

# PITT Pharmacy

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

FALL 2012







P1 students proudly pose with Dean Kroboth after the Gordon J. Vanscoy White Coat Ceremony 2012.  
 Left to right: Hilary Navy, Lindsey Rihtarchik, Dean Patricia Kroboth, Julia Zecchini, and Laura Bredenberg.

**ON THE COVER**

Top: Members of the class of 1972 on campus for their 40th reunion at RxTravaganza 2012.

Left: Class of 2015 reciting the Oath of a Pharmacist at the White Coat Ceremony 2012.

Right: School of Pharmacy's newest alumni, class of 2012.

**Features**

- 9** Opportunity Knocks
- 13** Creating Change
- 16** Distinguished Alumnus 2012: Daniel J. Cobaugh
- 17** Distinguished Alumnus 2012: David P. Rotella

**Departments**

- 5** Awards
- 18** Photographic Memories
- 20** News: Our School
- 22** News: Our Faculty
- 26** News: Our Students
- 29** News: Our Alumni
- 30** Investing in the Future
- 34** President's Message

The University of Pittsburgh, as an educational institution and as an employer, values equality of opportunity, human dignity, and racial/ethnic and cultural diversity. Accordingly, the University prohibits and will not engage in discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, disability, or status as a disabled veteran or a veteran of the Vietnam era. Further, the University will continue to take affirmative steps to support and advance these values consistent with the University's mission. This policy applies to admissions, employment, and access to and treatment in University programs and activities. This is a commitment made by the University and is in accordance with federal, state, and/or local laws and regulations.

For information on University equal opportunity and affirmative action programs and complaint/grievance procedures, please contact the University of Pittsburgh, Office of Affirmative Action, William A. Savage, Assistant to the Chancellor and Director of Affirmative Action (and Title IX and 504, ADA Coordinator), 901 William Pitt Union, Pittsburgh, PA 15260; 412-648-7860.

Published in cooperation with the Department of University Marketing Communications. 87701-1031



Dear Friends,

The sounds of the cicadas have faded and the signs of fall in Western Pennsylvania surround us—the lower angle of the sun in the sky, the shortened daylight hours, and the growing vibrancy of the trees.

Our Pitt campus is again fully alive with the energy of youth and the excitement of a new semester. I am incredibly impressed by our pharmacy students. As groups, their motivation, commitment, and enthusiasm for making a difference and for being the innovators shine. As individuals, they are inspiring. You can rest assure that your legacy of excellence, innovation, and leadership is in good hands.

This fall has its own special excitement because we can now see an amazing retainer wall between Salk Hall and the Field House; we can see the foundation for Salk Pavilion and the Commons; and we can see steel! Well, maybe the last observation is misleading—we can see rebar, not steel beams. I hope that by the time you read these words, though that steel beams will make visible to all the shape of our new space.

These physical changes are harbingers of changes that will the impact lives our students and the lives of the people in the communities in which we live and work. Long-Range Plan 2018 is a look at the ambitious broad strokes that could shape our future. I invite you to review the plan and let me know your ideas. [www.pharmacy.pitt.edu/about/pubs/pdf/Long\\_Range\\_Plan\\_2018.pdf](http://www.pharmacy.pitt.edu/about/pubs/pdf/Long_Range_Plan_2018.pdf)

Guided by the diverse opportunities in our health care landscape and by the science that shapes our research, we have set the goal of personalizing the education of every student by the time they graduate. Personalizing education means helping students explore how they might use their innate talents synergistically with the foundations of our profession, whether those areas are information technology, business, or direct patient care. This venture means developing opportunities for learning that don't exist and that could. Personalizing education is an opportunity for you, (yes, you!) to partner with us so that the opportunities for students, the profession of pharmacy, and innovation explode.

So please help. Help “Shape our Future” with your participation and support. Help us “Honor our Past” by honoring your past; please share a part of your story on our Web site: [shape.pharmacy.pitt.edu/](http://shape.pharmacy.pitt.edu/)

Together, let's “Honor our Past and Shape our Future.”

---

*PITPharmacy* Fall 2012:

Managing Editor: **Jan K. Shaw**

Writer: **Niki Kapsambelis**

Editing and Production Services: **University Marketing Communications**

Graphic Designer: **Jon Young**

Contributing Photographer: **Rebecca Bailey**

*PITPharmacy* is published by the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy.

# AWARDS

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH SCHOOL OF PHARMACY FACULTY, STUDENTS, AND ALUMNI

## Accolades Abound at APhA Annual Meeting

School of Pharmacy students, faculty, and an alumna were honored with numerous recognitions and awards at the American Pharmacists Association (APhA) Annual Meeting, held in New Orleans from March 9 to 12, 2012. Read on for specifics.

## Lucas Berenbrok: Top 10 in the National Patient Counseling Competition!

As a third-year PharmD student, Lucas Berenbrok competed locally and nationally in the APhA-Academy of Student Pharmacists (ASP) patient counseling competition, which is designed



Jesse Koch (P3)  
and Samantha  
Becker (P3)

to reflect changes that are occurring in practice and to reinforce the role of the pharmacist as a health care provider and patient educator.

As the Pitt national representative, Lucas and other competitors were evaluated on the content and style of their counseling. He was recognized as a Top Ten Finalist at the APhA-ASP Awards Ceremony and received prize compliments of APhA-ASP.



Lucas  
Berenbrok  
(P4)

## APhA-ASP Chapter Receives \$10,000 Grant for Project Chance!

Students Jessa Koch and Samantha Becker submitted the chapter project to improve outcomes for patients with hypertension by addressing medication adherence, lifestyle changes, and barriers to care at the Birmingham Free Clinic, a 340B-eligible entity. The project, which will be completed in collaboration with students from the School of Dental Medicine, was selected based on its innovation and for the significance of its impact on underserved patients. A poster of their project will be presented at the 2013 APhA Annual Meeting and Exposition. Project Chance is available through a partnership between APhA-ASP in collaboration with the Pharmacy Services Support Center of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and recognizes five nationwide chapters.

# AWARDS

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH SCHOOL OF PHARMACY FACULTY, STUDENTS, AND ALUMNI



P4 students Elyse Weitzman and Indrani Kar

## Phi Lambda Sigma Wins Chapter Award

Our Beta Delta Chapter of Phi Lambda Sigma, the national pharmacy leadership honor society, received the National Chapter of the Year Award. Students received the award at the American Pharmacists' Association Annual Meeting in New Orleans for outstanding programming during the previous year. The chapter's programs focused on the leadership development mission of the organization. The Beta Delta chapter sponsored two leadership retreats for students of all organizations in the school, a mentoring program for first year PharmD students, and a professional speaker series among other events.

## Rho Chi Wins Chapter Award

Rho Chi, the pharmacy honor society that recognizes academic achievement, won Chapter of the Year Award. The chapter's outstanding programs during the year were consistent with its mission and vision, which is to recognize excellence in intellectual achievement, foster fellowship among its members, and instill critical inquiry to advance all aspects of the profession of pharmacy. Students received the award at the American Pharmacists' Association Annual Meeting in New Orleans.

## Students Honored at the APhA Annual Meeting

Indrani Kar, now a fourth year PharmD student, was elected to the national board of Phi Lambda Sigma as the 2012-2013 member-at-large. Fourth year PharmD student Elyse Weitzman who served as the chapter president the School's APhA-ASP chapter president, received the Gloria N. Francke Student Pharmacist Scholar award from the APhA Foundation.



Members of Phi Lambda Sigma after receiving the 2012 PLS National Chapter of the Year Award at the 2012 APhA Annual Meeting in New Orleans.

# AWARDS

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH SCHOOL OF PHARMACY FACULTY, STUDENTS, AND ALUMNI

## McCormick PharmFlix2011 Video in Top 15

As a second-year PharmD student, Kyle McCormick created his "Search for Life" pharmacy video for the APhA-ASP national competition. It was selected among the top 15 videos and was played on monitors around the New Orleans Convention Center. Anyone who knows Kyle knows he will talk of his savvy with combining pharmacy with technology. McCormick is the current president of Pitt's APhA-ASP chapter. Watch the creative one and a half minute video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8SMYtS3-53c>



## McGivney Receives Residency Preceptor Excellence Award

Faculty member and alumna Melissa Somma McGivney (PharmD '98), received the APhA Community Pharmacy Residency Excellence in Precepting Award at the APhA Annual Meeting in March. McGivney is associate professor of pharmacy and therapeutics. The community pharmacy focused residency program has been the basis of awards for her and also for her residents.

The National Association of Chain Drug Stores Foundation partnered with McGivney to develop the Faculty Scholars Program. McGivney designed the educational programming. Now in its inaugural year, the purpose of the Scholars Program is to educate faculty around the country how to design, implement, and publish community pharmacy-based patient care research with the goal of making meaningful difference in patients' lives and public health.

## Christine M. Ruby Scelsi Receives Education Award

Christine M. Ruby Scelsi (BS '90, PharmD '94), assistant professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, was awarded the American Society of Consultant Pharmacists Leadership in Education Award at the organization's national meeting in Anaheim, Calif., on May 2012. This award honors the unique and innovative educational endeavors of one individual annually. Ruby's efforts in interprofessional geriatric education were lauded by the awards committee as being of great benefit to health care provider teams as well as to the senior patients she serves.



## Meyer and Howrie Receive AACP Excellence Award

The American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) selected the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy as a winner of the 2012 Award for Excellence in Assessment. As recipients of the award, Susan M. Meyer, associate dean for education, and Denise L. Howrie, assistant dean for academic affairs, presented their work during a special session at the AACP Annual Meeting in July 2012. The award recognizes outstanding PharmD assessment programs for their progress in developing and applying evidence of outcomes as



## Melinda Kozminski Wins Best Paper

Melinda (Mindy) Kozminski former community resident, 2010, won the APhA Wiederholt Prize for Best Published Paper Award for Economic, Social, and Administrative Sciences as the lead author. Co-authors included alumna Rachelle Busby (PharmD '08), former family medicine pharmacy resident, and Melissa McGivney. The winning paper was titled "Pharmacist Integration into the Medical Home: Qualitative Analysis."

Top, left to right: Christine Ruby Scelsi, Melissa Somma McGivney, Denise Howrie, Susan Meyer

# AWARDS

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH SCHOOL OF PHARMACY FACULTY, STUDENTS, AND ALUMNI



Gretchen Kreckel  
Garofoli



Jan Beumer

part of the ongoing evaluation and improvement of pharmacy professional education. Their winning application is posted on the Pharmacy Education Assessment and Accreditation Services (PEAAS) portal of the AACP Web site: [www.aacp.org/resources/education/peaas/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.aacp.org/resources/education/peaas/Pages/default.aspx).

## Kreckel Garofoli Honored as Distinguished Young Pharmacist

Gretchen Kreckel Garofoli (PharmD '09), was the recipient of the Pharmacists Mutual Companies' 2011 West Virginia Distinguished Young Pharmacist award. The award is presented to one pharmacist in each state who displays outstanding clinical, pharmacy and leadership skills, as well as excellence in contributions in state pharmacy association activities and community affairs. Garofoli is a clinical assistant professor in the West Virginia University School of Pharmacy Department of Clinical Pharmacy.

## Jan Beumer Receives Junior Scholar Award

Jan Beumer, assistant professor of pharmaceutical sciences, has been selected as the recipient of the 2011 University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute Junior Scholar Award in Clinical Cancer Research. Beumer gave a presentation about his work at the 2012 UPCI Scientific Retreat on June 22, 2012. Presentations immediately followed an awards ceremony during which Beumer was recognized.

## Tanya Fabian Recognized with University Alumni Award

Tanya Fabian (PharmD '98, PhD '03), assistant professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, was selected by the University of Pittsburgh Alumni Association and the Awards Committee of the Board of Directors as the winner of the 2012 Ivan and Mary Novick Award. The award is given annually to an alumnus who graduated in the past 15 years, is age 38 or younger, and has demonstrated leadership as a volunteer for the Pitt Alumni Association and/or the University. The award is funded with a gift from Ivan (A&S '49) and Mary Novick. Among her many other contributions, she served as president of the School of Pharmacy Alumni Society Board.



Tanya Fabian, accepting the Ivan and Mary Novick Young Alumni Award from Jeffery Gleim Sr., executive administrator alumni relations, and Mary Novick, the originator of the award.



# Opportunity Knocks

As Baby Boomers age, pharmacists adapt to meet their needs



When Nick Generalovich acquired his second retail pharmacy, he was learning the ropes from the previous owner, a fellow pharmacist who was preparing to retire. In the back of the shop, Generalovich noticed employees were popping medications into bubble packs.

“What is that?” he asked.

“You don’t even want to know,” the former owner replied, before explaining that the packs were for three assisted living homes he serviced. The work was a pain, he said: People called him at midnight, asking him to bring a bottle of Maalox.

“You’ll want to discontinue it,” he advised.

But Generalovich (BS ’67) decided to see for himself. He visited the three homes. Two had already decided to change pharmacies; the third was thinking about it.

Generalovich, who had been working in retail pharmacy for more than two decades, wasn’t ready to give up so easily. He convinced the home’s administrators to give him a chance to learn more about their needs and tailor his business plan accordingly.

What he discovered not only changed the way he handled the assisted living accounts, but also transformed his career.

“I learned about how people were aging now,” he says. Unlike the seniors of past decades, who often moved in with their grown children, people were retiring with enough money set aside to live in communities where they could socialize with people their own age. Assisted living cost less than nursing homes and was designed for people who are living longer and with greater independence than they were a generation ago.

“The vision was that this was not a flash in the pan,” Generalovich says. “This was part of our health care system that was bound to grow.”

# Opportunity Knocks (continued)



Nicholas Generalovich (BS '67)  
CEO  
Vanguard Advance  
Pharmacy Systems, retired



John T. Tighe III (BS '78)  
President, CEO  
TMG Health Inc.

Recognizing this trend prompted Generalovich to create Vanguard Advanced Pharmacy Systems, a Florida-based business that now serves 215 assisted living homes across Florida.

"We got quite an education, and we kept customizing our model to that segment in the industry," he said.

## A growing trend

The creation of Vanguard is just one example of how the aging Baby Boomer demographic is affecting the way health care in general, and pharmacy in particular, are practiced within the context of a population that is growing in both numbers and complexity.

As Generalovich points out, people live longer now than they did even a generation ago. Medications and access to other health care resources keep them mobile, and their daily needs often don't require the expense of nursing homes with skilled staff. Hence the explosion of assisted living facilities, where residents live more or less independently with an occasional helping hand from unskilled staff.

"I think it will continue to grow. That particular industry, I think, is subject to increased regulation," Generalovich says.

Increased regulation is also at play in the insurance side of the Baby Boomer business—an area in which pharmacists can play a key role. Jack Tighe (BS '78) worked in Washington, D.C., as an intern for the American Society of Hospital Pharmacists and as a staff person for a succession of other groups before returning to Pennsylvania to help run the gubernatorial campaign for family friend Bob Casey. After the election, Tighe was

Casey's chief of staff for five years, creating the Pennsylvania Employee Benefits Trust Fund and the Children's Health Insurance Program before leaving to work for Independence Blue Cross in Philadelphia. He developed the insurer's Medicare/Medicaid HMO from the ground up, then left in 1998 to start his own business, TMG Health, doing for other businesses the same work he had done for Independence.

When he founded the company, Tighe says he looked at U.S. demographics and drew a few conclusions: one, that the population was aging; two, that those people would need health care; and three, that someone would have to pay for it. A person who understood how these three trends meshed together would almost certainly have a niche to fill.

Tighe expects growth in clients who use Medicare's Part D or Advantage (Part C) programs, which will bring in more revenue. According to the Pew Research Center, on Jan. 1, 2011, the oldest Baby Boomers turned 65. Every day, about 10,000 more people join them, a trend that is expected to last 19 years. By 2030, fully 18 percent of the nation's population will be at least that age, compared with 13 percent today.

"It's not rocket science," says Tighe. "The future, at least for our wheelhouse, is very bright."

The Part D program, which took effect in 2006, subsidizes prescription drug coverage for people who join a plan run by a Medicare-approved insurance or other private company.

"Part D was a big wake-up call for everybody, because they realized that overnight, 43 million Americans were going to be eligible," Tighe explains. His

**“People live longer now than they did even a generation ago. Medications and access to other health care resources keep them mobile.” —Nick Generalovich**

company is one of the largest private administrators for Part D outside of major insurers.

Another coming trend, as Tighe sees it, is cost control—an issue that has yet to be fully addressed, but in which pharmacists could play an integral part.

“Pharmacy can play a huge role, because [of] the intrinsic value and return on investment of providing prescription medicine to seniors and others who are uninsured,” he says. “The evidence is out there pretty clearly that [medications] can reduce hospital stays and manage chronic illnesses.”

More pharmacists should get involved in this public policy debate, because to the untrained eye, the cost savings associated with pharmaceuticals can be obscured, he notes.

“I think they’ve got to drill down to the therapeutic value” of the drugs, instead of just worrying about the profit margins of drug companies, Tighe says of lawmakers. “I’m not sure there’s always an honest evaluation of the value of pharmaceuticals.”

### **A shifting landscape**

When Mike Kinter first started in retail pharmacy, about 98 percent of his business was handled through private payers. Today, those numbers have almost completely reversed, with 95 percent of his business paid through Medicaid, Medicare, or insurance companies. What that means is that on any given day, he goes to work not knowing how much he’ll charge or how much he’ll be paid.



**Michael G. Kinter (BS '70)**  
Director of Operations  
Bay Pharmacy St. Petersburg, FL

“It’s a very challenging dilemma for practicing pharmacists,” says Kinter (BS ’70). “The market is limitless because of the number of patients out there and the aging of the population. But because of who’s paying for it, it becomes really difficult to make money.”

Nonetheless, he must be doing something right, because his pharmacy, The Prescription Shop in St. Petersburg, Florida, has been open since December 1947. It’s the oldest independent pharmacy in the area, and Kinter has owned it for about 25 years.

In his practice, to which he recently returned after an eight-year hiatus, he can discuss the patient’s medication profile and help them understand interactions and other variables. It’s a need made even greater by the aging population, he says.



**William J. Gatti (BS '66)**  
Chairman  
Millennium Pharmacy Systems

“Elderly people certainly present an interesting challenge for health care practitioners because of dementia and that sort of thing,” he notes. And as people live longer, their health care typically becomes more complex, he notes: “In my practice, we talk to a 90-year-old person every day.”

Like Tighe, he believes cost cutting will impact his business and thinks formulary management—or using less expensive drugs to treat certain conditions—could help, but would be politically inexpedient in some cases.

But in other ways, drugs can also help save money, he says: “If the drugs are properly administered and taken by the patient, they can keep people healthier longer and out of expensive institutional type care.”

# Opportunity Knocks (continued)

**“Pharmacy can play a huge role, because [of] the intrinsic value and return on investment of providing prescription medicine to seniors and others who are uninsured.” —Jack Tighe**

Kinter worked as an institutional pharmacist and owned some nursing home pharmacies in Florida for much of his career (1974 to 2002). Back then, ideas they used—unit dosing, consultant pharmacy services, drug regimen reviews, and written reports for the facilities’ administrators—were novel.

Nowadays there is less turf protection between physicians and pharmacists, he says, which works to the patient’s benefit.

“I do see a lot of acceptance of discussion of drug therapy with physicians,” he says. “They seem to have grown up with an understanding that pharmacists have knowledge and seem to accept it more.”

That’s where medication therapy management comes into play. Kinter says pharmacists are starting to earn reimbursement for helping to manage a patient’s care, a trend that is sharpened by the complexity of the Baby Boomer’s health profile and promising for the pharmacists who treat them.

## Technological advances

About the time that fax machines came into widespread use, Bill Gatti (BS ’66) began working with nursing homes. Like Kinter, who once worked for Gatti’s father the family’s pharmacy in Indiana, Pennsylvania, he recognized a niche market when he saw one.

By 1990, Gatti had opened a second location near Pittsburgh. The nursing home business had

given them a bigger presence, and by 1994, his company was acquired by American Medserve, a Chicago Company that was starting a new rollup that consolidated independent pharmacies. Gatti retained some ownership; in 1996, the company went public and it was sold to Omnicare, a corporation devoted to pharmacy in elder care settings, in 1997. (The same company also purchased Vanguard from Generalovich five years ago.)

Gatti decided to open his own nursing home pharmacy using software as a stand-in for the trusty fax machine. He named it Millenium Pharmacy Systems and took on his first client in 2004. Technology is used end to end, meaning it is transmitted electronically from a laptop at the patient’s bedside and goes directly to the pharmacy.

“It’s virtually error free, and there is virtually no waste,” says Gatti, who worked with Randy Smith, senior associate dean at the School of Pharmacy, to perfect the system.

Today, the company has expanded to include nine states and more than 30,000 beds, and Gatti has retired. But he agrees that the aging Baby Boomer population has created a need for pharmacists.

“They take significantly more drugs than at-home patients, and it has to be managed,” he says.

Though nurses manage medication in some nursing homes,

patients in assisted living don’t have that kind of skilled assistance. That’s why Generalovich established an education program that uses registered nurses to teach assisted living aides about proper handling of prescription drugs.

“It keeps their people educated, trained, so that when they pass medications, there are fewer errors,” he says. “They are able to recognize some basic symptoms.”

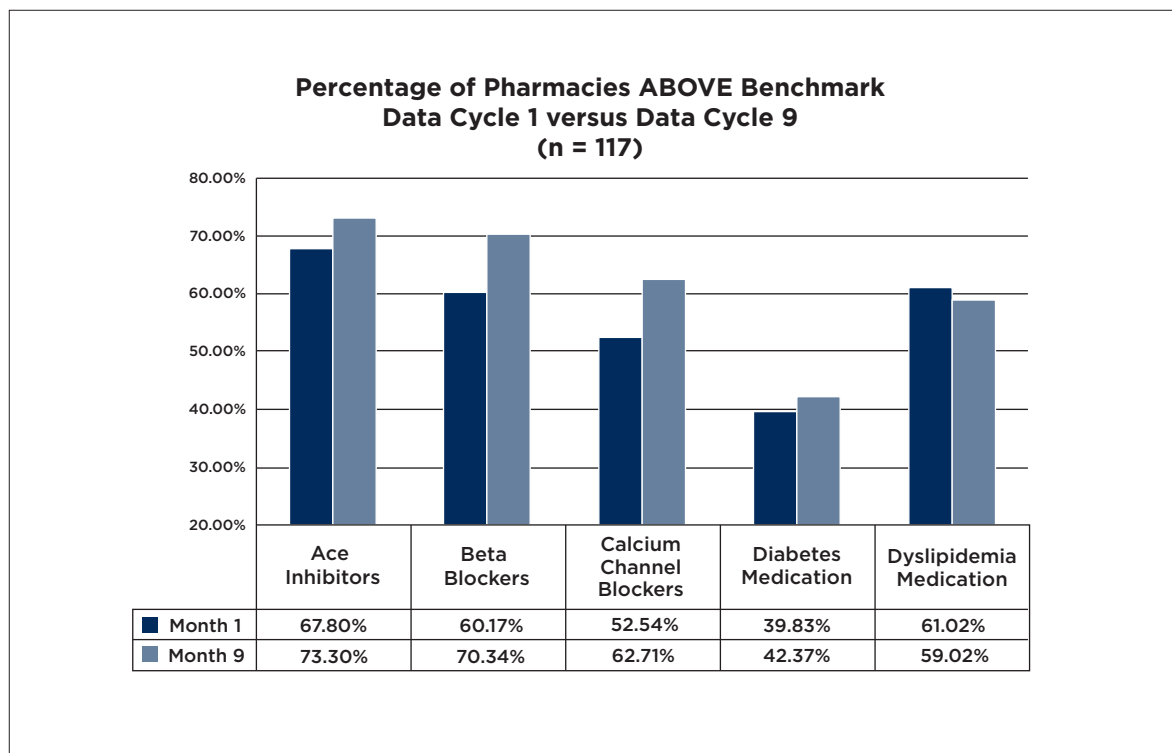
Gatti believes that his model can be further expanded to help patients who remain at home. If the person is taking four to six drugs every day, at different times of day, compliance can be tricky, he notes. But drugs could be packaged to clarify dosing times and amounts for patients, he says.

Generalovich says his company also recognizes that a caregiver might be the true customer because he or she takes responsibility for obtaining and administering drugs. That’s where a good relationship with the pharmacist can be critical, he notes.

“We have to maintain that relationship... Anything we can do to engage the customer or the patient with the pharmacy is helpful for both sides,” he says. “It’s a more educated customer, I guarantee you.”

# Creating Change

Pharmacists drive metrics that improve medication adherence



When treating people with chronic illnesses, finding the right medication is only half the battle. The other half is getting the patient to take the medication in the prescribed dosage and manner.

The reasons people give for failing to take their medication are as varied as the patients themselves: they don't believe they're that sick, a friend told them that the medicine has nasty side effects, they can't afford it, or they simply have trouble remembering to take it.

No matter the underlying cause, the end result is medication rendered useless in controlling potentially serious—even life-threatening—conditions. To combat that problem, an unorthodox collaborative of

health care stakeholders formed a joint project that seeks to position pharmacists on the front line of preventative care.

## The PA Collaborative

In 2008, the Pennsylvania Collaborative began with a strategic partnership among Highmark BCBS, Rite Aid Corporation including more than 300 pharmacies in Central and Western Pennsylvania, the Pharmacy Quality Alliance (PQA) in Washington, D.C., and Pittsburgh-based CECity, a company dedicated to technology-based performance improvement in health care settings.

At a meeting in Washington, the PQA challenged its members to develop quality metrics that

could be applied toward medication use. Meeting attendees included collaborative members, such as CECity's Annette Boyer (BS '91), vice president of business development, and Rite Aid's Rick Mohall, senior director of clinical services. As the players aligned, a plan was initiated. The planned project represented a unique effort by several different entities who traditionally don't work together.

"This is the perfect example of how health plans and community pharmacies can collaborate to improve appropriate medication use," Boyer noted. "This serves as a model for other partnerships to implement across the country."

Putting the plan into action, Highmark committed to providing aggregated prescription

**“It demonstrates the importance that pharmacists play in improving quality of patient care and in particular around adherence and compliance to medication therapy.”**

**—Simone Karp**

data that has been de-identified from individual patients and is used to calculate medication use metrics; CECity contributed its Web-based application, branded as the Advancing Safety and Performance Improvement for Pharmacy Excellence (ASPIRE) for this initiative; PQA provided the measures, endorsed by the National Quality Foundation (NQF); and Rite Aid provided the pharmacy implementation with a set of control pharmacies to compare results against those where pharmacists employ intervention strategies. The University of Pittsburgh was brought in for statistical analysis and to collaborate with Rite Aid on the pharmacy implementation and the intervention strategy.

## ASPIRE

ASPIRE provided participating Rite Aid pharmacies with metrics benchmarked against specific predetermined targets for seven classes of medications used to treat diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and respiratory illnesses. These chronic illnesses were chosen based on commonality and consistently poor adherence to medication regimens.

Using short questionnaires, pharmacists screened patients who had prescriptions for the targeted medications to check for possible adherence issues. Based on the results of these short questionnaires, the pharmacists then offered brief interventions lasting two to five

minutes based on motivational interviewing principles developed by Janice Pringle, research associate professor in the Department of Pharmacy and Therapeutics at the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy.

“They’re actually meeting each patient individually where they are, strategizing with the patient ways of improving what they’re doing in terms of medication use,” Pringle explained.

Pharmacists who perform the interventions are trained to cultivate patient buy-in. For example, the pharmacist indicates concern and requests the patient’s permission to discuss the situation, said Pringle.

Once the dialogue is initiated, the pharmacist asks the patient to help them understand any concerns the patient might have about the medication. The pharmacist is trained to get the patient to agree that they have a condition, such as high blood pressure, and to discuss reasons why the medication is important. If they can get the patient to agree to try the medication for two weeks, that agreement is then put in writing, and the patient is asked to call the physician or pharmacist with any concerns.

If the patient continues to ignore the intervention, he or she can be flagged for a longer discussion. But that can only happen when a system is in place that allows for such screens to catch a potential problem, noted Pringle.

Pharmacists trained in these techniques, developed by Pringle, were able to improve compliance by helping the patient buy into the importance of medication adherence.

The collaborative included approximately 120 intervention pharmacies and 118 control stores across Western and Central Pennsylvania. Some sites averaged four to five patient interventions per day. According to Pringle, the results were promising: medication compliance rose about a half a percent per drug every month. In real numbers, that means about 400 more people became adherent in a year, just for one medication, she says.

“It demonstrates the importance that pharmacists play in improving the quality of patient care and, in particular, adherence and compliance to medication therapy,” said Simone Karp (BS ’86), cofounder and chief business officer of CECity. “Not only was there improvement, but the important thing was that we were able to show pharmacists their gaps in a set of core measures, direct the pharmacists to appropriate interventions for improvement, and scale the initiative very quickly and easily with minimum staff support and expense.”

### Inside the Initiative

Jesse McCullough (PharmD '00) a director of field clinical services for Rite Aid, worked directly with Pringle as the collaborative was rolled out across the participating stores.

"The long and short of it is we were able to show positive improvement across these metrics," he says. "I think they have a lot of merit."

"We showed that we had a scalable approach that was able to use continuous data aggregation to develop quality reports not only of value to the individual pharmacy in the community setting... but also of value at the corporate level for Rite Aid," added Boyer, of CECity.

Eventually, pharmacies may be evaluated on similar performance metrics as a means for reimbursement, according to Boyer. Already, health plans are being held accountable for adherence through Medicare plans.

And while not all pharmacists were initially comfortable with the program, it's impor-

tant to introduce the tools and familiarize the staff with them, McCullough said.

Pharmacists are well suited to serve as the catalyst for change that yields better patient outcomes, McCullough notes. Typically, patients interact with their pharmacist 12 times every year, as opposed to twice a year with a physician.

"We are well positioned to be able to observe these things and react to them much more quickly," McCullough points out. "We're really looking to highlight the role of the pharmacist as we move forward," McCullough said. "Being involved in programs like this is helping us to learn different things... to help the public that we serve."

As Boyer illustrated, pharmacists in community practice are traditionally measured on the number of prescriptions they fill and generic substitution rates. Through this collaborative, those quality metrics are simply being expanded to clinical practice in an area that dovetails with their training and expertise.

**"We're really looking to highlight the role of the pharmacist as we move forward...to help the public that we serve."**

**—Jesse McCullough**

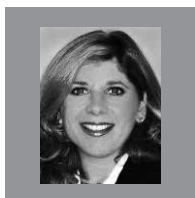
"To our collaborative this initiative raises the bar for the pharmacy profession and enhances the pharmacists' role in primary care," Boyer said. "If you think about what our focus is, it's on the patient and improving patient care. Who better serves the patient than the community pharmacist!"

The notably successful initiative is currently being expanded to include multiple pharmacy chains and health plans in Alabama, Florida, and Pennsylvania.

#### CONTRIBUTORS



Annette Dudash Boyer (BS '81)  
Vice President of Sales and Marketing  
CECity



Simone Faye Karp (BS '86)  
Cofounder and Vice President of Marketing and Sales  
CECity



Jesse McCullough (PharmD '00)  
Director of Field Clinical Services  
Rite Aid



Janice Pringle (PhD '86)  
Associate Professor  
University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy

# Daniel J. Cobaugh (BS '87)

## Distinguished Alumnus 2012



Daniel Cobaugh, Virginia Cobaugh (mother), Nicolas Lagomarsino (spouse)

In 1985, as a fourth year pharmacy student, I was uncertain about the direction my career would take after graduation," Daniel Cobaugh remembered, "but it all came together on one incredible morning."

Cobaugh grew up in Pittsburgh and was surrounded by strong, influential women who helped him recognize his passion for helping people. During his early college years, he worked at the Rehabilitation Institute of Pittsburgh (now known as The Children's Institute) under the direction of other health professionals. "It was remarkable watching these nurses, physicians, and therapists come together and care for the patients, not one-by-one but rather as a multidisciplinary team

When it came time for him to consider college, the then-18-year-old saw the University of Pittsburgh as a logical extension of his Western Pennsylvania roots. "Little did I know that I would be the beneficiary of a world-class education. When you're 18 and a first generation college student, you don't really appreciate the opportunities as they're presented to you in the moment. But looking back on my experience at Pitt, I received an incredible education."

And so Cobaugh enrolled, first in the College of Arts and

Sciences and then in the School of Pharmacy, where, as a fourth year student, his entire professional path was shaped over the course of two short lectures on clinical toxicology from Dr. Edward Krenzelok. "I was absolutely enchanted with clinical toxicology," said Cobaugh, "and my entire future in the field was crystallized in those lectures."

Cobaugh expressed his enthusiasm to Krenzelok, the director of the Pittsburgh Poison Center, and together they created a summer internship opportunity. "I spent every morning that summer shadowing specialists in poison information and learning a great deal about clinical toxicology. That experience motivated me to apply to PharmD programs. I would not have had that chance without the guidance and knowledge of my instructors at Pitt."

After graduating from Duquesne University and completing a hospital pharmacy residency at Mercy Hospital, Cobaugh returned to the Pittsburgh Poison Center and the School of Pharmacy as a fellow, and then joined Dr. Sandra Schneider's toxicology treatment team at Montefiore.

Today, Cobaugh serves as the Vice President of the highly respected American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) Research and Education Foundation, overseeing the development of numerous practice-based programs to ensure safe and effective medication use. And while his research and advocacy efforts have spanned the nation and impacted countless lives, Cobaugh is quick to attribute his achievements to the passion inspired by the faculty at the School of Pharmacy. "I was the beneficiary of a stellar education offered by faculty

who, along with being experts in their fields, incorporated humanism and caring for each student into their approach to teaching. Any career successes that I've had are due, in large part, to the School and the family and friends who have been there for me throughout the journey."





# David P. Rotella (BS '81)

## Distinguished Alumnus 2012

For most 15-year-olds, summer jobs are nice ways to earn a little bit of pocket money, but for Dave Rotella, his summer job at a local pharmacy would shape his life's path for decades to come.

Growing up just outside of Pittsburgh, Rotella worked summers in a local drugstore, stocking shelves and keeping the store in good order. A talented student, he recognized that his passion for science paired well with the pharmacy environment with which he was already familiar, and so when it came time to pursue higher education, pharmacy school seemed to be a good fit.

"In those days," reminisced Rotella, "we took one full year of classes in the School of Arts and Sciences and then we were released into the bachelor of pharmacy program." Rotella's time at Pitt was fruitful. "I am convinced that I got an excellent education from an excellent faculty—they challenged and motivated me and I learned a good bit while I was there, not only about pharmacy, but about ephemeral things like hard work, respect, obligation, and teamwork. It was an outstanding experience."

During his time at Pitt, Rotella's attention was not only focused on success within the classroom, he focused on success within the laboratory as well. "It was during my time at Pitt, during my undergraduate years, that I became familiar with scientific research and embraced the lab." His experience in conducting undergraduate research at Pitt propelled him toward the next critical step in his career: pursuing a PhD in medicinal chemistry.

"It was an easy transition for me," Rotella stated. "Pitt really prepared me to undertake this kind of intense scientific investigation, and so I was very well prepared for graduate school."

After graduating from The Ohio State University in 1985, Rotella set his sights on the pharmaceutical industry, and for more than 20 years he engaged in basic drug discovery research.

Recently, Rotella has returned to the classroom, this time as a teacher.

Today, Rotella serves as the Margaret and Herman Sokol Professor of Medicinal Chemistry at Montclair State University, a position that allows him to straddle between the two worlds with which he is so familiar.

Rotella still looks back fondly on his time at Pitt. "I wouldn't hesitate to recommend the school to anyone." His support and enthusiasm for the school extends beyond just kind words: Rotella is also a donor to the School of Pharmacy. "Education is expensive. I know this, and alumni support is what gives the dean and school the ability to support these talented young students. I firmly believe we owe it to the next generation of pharmacists to invest in their education so that they can benefit the way I did."



Members of the Rotella Family  
left to right: Christopher  
(son), Mark White (son-in-  
law), Amanda Rotella White  
(daughter), David, with wife  
Mary Beth and Dominic (son).



# Photographic Memories





6



7



8

**1:** Pharmacy students demonstrate enthusiasm for their career during the Phlash Mob at the Petersen Event Center, Pharmacy Week 2012. **2:** Director of Development Maurissa Vergari, alumni Daniel Damratowski (BS'68), and Irene Hilinski Damratowski, (BS'63, MS'66) enjoy RxTravaganza Gala 2012. **3:** PI students Megan Petersen and Gordon Watkins present information about osteoporosis at the Health Fair 2012. **4:** Pon and Robert McKenzie (BS '60) celebrate the evening on the dance floor at RxTravaganza 2012, Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall. **5:** Members of the 50th year reunion class of 1962 on the Pitt campus during RxTravaganza 2012, l to r: James Borecky, Donald McDonald, Patricia Burgh McDonald, Ronald Olsen, and Raymond Rodgers. **6:** Assistant Professor Maggie Folan, (PhD '03), and graduate students at the Annual Research Retreat and Awards Ceremony. **7:** Michael Tortorici, (PharmD'02, PhD '07) sharing his career expertise during the APPS Pharmaceutical Sciences Alumni Program. **8:** Faculty and Leadership Team members discuss their vision for the school with the Board of Visitors, June 2012.

## Four Retiring Staff Leave Indelible Mark on the School of Pharmacy



Barbara Belardi



Lois Edmondston



Laraine Kuchma



Andrea Stofka

**B**arb Belardi, Lois Edmondston, Laraine Kuchma, and Andrea Stofka each elected to accept the University's voluntary retirement package that was recently offered to eligible staff. We wish each of them all the best in their retirement and future endeavors. They have individually made enormous contributions to our school, which is a better place because they worked here. Each will be sorely missed.

Barbara Belardi has shaped the events of the school including the White Coat Ceremony into the professional events that they are, making families, corporate and individual partners, and especially the student white coat recipients appreciative of their connection with our school. Barb has been the face of the School of Pharmacy for distinguished guests and has uniformly left each visitor with the feeling that no detail has been left undone.

Lois Edmondston joined the School of Pharmacy in 2000 and was instrumental in assisting Jan Pringle and her group with all aspects of a research study including IRB submissions, database development, statistical analyses, and report development. The Pharmacy Evaluation and Research Unit known as PERU could not have conducted their many, many studies over the past two decades without Lois' help and support.

Laraine Kuchma joined the School of Pharmacy as an administrative assistant. Her interpersonal skill with alums was recognized and she became the school's alumni coordinator and has since then worked with the director of development. She has been the connection with alumni and the liaison to the Pharmacy Alumni Society and over the years, has given our alums the kind of personal attention that has drawn each closer to our

School of Pharmacy family.

Andrea Stofka began her University employment in what was then the Department of Pharmacology in the School of Pharmacy. In 1981 she was promoted to administrative assistant to the chairman of the Department of Pharmacology and remained in that position until 1987 when all members of the Department of Pharmacology transferred to the School of Dental Medicine. In 1995, Andrea transferred back to the School of Pharmacy along with her pharmacology colleagues and grew to the position of manager of the school's research office. Andrea's amazing ability to work under stress and meet all the grant deadlines is immensely appreciated.

## Class of 2012 Names James J. Pschirer the Stanford Cohen Teacher of the Year

James J. Pschirer, School of Pharmacy assistant professor of pharmacy and therapeutics and director of experiential learning and continuing professional development, was chosen by the Class of 2012 as the school's Stanford I. Cohen Teacher of the Year. The award was presented at the school's Graduation Dinner and Hooding Ceremony on April 29, 2012.

The award is named in honor of the late Stanford Cohen, a 1957 graduate of the School of Pharmacy who served on the faculty from 1979 to 1998.



James Pschirer

## Pitt Students Selected to Attend GRASP Program

The Pennsylvania Pharmacists Association selected three Pitt pharmacy students, Nicole Kovacic (P3), Erika Morgan (P3), and Tamiko Yamatani (P2), to participate in the Fifth Annual Government Relations Advocacy for Student Pharmacists (GRASP) program held February 2012, in Harrisburg, Pa. Only 20 student pharmacists from across the Commonwealth were accepted to participate in this leadership and advocacy-building retreat designed for students. The program included presentations on leadership, legislative issues, advocacy and involvement in professional organizations.

## Graduate Student AAPS Chapter Receives Funding for Pharmaceutical Sciences Alumni Program

The School of Pharmacy graduate student chapter of the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (AAPS) was awarded funding to support a University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy Pharmaceutical Sciences alumni program from the AAPS Student/Postdoc Outreach and Development Committee. The program is entitled "How We Got Here: Career Development in Basic and Clinical Pharmaceutical Sciences Symposium." Other participating universities include Duquesne University and West Virginia University. The goals of this multi-institutional joint-speaker event are to facilitate career development, increase alumni-student interactions, and support further collaborations between institutions in pharmaceutical sciences. Participating universities will feature alumni speakers from their pharmaceutical sciences training programs who have careers in academia,



Participants in the AAPS Pharmaceutical Science Program from University of Pittsburgh, Duquesne University and West Virginia University.

industry, or government. Graduate students, PharmD students, undergraduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and junior faculty in fields of pharmaceutical sciences.



Caisson rebar being cleaned and ready for grade beam installation. In the background the Soil Nail wall is being faced with brick to match the PEC and the new Salk Addition.

# Our Faculty

**Amy Calabrese Donihi**, associate professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, was an invited speaker at the American Diabetes Association (ADA) 72nd Scientific Sessions held in Philadelphia, Pa., June 8-12, 2012. Donihi spoke at a symposium session titled “New Directions for Diabetes Education in the Inpatient Setting.” The title of her presentation was “Preparing Diabetes Patients for Hospital Discharge—A Standardized Team Approach.”

An article by **Kerry Empey**, assistant professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, with Cathryn Kurkjian, Melissa Hollifield, J.

Louise Lines, Amy Rogosky, Mahboob Qureshi, Stephen A. Brown, and Beth A. Garvy, “Alveolar macrophages in neonatal mice are inherently unresponsive to Pneumocystis infection,” has been selected as the Spotlight article in the June 4 issue of *Infection and Immunity*.

**Lauren Jonkman ('06)**, clinical instructor, was elected chair of the Pittsburgh Schweitzer Fellows Program Advisory Board. Founded in 1997, the Pittsburgh Schweitzer Fellows Program is one of thirteen Albert Schweitzer Fellowship program sites across the United States. Since the program's inception, Schweitzer Fellows

in Pittsburgh—competitively chosen from health-focused graduate student applicants in a variety of fields—have worked to address health disparities and the social determinants of health throughout the greater Pittsburgh area.

**Susan M. Meyer**, associate dean for education and professor, delivered invited keynote presentations at two interprofessional education conferences in May: *Interprofessional Care for the 21st Century: Redefining Education & Practice* conference at Thomas Jefferson University and the Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) Institute,

## Preceptors Share Passion for Profession



Nancy Keefer

The 2012 Preceptor of the Year awardees, Neal Benedict and Nancy Keefer both share the same commitment to their roles as preceptor pharmacist. As evident in the nomination letters by students, the word passion was used often.

The award is presented by the graduating class to recognize a preceptor for outstanding teaching contributions during the advanced experiential learning portion of the professional curriculum.

Neal J. Benedict stands among the upper tier of preceptors for enjoying his role as a clinician in the UPMC Presbyterian Intensive Care Unit. A passion for an area of expertise does not necessarily yield a great preceptor. Where Dr. Benedict excels is being able to transfer his passion for his work to the students he takes on rotation. He is so highly



Neal Benedict (center)

requested, in fact, that he was asked to make an additional block available for students this academic year.

Nancy E. Keefer works daily with patients in acute pain at the Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center. Her compassion and care for this difficult population is evident in everything that she

does. She encourages her students to take active roles talking to patients and thinking about care regimens while providing the support needed to help develop a great thought process to address pain management. Keefer has served as a wonderful role model in both the pharmacy world and the community.

and *Building Your Foundation for Interprofessional Education*, in Herndon, Va. Meyer focused on the development and use of the Core Competencies for Interprofessional Collaborative Practice. The Core Competencies were released in May 2011 by the Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC). She served as a member of the expert panel that authored the document.

**Thomas Nolin** (PharmD'99, PhD '03), assistant professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, has been named a fellow of the American College of Clinical Pharmacology (ACCP). Fellowship is awarded to those with exemplary credentials and dedication to clinical pharmacol-

ogy and is the highest category of membership in ACCP.

**Brian Potoski** (PharmD'99) associate professor of pharmacy and therapeutics and a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy Reserve, was deployed to active duty in March in support of Operation Enduring Freedom to serve with the Navy Expeditionary Medical Unit at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Landstuhl, Germany. Potoski will provide pharmaceutical care to wounded and ill service members. He will serve for one year, returning in 2013.

**Janice Pringle**, associate professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, gave several presentations recently, includ-

ing "Integrating Quality Metrics with Focused Interventions to Improve Medication Adherence," presented at the Seventh National Pay for Performance Summit in Los Angeles, Calif., in March, and "Transforming Community Pharmacy Practice Using a Scalable Web-based Platform with Focused Interventions to Improve Medication Adherence," presented at King's College in London, also in March. Pringle also presented "Measuring Up. What Is Around the Corner for Quality Improvement?" at the Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy Annual Meeting in San Francisco, Calif., in April.

## Faculty Members Honored and Appreciated

**K**ristine Schonder, PharmD, assistant professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, was honored by the students of Rho Chi with the award for Outstanding Scholarly Contribution. The award is given to a faculty member who has created significant publications to the profession of pharmacy. This award recognizes intellectual achievement and critical inquiry in the profession. Schonder teaches in the PharmD curriculum in various courses. Her areas of expertise include nephrology and immunology. She develops innovative teaching strategies using computer technology to enhance student learning.

The school's Rho Chi Society chapter honored Karen Steinmetz Pater, assistant professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, with its Innovation in Teaching Award, which recog-

nizes a faculty member for new and creative teaching methods. Pater was also awarded the APhA ASP Faculty Member of the Year. Pater joined the faculty in 2000, leaving for a brief time from 2005-2007, returning in 2007. She has spent her professional career taking care of patients in a variety of outpatient settings including community pharmacies and physician practices. She brings her experience into the classroom by educating the students in the first and second professional years of on the 'art' of patient care by introducing the students to Standardized Patients. These experiences allow the students to practice their assessment skills in a safe environment, while learning from each other the assessment strategies that work best when communicating directly with patients. In addition to the use



of standardized patients in the classroom, Dr. Pater is known to the students as the professor that uses multiple active learning strategies in the classroom setting, most notably the inclusion of team based learning in all the courses she coordinates.

Left to right:  
Kristine  
Schonder,  
Karen Pater

## Amy L. Seybert, PharmD

CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACY AND THERAPEUTICS



After serving as interim chair since 2010, Amy L. Seybert (BS '94, PharmD '96) was appointed chair of the Department of Pharmacy and Therapeutics effective January 1, 2012. Seybert is an accomplished faculty member, who has been honored as a fellow of ACCP (American College of Clinical Pharmacy) and as a fellow of the ASHP (American Society of Health System Pharmacists). She is the recipient of the ASHP Research and Education Foundation 2009 Residency Excellence Preceptor Award and has received Honorable Mention from the AACP (American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy) in 2006 and 2010 for her teaching innovations. She has earned distinction on the Pitt campus as well, having been recognized with the prestigious University of Pittsburgh Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award in 2006.

**Tara Pummer**, assistant professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, was elected chair of the Pennsylvania Pharmacists Association Editorial Review Board for a two-year term beginning May 2012.

**Michael Shullo** (BS'95, PharmD'97) associate professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, was an invited speaker at the International Society for Heart and Lung Transplant (ISHLT) Annual Meeting in Prague, Czech Republic, in April 2012. His topic was "Approach to Innovative Immunosuppression in the Face of Malignancy." At that meeting, Dr. Shullo was elected vice chair/chair-elect of the Pharmacy and

Pharmacology Council of the ISHLT and will become chair following the Montreal ISHLT 2013 meeting.

**Susan Skledar** (BS '88), associate professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, was invited to serve as one of four expert mentors for the 2012 Mentored Adult Immunization Impact Program. The American Society of Health-System Pharmacists sponsors this national, competitive, six-month program, which is designed to improve participants' hospitalized adult immunization programs. Skledar is responsible for mentoring 10 hospitals across the country in developing a program or modify-

ing an existing hospital program for immunizing inpatients.

**Raman Venkataramanan**, professor of pharmaceutical sciences, was an invited speaker on "Generic substitution of tacrolimus" at two international meetings in 2012: the Tacrolimus Launch symposium at the First Congreso Argentino Y Latinoamericano De Cirugia Hepato Pancreato-Biliar (HPB) in Buenos Aires, March 2012, and the Tacrolimus Launch symposium in Santiago, Chile, August 2012.

**Wen Xie**, professor of pharmaceutical sciences and director of the Center for





Pharmacogenetics, has been appointed to the editorial board for *Drug Metabolism and Disposition*, a leading drug metabolism journal published by the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET). Dr. Xie also served as an invited speaker at the Society of Toxicology (SOT) Annual Meeting held in San Francisco, March 11-15, 2012. Xie spoke for the symposium session "The Thick and Thin of Nuclear Receptors and Nrf2 in Diabetes and Obesity." The following month, Dr. Xie was an invited speaker at the Experimental Biology (EB)/American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET) Annual Meeting in San Diego. Xie spoke at the Symposium Session "Role of nuclear receptors in lipid dysregulation and obesity-related diseases."

## Promotions

**Scott Drab** (BS '89) was promoted to the rank of associate professor of pharmacy and therapeutics. **Deanne Hall** (BS '96, PharmD '98) was promoted to the rank of associate professor, pharmacy and therapeutics. **Song Li** was promoted to the rank of professor of pharmaceutical sciences.

**Janice Pringle** was promoted to the rank of associate professor of pharmacy and therapeutics.

**Michael Shullo** (BS '95, PharmD '97) was promoted to the rank of associate professor of pharmacy and therapeutics.

## New Faculty

**Irene Gathuru** has been appointed as instructor in the Department of Pharmacy and Therapeutics. Gathuru is an epidemiologist with an interest in health disparities and clinical trials. She was recently accepted into the RAMP to K Program to prepare a K-grant application to fund her research on asthma management in adolescents.

**James Coons** has been appointed as an associate professor in the Department of Pharmacy and Therapeutics. Coons specialty area of practice is within cardiovascular medicine, where he primarily manages patients with acute coronary syndromes and advanced heart failure. His clinical practice and research endeavors will focus on guiding the optimal care of patients undergoing percutaneous coronary intervention through appropriate antiplatelet and anticoagulant use.

**Shilpa Sant** has been appointed as an assistant professor in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences. Sant received her PhD from the University of Montreal and then moved to Harvard Medical School where she worked in the Wyss Institute of Biologically Inspired Engineering. Her research interests are in controlled drug delivery for regenerative and stem cell therapy, and engineered tissue models for drug testing.

**Vinayak Sant** has been appointed as an assistant professor in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences. Sant received his PhD from the University of Mumbai and then moved as a postdoctoral fellow to the University of Montreal. He then worked for more than eight years in the pharmaceutical industry in the area of drug formulation, which remains his research interest.

Left to right:  
Irene Gathuru,  
James Coons,  
Shilpa Sant,  
Vinayak Sant

# Our Students



Assisting with the location changes and test monitoring are grad students Zhuzhu Wang and Peng Zhang



Students fully cooperate with changes in the exam locations during Spring 2012 finals.

Graduate student **Osama Alshogran**, School of Pharmacy graduate student, completed his seven-month participation in the Jonas Salk Fellowship program in summer 2012. The fellowship is an educational program sponsored by the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, and is co-sponsored by the University of Pittsburgh Center for Bioethics and Health Law. The fellowship introduces graduate students from a variety of health-related disciplines to the prominent ethical issues facing the healthcare system today. Guided by health care experts and religious leaders, the sessions are structured in an intimate class setting. Students are challenged to explore complicated dilemmas in health care and to investigate these issues from bioethical and religious perspectives.

Alshogran's faculty advisor is Assistant Professor Thomas Nolin. **Alshogran** also completed the certificate program in Clinical and Translational Science for Doctoral Students in the Health Sciences at the Institute for Clinical Research Education, School of Medicine. The program enables students to take courses, obtain training in clinical and translational science methods, and become involved in clinical and translational research. The program also offers opportunities for collaborative research and mentorship with translational researchers.

Graduate students **Firuz Feturi** and **Hari Kalluri** each won a scholarship from the University's IRB Committee to attend the Office for Human Research Protections Research Community Forum "Building Bridges: Research Around the World" in June in Pittsburgh.

**Chibueze Ihunnah**, graduate student, received a pre-doctoral training grant from NIH for his project, "Estrogen Sulfotransferase in Human Adipogenesis." This study will advance understanding of the molecular and genetic mechanisms that underlie the development and regulation of adipose tissue and obesity in humans. Results from this study are expected to identify a novel adipogenic regulatory pathway, which may lead to the development of novel therapeutic strategies to prevent and treat obesity in humans.

The School of Pharmacy graduate student awards for 2012 were presented to several deserving students. **Chibueze Ihunnah** won the Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Student Excellence Award. **Yifei Zhang** won the Norman R. and Priscilla A. Farnsworth Student Award. Both **Sung Tae Kim** and **Sheila Grab** received Teaching Assistant of the Year Awards. The awards were presented at the Graduate Student Research Retreat, held at the Student O'Hara Center, June, 2012.

**Mengxi Jiang**, a third-year pharmaceutical sciences graduate student, has been chosen to receive the 2012 George Wang Memorial Student Assistance Fund Award in Pharmacogenetics based on her research proposal, "The Steroid Sulfatase Prevents Bile Acid Toxicity by Activating the LXR Signaling Pathway." This award was established in memory of George Wang, an outstanding graduate student in the Department of Human Genetics. The award was made possible by an endowment established by Novartis and the Wang



Graduate student awardees Shelia Grab, Chibueze Ihunnah and Yifei Zhang

family and is sponsored by the Department of Human Genetics at the Graduate School of Public Health and their partners: the Center for Pharmacogenetics, School of Pharmacy; the Center for Clinical Pharmacology, School of Medicine; and the Department of Pharmacology, School of Medicine.

**Shashi Sriram**, School of Pharmacy graduate student in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, was awarded a scholarship to attend the Federal Laboratory Consortium for Technology

Transfer (FLC) National Meeting held in Pittsburgh, April 2012. Only ten scholarships were awarded for the national meeting. FLC is a nationwide network of all federal laboratories with a mission to promote and strengthen technology transfer. Approximately 300 federal labs and agencies are FLC members. Sriram is a PhD candidate in Dr. Yong Tae Kwon's lab in the Center for Pharmacogenetics.

**Indrani Kar** (P3) won in the First Professional category in the 2012 Health Disparities Poster Competition for her poster

"Quality of Care for Asthmatic Patients at an Urban Federally-Qualified Health Center." This was the second annual Health Disparities Poster Session, sponsored by the University of Pittsburgh Schools of the Health Sciences.

**Elyse Weitzman** (P3) and Christine Ruby Scelsi, assistant professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, were chosen as one of 75 student/faculty recipients for the 2012 American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) Walmart Scholars Program. The pair received a travel scholarship to attend the AACP Annual Meeting in Florida in July. The goal of this scholarship program is to strengthen the student recipient's skills and commitment to a career in academic pharmacy.

## Pitt Pharmacy in State Association Positions

The Pennsylvania Pharmacists Association announced the results of its Board of Directors elections for officers and directors, as well as the student officers for 2012-2013. Several posts were won by University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy faculty and students. **Stephanie Harriman McGrath** (PharmD '07), assistant professor of pharmacy and therapeutics, was elected as director representing chain pharmacy, and **Tamiko Yamatani** (P3) was elected student director. **Brahaim Shettima** (P3) was elected chair of the Student Board. Erin Burke (P4) was elected as corresponding secretary to the Student Board.

# Our Students



The University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy welcomes the Class of 2016 to the PharmD Program. The diverse class includes students ranging in age from 19 to 29, 12 institutions, and 12 states. Nine students have degrees and 88 percent of the entire class is from the University of Pittsburgh. (Photo taken the first week of class outside of Posvar Hall.)

**Anna Bondar** (P2) was selected by the Association for Prevention Teaching and Research as a 2012 Paul Ambrose Scholar. As an Ambrose Scholar, she attended a three-day leadership and health policy symposium this summer in Washington, D.C., with other selected health professional students. During the coming year, Bondar will develop and implement a funded community-based health education project. She plans to focus on cardiovascular disease prevention in the

Latino community in Pittsburgh. Susan Meyer, associate dean for education and professor, will serve as her project mentor.

The School of Pharmacy's American Pharmacists Association-Academy of Student Pharmacists (APhA-ASP) chapter was selected by the American Pharmacists Association as one of five recipients of a Project CHANCE grant. The grant program focuses on interprofessional collaboration in the care of underserved patients.

The chapter's funded project is a hypertension intervention at the Birmingham Clinic, to be done in conjunction with dental students. Faculty members Sharon Connor and Lauren Jonkman assisted the students in designing the project. The chapter was honored with the recognition during the APhA-ASP Annual Meeting and Exposition in March in New Orleans.

**Michelle Edwards Allen** (PharmD '01), was installed on the executive committee for ASHP section of Clinical Specialist and Scientists as director at large

**Dana Behlke** (PharmD '08) received a prestigious promotion to a new Duane Reade location that will be implementing a novel clinical pharmacy model in a community setting. She was also selected to represent Duane Reade in a TV commercial educating patients on the upcoming flu season, that was aired in New York City taxis and on NBC.

**Rhea Santangelo Bowman** (PharmD '11) will be starting as a clinical management pharmacist, doing medication therapy management for CVS Caremark

**Reginald Frye** (PhD '95) was promoted to professor at the University of Florida College of Pharmacy, where he currently serves as chair of the Department of Pharmacotherapy and Translational Research.

**Lauren Jones** (PharmD 09), sat for and passed the 2011 Pharmacotherapy Specialty Certification Examination and may now use the designation Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist (BCPS).

**Joanne Grechen Kowiatek** (BS '77) is now the oncology pharmacist at the UPMC Cancer Center Upper St. Clair in Bethel Park, Pa.



Reginald Frye  
(PhD '95)

## Legacy Laureate: Fall 2011



Mahmoud ElSohley (PhD '75)

**M**ahmoud ElSohley has commanded a distinguished career in biochemical pharmacology. He is a research professor at the University of Mississippi's National Center for Natural Products Research in the Research Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences, a professor of pharmaceuticals in that university's School of Pharmacy, and director of the National Institute on Drug

Abuse Marijuana Project. He also serves as president and laboratory director of EISohley Laboratories, Inc., a multifaceted laboratory that offers analytical and advisory services in the area of drug testing to commercial and governmental clients. EISohley earned a Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy in 1975.

EISohly has worked on many projects to advance human health and alleviate the suffering of others, including a vaccine to protect people with severe allergies to poisonous plants as well as drugs that stimulate the appetite of patients being treated for cancer or AIDS. EISohley and his Pitt alumus wife, Hala (PhD '76), isolated a compound to treat malaria, allowing the World Health Organization to create the first supply of a drug to treat the disease in Western Europe.

A fellow of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, American College of Forensic



Mahmoud ElSohley (PhD '75) and wife, Hala (PhD '76) with faculty member and friend Paul Schiff

Examiners International, and American Institute of Chemists, EISohley has been recognized by *The Scientist*, *Science Watch*, and the *Journal of Analytical Toxicology* as one of the most-cited authors in forensic sciences in the world. He has presented at more than 200 scientific meetings of professional societies and holds more than 20 patents.

# Our Alumni

**Christina Martin** (PharmD'10) was recently appointed to Vice-chair for the 2012-13 ASHP New Practitioner's Forum Executive Committee and will be installed during the 2012 ASHP Summer Meeting in Baltimore, MD.

**Richard Montgomery** (BS '83) Recently awarded the Florida Society of Health System Pharmacists 2011 Pharmacist of the Year.

**Krista Pedley** (PharmD '00) and **Christopher Lamer** (BS '95, PharmD '97) are contributing authors to a new report released by U.S. Public Health Service, "Improving Patient and Health System Outcomes Through Advanced Pharmacy Practice."

**Jovonne Williams** (PharmD '09) sat for and conquered the Board Certified Ambulatory Care Pharmacist Exam, and can now proudly add the initials BCACP after her name.

## In Memoriam

Jerome Danenberg '48  
Ralph A. DiMuccio '62  
William M. DuVall '59  
Joseph A. Gatto, '75  
William J. Heinauer '62  
James M. Kirkwood '65  
Maurice Levenson, '35  
Josephine Nobers  
Schneider '52  
Alvin B. Segelman '71  
Peter S. Turano, '48

## INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

# 2012 Joseph A. Gatto Golf Invitational

Top: Dean Patricia Kroboth and Joe Gatto discussing golf strategies at a past Golf Invitational

Bottom: Pharmacy scholarship students express appreciation by volunteering at the Joseph A. Gatto Golf Invitational, May 2012



More than eighty golfers joined the School of Pharmacy for a fantastic day of golfing and networking with fellow alumni and friends at the 9th Annual Joseph A. Gatto Golf Scholarship Invitational on May 18, 2012, at the Quicksilver Golf Club. The event is now named in honor of Joe Gatto in recognition of his founding role and annual leadership to make the event a success.

Proceeds from the golf outing support much needed scholarships for our students raising \$20,000 and an overall Alumni Scholarship Fund of \$150,000 in the past nine years.

# Kindnesses not Forgotten

Alum pledges donation to honor the assistance she and husband received: *Paying It Forward*

INVESTING IN  
THE FUTURE



Left: Fern Alice Heidt (Fern Kelly) and Natalie Mary Certo, May 1945



Right: Russell and Fern Kelly, May 1947

When Fern Kelly was attending pharmacy school at the University of Pittsburgh, traditions that students take for granted today—spring break, sororities, and on-campus dorm rooms—were well beyond her universe.

Just attending college in Pittsburgh was something of a reach. A self-described “poor kid” from Erie, Fern—whose last name in those days was Heidt—thought she might attend college close to home and study to become a medical technician. But a neighbor who worked for Brown and Jones Drugs in Erie and a highschool paper Fern wrote about medicinal plants inspired her to apply for late admission to the School of Pharmacy. Together with her mother, she took a bus to Pittsburgh two weeks before classes started and interviewed with the dean, Leonard O’Connell. By today’s standards, it was a challenging, often grueling experience. But what

Fern remembers most are the kindnesses that helped her and her husband create a future from scratch. For that reason, she has donated a substantial gift to the school in hopes of assisting students who are in need, as she once was.

Thelma Carr, a distant cousin of Russell Kelly’s mother, worked as a registrar at the School of Pharmacy. Room and board was hard to find. Thelma offered Russell a room in the home she and her mother shared for a small fee and help around the household. It would be the first of many supportive gestures that led to Fern and her future husband, Russell J. Kelly, earning their degrees—she in 1945, he in 1943.

“It was rough, it truly was,” says Kelly, who is now retired and living in Longview, Washington. (Russell died 19 years ago.)

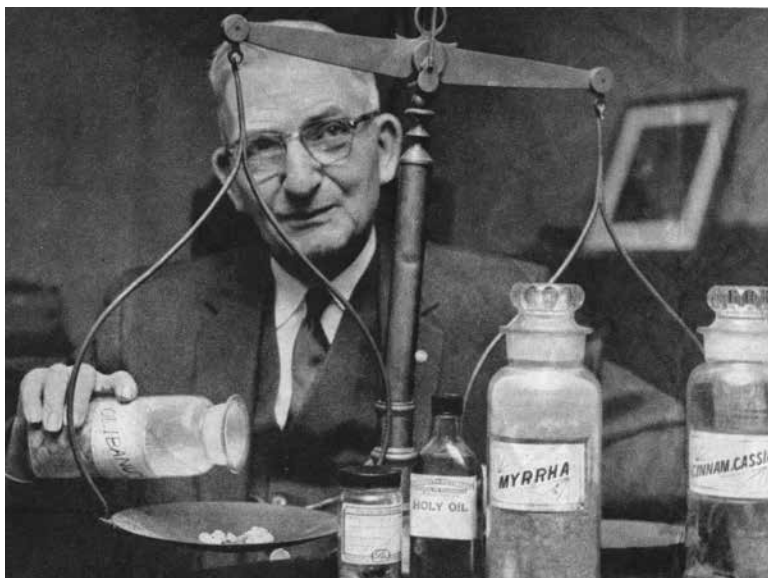
Her class began with eight women and 42 men, but World War II significantly diminished their ranks. By the time

they graduated, only seven women and five men remained; one woman had married and dropped out, and the rest of the men were drafted or enlisted into military service. At the end of their first year, Pitt moved them to a trimester system that allowed no breaks except for a week at Christmas. One semester would finish on a Friday, and the next would resume on Monday.

Fern lived in a rooming house in Oakland and worked as a soda jerk at Melwood Pharmacy when she wasn’t in class. She mailed her dirty laundry home to her mother in Erie, who would wash and iron the clothes, then mail them back, usually with treats such as candy bars or oranges tucked inside—a gesture that still touches Fern more than 50 years later.

During Fern’s first year she met Thelma, who assisted her with obtaining a part-time job in Dean Edward C. Reif’s office. After her first year, Dean Reif told Fern that a St. John’s

Edward C. Reif  
Dean  
1945–1958



hospital, on Pittsburgh's North Side, was looking for a part-time women's pharmacy student to work after school and weekends. She would get room and board, a packed lunch, and \$25 a month.

"That was a big deal for me," she recalls. Tuition at that time was \$150 a semester.

Between her hard work and the compressed schedule, she was ready to graduate as valedictorian when she was just 20 years old—too young, in fact, to take her board examinations, for which she had to be 21. So she took her first job at Brown and Jones in Erie, earning \$35 a week.

She also maintained a long-distance romance with Russell, who had graduated two years earlier and gone into the Navy. They knew each other in passing, but it was during a trip on the train to Indianapolis to tour Eli Lilly that he was truly smitten. Russell was still in Pittsburgh doing research.

"He sort of followed me around like a little puppy dog," she says fondly. "He went to

Dean Reif sometime after we had been to Eli Lilly and said, 'I met a girl I want to marry, and \$2,500 a year isn't enough pay for me to exist on, let alone a wife.'"

With that, Russell Kelly left research and went to work for a Pittsburgh-area drug company, and the couple wed in Erie on June 12, 1949. By then, Fern had passed her boards and was working for Eckerd Drugs. They transferred for Russell's job to East Liverpool, Ohio, and then to Steubenville, where they lived for 20 years. The two along with their children, Keith and Cynthia, moved to Youngstown, Ohio, and stayed another 30 years. Though a soft-spoken man, Russell Kelly went on to serve as president of the Jefferson County Pharmacists Association and later the president of the Mahoning County Pharmacists.

When Russell died, Fern decided to move to the West Coast, where Keith had become a mechanical engineer for the space industry in Los Angeles, while their daughter, Cynthia Jolly, had become a plastic surgeon in the Seattle area. Fern

now lives within walking distance of Cynthia and her grandchildren.

Fern worked full-time briefly before she and Russell started their family. For several years after her marriage, Fern didn't work, though she did return to the profession part-time after Cynthia graduated from high school. Although she enjoyed working full-time, it proved to be more of a commitment than the busy mother wanted. She appreciates now how valuable her pharmacy education was, allowing her to earn money part-time while also raising her children. Fern worked for St. Francis in New Castle for over twenty years retiring at age 71.

And while Russell and Fern were never rich, they did manage to save enough to make the gift to the School of Pharmacy possible.

"We never made a lot of money, but we invested wisely, and we lived within our means," says Fern. "I've been thinking, maybe for the last year or two, I'm not doing my kids any favor by giving [them] all my money." A letter from Dean Patricia Kroboth explaining the need for donations to defray tuition costs turned out to be the opportunity she was looking for.

"I thought, that's what I want to do," Fern says. "To me, it's a lot of money. But I know it's a drop in the bucket, the way expenses are nowadays. If I can help some kid a little bit, then I'm happy to do it."



**“Having a scholarship has allowed me to focus less on my job during the school year and more on being involved in the school.”**

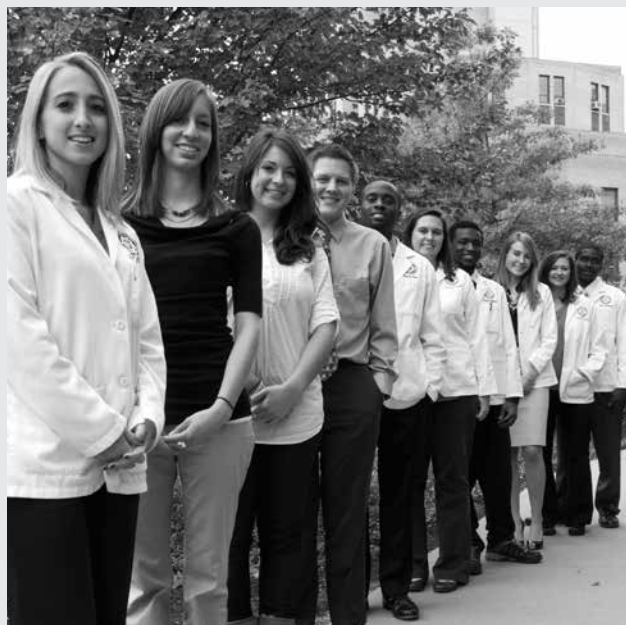
—Jaclyn Brucker, PharmD Candidate 2013

Our alumni and friends have supported our students with “passion, commitment, and diligence” for generations. Thousands of graduates, and possibly you, have benefited from the generosity of those who went before them.

You can significantly impact our students by making a gift to support scholarships. As dean, I am well aware of the financial needs of our students, whose tuition and related expenses in many cases outstrip what they and their families can afford. Your scholarship support is especially important during these times of economic uncertainty.

A scholarship not only provides financial aid, it can also be a way to honor someone who has influenced your life. Please consider giving to the Haberle, Stoehr, Bianculli or Farnsworth, Scholarship Fund. Or create your own named award with a gift or five-year pledge of \$10,000 or more.

Be a part of the legacy of supporting students. Make a gift or pledge to support a scholarship today. —Patricia Kroboth



Several of the School of Pharmacy’s student scholarship recipients outside Salk Hall

## 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 established to this endowment in memory of the following individuals:

**2006**  
Kim Lawren Reighard (BS '76)  
Samuel P. Conte (BS '41)  
Eilene Stauchler Liepack (EDUC '57)  
Margaret Madarasz Gerson (BS '52)

**2007**  
Fred G. Gatto  
Janet Ball, Carmen Muto  
Matthew O. Pecht  
Brian Haugh (BS '98)

**2008**  
James C. Meisner (BS '48)  
Gerald Paulice  
Ethel M. Ritzman (BS '58)  
Tara Feroce  
H. Lawton Snyder

**2009**  
Robert M. Fry  
Frank Ulyan  
Rose Borrelli  
Patricia Kuchma  
Betty Snyder  
William F. Roberts Sr.  
Bruna Migliorisi

**2010**  
Wendell Bitzer  
Juliano Nickoline  
Anna M. Taylor  
Harry W. Kerr Jr. (BS '58)  
Mary Fisher  
John H. Christy Jr.  
Jean Cohen

**2011**  
Richard Allen Lithgow (BS '50)  
Jack Wade Rohland, Sr. (BS '67)  
C. Leonard O'Connell  
Teresa Curcio

**2012**  
James M. Kirkwood (BS '65),  
Joseph A. Gatto (BS '75)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I am proud to serve as the 2012–2013 president of the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy Alumni Society. As a graduate of the class of 2002 it has been my distinct pleasure to serve on the alumni board since 2004. I believe that although we have all graduated from the School of Pharmacy we are all still a very real part of the school itself. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage all alumni to be active with the School of Pharmacy because we represent the exceptional opportunities, honors, and privileges of a pharmacy career that the school has given us.

The Alumni Society offers many opportunities for alumni remain connected such as:

- **Career Roundtable:** This event allows alumni to share insight into their particular field of pharmacy with students.
- **Homecoming Reception:** Celebrate and reminisce with a casual evening of fun and conversation with friends.
- **Joseph A. Gatto Scholarship Golf Invitational:** Relax playing a few rounds on a beautiful golf course with alumni while benefiting pharmacy student scholarships.
- **RxTravaganza Gala:** This is the flagship event of the Alumni Society and is your chance to spend an elegant night of dining and dancing. The gala is truly an event not to be missed.

Beyond the above opportunities staying involved with the School of Pharmacy can be achieved by making a financial donation or being preceptor to a current Pitt pharmacy student. Truly any involvement you make with the school is sincerely appreciated.

I encourage you to explore [www.pharmacy.pitt.edu](http://www.pharmacy.pitt.edu). There you will find the latest information on upcoming events as well as student, faculty, and alumni achievements; ways to donate; and much more. The school is also on social media. There you can “like” the School of Pharmacy on Facebook and “follow” the school on Twitter.

Thank you all for your continued support of School of Pharmacy and for being a proud member of the Pitt School of Pharmacy family.

Hail to Pitt!

Ernie Sanchez,  
PharmD 2002



Megan Barkell Sanchez (PharmD '06) and Ernie Sanchez (PharmD '02) at RxTravaganza Gala 2012, Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall.

## PHARMACY ALUMNI SOCIETY BOARD 2012–2013

### EXECUTIVE BOARD

Chairman of the Board  
**Irene Damratoski '63, '66**

Past President  
**Tanya Fabian '98, '03**

President  
**Ernest Sanchez '02**

Vice President  
**Nicole Butteri '00**

Secretary  
**Diane Ammerman '98**

Golf Committee Chair  
**Timothy Davis '97, '00**

### BOARD-AT-LARGE

**Christopher Baldini '88**

**Kathleen Bartony '76**

**Shelby Corman '02**

**Timothy Davis '97, '00**

**Mark Garafoli '04**

**Tyler Gnesda '07**

**Bernard Komoroski '00, '05**

**Joanne Kowiatek '77**

**Iny Marks '00**

**Adrienne Meck '06**

**Denise Mervis '00**

**Christopher Miller '08**

**James Pschirer '76**

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

**Robert Snyder '09, '10**

**Kara Sperandeo '06**

**Jay Stragand '88**

**Kristen Topolosky '07**

**Janet Traynor '87, '95**

### STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

**Kelly Luzi '13**

**Stefanie Drahuschak '14**

**Kyle McGrath '15**

### EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Dean

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

Director of Development

**Maurissa Vergari**

## Honor our Past. Shape our Future.



“I entered the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy in the fall of 1953 as a 17-year-old naive student. I was overwhelmed by the size of the Cathedral of Learning where I attended most of my classes. The School of Pharmacy, back in those days, was down on ‘The Bluff’.”

LEARN MORE: [shape.pharmacy.pitt.edu](http://shape.pharmacy.pitt.edu)



**HELP US GROW OUR FACEBOOK FOLLOWING** and have a chance to win cool prizes! We are looking to get over 1500 friends on Facebook. For your chance to win, invite five folks to first “like” the School of Pharmacy page. Then have those folks leave a comment and include your name in the comment! Anyone who is mentioned five or more times is eligible to win, and the five people mentioned the most will receive cool PittPharmacy prizes!



HOME BASE  
[www.pharmacy.pitt.edu](http://www.pharmacy.pitt.edu)



KEEP IN TOUCH  
[rxalumni@pitt.edu](mailto:rxalumni@pitt.edu)



# University of Pittsburgh

School of Pharmacy  
Salk Hall, Suite 1100  
3501 Terrace Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15261

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PITTSBURGH, PA  
PERMIT NO. 511



For an electronic copy of Pitt Pharmacy Fall 2012 simply scan the QR code above or go to [www.pharmacy.pitt.edu/about/pubs/pdf/PittPharmacyNews\\_Fall12.pdf](http://www.pharmacy.pitt.edu/about/pubs/pdf/PittPharmacyNews_Fall12.pdf)

## **Kappa Psi** **Centennial Celebration** BETA KAPPA TURNS 100!



### **APRIL 5-7, 2013**

For invitation and further details email:  
[bkgradinfo@gmail.com](mailto:bkgradinfo@gmail.com)

## The **Joseph A. Gatto** **Tenth Annual** **Golf Invitational**

**Friday, May 17, 2013**  
**Quicksilver Golf Club**  
**Midway, PA**

Benefits Student  
Scholarships

Were you a member of the **Pitt Marching Band** during your years at the School of Pharmacy? Consider sharing a memory for an upcoming issue of Pitt Pharmacy. Send your thoughts to [shawj@pitt.edu](mailto:shawj@pitt.edu)

