

# The Pitt Capsule

THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH  
SCHOOL OF PHARMACY



## #PharmacyHasHeart

Josh Niznik, ASP President

Greetings fellow student pharmacists! American Pharmacists Month was a major success thanks to your enthusiasm about our profession! We hosted several events throughout the month to celebrate. The month kicked off with our co-promoted lecture on “How to Improve Medication Use” by Dr. William Shrank. There was overwhelming attendance from student pharmacists, which truly demonstrated our interest in learning about how pharmacy can help to improve health outcomes in patients.

Later in the month, APhA-ASP provided the opportunity to take a study break and test your spelling skills with the First Annual School of Pharmacy Spelling Bee! Eleven students from the P1, P2, and P3 classes competed for a trophy and the glory of being the best student pharmacist speller at the University of Pittsburgh. The competition was fierce, but in the end P3 Tyler Chanas took home the gold! Congrats!

At the end of American Pharmacists Month, our chapter participated in the American Heart Association’s Heart Walk to raise awareness of cardiovascular disease. Thanks to the efforts of our student members, we were able to raise over \$400 towards this cause! Thank you to everyone who participated and helped us support the cause!

This November, we will really keep things moving as we get closer towards the end of the semester. This past weekend, 35

chapter members made the journey out to Washington, D.C. for this year’s Mid-Year Regional Meeting or MRM! This year APhA-ASP piloted a combined MRM, bringing together Regions 1 and 2. Students in attendance traveled from 14 different states! This pilot program gave APhA-ASP the opportunity to bring in more diverse programming for students to develop their leadership skills and learn from one another.

Looking ahead, it is hard to believe that we are already beginning to plan for the APhA Annual Meeting in Orlando, Florida! This year’s meeting will be held from **March 28th-March 31st**. The APhA Annual Meeting offers students the opportunity to take part in a wide variety of opportunities for professional development, networking, and learning! Each year, thousands of pharmacists and student pharmacists alike gather to exchange ideas and network all weekend long. This is an opportunity that you definitely don’t want to miss out on! If you are interested in attending and would like more information, please feel free to contact us at [pitt.aphaasp.eboard@gmail.com](mailto:pitt.aphaasp.eboard@gmail.com).

Be sure to follow the new Pitt APhA-ASP Twitter account at @PittASP for updates on our chapter at the University of Pittsburgh!



*Spelling Bee champion, Tyler Chanas, poses with his custom, hand-crafted trophy.*

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## Pharmacy Students S-P-E-L-L

Jessie Lewis, Social Committee Chair

The social committee was extremely excited to host the First Annual Pharmacy School Spelling Bee in October! The competition featured 11 students with representation ranging from P1 to P3 year. The audience cheered on their peers and was able to assist when a participant needed to “phone a phriend.” Competitors were also able to skip a word once, ask for 50% of a word, or spell the brand/generic depending on the version of the drug asked. The first few rounds began with a solid showing as students spelled Pitt related words. Highlights included P2 Dylan Nelson effortlessly spelling Professor Venkat’s FULL last name and all of the P1’s trying to figure out what names were on their last Top Drugs exams.

Unfortunately, P2’s were the first class eliminated, and the competition eventually came down to a sudden-death elimination round spelling of a monoclonal antibody between P3s Sam Holliday, Mike Mayrosh, and Tyler Chanas. When the answers had been submitted, Tyler Chanas was deemed champion as the only one to spell it correctly—as grand champion he walked away with a one-of-a-kind custom spelling bee trophy and school of pharmacy mug! All of the participants competed valiantly and walked away with some sort of prize. Great job spellers and a big congrats to Tyler!!!

Looking forward, the members of the social committee will be busy bees (pun intended) planning for pharmacy weeks! They are coming up much faster than you think, so if any organization is interested in hosting an event during pharmacy weeks, please contact Jessie Lewis at [JRL74@pitt.edu](mailto:JRL74@pitt.edu)! With that in mind, mark your calendars and be on the lookout for a hot date to the Formal, which will be held at the Westin Downtown on **Saturday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014**.

## P3 Presidential Report

Trey Draude, Class of 2015 President

The P3 class is hosting our basketball tournament on **November 9<sup>th</sup>** in Bellfield Hall. There will be 3v3 teams, with at least one girl per team. Sign up now!

As we near the end of our second to last semester, we prepare for high priority events such as our class gift exchange, Holiday party, end of semester party, and capstone. The family has stayed close over our three years and looks forward to even better times on the horizon.

## Want to share the Pitt Capsule?

Look for .pdf versions of this year’s Pitt Capsules at [www.porxtal.com](http://www.porxtal.com) under Organizations → APhA-ASP tab! Articles written by yourself or about your organization fit nicely into portfolios as a way to showcase your work. It’s also a great way to share all of our hard work, accomplishments and projects with family, friends and potential pharmacy students!

## PPA has an exciting month!

Kyle McCormick and Kyle McGrath, PPA

During the weekend of September 27-29th, homecoming celebration was in full swing at the University of Pittsburgh. Meanwhile, a smaller, yet just as exciting celebration was underway at the Pennsylvania Pharmacists Association (PPA) Annual meeting in Gettysburg, PA.

Pitt representation was strong at the meeting with 21 students and 9 residents and faculty members present. However, Pitt's impact did not stop at a three-fold attendance increase from last year. Pitt students, residents, and faculty members moderated a number of conference programs and were recognized for their achievements and contributions to the profession.



The meeting started off with the swearing in of new members of the Board of Directors, which include Pitt's own Dr. Stephanie McGrath, Director of the Academy of Chain Pharmacists, and Kyle McCormick (P4), Director of the Academy of Student Pharmacists.



After much networking and learning through the variety of CEs offered, the Awards & Leadership Dinner started.

Erin Burke (Class of 2013) was recognized for the award she received at graduation - outstanding student member from the University of Pittsburgh. Throughout her academic career at the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy, Erin made significant contributions to PPA including: increased membership, growth in student participation at PPA/ACPA events, and improved attendance at conferences. She also served as secretary on the Academy of Student Pharmacists board during the 2011-2012 year.



For the second year in a row, Pitt took home the win for the Achieving Independence Competition. This year's team consisted of Natalie Valentino, Kyle McGrath, Gordon Watkins, and Andrew Nguyen, (all of whom are current P3 students) with Dr. Karen Pater as their faculty mentor and Darin Silbaugh as their coach. The competition requires students to develop an innovative, hypothetical business plan for an independent pharmacy practice, starting from the ground up or through the "purchase" of an existing one. The team then presents their concept and poster to a panel of judges. The competition concludes with a period of question and answer following the presentation.



The University of Pittsburgh also won the Student

Membership Award, an award presented annually to the Pennsylvania pharmacy school that has made outstanding efforts in membership, participation, and recruitment of students, thus strengthening the association and practice of pharmacy in Pennsylvania. Pitt has significantly increased its student membership and participation over the past few years. Currently, Pitt ranks 1st in the state with 30% of students as members of PPA.



The night continued as Dr. Stephanie McGrath received the Pharmacists Mutual Insurance Company’s Distinguished Young Pharmacist Award, which recognizes new pharmacists for their dedication to and participation in PPA, commitment to the practice of pharmacy, and involvement in community activities. Her contributions to the profession are plentiful, from teaching students in class to precepting them on rotation and residency as well as being an outstanding employee to her company. She sits on the PPA Board of Directors as the Director of the Academy of Chain Pharmacies and serves as the Public Relations Committee chair. Most importantly she is an advocate for the profession and community in which she practices.



Dr. Karen Pater won the PPA Preceptor of the Year, which is awarded to a PPA member from any practice setting who has demonstrated outstanding interaction, knowledge sharing, and served as an exceptional pharmacy role model for students. Dr. Pater was nominated by 2013 graduates Elizabeth McCartney, Erin Burke, and Chelsea Fitzgerald for her contributions in the classroom, to the School’s PPA chapter, and in practice to all of the students she precepts. Students from every year recognize the diligence and passion that Dr. Pater puts into her work as well as her desire for every single one of her students to succeed.



In addition, during his acceptance of the award for Legislator of the year, Rep. Seth Grove acknowledged the University for our commitment to the advancement of our profession and our willingness to participate in the recent press conference. He even put in a plug for past Pitt director Brandon Antinopoulos to become the future governor of PA one day!

Congratulations to all award recipients! Although homecoming celebrations and the initial excitement from the PPA Annual conference has declined, we hope to have continual growth and involvement within our chapter and remember there is always the 2014 PPA Mid-Year Conference which will be held in Bedford Springs **January 23-26** as well as the anticipation of Legislative day in April where Pitt hopes to maintain our record of student involvement from last year.

## Phi Lambda Sigma Update

Nicole Romstadt, PLS Secretary

PLS members are already preparing for annual PLS Auction on **February 6<sup>th</sup>** at the Hilton Garden Inn in Oakland! Members have been busy inviting SOP faculty and staff to the auction, as well as asking local business for donations. The auction is always a great success, and faculty members have really enjoyed the donations from student organizations. It's time to start thinking of fun activities or donations for your organization to auction off!!

The PLS information session was held last week and provided interested students an opportunity to meet members and learn more about Phi Lambda Sigma. Applications will be due on **January 10th at 11:59pm**. Applications require a letter of recommendation from a PLS member or a faculty member, so start thinking of who you'd like to write your letter, and ask early! Applications are open already and can be accessed at [www.porxtal.com](http://www.porxtal.com) under the Organizations → PLS tab. All student leaders are encouraged to apply! If you have any questions about PLS or the application process, feel free to ask any members or contact [philambdasigma@gmail.com](mailto:philambdasigma@gmail.com).

PLS has invited Dr. Mark Peters from Bristol-Myers Squibb to give a lunch lecture about industry at noon on **November 14**. We hope to see you there!

## Rho Chi holds successful events

Nicole Romstadt, Rho Chi Historian

Rho Chi has continued the monthly Health Talks at the Salvation Army Rehabilitation Center in the Southside. Last month's topic was the cold and flu— always a popular topic! Students also educated residents about the importance of obtaining an annual flu shot and encouraged the men to get vaccinated. Next month's topic will cover other important immunizations.

Rho Chi held the first "Tips, Tricks and Tutoring" sessions to provide P1 and P2 students with information and first hand insight on topics including patient care workups, capstone cases and the Wiser final. The P2s had a great turnout, and left (hopefully) with a clearer understanding of these daunting projects, as well as some tips on how to do their best! If you have any ideas or suggestions for future session topics, please let us know.

The annual Rho Chi business card sale was a success, and

students who ordered business cards will have them in time for the SSHP Midyear meeting in December. Rho Chi members are also hard at work revamping the lab cards to include the most up-to-date and useful clinical information. Keep an eye out for lab cards to go on sale in the next few months.

## Patient Care Update

Katie McGuire, Patient Care Co-Chair

The patient care committee had a great beginning to the school year with the addition of some exciting new projects and continuation of many of our other projects. We are still looking for students to volunteer for many of our projects as we continue to implement them in each of the operations.

The Generation RX committee is starting many exciting projects. First the presentations to high school students about prescription drug abuse start this week. Second the parent presentations/community toolkit committee recently received a grant from Cardinal Health to carry out their project. We are definitely looking for more people to assist with making this project a success. Finally the drug disposal group is working on making new materials for students to pass out, educating patients about proper disposal of medications. If you are interested in using the poster or information for an upcoming pharmacy event or school project—please let us know.

The Self Care committee is giving presentations to undergraduate students in residence halls about flu and cold self-care in a presentation titled "Pills and Popcorn". They still need a few students to give presentations in November, so please let us know if you are interested.

Operation Diabetes is giving presentations to patients in senior centers to educate about proper diabetes care. They are looking to expand the committee and get more students involved in order to set-up a health-fair in the spring. Please let us know if you are interested and be on the lookout for an upcoming committee meeting.

Operation Heart has been working on setting up blood pressure screenings at malls and gyms in the Pittsburgh area.

If you are interested in helping with any of these initiatives please let Katie McGuire (P3) or Meera Vachhani (P2) know at [asppatientcare@gmail.com](mailto:asppatientcare@gmail.com).

## Ignorance Isn't Bliss

Aaron Devanathan, Class of 2016

There is a phrase that states, "You can't un-ring a bell." This means that once you hear or see something, it's already etched into your mind and there's no turning back. This is usually in the context of bad news; once you hear the bad news, it already alters what you are going to do moving forward compared to if you hadn't heard it in the first place. So which situation is better? Because we're students, it is only fitting to have a school-related example.

Let's say you take a test (that probably seems like every single day). Upon leaving the exam room, you get an answer key. But you're not the type of person to grade it immediately afterwards. You want to wait until the scores are up online and then go back to see what you missed. On the next day, the teacher e-mails the class saying that the scores are up and the average, for the sake of argument, was 52%. Ouch. You decide not to look at the score because you have an exam the day after and you can't afford to have this distract you.

Now you're studying for the next exam, as you are a diligent student. You can't help but think to yourself, "How was it that low?" and "How did I do?" You shrug it off for the time-being. A few minutes later, you go back to thinking about that exam. "I can easily look at it and find out", you think. You forget it and just get back to studying. This repeats over the next half-hour. Your heart rate increases. Blood pressure must be skyrocketing. You are breathing more rapidly and heavily. You can't study because your mind is pre-occupied about that exam.

Ignorance isn't bliss.

Your computer magically opens and goes to Courseweb. You click on "My Grades" and your cursor hovers over the class title. It just takes one click to make or break your day. To click or not to click, that is the question. Click! You received a 36.

"There's no way that's possible. How will I pass? I'm so stupid. There must have been a mistake. I need to e-mail the teacher immediately. What's my average? How did [insert classmate's name here] do? I should have studied more. This is awful."

You end up comparing the answers on the key to yours (the paper bleeds red). You burn another half-hour to a grand total of an hour, at minimum. You feel sick to the stomach and now you are lost. How can you possibly study with this abhorrent score on your mind?

So which situation was worse: not knowing the score

(ignorance) or knowing it? In a comprehensive risk-benefit analysis, based on personal experience and mathematical logistics, I believe not knowing is worse. Ignorance leads to uncertainty. Uncertainty leads to confusion. Confusion leads to retrospective analysis, which includes looking at good and bad decisions. Retrospective analysis leads to paranoia. Paranoia leads to complete mental block. Complete mental block means you can't study anyway.

If you decide to take the leap and know, you go through all of these steps *except* paranoia. Instead, retrospective analysis directly leads to mental block. But the mental block is much shorter in duration because you have no choice but to accept the final result. That is the beauty of knowing. So what's my point?

In our life, we will inevitably have to make decisions. But when it gets to the point where we can choose to either know or ignore something, it is better for us to know. And it's all about risks vs. benefits.

Ignorance about outcomes that are important to you will consume you. During the paranoia stage, the biggest question that comes into your mind is "What if?" Once you start asking yourself that, you immediately fill your thoughts with regretful situations and mental block occurs within minutes. This will happen 100% of the time.

If you have the opportunity to know or do something important to you, take advantage of it. The risk of ignorance is far greater than the risk for accepting your fate. You can make peace with the end result, even if the healing process takes days, months, or even years.

This is a hard concept to grasp and master. We (myself included) are so worried about potential outcomes that we hesitate too much and don't take many risks. But it's not right. We have to know and do. The consequences of ignorance and potential mental block and shutdown are grave. And that's just the honest truth.

Ignorance isn't bliss. You made the right decision to click to check your grade. This isn't your first mistake and it certainly won't be your last. Now take the time to heal and get back into the game. Trust me, you'll be fine.

## Being bored to being boring: the transition from student to teacher

Ravi Patel, Class of 2014

It was during a hospital rotation when an underclassman had the displeasure of being paired with me while on a general medicine floor. I happened to overhear a medical student's conversation with their preceptor regarding a psychology consult. Thinking about what I eavesdropped, I asked myself aloud, "Why would they use that as first-line treatment for delirium?" Taking this question as an actual question, my fellow student replied with, "um, no clue." Not having covered that topic in class yet, that student and I had a conversation about delirium ended in us breaking for lunch as I casually joked, which I do in poor form, "And after lunch, see if you can find the difference between delirium and dementia." To my surprise, they came back with a correct, comprehensive answer. After confirming the answer, I stopped to both appreciate the student's initiative and ponder my role in the situation. Glad to help someone else learn, I wondered about my possible future as a preceptor or teacher.

My power trip over underclassman is just one indicator of how I can see myself as a professor someday. Maybe it's the chance to educate future generations, maybe it's the allure of tweed jackets, or maybe it's the captivate audience for my jokes. Whatever the motivation is, it's accompanied with the chance to make another student's education better than my own.

In 16+ years of education, though, I've had a comparably limited education on "how to teach students". I have learned, however, how to teach patients. I've learned to condense an entire drug monograph to a comprehensible, comprehensive, and time-limited message that a patient would be able to understand. Further, I can gauge this patient's understanding with a standardized set of questions. This approach is a stark contrast to the graphs, figures, and walls of text in the hours-long Powerpoint presentations and accompanying assessments that face students in many courses. These are different situations but they represent two very different approaches to accomplish (arguably) similar goals of educating someone.

While teaching may vary based on recipients, it also differs according to whoever is teaching. On rotations, preceptors follow a less structured, discussion-based approach. As a student perspective, I've found each preceptor to follow a unique approach and style to teachings. In comparison, lectures tend to follow a more traditional, standardized structure. This lecture structure is typically required of students to use when

given the opportunity to teach fellow classmates. Many of my presentations about natural products, immunology, and newly approved drugs have followed the traditional slides/exam format—the same format that I normally ignore in a lecture. In these experiences, more than learning about teaching, I learn about how easily lecturers can see students sleeping.

Experiencing lectures as both a disinterested student and boring lecturer in the same day may be the best lesson in teaching I take away from my education. We're expected to be "lifelong learners", but the prospects of being a "lifelong student" is downright scary. Being in a classroom as a student when teaching could, however, have benefit through exposure to the merits/demerits of other educational styles and experiences. If nothing else, it could help fuel my cynicism and drive my efforts to ensure my students have a better education that I had... or lead to me to snap and leave the ivory tower in (figurative) ashes.

The benefit of being both a student and a teacher is in experiencing different perspectives of the classroom. Both perspectives, however, have biases. Demanding teachers may blame lazy students. Bored students may blame un-empathetic teachers. To account for these biases, student may best learn how to teach during their own education from a third-person perspective. This perspective may be best adopted in classroom instruction on teaching with emphasis on practical application. In the fast approaching post-graduate world of residency, there is the option of seeking a "Teaching Certificate", which includes a combination of didactic education and practical application of teaching. Learning about how I, in short time, might become one of the residents from which I learned self-care gives a slight glimpse into a possible future in academia and a peek into the past of current faculty and preceptors.

For students to appreciate the teaching they've experienced and may someday do themselves, objective discussion about "teaching" should be included in the curriculum. This proposal is no easy endeavor in a curriculum already strained for time. Some professors and courses already make explicit how their approach towards teaching correlates with material and course structures. It would be worthwhile to make the time for this material because a student body well educated in pedagogy could make more informed and constructive feedback about courses to improve them for future students—a process perhaps more useful than a grammar-error-riddled rant in a monthly column.

Until then, I will ride out my ego trip with whichever poor underclassman ends up in my path and keep working on my professor jokes: "Rituximab is not just the fanciest dressed of monoclonal antibodies..."

## Are you the next Dr. Salk Hall??

Jocelyn Hatfield, Corresponding Secretary



*Brandon Antinopolous poses proudly with his trophy after winning Dr. Salk Hall.*

Do you have a hidden talent? Do you think you are the best professionally dressed individual in Salk Hall? Then LKS wants YOU to be a contestant in the Second Annual **Dr. Salk Hall Competition!** Last year we had 9 of the finest men from the pharmacy and dental school compete to be crowned Dr. Salk Hall. Not only is this event one of the most entertaining of the year, but it is also for a good cause. Each participant gets to choose a charity to donate the proceeds of the event to. The winner's charity will receive part of the money raised. Last year we were able to donate about \$1,000 to The Wounded Warrior Project, as well as about \$300 to Project Hope (LKS's National Philanthropy). Contestants will show us their best in categories such as professional wear, talent, and interview. If you are interested in being crowned this year's Dr. Salk Hall please email Reina Fink at [drsalkhall@gmail.com](mailto:drsalkhall@gmail.com) by **November 15<sup>th</sup>** (participants are not limited to men only, females welcome). The event will be held on **Thursday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>**. We look forward to hearing from you and hopefully pulling out another win for the pharmacy school this year!

## Updates from Kappa Psi (It's Almost Time for Pumpkin Pie!)

Kathryn Wersosky, Corresponding Secretary

The brothers of Kappa Psi had a great October, which included the regional meeting for the Mountain East Province in Buffalo, NY. Twenty-two Beta Kappa brothers attended, and we all had a great time winning raffle prizes, dancing to Michael Jackson at the 80's party, and visiting Niagra Falls, which is only a 25 minute drive from downtown Buffalo! The other Kappa Psi chapters in our region are D'Youville, Maryland, Maryland Eastern Shore, West Virginia, Duquesne, Howard, and Shenandoah. Also at the fall assembly, one of our own chapter's brothers, Karen Hoang (P2), was elected to the regional position of Parliamentarian. Beta Kappa is extremely proud of Karen and excited to have a collegiate brother represent on the province level!

Our pledging events have been a blast so far thanks to Katlyn Grossman and Joe Napora, who flawlessly planned our trip to Scarehouse and the lineage dinner at Spaghetti Warehouse! The brothers have enjoyed getting to know our pledges and are excited for the other activities down the road.

For the rest of the semester we will be continuing our service projects at Family House and planning more social events. The Patient Care Committee has done a wonderful job of designing a Generation Rx resident program for Nordenberg Hall, and so some brothers will be going to talk to freshmen there on **November 20<sup>th</sup>**. Thank you to the committee that made this project possible! We will also have our Christmas Party at the beginning of December where we sit on Santa's lap (AKA Regent, Adrienne Jantzi) and exchange Secret Santa gifts.

It's hard for us to believe how quickly these semesters begin to end, but we are starting to look forward the spring semester!



*Kappa Psi brothers and pledges clearly wide-eyed and terrified at Scarehouse!*



## PDC Brother Interview

Kevin Ordons and Kyle McGrath



In August 2013, brother Kyle McGrath attended Grand Council in Omaha, Nebraska. He represented the Mu chapter and was elected to regional correspondent of the Great Lakes Region. This region includes University of Michigan, Ohio State University, Purdue University, Wayne State University, Ferris State University, Ohio Northern University, Butler University, Duquesne University, University of NY at Buffalo, St. John Fisher College, D'Youville College, and University of Findlay. Therefore, his role seems overwhelming since he serves as a liaison between all these chapters and covers a huge geographical area. I interviewed him about his position.

*Q: Why did you decide run for this position?*

A: I went to PDC's Leadership development seminar in Lexington, KY the summer of 2012 and had a blast. At the APhA conference in LA, I had a meeting with a national officer and a historic PDC brother and they asked if I was going to Grand Council in Omaha. At the time, I was hesitant. The national officer said if I promised to attend he would cover my registration cost. Feeling overwhelmed with gratitude, I decided that I needed to give back. My passion for networking and meeting new people outside of Pitt along with this encounter convinced me to run.

*Q: How did you get elected to this position?*

A: I had to give a speech at the regional Caucus during PDC's national convention in Omaha. There was a brother from

Duquesne and a brother from buffalo running as well. Then the chapters had little meetings within their groups and each chapter and alumni chapter was allowed one vote. It was announced shortly after that I won!

*Q: What are your duties for this position?*

A: I act as a liaison for the national office to the chapters in the Great Lakes region as well as a liaison for the chapters to the national office. I contact each of my ten chapters in the region and have a monthly phone call with them to determine how they are doing. Also, I give them an update on what the monthly report entails. In addition, I am trying to plan a region wide olympics and formal to increase regional pride.

*Q: What effect does your position have on the Mu chapter? How does it help to move the chapter forward?*

A: Hopefully, being more in tune with the national office out of necessity for my position will help the chapter to move forward in gaining favor with the fraternity. Furthermore, it can help with developing procedures that will continue after we are gone. In addition, some of the unclear requirements of the past will make more sense, since I have to talk with the national office once a month.

*Q: What are your goals for your position this year? How do you plan to accomplish these goals?*

A: My main goal or platform was developing regional pride. Recently, PDC has become 8 regions and there was a shuffling of the regions. Thus, we include a combination of brand new chapters and chapters from other regions which causes us to feel disconnected. I really want the Great Lakes to come together and become a tight knit community. Through having a formal out at Buffalo and then planning a winter olympics in Feb or March, I'm hoping to bring a large majority of brothers together to bond and develop friendships.

*Q: What has been your favorite part so far? What upcoming events are you looking forward to?*

A: My favorite part so far has been getting to know my correspondents from each chapter. Each school has such an interesting history and group of people that make up their chapter. The PDC chapter here at mu is different from the chapter in Buffalo is different from the chapter at Purdue. It's great getting to know these individuals. Also, getting to go to St. Jude's, our national philanthropy, for a strategic leadership and planning meeting was awesome as well.

*Q: What is your least favorite part?*

A: So far nothing. It's not stressful, it's beneficial, and I get to meet a lot of amazing individuals. I hope Mu continues to do well in national's eyes and hopefully another brother will take my lead in the future.

## Gadget of the Month: AdhereTech smart pill bottle

Andrew Nguyen, Class of 2015



Medication adherence has consistently been a major area of concern for anyone in healthcare. Enter the AdhereTech smart pill bottle. This high tech pill bottle uses capacitance readings (same technology used in touchscreens) to determine how many pills are in a bottle. The information is sent to the cloud where the company supplements adherence information with specific medication information provided to them by the pharmacy. Using the supplemented information and ordered dosing regimens, the company can remind patients through a phone call, text message, or email to take their medications if the bottle does not sense that the patient has already done so. The use of this technology is rather interesting because it has potential to be a powerful aide in improving medication adherence; however, the technology is not without its drawbacks such as potential cost and breach of privacy. Imagine the implications for patient care if pharmacists and physicians could look in one location, which included all of the patient's medications and their adherence patterns.

## SSHP Updates

Allison Doherty

This semester has been very exciting for the Student Society of Health-System Pharmacists! We held our Clinical Skills Competition in October, with seventeen teams competing for an all-expenses-paid trip to the Midyear Clinical Meeting in Orlando, Florida. SSHP would like to congratulate the winners of the competition, Pamela Lyons and Evan Williams, for their excellent work, and wish them the best of luck in Orlando. SSHP also hosted the Residency Panel in the beginning of November, and we would like to thank the residents from various health-

system fields for joining us and providing such useful information about their residencies. A big thanks to all of the students who attended the event as well!

The Student Society of Health-System Pharmacists is looking forward to ending the semester with exciting events and activities that members and non-members alike will enjoy. We have been working on setting the foundations for a variety of projects that members can take part in. Topics include men's health, contraception, immunizations, and poison prevention. Project leaders will definitely be looking for help during both this semester and next, and these projects are a fantastic opportunity to get involved.

SSHP is thrilled to announce we will be holding a new event this semester that will be a must see for anyone interested in pediatrics. The **Pediatric Pharmacy Talk** will consist of several clinical pharmacists from the Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh discussing their role in pediatric care. This event will be held on **November 20<sup>th</sup>**, and coincides with the introduction of a pediatric ARCO beginning next year. Please remember to "like" SSHP on Facebook if you haven't done so already, and feel free to email us with any questions about projects or events at [pitt.sshp@gmail.com](mailto:pitt.sshp@gmail.com).

## SNPhA Fun in the Garden

Leah Williams



Have you rode past Centre and Herron Ave lately? Well, the now spotless beds are the accomplishment of SNPhA members' hard work on the morning of Saturday October 5<sup>th</sup>. That morning, 8 dedicated SNPhA members arrived at the garden site to participate in community gardening with the Western PA Conservancy Community Gardens and Greenspace Program. While they thought they would be planting flowers, the volunteer coordinator who met them there had different plans. Their task, instead, was to pull up all of the plants and remove the plastic underneath the beds, all while keeping the soil onto

the flowerbeds. Now, imagine doing this on a hillside! This proved to be hard work for the small team, but what better way to bond than through hard work? That morning turned out to be just that, as the team worked together to accomplish the seemingly impossible task.



The morning was also sprinkled with several surprises. As the team pulled up plants, they discovered red sweet potatoes growing from the pretty purple plants lining the hillside bed. Due to the rain the previous night, they were greeted with many worms, snails, and insects. They also discovered a rabbit hole and a small snake! Fears were conquered, laughs were shared, and the team diligently finished their task. At the result of the morning, 15 large bags of plants had been collected, to be used for plant compost for future gardens. The landscape was left looking beautiful, and the team celebrated all of their hard work with pizza afterward. It was a great workout and a great time. SNPhA is excited to return to this site for flower planting in the spring, especially now that all the tough work is done!

## Interested in editing the Pitt Capsule next year?

If you're creative, have new ideas, enjoy editing and would like to be more involved with ASP and the School of Pharmacy – consider applying to be the next ASP Historian and Pitt Capsule editor. Interviews aren't until the Spring, but now is the time to start thinking of new ideas. If you have any questions or would like to get involved with the Pitt Capsule this year, feel free to contact Nicole Romstadt at [pittcapsule@gmail.com](mailto:pittcapsule@gmail.com)!

## Interested in holding an ASP Executive Board position next school year?

ASP executive board positions are either appointed or elected annually in February. More information will be presented in the coming months, but it's never too early to start thinking about what position(s) you might be interested in!

Below is a list of officer positions that will be available in the 2014-2015 school year as well as current officers and contact information.

### President-Elect:

- Josh Niznik, Malloy Wiersch,  
[pitt.aphaasp.eboard@gmail.com](mailto:pitt.aphaasp.eboard@gmail.com)

### Patient Care Coordinator:

- Katherine McGuire, Meera Vachhani  
[asppatientcare@gmail.com](mailto:asppatientcare@gmail.com)

### IPSF Coordinator:

- Colleen Moroney  
[pittipsf@gmail.com](mailto:pittipsf@gmail.com)

### PPA/SPAN:

- Kyle McGrath  
[km1376@gmail.com](mailto:km1376@gmail.com)

### Social Chair:

- Jessica Lewis  
[jrl74@pitt.edu](mailto:jrl74@pitt.edu)

### Professional Council Chair Elect:

- Regina Ulis, Christina Xia  
[pitt.profcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:pitt.profcouncil@gmail.com)

### Interprofessional Committee/IHI representative:

- Cara Mazzarisi  
[cmm167@pitt.edu](mailto:cmm167@pitt.edu)

### Historian:

- Nicole Romstadt  
[PittCapsule@gmail.com](mailto:PittCapsule@gmail.com)

Over the next few months, take the initiative to get involved with the committees or projects, and get to know the current officers.