

PITT CAPSULE

OCTOBER 2024 EDITION

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OCTOBER IS AMERICAN PHARMACISTS MONTH!

OCT

11

National Student
Pharmacist Day

OCT

12

National Women in
Pharmacy Day

OCT

15

National Pharmacy
Technician Day

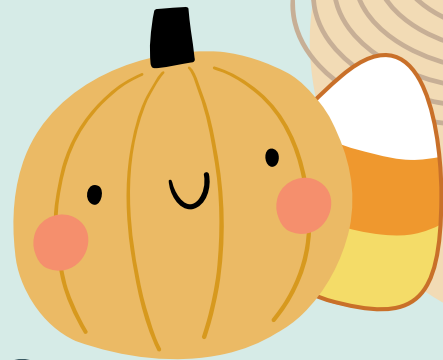
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APhA-ASP: American Pharmacists Association Academy of Student Pharmacists

Author: Shannon Osborne (P3) Membership Vice President

On behalf of APhA-ASP, we hope classes are going well for everyone!

APhA-ASP has been working hard on our membership drive for the 2024-2025 academic year. We placed posters around Salk Hall with a QR code to pay your dues and become a member, and have sent out emails with the link for APhA registration. Thank you to everyone who registered!

We have lots of fun events coming up for APhA members! The MRM meeting will occur November 1-3, and we plan to have many of our members attend. This is a great opportunity for pharmacy advocacy for those interested. We plan to have some dinner and dialogue events to provide networking opportunities with pharmacists in clinical, community, and industry roles. Also, the Tucci lecture will be occurring on November 21 at 12 pm (noon) with guest speaker Alex C. Varkey, the president of APhA! We hope to see everyone there.

American Pharmacists Month and National Pharmacy Week are in October! PittPharmacy and APhA-ASP hosted a pharmacy week celebration during pharmacy week this month. We had events each day from Oct 21st - Oct 25th. There were lots of snacks, cookies, a photo booth, and a chance to enter a raffle to win prizes. Also, there were many staff and faculty members present to discuss their careers as pharmacists and discuss any research or clinical opportunities they have for students. We hope everyone enjoyed the many events celebrating National Pharmacy week!





APhA-ASP Patient Care Operation Infectious Disease Spotlight

Author: Dylan Zunski (PI) Operation Infectious Diseases Project Leader



The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can lead to severe illness and even death, especially in vulnerable populations like the elderly and those with pre-existing health conditions. The flu is characterized by symptoms such as fever, chills, cough, sore throat, body aches, and fatigue.

Influenza is a Baltimore Class V negative sense single stranded RNA (ssRNA) virus. Negative sense means the viral components are complementary to mRNA and are ready to be transcribed right from there. Ebola and rabies are other viruses in this classification that use the host cell's machinery in similar ways. The flu replicates through a complex process that takes place within the infected host cell's nucleus and cytoplasm. After the virus enters the respiratory tract, it attaches to the surface of epithelial cells where cells allow the virus to enter. Here, the viral RNA is released into the host's cytoplasm.

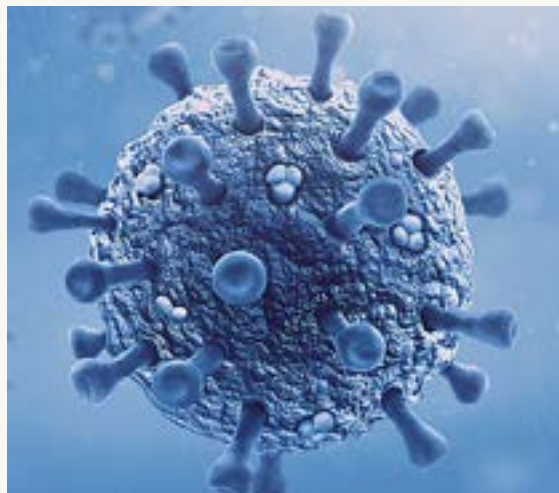
Within the cytoplasm, the viral RNA enters the nucleus of the host cell. Here, the host RNA polymerase is used to synthesize new complementary strands and viral mRNA. The RNA then steals the host's own caps which has led many virologists to refer to the flu as a "cap snatcher". These caps stabilize the RNA and allow it to be further propagated sneaking past the host cell's defense mechanisms. From here, new virions are constructed using the genetic material it synthesized in the nucleus and other proteins from the mRNA code that were synthesized in the cytoplasm. The new virus is complete after budding off the host cell membrane where it steals the host cell markers in the process.



APhA-ASP Patient Care Operation Infectious Disease Continued...

A fascinating aspect of the flu virus replication is the phenomenon of antigenic drift and shift. Antigenic drift involves small mutations that occur during replication, leading to gradual changes in the virus's surface proteins. This is why flu vaccines need to be updated annually. In some cases, antigenic shifts can occur which is much more dangerous and rarer. It occurs when a flu virus from an animal, like a bird, infects a chicken or a pig and a human influenza virus infects the same animal. Here there is a chance that a mutant flu containing parts of both viruses can be formed which can spread from animals to humans. These zoonotic spillovers can be extremely dangerous as these viruses will contain genetic information the human body hasn't seen before leaving our immune system defenseless at the first line. This can cause a serious outbreak or even a pandemic.

The flu virus can replicate incredibly quickly, with a single infected cell producing thousands of new viral particles in just a few hours. The flu virus can also survive on surfaces for up to 48 hours, making it easy to spread in communal environments. Understanding the flu virus's replication mechanisms is crucial for helping to mitigate its spread, and for how we develop effective vaccines and treatments.



ASCP: American Society of Consultant Pharmacists

Author: Camie Schmader (P3) Secretary

ASCP, American Society of Consultant Pharmacists, is hosting a variety of events this semester!

We just welcomed our P1 Representative, Ava Calabrese. Thank you to everyone who stopped by our labeling event for Alzheimer's awareness this past week!

On October 19 we participated in the Walk to End Alzheimer's at Highmark stadium . This walk raised money to support research and care for the Alzheimer's Association. This walk was suitable approved for patient advocacy. Keep an eye out for our guest speaker event being hosted in January!






ASOP: Association of Student Oncology Pharmacists

Author: Morgan Faircloth (P3) Secretary

The Association of Student Oncology (ASOP) wishes Pitt Pharmacy a happy fall! ASOP is a new organization that aims to educate students on various aspects of cancer awareness, treatment, and the roles of healthcare professionals in oncology. Some important oncology topics students will get to learn about through ASOP include investigational drug accountability, clinical trial processes, pediatric oncology, and leadership in pharmaceutical services. If you are considering an oncology career path or just interested in learning more about the role of a pharmacist in oncology, be sure to check out our events.


We had our first oncology chat on October 23rd where we got to discuss the impact of a recently approved medication (Enhertu) for HER2 positive tumors. Attendees were given a research article to review and an open discussion on the clinical utility of Enhertu was held. October was breast cancer awareness month, so ASOP hosted a tabling event in the atrium on October 28. We got to talk to students about the prevalence, symptoms, risk factors, treatment, and the role of a pharmacist for patients with breast cancer. There are some exciting events planned for November as well! An oncology pharmacist from UPMC Shadyside will be hosting a speaker event on November 11. This is a great way to learn more information about the role of an oncology pharmacist and learn if this is a career path you would like to pursue. In addition, we will be collaborating with SCCP for a pharmacy round table event, hosting our second oncology chats, and tabling for lung cancer awareness. Don't forget to follow us on Instagram @asop_pittpharmacy to stay up to date on everything ASOP related! We look forward to seeing you in November.





ISPOR: International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research

Author: Jolie Nguyen (P2) Secretary




ISPOR hopes you had a fun Fall break! On Friday, October 11, ISPOR held its first joint journal club meeting with our graduate students and HEOR fellows. The session was led by our advisor, Dr. Kangho Suh and Xiaotong Li, one of our graduate students pursuing a PhD in Pharmaceutical Outcomes & Policy Research (POPR). We were thrilled with the turnout and enjoyed an interesting discussion about the article "Comparative Effectiveness of Sodium-Glucose Cotransporter 2 Inhibitors vs Sulfonylureas in Patients With Type 2 Diabetes", particularly focusing on the study's limitations. This event was Dashboard-approved for Communication, and provided our students with insights into how graduate students break down publications. Under Dr. Suh's guidance, students also learned how to pose questions and present relevant information to their peers.

We plan to host these journal clubs at least once per semester, and we would be happy to welcome you to our next session. No prior experience, research, or background knowledge is required to attend. All interested students, both undergraduate and graduate, are more than welcome to participate in our journal club meetings!

ISPOR aims to support our students in learning more about pharmacoeconomics and discovering diverse fields that pharmacists can pursue. We offer networking opportunities with HEOR professionals and are creating special topics research opportunities with credit for the spring semester. If you're interested in attending our future events or have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us at isporpitt@gmail.com. We look forward to seeing you at our next meeting!






Kappa Psi: Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity Incorporated

Author: Colin Schurek (P3) Corresponding Secretary

Happy October Everyone!



The Brothers of the Beta Kappa Chapter of Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity, Inc. have been busy with many different fall themed events to foster fellowship amongst our chapter and new members! During an event, we had alumni and Brothers from our Graduate Chapter come speak to our Fraternity. They talked about their journey through pharmacy school, their experience in Kappa Psi, and their career afterwards! It was great getting to learn more about their wide variety of Pharmacy careers and how their experiences in our Fraternity helped them along the way. At another event that happened very recently, the Brothers of Kappa Psi and our new members traveled to the South Hills to brave the 100 Acres Haunted Manor Haunted House! Facing spooky frights from the actors and animatronics, Bigs and Littles traveled together through the scary corridors, banded together, and triumphed over the haunted house! Pictured below are our new members after going through the haunted house. It is a wonderful tradition we have in the Fraternity, and it is always complimented by some delicious Sheetz afterwards to ease any remaining fears. Brothers have also recently traveled to Soergel's Apple Orchard!


So what's next for Kappa Psi?

We currently have a Halloween caroling fundraiser planned! Do you have a favorite professor or mentor in Pitt Pharmacy? Have some Brothers serenade them with Halloween carols! There will be more details in an email sent to the school. I hope you have a wonderful Halloween and Fall season, and I look forward to updating you on what's been happening in our chapter in the next edition!



PLS: Phi Lambda Sigma

Author: Brinn Mancuso (P3) Secretary



PLS hopes everyone is having a good spooky season (and that school isn't making it spookier). As an organization, we have been hosting leadership events, discussing new ways to help students grow as leaders, and recognizing leaders throughout Pitt Pharmacy.

What have we been working on?

Our first Pitt Pharmacy Open House & Alumni Networking Event that we hosted was very successful and we enjoyed seeing everyone make meaningful connections and grow professionally. On Tuesday, October 29 at 12pm in room 402, we wrote "Thank You" Cards in collaboration with PPA and Drs. Yarabinec and Skledar. In addition, we're planning a Young Professionals Lecture with Dr. Ukwon Akpoji and an upcoming event with SSCP. Finally, make sure to look out for information about the Mentorship Academy that will take place in the Spring. Make sure to follow us on Instagram @pittpls to stay updated!

What is the PLS auction?

Coming in the Spring, we will be hosting the annual PLS Charity Auction to support the Grace Lamsam Pharmacy Program for the underserved. There will be many fun activities and things to bid on in collaboration with Pitt Pharmacy professors and staff. Make sure to stay tuned for more details about this event as it's super exciting for the entire school!

Leader of the Month:

Congratulations to Lexi Tamburri, P3, for being nominated as September's PLS Leader of the Month! Use the QR code included to nominate a student leader for October's Leader of the Month!



PPA: Pennsylvania Pharmacists Association

Author: Alayne Gaghan (P3) Communications Ambassador

Happy Halloween from PPA! PPA focuses on advocating for pharmacists in PA and advancing the profession. We are involved with many pharmacy topics such as policy making and advocacy, industry, community, and hospital. There is a place for everyone in PPA!

Our first event for the month of October was our Election Hype-Up Event held in the Salk Atrium. Students were presented with education on how to register to vote, whether they reside in-state or out-of-state. The event also focused on current pharmacy legislation, such as ECAPS, to convey to student pharmacists that their vote is important. On October 9th, PPA hosted an event focusing on important advances in the regulation of pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) in Pennsylvania with guest speaker Kyle McCormick, the owner of Blueberry Pharmacy. We focused on the part of the Bipartisan House Bill 1993(Act 77) that creates more thorough regulations on PBMs within the state. PPA wanted to celebrate the passing of this act because it expands and solidifies pharmacists' rights as immunization providers. On October 22nd, we held a Dean's Theme event in collaboration with APhA's Pediatric Pharmacy Education Initiative to learn ways to teach patients, specifically within the pediatric population, to distinguish OTC medications from candy and other look-alike items. The event was interactive and facilitated conversations that will allow us to become better communicators and educators for our patients. Lastly, October included our yearly Pitt Pharmacy Patagonia sale fundraiser.

We have many more events coming up next month, so stay tuned! Be sure to follow us on Instagram @ppa_pitt to stay up to date on our upcoming events and fundraisers, as well as meet our executive board. We cannot wait to continue advocating for Pennsylvania pharmacists and spending time together at these entertaining and informative events!



PPIP: Pittsburgh Pharmacy Investment Portfolio

Authors: Jessica Michel (P2) Director of Communications

PPIP hopes you had a fantastic Fall break! We wanted to share some updates and exciting upcoming events. On Monday, September 30, PPIP had our annual Biotech Investment Fantasy League (BIFL) kick-off meeting. BIFL is an annual investment simulation competition that allows student pharmacists to gain skills in healthcare investing. The competition gives you a virtual \$100,000 to invest in any companies that you believe will generate profit and provide the greatest return on investment. To qualify for the competition, please ensure that you have invested at least \$50,000 by Friday, October 25.

Our competition will run from Monday, September 30 to Friday, November 22, and the top 10 highest-earning students will have a chance to present their portfolios to a panel of judges for a cash prize. No prior experience is necessary, as our risk-free simulation offers a perfect introduction to investing. If you are participating in our BIFL competition, it is also dashboard-approved for Innovation! PPIP had a BIFL check-in/Q&A meeting on Monday, October 21 at 12:00PM in room 5200 to answer questions and provide industry news updates.

Additionally, we are thrilled to share that PPIP will host a residency & fellowship guest speaker panel on Wednesday, November 6 at 12:00PM in room 456. Four accomplished Pitt Pharmacy alumni will join us to share their current residency and fellowship experiences. Please come prepared with any questions you may have!

If you're interested in attending our future events or have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at pittsburghpharmacyportfolio1@gmail.com to be added to our email list and stay informed about upcoming events. We hope to see you at our upcoming meetings on Monday, October 21 and Wednesday, November 6!



QPA: Queer Pharmacy Alliance

Author: Tara Truong (P2) Secretary

QPA, the Queer Pharmacy Alliance, is an organization founded in the past few years with the aim of promoting diversity and inclusion within the pharmacy profession. We want to bring attention to LGBTQIA+ issues and spotlight pharmacists who are part of this community themselves or those who work with individuals in the queer community.


Our organization's goal is to educate about issues that LGBTQIA+ patients and professionals face in healthcare. This past month we held a tabling event called "Queer Top Drugs" led by our vice president Nina Trabert in which we talked about common medications you'd find used by the queer community such as spironolactone, PrEP, doxycycline, and more. Inspiration came from our Pharmacist Patient Care course in which we learned about commonly used medications in the community and each of their indications, drug classes, and adverse effects. It was a successful event that was Suitable dashboard-approved and had high attendance!



During the month of October, we continued to hold educational events such as the one which occurred Wednesday, October 23 in collaboration with PPA for this year's Dean's Theme: OTC Medicine Safety. We discussed the importance of bone and health supplements and Opill use and legislation. In addition to our educational events, QPA plans on hosting fun and relaxing activities in the future before finals start! We also plan to have more guest speakers this year so please be on the lookout!

Rho Chi: Academic Honor Society in Pharmacy

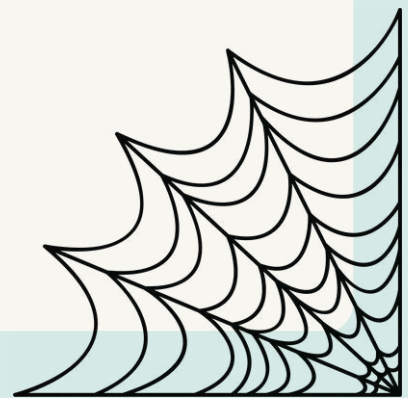
Author: Alayne Gaghan (P3) Historian



Happy Halloween! Rho Chi hopes you had a fun spooky season! As a reminder, Rho Chi is the academic honor society at Pitt Pharmacy. We focus on advancing pharmacy through sustained intellectual leadership. We are involved throughout the pharmacy school in many ways and are always trying to help the classes below us!

October brought many exams for all three Pitt Pharmacy classes and marked the restart of our exam review sessions for P1s and P2s. We held a cardiology review for exam 2 on October 4 for the P2s. We also held an anatomy and physiology review for exam 3 on October 17 and October 18, a biochemistry exam 2 review on October 25, and a dosage form midterm review on October 28 for the P1s. We are grateful for the opportunity to help the other classes while they are preparing for exams and hope these review sessions are beneficial to their studying. Rho Chi's first blood drive of the year was held on October 23 in collaboration with Vitalant and allowed students and faculty to contribute to an impactful cause. Our October health lecture at the Salvation Army was held on the evening of October 24 and focused on headaches and migraines.

We have plenty to look forward to next month including our November health lecture at the Salvation Army and more exam reviews with the P1s and P2s. Be sure to follow us on Instagram @rhochi_alphaomicron to stay up to date with our upcoming events and fundraisers, as well as meet the eboard! We cannot wait to continue to be intellectual leaders in the School of Pharmacy and assist the P1s and P2s in their pharmacy school journeys.





SASP: Student Association of Specialty Pharmacy


Author: Mikayla Molfetto (P3) Secretary

The Student Association of Specialty Pharmacy kicked off the semester with our first General Body Meeting on October 10. This meeting served as a great opportunity to welcome new members and introduce them to the field of specialty pharmacy while outlining the goals and objectives of our organization for the upcoming year. We discussed the unique role that specialty pharmacy plays in the healthcare landscape, emphasizing the importance of providing specialized care for patients with complex and chronic conditions.

The highlight of this event was our guest speakers from PANTHERx, a specialty pharmacy located in Pittsburgh. Dr. Catherine Smith and Dr. Rachel Sweetall shared their experience in the field, discussing the challenges and rewards of working in specialty pharmacy. They provided valuable insights into how their work at PANTHERx focuses on improving patient outcomes through personalized care, medication management, and innovative treatment solutions.

Specialty pharmacy is often overlooked in traditional pharmacy practice, despite its growing significance in the healthcare industry. By shining a light on this crucial area of pharmacy practice, we aim to raise awareness among our members about its impact and the essential role it plays in enhancing patient care. Overall, the meeting was a successful step towards inspiring our members to explore the opportunities within specialty pharmacy and to recognize its value in shaping the future of healthcare.

For information on upcoming events and to learn about the current specialty drug of the month, follow us on Instagram at [@sasp.pitt!](https://www.instagram.com/sasp.pitt/)



SCCP: Student College of Clinical Pharmacy

Author: Emily Miller (P3) Secretary

The Student College of Clinical Pharmacy has had an engaging month! On October 10, SCCP held a roundtable discussion, helping expose students to the world of clinical pharmacy. This brought together pharmacy students and residents for dynamic conversations, allowing them to reflect, on their personal journeys to residencies. Residents from UPMC, AGH, and Children's Hospital shared their experiences, challenges, and successes in the field. This offered student pharmacists an inside look on what it's like to work in clinical pharmacy.

The discussion touched on topics such as managing patient care and adapting to evolving responsibilities, giving students a realistic sense of the day-to-day life of a resident pharmacist. Attendees gained valuable insights and practical advice, learning about the importance of adaptability, continuous learning, and communication in a clinical setting. Student pharmacists also learned about how to better prepare themselves for residency through APPE strategic planning.

The event wasn't just about learning—it was also a great networking opportunity. Students had the chance to connect with peers and seasoned residents, building relationships that could help guide their future careers.

Please make sure to get involved in future events like this one if you are interested in residency or fellowship.

Happy Halloween!



SIO: Student Industry Organization

Author: Lily Turner, Vice President of Communications

Hello student pharmacists, faculty, and staff! The Student Industry Organization is having a great October! On October 11 at 12 PM, SIO hosted a Resume and LinkedIn Workshop. It was a great opportunity for students to learn how to focus their materials toward specific internships. In addition, there was discussion about how to effectively search for internships and properly network. On October 21 starting at 5 PM, SIO ran a Mock Interview Event where students had the opportunity to practice interviewing with their peers. This rounded out the professional development events to prepare students as they apply for summer internships.

The next event we had was on October 23 at 12 PM in collaboration with APhA and LKS of Pitt and Duquesne for the celebration of Women Pharmacists Day. Pharmacists from different career paths spoke about their experiences and answered the questions of students.

On November 11 at 12 PM, Jay Stragand, a Pitt Pharmacy alumni, will speak on his unique career in pharmaceutical sales. Look out for these upcoming events! If anyone has any questions or ideas, please feel free to reach out at studentindustryorg@gmail.com.



SSCP: Student Society of Cannabis Pharmacists

Author: Autumn Ellis (P2)

Hi everyone! We hope you are having a wonderful semester so far. Our leadership team is excited to announce that this past month we partnered with Phi Lambda Sigma (PLS) to host a guest speaker event featuring Dr. Terrence McGuire, a prominent figure in cannabis research. The event took place on October 22 at 12 PM in 402 Salk. Dr. McGuire shared his insights on medicinal cannabis, including research on its therapeutic potential. All were welcome to attend and gain valuable perspectives on this evolving field.

In addition, SSCP will host a tabling event on the undergraduate campus on November 6 from 5-7 PM. This event will focus on education and awareness of over-the-counter cannabis products. As these products become more accessible, it is essential to understand their proper use, potential benefits, and risks.

Our next meeting will take place on November 5 at noon in 524 Salk. Join us for details of the membership dues deadline and upcoming events. We hope you are all able to join us!

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.
President: Mai McWilliams mam935@pitt.edu Vice President: Bryce Schiltz brs307@pitt.edu

Also, make sure to keep up with us on Instagram: [sscp_pitt](https://www.instagram.com/sscp_pitt)



SSHP: Student Society of Health System Pharmacists

Author: Joya Scibek (P3) Internal Career Development Chair

Hello everyone! We hope you had a restful fall break and we hope exams are going well. SSHP had a few events during the month of September. Thank you to everyone who came to our GBM on September 10! If you signed up for a membership, be sure to look into the various benefits you can receive. The next event we hosted was the Dean's Theme event. The theme was myths and misconceptions about OTC birth control. We had a poster board set up in the atrium about the new OTC medication, Opill. We hope everyone learned some myths and facts about this new birth control. Thank you to everyone who stopped by to hear about it and take our quiz. We will be using the information we collected to present a board during Midyear.

On September 28, we attended the PSHP Annual Assembly and competed against Duquesne and Temple in a game of Jeopardy. All of the questions were related to therapeutics. In the end, we were defeated by a group of P4 students from Duquesne. Congratulations to Jodi Chen, Matt Chin, Joya Scibek, and Dakota Heffner for competing and winning 2nd place! Save the date for the next PSHP assembly which will be held in Philadelphia on April 9-12, 2025.

Be on the lookout for our upcoming fleece sale. If you missed out last year, be prepared to buy one this year! Our last announcement is we have elected our new P1 rep. Congratulations to Jennifer! PIs, be sure to look out for messages from Jennifer pertaining to our upcoming events.

