SNPhA Claims Awards, Scholarships and Finalist Spots at Nationals

UHCOP’s SNPhA Chapter won six out of eight possible national initiative awards for its local activities at the SNPhA/NPhA National Convention July 27-31 in New Orleans, La.

The chapter was honored for its activities supporting the Bridging the Gap, Fighting Diabetes, Mental Health, Power to End Stroke, Project Keepsake (CKD) and Remember the Ribbon (HIV/AIDS) initiatives. The chapter also was named as a top three finalist for the SNPhA/Rite Aid Chauncey I. Cooper Chapter Excellence Award in the Large Chapter category.

Pharm.D. students Bethany Bluitt and Connie Lau and Pharm.D. candidate Sarah Garcia-Plouch were awarded the Executive Leadership Endowed Scholarship, Dr. Bryan Donald Book Award, and Rite-Aid Endowed Scholarship, respectively.

Aparasu Receives $1.6M AHRQ Grant to Study DMA Discontinuation in Older MS Patients

Researchers at the recently established Center for Population Health Outcomes and Pharmaepidemiology Education and Research (P-HOPER Center) are examining when older patients with multiple sclerosis (MS) should stop taking their Disease Modifying Agent (DMA) medications.

The first-of-its-kind study will involve a longitudinal national cohort of older adults over 65 years of age with MS and DMA use based on 10-year Medicare claims data.

The results are expected to provide valuable real-world evidence regarding DMA deprescribing and associated outcomes with significant clinical and policy implications for improving prescribing practices and quality of care in older adults with MS.

The work is funded by a $1.6 million AHRQ grant awarded to Rajender R. Aparasu, Ph.D., FAPhA, Mustafa & Sanober Lokhandwala Endowed Professor and director of the P-HOPER Center.

ASP Chapter Members Among Winners at TPA Conference

APhA-ASP Chapter members earned multiple honors at the 2023 TPA Conference & Expo July 28-30 in Houston.

Pharm.D. candidate Haley Brusen secured first place in the Patient Counseling Competition, with students Hunter Adam and Sarah Davis among the finalists. The Pharm.D. student team of Hunter Adam, Tammie Lam, Annie Man and Tyler Trinh won first place in the Student Pharmacist Self-Care Championship.

Pharm.D. candidate Yashvi Patel won first place for her poster presentation, “Group-based trajectory modeling to identify patterns and predictors of adherence to oral endocrine therapies in underserved population of greater Houston.” As one of the top eight finalists in the AstraZeneca MSL Simulation competition, Patel also presented the results of the DESTINY-Breast03 study to the company’s US Oncology Medical Affairs team.

Garcia-Plouch was nominated for Rite Aid Community Leader of the Year and Chapter President of the Year. In addition, she was appointed 2023-24 National Region IV Facilitator for the SNPhA Board of Directors.

Patel and fellow Pharm.D. candidate Han Lieu placed second in the national Kroger Clinical Skills Competition.

Among the TPA Foundation scholarship recipients were Petar Jordanov – Larry “Neal” McClaugherthy Scholarship and Trinh – TPF General Scholarship. In addition, Man and Mattie Sullivan received Professional Recovery Network Scholarships to attend the 2023 APhA Institute on Substance Use Disorders.

Currently serving as chair of the TPA-ASP Policy Committee, Trinh was named chair-elect of the Student Board of Directors.

SNPhA Claims Awards, Scholarships and Finalist Spots at Nationals

UHCOP’s SNPhA Chapter won six out of eight possible national initiative awards for its local activities at the SNPhA/NPhA National Convention July 27-31 in New Orleans, La.

The chapter was honored for its activities supporting the Bridging the Gap, Fighting Diabetes, Mental Health, Power to End Stroke, Project Keepsake (CKD) and Remember the Ribbon (HIV/AIDS) initiatives. The chapter also was named as a top three finalist for the SNPhA/Rite Aid Chauncey I. Cooper Chapter Excellence Award in the Large Chapter category.

Pharm.D. students Bethany Bluitt and Connie Lau and Pharm.D. candidate Sarah Garcia-Plouch were awarded the Executive Leadership Endowed Scholarship, Dr. Bryan Donald Book Award, and Rite-Aid Endowed Scholarship, respectively.
Students Provide 2,500+ Screenings, Education Outreach at 1-Day Event

Over 50 Pharm.D. students completed more than 2,500 patient interactions with Houston’s resource-limited elementary school students and families Aug. 5 at the annual City of Houston Mayor’s Back 2 School Fest.

Vaccination records screenings helped City of Houston health care providers administer over 200 vaccinations. Nearly 150 attendees received pre-diabetes and/or blood pressure screenings, while nearly 2,000 adults and children were educated about such topics as medication safety, healthy lifestyle choices, opioid misuse/nalaxone training, and mental health.

The college has participated in the event every year since 2013, with the exception of two years during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. The event has become a university-wide event with UH-COP joined by nursing, medicine, optometry and other programs.

Gowri Kalyani, Pharm.D. student, was named as a Doctoral Scholar in UH’s NIH-funded program, Helping Everyone Achieve a LifeTime of Health Future Addiction Scientist Training (HEALTH-FAST) program.

Junghwa Park, Pharm.D., Ph.D. student, has earned an American College of Clinical Pharmacology (ACCP) Student & Trainee Abstract Travel Award to present her project, "Riluzole in Acute Spinal Cord Injury Study (RISCIS) with the Bayesian Approach to Overcome Small Sample Size and Inter-subject Variability” at the ACCP Annual Meeting Sept. 10-12 in Bellevue, Wash.

Simin Dokht Sadeghi, Pharm.D. (’23), received the Sandra Evans Webb Scholarship from TSHP’s Research & Education Foundation. The scholarship is named in honor of outstanding fellow alumna and former faculty member Sandra Evans Webb.

College News

College Honors Top Preceptors of 2022-23

Recently several pharmacy preceptors and organizations were recognized for their outstanding experiential training of Pharm.D. students during the 2022-23 academic year:

Ambulatory Care Preceptor of the Year – Hannia Qureshi, Pharm.D. (’10), manager, clinical pharmacy quality, Kelsey-Seybold Clinic

Community Preceptor of the Year – Ashley Dao, Pharm.D. (’15), manager/pharmacist-in-charge, Kelsey-Seybold Clinic - Main Campus

Faculty Preceptor of the Year – Ron Ozuna, Pharm.D., BCPS, UHCOP clinical assistant professor and assistant dean, UHCOP RGV Pharm.D. Satellite Program/pharmacy clinical coordinator, DHR Health

Health Systems Pharmacy of the Year – Harris Health System

Hospital Pharmacy Preceptor of the Year – Seena Korah, R.Ph., Memorial Hermann TIRR

Institutional Patient Care Preceptor of the Year – Jonathan Patterson, Pharm.D., BCCCP, clinical pharmacist-critical care, HCA Houston Healthcare-Clear Lake

Outpatient Pharmacy of the Year – Compounding Shop Pharmacy, Houston

Leslie Joseph, RPhT, and Sherrie Myers, RPhT, instructional lab managers, were elected Technician Co-chairs on the Gulf Coast Society of Health System Pharmacists Board of Directors.

Nearly 60 alumni and friends of UHCOP teed up to raise over $11,000 for student scholarships at the 2023 UHCOP Golf Classic June 2 at the Golf Club of Houston in Humble. The tournament has raised more than $200,000 since its inception in 1979 and spawned an endowed scholarship.

UHCOP’s Information Technology Office won the University-wide UH Staff Council 2022-2023 Team Excellence Recognition Award for its outstanding technical support for pharmacy students, faculty and staff.
Shane Tolleson, Pharm.D. ('14), clinical assistant professor and director of ambulatory APPEs, was honored with the 2021-23 Outstanding Advisor Award by the national Kappa Epsilon (KE) professional pharmacy fraternity at its 54th National Convention July 26-29 in Pittsburgh, Pa.

A member and officer of the organization during his UHCOP Pharm.D. education, Tolleson was nominated for his steadfast support of the organization and advocacy for students.

The Upsilon Chapter has the distinction of having both of its faculty co-advisors as recipients of the award, with faculty co-advisor Cathy Hatfield, Pharm.D., earning the honor for 2011-2013.

With research projects ranging from cancer and cardiovascular diseases to inflammation and infectious diseases, students and postdoctoral fellows showcased their work in UHCOP laboratories at the annual PPS Research Symposium Aug. 9-10 at UH.

Winning presenters and their respective projects from this year’s symposium were:

**Graduate Student Oral Presentation**

First place, Zicong Zheng for “Intestine-Specific Induction of UDP-Glucuronosyltransferases as a Potential Treatment Approach in Mitigating Irinotecan-Induced Delayed-Onset Diarrhea,” and second place, Kavya Mathukumalli for “TAK1 signaling in the regulation of Cancer Stem Cells and Rhabdomyosarcoma Growth”

**Graduate Student Poster Presentation**

First place (tie), Aniket Joshi for “IRE1α/XBP1 axis promotes myoblast fusion during skeletal muscle repair” and Wangjia Cao for “Deciphering genetic basis of Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome”

**Post-doctoral Fellow Oral Presentation**

First place, Lianjie Miao, Ph.D., for “Distinct populations of vascular smooth muscle and sinoatrial Progenitors are localized adjacent to pro-epicardium,” and second place, Meiricris Tomaz da Silva, Ph.D., for “Fn14 promotes regenerative myogenesis through augmenting myoblast fusion”

The event also featured talks by Scholar-in-Residence Patrick J. Sinko, Ph.D., R.Ph., FAAPS, FAAS, FCRS, Distinguished Professor in the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy and Parke-Davis Endowed Chair in Pharmaceutics and Drug Delivery at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

Diana S-L. Chow, Ph.D., FNNAI, John J. & Paula Lovoi Endowed Professor in Drug Discovery and Development, professor of pharmaceutics and director of the Institute for Drug Education & Research, recently was honored as the 2023 Pharmaceutical Sciences Alumni Agent of Change by her doctoral degree alma mater, the University of British Columbia.

Shantera Rayford Davis, Pharm.D., BCPS, clinical assistant professor, and collaborators David Wallace, Pharm.D., clinical associate professor, Joshua Wollen, Pharm.D., clinical assistant professor, and Dhara Surati, Pharm.D., BCPS, earned an honorable mention in the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy’s Lab Instructors Special Interest Group Laboratory Innovation and Teaching Excellence (LITE) Awards for their project, “Researching and Responding to Y-site Compatibility Questions from a Nurse,” which was presented at the AACP Annual Meeting July 22-25 in Aurora, Colo.

Jiukuan Hao, Ph.D., associate professor, and co-investigator Ming Hu, Ph.D., Diana S-L. Chow Endowed Professor, have received a two-year, $440,000 grant from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke for his project, “A Novel-designed sulfonylurea compound for Vascular Dementia Therapy.”

Bradley McConnell, Ph.D., FAHA, FCVS, professor, and co-investigator Xinli Liu, Ph.D., associate professor, have received a two-year, $200,000 grant from American Heart Association for his project, “Novel Reprogrammed Cardiac Conduction Cells to Stimulate Synchronized Cardiomyocyte Contractions.”

Three UHCOP faculty members were among UH’s Faculty Award honorees for 2022-23: Bradley McConnell, Ph.D., FAHA, FCVS — Outstanding Graduate Mentor Award; Meghna Trivedi, Pharm.D. (’03), Ph.D. (’04), BCOP — Undergraduate Research Mentoring Award; and Joshua Wollen, Pharm.D. — Teaching Excellence Award-Instructor/Clinical.

UHCOP’s 2022-23 Faculty Awards of Excellence recipients were: Doug Thornton, Pharm.D., Ph.D. — Research; Elisabeth Wang, Pharm.D., B CCP — Teaching; and Service — Louis Williams, Ph.D.
Recent Publications


Faculty Author

Current/Recent Student, Fellow/Resident, Postdoc/Staff