



# The Pitt Capsule



University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy

## ASP Busy During American Pharmacists Month

By Elyse Weitzman and Kyle McCormick

The last weekend of October marked more than just the first snowfall and Halloween festivities. That weekend, 17 Pitt student pharmacists traveled to Cherry Hill, NJ to learn about the landscape of pharmacy education, discuss ideas for enhancing our ASP chapter and leadership growth, and enjoy the company of fellow students. The Friday night social featured a dance-off, during which some Pitt students reenacted the American Pharmacists Month PhLASH Mob (Our PhLASH Mob success was the talk of the weekend!).

Policy discussion is always a highlight of the MRM experience. During the policy proposal forum, the floor is open to any student who wishes to comment on proposals submitted by chapters within our region. Many of our students spoke up on issues that were meaningful to them, such as international APPE opportunities, sale of clean syringes to drug users, and drug shortages. Following the forum, our chapter held a dynamic discussion and vote on each of the 54 resolutions. The regional policy process closed with chapter delegates discussing and performing the final votes in front of everyone. Our chapter delegate, Erika Morgan, did a wonderful job representing our chapter's opinions! Saturday night also featured a nice chapter dinner at a local restaurant, The Pop Shop. We enjoyed our meals and company in an atmosphere that brought out the kids in us (they had Harry Potter Butterbeer!).

An additional piece of the weekend involved elections for regional offices. Two of our very own, Ravi Patel and Brahim Shettima, ran for Member-at-Large and Delegate respectively. Even though neither of them was successful, they made very admirable efforts!

Reflecting on their experiences, here is what some of our members wanted to share:

*"My first experience at MRM was a little intimidating but it didn't take long for me to feel welcome among 400 students from around our region. I was able to serve as our school's regional delegate, voicing our chapter's opinions on various policies affecting*



MRM attendees enjoyed a chapter dinner at the local Pop Shop.

*pharmacists and student pharmacists. The greatest thing I learned during MRM weekend is that it is never too late to get involved! I have found a great passion and excitement for policy that I would have never realized had I not attended MRM." -Erika Morgan, P3*

*"It is great to watch the policy process come full circle, from a regional level at MRM to nationally at the ASP Annual Meeting. I can't wait for New Orleans!" -Lindsay McCartney, P3*

*"Learning about organizational advancement of our profession never gets old and comes in a nice little weekend package of MRM! You will not regret coming out to Annual in March, especially since it is 1000 times the fun :)" - Indrani Kar, P3*

*"You won't know how great it is or why it's great until you just go. Between hearing guest speakers, meeting new people, getting to know the people you thought you already knew, and hanging out, you'll wonder where the weekend disappeared and when you'll get to have another one like it." - Sudha Mokapatti, P1*

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## The Pitt Capsule

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## Thank you Student Pharmacists Responses

For American Pharmacists Month a box was placed in the PCLC for students to share stories of how they impacted patients at their workplace or Experiential Learning sites. The following are stories that were submitted.

*"A patient was having trouble taking her beta blocker twice a day. We got her a recommendation from the staff pharmacist to switch her to an ER alternative, and now she is likely to take her medication."*

*"Pharmacy, like life, is less about the knowledge and science and more about the sincerity and caring. My most memorable experience with a patient was when I walked an elderly woman to her car in the pouring rain because she didn't have an umbrella. Not only was she grateful but it put a smile on her face despite the dreary weather."*

*"While doing a blood pressure screening an elderly woman walked up. I was with a few other students and we asked if she wanted to have her blood pressure taken to which she responded, "my knee hurts too much." Concerned and somewhat confused, we responded by asking what was wrong. She had just come from an appointment at the arthritis center and was heading to her car when her knees began to bother her too much. We sat her down and began talking.*

*Apparently the doctor had suggested that she go to the ER if her pain persisted but she insisted that she did not need to go. However, when asked if she thought she could drive home, she said that she just wanted to drive off a cliff. Alarmed, we immediately knew she could not take care of herself at home. The pharmacy manager made arrangements for a medical transporter to take her to the ER. As she waited I sat next to her and we just talked. We discussed her previous career as a teacher and the variety of students she interacted with over the years. When I discovered that she had been a music teacher we began to discuss piano. Our conversation continued for an hour until the transporter finally came. As I was getting up to leave, she grabbed my hand, looked at the transporter, and said, "this young boy has been so kind, he's taken good care of me, he will make a good pharmacist." This statement made me think about what it really means to be a pharmacist. This elderly lady had identified me as a good future pharmacist based solely on an hour of conversation aimed at taking her mind off of her pain. Never had I performed one "pharmacist duty" - I didn't even get to take her blood pressure. Looking back, her compliment indirectly identifies the roots of a pharmacist's role: that of a listening, accessible caregiver."*

## P1 Class Update

By Trey Draude

The P1s are being fitted for their white coats and will soon be writing their bios in preparation for the greatly anticipated White Coat Ceremony on

January 27th. It is incredible to think that we are already almost done with the first semester of our P1 year!

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*"It was a great chance to meet students from other chapters to learn how we compare in terms of education, student organizations, and enjoying time outside of class. Getting the chance to run for a regional office also exposed me to the variety of opportunities and how my work in APhA-ASP has an effect at the regional and national level." - Ravi Patel, P2*



Students participate in the Phlash mob

*"MRM was something I knew nothing about before I went. But once I got there I was really caught up in the activities and I found myself meeting new people and doing things that I didn't even expect. I highly recommend it because you'll be able to do things that you never even imagined." - Brahim Shettima, P2*

If you think MRM sounds like fun, consider going to APhA's Annual Meeting in New Orleans, LA, as it is many times the fun. Feel free to speak with current executive board members and others who have attended Annual in the past about our experiences. It is an incredible opportunity to see how student pharmacists make an impact across the nation, and it is sincerely a blast.

## AIDS Benefit Planned

By Chelsea Fitzgerald

The social committee and IPSF are pleased to announce that together they are hosting an AIDS Benefit Concert at Peter's Pub! The event will be held on Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup> and the time is tentatively scheduled for 6-10. This is an all ages show featuring two bands, Higher Ground and Haven. Higher Ground is a local rock band that performs all cover songs from bands such as Red Hot Chili Peppers, Sublime, and The Beatles. Haven is an original alternative rock band that our very own Dr. Benedict is a part of!

There will be a \$5 entrance fee and a 50/50 raffle with all proceeds going to the Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force. There will be some appetizers available and drink specials. P1s and P2s come out for a fun night before the stress of finals week commences, and P3s come celebrate a completion of another finals week with only one more semester of class to go!

The next social committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 30<sup>th</sup> during lunch in rooms 229/230 of the PCLC. Anyone interested in helping with the AIDS Benefit Concert or formal is encouraged to attend!

## SNPhA Update

By Erin Mathis

Operation Immunization has been in full swing on campus. SNPhA members have been assisting pharmacists with influenza immunizations, and having fun in the process! There are still a number of time slots available to participate; these hours count for Experiential Learning. Contact Sam Holliday ([snpha.pitt@gmail.com](mailto:snpha.pitt@gmail.com)) to sign up.

SNPhA is preparing for Operation Barbershop, which will begin next semester. Students will travel to various barbershops around the city to educate patrons about health issues and answer questions relating to medications. E-mail us if you would like to participate.

It's not too early to think about attending SNPhA's annual regional conference. This year's regional conference will be held the weekend of February 5, 2012 at Wingate University in Charlotte, NC. The conferences are always lots of fun, and a great way to meet students from other pharmacy schools. SNPhA will be covering some of the travel costs; e-mail or speak to one of the E-board members for more information.

## A Priori

By Ravi Patel

Today, I learned about the development of drugs, provided a patient with basic care, and attended a discussion on global health. I had no clue to expect any of this before I actually entered pharmacy school. Even though I didn't expect to do all of this, I (thankfully) am able to enjoy it. If I didn't know what to expect about pharmacy school, a decision I spent hours, days, years agonizing over, my thoughts turn towards the next "big" decision I (we all) soon have to make: a career.

Doing something without knowing about it is, in my mind, a gamble. Time, effort, and sanity are invested in the hopes that the wager pays off by improving a patient's life, fixing a problem in health care, and/or providing some sense of self-satisfaction. I am not a gambler. I want to make the decision that is not wrong. Thinking about it, distain of being "wrong" likely stems from my past as a grade-grubbing overachiever. Regardless, I don't know when to hold 'em, nor do I know when to fold 'em, unless there is primary literature on it. So when it comes to deciding an eventual career, however, I might as well go all in at the roulette table, because I have no idea.

I try to stack the odds in my favor by choosing a field which would best suit what I want in a career, but how am I supposed to know what I want in a career without already having one? The few job experiences I have had as a student are far from adequate, for me, in showing what it is to truly work in that field. This problem is compounded by the fact that any small snippet of a career is enjoyable, personally, to some degree. Community, hospital, lab work, and formulary management. The mini-experiences which riddle our education all have some appeal, especially when I know that I can stop after the 4 hours/1 week/summer is done.

Eventually, though, I am going to have to make a decision based on these mini-experiences.

The term "a priori" has been used across the spectrum of academia, from philosophy to drug development. Latin translation roughly meaning "from the former," this term can be interpreted as knowledge that is derived from theory rather than experience—a fitting description for the struggle with determining life after graduation. Even beyond the lack of experience in career pathways (through a job, residency, or fellowship), I have to decide in what field I want to pursue a career (patient care, administration, public health). Trying to choose a pathway and a field is like trying to treat comorbid conditions where one complicates any treatment given for the other.

There is solace in the fact that a lot of us share this same worry. Everyone, though, finds some way to deal with it. Personally, I have come to dilute my concerns with the understanding that what I do immediately after graduation is not what I will be doing for the rest of my life. I know that my ambitions to be the first pharmacist/space-cowboy might not pan out as I expect, but if you ask your professor, parent, or any general "grown-up" about what they expected their career path to be and what it actually became, there is very little overlap.

As graduation approaches at a pace that is too slow to bear but too fast for comfort, I prepare to make a decision not for the rest of my life, but for my first foray into the "real world." It may not be what I do forever, but that does not mean that career is "wrong"—that cringe inducing word again. The first attempt to be a "real person" after graduation will rather be my first step in finding a vocation that is my vacation. Until then, I'll be filling note margins with doodles of concept designs for a holster for my flight suit that can hold a laser pistol and prescription pad.

## Eat Ice Cream and Meet PLS

By Sarah Rindfuss

If you're interested in learning more about Phi Lambda Sigma, come to our ice cream social! This information session will be held on Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup> from 12:30 – 1 PM in 402 Salk following the ASP PharmFlix viewing. The ice cream social will give you a chance to learn about who we are and what we do, and will also give you a chance to interact with current PLS members to learn more

about the organization and what it has to offer, all while enjoying delicious ice cream sundaes! Applications for PLS will be available in the next few weeks, and will be due the first week back after Christmas break. More information about applications will be discussed at the ice cream social. Please speak to any of the PLS members or email [philambdasigma@gmail.com](mailto:philambdasigma@gmail.com) with any further questions you may have!

## A Busy Beta Kappa

By Hannah Duttenhoeffer

Happy midterms, Salk Hall! Beta Kappa has been keeping busy this past month with the continuation of pledging as well as various philanthropic events, both planned by philanthropy chair, Jaclyn Brucker.

Beta Kappa helped out our fellow Gamma Pi Brothers by raising over \$600 for the St. Baldrick's Foundation for pediatric cancer! We thank everyone who came to our Breakfast for Baldness and those who donated money to help us reach our goal of \$500 to have our Regent, Luke Berenbrok, Brother Chris Turton, and Brother Felix Fisher shave their heads for the cause! It was a blast watching (and helping) them go bald for children! If you see them around Salk Hall or Oakland, say hello and give their heads a little rub!

Our chapter also sponsored a lunch and lecture event featuring Dr. Ed Krenzolak from the Pittsburgh Poison Control Center on Tuesday November 8<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to those who attended, those who donated money to charity!

Pledging was in full swing throughout the month of October. Brothers and pledges traveled to Fright Farm on October 18<sup>th</sup> and had a great time going through the haunted house, getting spooked on the haunted hayride, and getting lost (and stalked) through the new terror maze. Most importantly, pledges and Brothers got to know each other a lot better. We also held our annual lineage dinner on November 3<sup>rd</sup> at Spaghetti Warehouse where Brothers shared fellowship with pledges and graduate Brothers and at delicious Italian food. Thanks to Nick Hunsinger and Julie Cusatis for their excellent planning of these events!!

With the semester winding down, BK will be busy planning and participating in various



*The men of Kappa Psi pose for a goofy picture at Spaghetti warehouse*



*Kappa Psi Pledge Class stays warm at Fright Farm*

philanthropy events at Family House and Global Links as well as planning our annual Christmas Party. Happy finals time everyone!

## Patient Care Continues Caring for Patients

By Sam Becker

Hello and Happy Diabetes Awareness Month! You can do your part as a student pharmacist by participating in the Patient Care Committee's Operation Diabetes community screenings. In the month of October alone, students identified 12 patients at risk for diabetes and referred them to their physician. Catching diabetes early can make a huge difference in the quality of a patient's life. Being that we, as students, are so busy, these screenings are conveniently set up in Falk Pharmacy mostly during lunch. It's an easy way to get IPPE hours and make a difference! Sign up at [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0Aq0Gdq\\_3Z27JdHhqTIRUQUZXYIZ2dzQweVNI RUw3bmc&hl=en\\_US#gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0Aq0Gdq_3Z27JdHhqTIRUQUZXYIZ2dzQweVNI RUw3bmc&hl=en_US#gid=0) and view the training video on our APhA-ASP Facebook page.

The Patient Care Committee was hard at work this past month. For Diabetes Awareness Month, students helped out at the American Diabetes Association's Diabetes Expo downtown. Students explained A1c to patients and promoted flu shots. At the Maggie Dixon Heart Health Fair at the Pete, students had fun participating in the kickoff for Pitt's basketball season while at the same time promoting cardiovascular health awareness. Students took blood pressures and counseled patients on hypertension medications, diabetes, and healthy lifestyle choices. It was a successful event!

Patient Care is moving along with Generation Rx in order to address the issues of drug diversion and addiction in our community. Students are partnering with Duquesne in order to create a CE showing pharmacists how to appropriately counsel addicts. In addition, students are currently planning



Students performed blood pressure screenings at the Maggie Dixon Heart Health Fair

for a larger-scale project to be carried out in the spring. More information to come! Let Sam or Jaclyn know if you are interested in taking part in this important initiative.

At the APhA-ASP Midyear Regional Meeting we heard from a lot of schools about their awesome patient care projects! We would like to hear from you so we can plan projects for the spring that everyone will be interested in!

As always, contact [asppatientcare@gmail.com](mailto:asppatientcare@gmail.com) with questions or ideas, and do your part as a student pharmacist by participating in patient care projects!

### Patient Care Tracker

As of November 8th: 375 patients

By Kailey Troutman

## LKS Supports the NOCC



Throughout the month of November, the sisters of Lambda Kappa Sigma will be busy promoting ovarian cancer awareness in collaboration with the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition (NOCC) of Pittsburgh. The NOCC Pittsburgh Chapter was formed in 2000, by three dedicated women who met while undergoing treatment for ovarian cancer. Together, they created a strong precedent of raising awareness and promoting education about this disease. In order to help increase knowledge across the Pitt campus, LKS members will be providing information on ovarian cancer at the following times: ...Continued on Page 7

*...LKS Continued*

November 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> at Sutherland Hall from 5-7 pm and on November 7<sup>th</sup> in the Union from 1-3 pm. Additionally, posters detailing the warning symptoms of ovarian cancer have been placed in all student dorms and around campus. By working on this project, LKS hopes that all women will adopt the NOCC slogan of "Take Early Action and Live" in order to improve the survival rates and quality of life of those diagnosed with ovarian cancer.

LKS has also been actively serving the community and held a movie night and a game night at the Family House in Oakland in October. Later in November, sisters will be preparing breakfast for residents of the Ronald McDonald House. Thank you

to our service co-chairs Kristen James (P3) and Nicole Kovacic (P3) for organizing these events.

October 27<sup>th</sup> marked the yearly scavenger hunt throughout the city of Pittsburgh. Sisters were grouped in teams and sent on a wild hunt to collect as many objects and group pictures in front of Pittsburgh landmarks as possible. Congratulations to the winning team! Following completion of the new member period, the 33 newest girls were officially inducted into the fraternity on Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup>. All sisters are looking forward to the upcoming LKS/PDC Sweetheart Formal to be held Friday, November 18<sup>th</sup> at the Pittsburgh Athletic Association.

LKS wishes everyone a restful and happy Thanksgiving!

## Sudoku

9	1		6	2		4	
3		2				8	
	7			8	1		3
		9		5		3	7
	2	7			3		4
		4	2			5	
2		5	9		6		
							6
8		3	4	7		1	

Easy

9				5			6
		4					
	7		8	1	4	5	9
						8	7
		2		5		6	
3	1	5					
	6		2			4	
		7		6		3	
			7				5

Medium

7	8		1	9				
9		2		3		6	8	
				2	9			
				4	5		2	
2		7					5	6
5	6			2	7	1		
	7	3						
6			4	5				
8		1	3			2		

Medium

7	2	4		1	5			
9	6			3	4			7
8	1			6		2		
		6	7			1	4	
	9			8		3		
	4							
		8	6					
		9		5				
2						7		

Hard