



# The Residents' Roar

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## From the Desk of Mary Hess, Pharm.D.

*Director of UPMC Pharmacy Practice Residency*

It is second edition time! Comments from the first print indicate an overall appreciation for creating a mechanism to reconnect everyone. We learned from the process that there is no feedback loop to confirm everyone received their copy and would ask for your assistance with this. If you keep in touch with members of the alumni and they did not receive a copy would you forward their address to our database? The newsletter will continue next year and be spearheaded by the incoming pharmacy practice residents. We appreciate the contributions made to this edition from you.

As for the group getting ready to exit – they will be missed. Each year the class comes in and creates their individual imprint on the department. This year's class was no exception, first creating a unique challenge because there were four of them. Trying to assure that each received experiences to develop similar skills kept all of us busy. If there seemed to be one focal point outside of patient

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## What to expect in this edition....

*Justine Schuller, Pharm.D., Co-editor*

Welcome back for the second edition. I hope that this issue finds you ready for summer and still hard at work delivering outstanding patient care, mentorship, and service. If you did not receive the first edition, the purpose of the newsletter is to reestablish connections between the University of Pittsburgh Residency Programs and past and present residents. It is our goal to reach out, learn more about you and your accomplishments and to provide you with information regarding the current program.

Before this making of this edition, we solicited feedback by e-mail from resident alumni to create a "feature section". We hope to do this with every newsletter. Please, if you did not respond the first time or were not yet contacted, send an e-mail to:

[hessmm@msx.upmc.edu](mailto:hessmm@msx.upmc.edu) so we can add your e-mail to our address book. We are proud of our alumni and look forward to hearing more from you.

This edition of the Residents' Roar will feature columns from residency directors, three alumni profiles, and feedback from our residents.

**Happy Graduation  
to our University  
of Pittsburgh  
Residents!**

care to the program this year it had to be communication. Opportunities for advancing these skills came from collaboration with various departments as well as intradepartmental projects. Probably the highlight of the year was the development of new department affiliations with various medical departments. The residents served as excellent ambassadors of the department and as a result have created opportunities for those that follow as well as for other faculty within the department. The residents were key contributors to the department of pharmacies continued integration between the Presbyterian and Shadyside campuses. This was in large part due to the fact that distribution services were shared between the two campuses and they all provided several months of clinical service on the Shadyside campus.

I would also like to say thank you to the faculty who throughout the year provide significant contribution to the maintenance of the program or in providing individual direction to the residents. The following individuals contributed by coordinating discussions segments for the residents: Research - Gil Burchart, Teaching - Joanne Nichol, Publishing - Jill Sellers, Career Considerations - Dean Juhl. A special thank you to Jennifer Stoffel for her invaluable assistance with residency recruitment. All of the faculty and secretarial staff thank you for your contribution with recruitment. This can be a tiresome and grueling period of time and your participation is much appreciated. Thank you to the social committee (Kerry Cholka, Jennifer Stoffel, Amy Calabrese) who coordinated new events for everyone to participate in after the work hours. Last but not least a sincere appreciation to Doug Janson and Meredith Rose for coordinating the seminar series for all of the residency programs. I noted a significant increase in attendance and more lively discussion throughout the series which added significant value to the overall resident experience. So thank you to everyone for a job well done!

## From the desk of Sherrie Aspinall, Pharm.D.

Director of V.A. Pharmacy Practice Residency.

I am excited to announce that the residency program at the VA is expanding next year. We received funding through the Geriatrics Research, Education and Clinical Center (GRECC) for a pharmacy resident. This year we have a third pharmacy practice resident, but eventually we will offer a geriatrics specialty residency. Rob Maher, Pharm.D. and Jill Slimick, Pharm.D. are the primary preceptors for the geriatrics experience. Rob is a full-time faculty member at Duquesne University, and he has been working with the GRECC as a consultant.

The clinical pharmacy department has undergone some changes this year. I am now the clinical pharmacy coordinator, and Jim Wertz, Pharm.D. moved into my position as a clinical pharmacy specialist. His area of interest is oncology. Jim joins Stephanie Scavnicky, Pharm.D. and Matt Kruszewski, Pharm.D. as a preceptor in acute care. Melissa Crouthamel, Pharm.D., a former resident, is back at the VA as a clinical pharmacy specialist in ambulatory care.

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## Alumnus: Melissa Somma

**Present Position:** Assistant Professor of Family Medicine, Nesbitt School of Pharmacy at Wilkes University and Clinical Pharmacist Geisinger Health Group- Lake Scranton

**Practice / Honors / Research:** Melissa is currently working on two major research projects at Geisinger: "Evaluation of Lipid and Medication Management Clinic on Clinical Outcomes and Patient Satisfaction" and "Implementation and Clinical Outcomes of a Diabetic Group Education Series".

**Exciting Personal Information:** She's off and traveling this summer to 8 weddings (imagine that!!)

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## Alumnus: Kathy Melbourne

**Present Position:** Director of Pharmacy Care Management Program at Costal Medical, Inc. and Clinical Assistant Professor of Pharmacy at the University of Rhode Island College of Pharmacy.

### Practice / Honors / Research:

This June, Kathy will receive the Pinnacle Award through the APhA Foundation's Quality Center in recognition of her contributions to health care quality through the medication use process. She has also been nominated this year for the APhA Foundation Advanced Practice Institute and was recognized for her directing an innovative and advanced pharmacy practice program that provides high quality pharmaceutical care to the citizens of Rhode Island.

Kathy's present research includes evaluating a clinical pharmacist-directed anticoagulation management service in a primary care physician's office and integrating pharmacists into a hospitalist team of private physicians' group of a continuity of care model. In the past, she has done much work on HIV patient care and drug management and has been an appointed speaker for the BMS HIV Division and the Glaxo Wellcome HIV/Oncology Division. She has also published several articles on antiretroviral therapy.

**Exciting Personal Information:** She has taken up kickboxing as a stress reliever!

**What she valued most about her Pitt residency:** Kathy enjoyed the diversity of experiences available at Pitt; both the clinical/professional and personal close connection with the other residents. In addition to this, she valued the strong role models among UPMC preceptors and the director of the residency program.

**What she misses most about the 'Burgh:** Getting advice from Rich Ptachinski!

### What she valued most about her Pitt

**residency:** Melissa valued that fact that her residency gave her the opportunity to explore many areas of pharmacy practice of interest and adapt her residency to fit those interests. She also valued the strong relationships she developed with Pitt faculty and her preceptors.

### What she misses most about the

**'Burgh:** She misses the many things to do: Penguins games, great restaurants, movies in the park, a mall in every direction, but most of all, having her college friends right down the street.

## Alumnus: Patricia Pecora-Fulco

**Present Position:** Clinical Specialist, Internal Medicine at Medical College of Virginia Hospitals in Richmond, VA.

### Practice / Honors / Research:

Patricia is currently working on evaluations of the use of IV methylprednisolone and oral prednisone for acute asthma and the use of oral antimicrobial restriction program. She is also examining efavirenz use in HIV patients.

### Exciting Personal Information:

Patricia married Frank A. Fulco, M.D. after her residency on June 20, 1998. No children yet!!

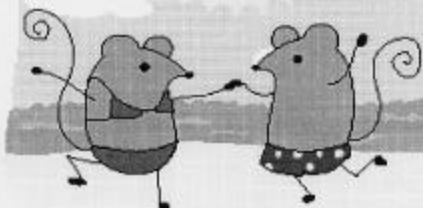
### What she valued most about her Pitt

**residency:** Patricia recognized three major facets of her experience. She stated that she appreciated: "(1) The colleagues that I made that will last for a lifetime. (2) The extensive experience that I gained due to the wide variety of disorders that are seen at UPMC. (3) The mentors that provided me with guidance for my career".

### What she misses most about the

**'Burgh:** Shadyside shopping and the restaurants; the Steelers, B94 radio, and the city itself.

Have Fun in the Sun!



**Jeff Brewer, Pharm.D.**

**UPMCHS Ambulatory Care Resident**

My year as the specialty ambulatory care resident at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center was everything I expected. Long hours, lots of patient interaction, and the chance to gain experience teaching pharmacy students. These experiences have given me the confidence to accept the clinical specialist in primary care position at The Johns Hopkins Hospital. I look forward to working with the staff and patients in Baltimore, as well as working with the many students and residents that go through the hospital every year.

One of my more memorable projects this year was working with a private physician practice to evaluate their adherence to the AHA guidelines on secondary prevention of Coronary Heart Disease. This project was a great example of pushing the boundaries of pharmacy. For future residents, I would suggest that as a clinical pharmacist you can do anything you set your mind to. Use this time to push expectations and expand your horizons. Good luck. ;+)

**Daisy Chung, Pharm.D.**

**UPMCHS Pharmacy Practice**

After completing my pharmacy practice residency at the University of Pittsburgh, I will be moving on to an oncology specialty residency at the South Texas Veterans Healthcare System and University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

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## **Current Residents' Future Plans & Comments!!**

*Daisy Chung, continued from previous column*

I plan on expanding my oncology knowledge base through patient care and various projects. I feel that this residency year has been very productive, as I have enhanced my clinical, research, and teaching skills. One experience that stands out is my precepting experience. Precepting Pharm.D. students allowed me to experience the other side of the student-teacher dynamic. It was very rewarding to know that I contributed a significant part to the students' learning that month, and I now know that I truly enjoy teaching. I would encourage future residents to take advantage of all the various opportunities available at Pitt, such as teaching and research, in order to have a well-rounded experience.

**Erin Conley, Pharm.D.**

**Stadtländers Managed Care**

I will be taking a position as Clinical Program Manager with Express Scripts, a pharmacy benefit management company and will be relocating to St. Louis, Missouri.

At Stadtländers, I was involved in a number of disease management and business development initiatives. One of my most important residency projects was an analysis of the financial impact of days supply (30 vs. 90) on the cost of antiretroviral therapy. This analysis was utilized internally, and I also presented in poster form at the Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy (AMCP) Annual Meeting in Phoenix this past April. At the meeting, I was presented with an award for the best student/resident poster. My trip to the AMCP headquarters in Alexandria, VA was an experience I would recommend to future residents.

**Laura Letterman-Jung, Pharm.D.**  
**UPCI Oncology Residents**

For the next two years, I will be an Oncology Pharmacy Fellow with the Pittsburgh Cancer Institute. I will be working with Bill Zamboni, Pharm.D., focusing on pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics of antineoplastics. I will also maintain a clinical practice three months of the year.

One of the most insightful events during my residency has been the teaching component. I had the opportunity to lecture in the oncology module at two schools of pharmacy, teach numerous times in the Pittsburgh Cancer Institute Comprehensive Chemotherapy Course, and deliver a seminar on Idiopathic Thrombocytopenia Purpura. In addition, I was also fortunate to co-precept numerous Pharm.D. students. From these experiences, I have learned to communicate more effectively with a wide range of health care professionals with varying levels of expertise. Also, I have definitely developed and enhanced my teaching and communication skills.

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**Pam Hucko-Koerner, Pharm.D.**  
**Stadtlanders Managed Care**

I will be taking a position with a Medicine Shoppe in Pittsburgh following the completion of my residency in June. At the store, I will be responsible for designing and implementing disease management programs. I will also be working with the ambulatory rotation students at the store and as a facilitator for the ambulatory rotation group discussions at Duquesne University.

I feel that my trip to the Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy headquarter and the time spent with a member of the Stadtlanders' sales force was a valuable experience that I hope next year's residents will also have the opportunity to do.

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**Nina Naeger, Pharm.D.**  
**V.A. Pharmacy Practice**

My plans for next year include completing a Specialty Residency in Infectious Diseases at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation.

A significant residency project I completed this past year was the development of a protocol for the Perioperative Management of Anticoagulation. The protocol was recently approved through our Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee and is now in the process of being implemented at our institution. The protocol was also presented at the American Society of Health-System Pharmacy Midyear Clinical Meeting in Orlando, Florida in December 1999 and at the Eastern States Residents' and Preceptors' Conference in Baltimore, Maryland in May 2000.

To enhance future residents' learning experience, I would recommend attendance at a Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Meeting. The VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System is part of VISN-4 which serves Pennsylvania, Delaware, and parts of Ohio, West Virginia, New York, and New Jersey. By attendance at one of these meetings, I feel that the residents' would have a better appreciation and understanding of what goes into running and maintaining the many Veterans' Affairs Medical Centers in those areas.



*Pam Hucko Koerner continued from page 5*

The project that I worked on during my residency was an exclusive distribution program at Stadtlanders. Working on the program from its infancy through implementation was a great learning experience for me. It allowed me to interact with many different areas of Stadtlanders as well as members of the pharmaceutical industry.

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### **Justine Schuller, Pharm.D.**

#### **UPMCHS Pharmacy Practice**

Upon completion of my residency at UPMCHS, I will be teaching at Wayne State University's School of Pharmacy and Harper Hospital in Detroit, Michigan. I will be an assistant professor and Harper's clinical specialist in neurology.

I valued the broad exposure to programs I was given at University of Pittsburgh. Not only did I build my foundations in different clinical practice settings, I was given opportunities to learn about teaching, research, and administration. I worked with Mary Hess and taught part of the neurology module for the P-3s. I was also given the opportunity to write my own IRB Protocol ("Home low-molecular weight heparin bridge therapy" in ischemic stroke patients) and learn about the approval process. Finally, I was allowed to partake in such activities as developing the UPMC-Presby budget, evaluating drug use on institutional level, and pilot programs. I am grateful for all of the opportunities and avenues opened to me at Pitt and the dedicated preceptors that helped me build my year. (Special thanks to Mary, Meredith, and Susan for all of their support during interview time!)

I encourage all future residents to grasp all of opportunities they can at UPMCHS. I believe that a resident will receive great "return on investment" once they delve into projects and become involved with preceptors, house staff, and students. I also encourage further guidance from all faculty for residents developing research projects-your expertise is valued.

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### **Emily Wade, Pharm.D.**

#### **UPMCHS Pharmacy Practice**

Once I complete the pharmacy practice residency at the end of June, I will be continuing on at the University of Pittsburgh as a critical care resident. I will have the opportunity to gain additional experience in the medical intensive care unit, liver transplant unit, and cardiac intensive care unit. I will also spend time rounding on the neurointensive care unit and in the emergency department. By staying here at UPMC, I will continue with my previous research project evaluating sedation.

This year, I had the opportunity to present a poster at the ASHP Midyear meeting. Justine, one of my fellow residents, and I were able to review a practice guideline and assess compliance to this guideline. This allowed us to target areas for education and assess cost savings.

I encourage all future residents to pursue their individual clinical interests and tailor their program to their wants/needs as UPMC has great flexibility due to the variety of practice sites and preceptors. I also recommend the formation of a research committee for the residents to help provide further guidance in research projects and for establishing deadlines. This will further enhance the residency research experience.

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We are proud of our residents and their accomplishments this year. We wish them the best in their future practices and encourage them to stay in touch. Their graduation will be celebrated at the Residency Banquet on June 27, 2000 at the Pittsburgh Athletic Association.