant was known for his "hands-on" management style. "He knew every manager at every store," remembers daughter Sherry Malone. One story has it that Helfant once visited a store in Downtown Pittsburgh and noticed that the windows were dirty. "So he told the manager to get soap and water, rolled up his sleeves, and washed the windows himself," recalls Sherry with a laugh.

Reuben and Ethel Helfant always knew how to give back. Reuben Helfant established a scholarship-loan-training program for students at both the Pitt and

Duquesne schools of pharmacy. This internship program played a tremendous role in the lives of many of our students, who then went on to successful careers at Thrift Drug and other companies. He also helped finance fellow alumnus Joseph Koslow's (BS '38) education through a scholarship.

After her husband passed away, Ethel Helfant established a scholarship in his name at the School of Pharmacy. Since that time, the Reuben Helfant Scholarship has provided more than \$85,000 in student support. Thanks to her generosity and to her husband's example, those students have since gone on to become the newest generation of leaders in pharmacy.



Reuben Helfant '23,  
Co-founder of  
Thrift Drug

## In Memory Fund

The School of Pharmacy In Memory Award was established in 2005 to provide a deserving pharmacy student with an award in memory of all alumni, families, or friends whose memorial gifts have come to the School of Pharmacy. Gifts have been made to this endowment in memory of:

Name	Year Gift Established
Kim Lawren Reighard (BS '76)	2006
Samuel P. Conte (BS '41)	2006
Eilene Stauchler Liepack (EDUC '57)	2006
Margaret Madarasz Gerson (BS '52)	2006
Fred G. Gatto	2007
Janet Ball	2007
Carmen Muro	2007
Matthew O. Pecht	2007
Brian Haugh (BS '98)	2007
James C. Meisner (BS '48)	2008
Gerald Paulice	2008
Ethel M. Ritzman (BS '58)	2008
Tara Feroce	2008
H. Lawton Snyder	2008
Robert M. Fry	2009
Frank Ulyan	2009
Rose Borrelli	2009
Patricia Kuchma	2009

## Class of 2009 Wants to Establish First-Ever Class Endowment



*Class of 2009 at the Graduation Hooding Ceremony and Dinner following Commencement*

As their way of thanking the School of Pharmacy for preparing them for successful careers, the Class of 2009 is initiating an effort to establish an endowment fund that will provide support to deserving pharmacy students. This endowment will provide funds to be awarded annually to pharmacy students designated by the dean or School representative. The endowment would remain at the School of Pharmacy in perpetuity enabling students to receive support long into the future.

Class of 2009 alumni interested in contributing to the establishment of this endowment should send their checks payable to the University of Pittsburgh to: Graham Ciraulo, University of Pittsburgh, School of Pharmacy, 1102 Salk Hall, 3501 Terrace Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15261

## School of Pharmacy Golf Invitational a Success

For the sixth year in a row, the School of Pharmacy Golf Invitational was a resounding success. Thanks to our alumni, friends, and corporate sponsors, more than \$17,000 was raised for student scholarships. We would like to thank all of the businesses who donated prizes and the students who volunteered to help make this year's outing a fun time for all.



*Doug McCullough, Tom Edinger (PharmD '06), Cathy Custer (BS '78) and Jeff Fink (BS '95) at the 2009 Golf Invitational.*

# Joseph Cippel Sr. Becomes Pharmacy's Newest Member of the 1787 Society

Joseph Cippel Sr. (BS '56) has been inducted into the University of Pittsburgh 1787 Society in honor of his decision to include the School of Pharmacy in his estate.

Cippel and his family are already a legacy at the School of Pharmacy. His two boys, David Cippel (BS '86) and Joseph Cippel Jr. (BS '88), are graduates of the School, as is his daughter-in-law Paula Haines Cippel (BS '88). Their pharmacy, Klingensmith's Drugstore, has been a Ford City, Pa., institution for almost 70 years.

In fact, it was from Klingensmith's founder, Joseph Henry Klingensmith, that Cippel Sr. learned the importance of giving to help a young person enter the profession. Cippel began working at Klingensmith's when he was 12 years old, and when it came time for him to go to college, his education was generously financed by Klingensmith. Cippel eventually paid him back and purchased his pharmacy.

Cippel chose to follow in the footsteps of his mentor by making a gift to help students at the

School of Pharmacy. When asked why he feels it's important to help young people begin a career in pharmacy Cippel responded, "It's the best health profession to get into. You really *can* help people." His only request was that the students who benefit from his gift one day do the same.



Joseph Cippel Sr.  
(BS '56)

# Silent Cal's Grimm History

## SNAPSHOT FROM PHARMACY'S PAST

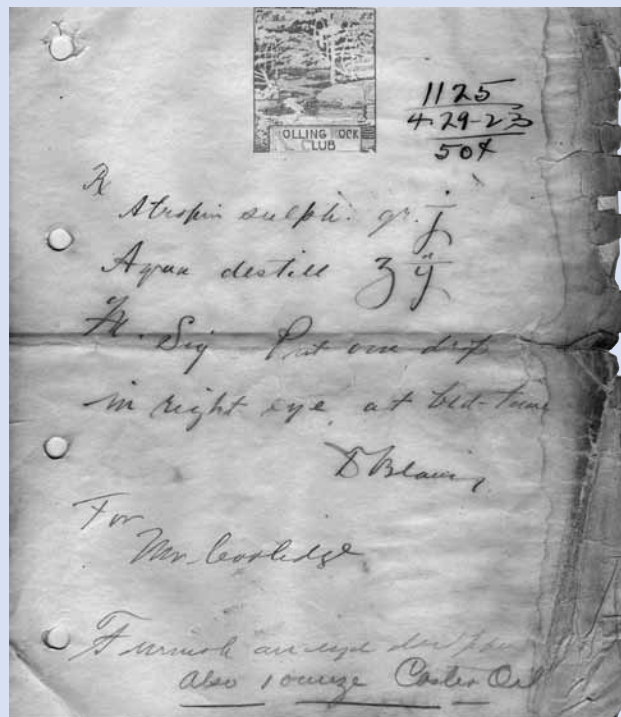
Prescription number 1125, for Vice President Calvin Coolidge (1872–1923), was filled on April 29, 1923, at the Ligonier Pharmacy, Ligonier, Pa.

It was filled for Vice President Coolidge by pharmacist John Lloyd Moonly for the amount of 50 cents.

Upon the death of President Warren Harding on August 3, 1923, Coolidge succeeded him as

the 30th president of the United States.

The prescription was written on Rolling Rock Club stationery, suggesting that he was a guest of the Club at the time he developed an eye infection. The prescription was donated by Fred W. Hayes (BS '58) and is displayed in the School's Elmer H. Grimm Sr. Pharmacy Museum.



The prescription reads as follows:

RX

Atropine sulfate      1 grain    (1/15.43 Gm.)  
Aqua destill.          2 drachm (1/4) Fl. Ounce

Sig Put one drop in right eye at bedtime

D. Blair (or Blain)

For Mr. Coolidge

It appears that the Vice President also needed some castor oil.





Welcome to the start of a fine academic year at Pitt School of Pharmacy! It is my pleasure to serve as the president of your Alumni Society. While we travel the folds of our profession over the next year, I expect that we will see vast changes to our health care system. There will be one thing that remains constant though, and that is our Alma Mater. For 131 years, the steadfast capability bestowed unto Pitt students and courageously perpetuated by Pitt alumni has anchored our profession. This year we shall celebrate our heritage of strength and plan our future of success. Please gather with us in camaraderie and generosity at the Homecoming party, golf tournament, and the RxTravaganza. Please continue to gift your time, talent, and financial support to nurture the next generation of pharmacists. And finally, please stay in contact with our Society to remain active and engaged.

Hail to Pitt,  
Tim Davis (PharmD '00)



Tim Davis volunteers his time at the 2009 Career Roundtable event.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Past President  
**Iny Marks '00**

President  
**Timothy Davis '97, '00**

Vice President  
**Irene Damratoski '63, '66**

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**Tanya Fabian '98, '03**

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**Diane Ammerman '98**

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**Shelby Corman '02**

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**Joanne Kowiatek '77**

**Randy Meyer '03**

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**Christine Ruby-Scelsi '90, '94**

**Ernest Sanchez '02**

**Kara Sperandeo '06**

**Janet Traynor '87, '95**

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

**Derrick Helon '10**

**Alexa Ray '11**

**Jaime Genovese '12**

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Dean  
**Patricia D. Kroboth '80, '83**

Director of Development  
**Lawton Snyder**

Alumni Coordinator  
**Laraine Kuchma**

Development Associate  
Student Development Coordinator  
**Graham Ciraulo**

## TELL US ABOUT YOU!

Please send us information about your career advancements, papers presented, honors received, appointments, and further education. We'll include your news in the Alumni section as space allows. Photos are welcome. Please print clearly.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree and Year of Graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Position(s): \_\_\_\_\_

News: \_\_\_\_\_

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Let us know if you belonged to any of the following student organizations. Please check all that apply.

- Kappa Psi
  Lambda Kappa Sigma – LKS  
 Phi Delta Chi – PDC
  Phi Lambda Sigma – PLS  
 Rho Chi – Alpha Omicron Chapter

Please complete and return to:  
 University of Pittsburgh, PITPharmacy News  
 Attn.: Laraine Kuchma  
 Suite 1100 Salk Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15261  
 Phone: 412-648-3304 E-mail: [laraine@pitt.edu](mailto:laraine@pitt.edu)

Send us your news by e-mail!

**[laraine@pitt.edu](mailto:laraine@pitt.edu)**



Megan Sanchez (PharmD '06) and Ernie Sanchez (PharmD '02) at the Pittsburgh Pirates baseball game in May 2009.

#### Memories of RxTravaganza Gala 2009 (captions)

- Ann Sykes, Mac Gearhart, Laurence Sykes (BS '59), Pat Gearhart (BS '59) reunite after 50 years. *light up the dance floor*
- Alexa Ray (P3), Josuha Clossin (P4) put on a show
- Brian Bobby (PharmD '03) and Kelly Stell Bobby (PharmD '03) "wear their sunglasses at night"
- Dan Damratoski (BS '68) and Irene Damratoski (BS '63, '66)
- Faculty members Philip Empey, PhD, Sharron Connor, (PharmD), Thomas Nolin (PharmD '99, PhD '03)
- Carole Finelli Ladik (BS '59, '60) and husband Joseph Ladik
- 14 distinguished alumni "keep good company." Front Row: James Kirkwood (BS '65), Nancy

## DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

Distinguished alumni are chosen on the basis of their educational, professional, and University-affiliated achievements. They are individuals who are renowned for their integrity and have exhibited the highest degree of passion, commitment, and diligence in their contributions to the profession of pharmacy.

To nominate a distinguished alumnus, please visit our Web site **[www.pharmacy.pitt.edu/alumni](http://www.pharmacy.pitt.edu/alumni)**. All School of Pharmacy alumni are eligible. You are welcome to nominate yourself or others.

The School of Pharmacy Web site is a wonderful way of keeping in touch with all that is happening at the School. We invite you to visit the Web site at: **[www.pharmacy.pitt.edu](http://www.pharmacy.pitt.edu)**.



# University of Pittsburgh

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Please let us know your e-mail address by sending an e-mail to Laraine Kuchma at [laraine@pitt.edu](mailto:laraine@pitt.edu).

## SAVE THE DATE!

### **The Seventh Annual School of Pharmacy Golf Invitational**

Friday, May 14, 2010  
Quicksilver Golf Club  
Midway, PA

### **RxTravaganza 2010**

June 12, 2010  
Westin Convention  
Center Hotel  
Downtown Pittsburgh