



UNIVERSITY of  
**HOUSTON**  
COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

Report to the  
Texas Pharmacy Congress  
Nov. 15, 2022

## Physician-Scientist Peter Hotez Presents Inaugural Lokhandwala Lecture

In his presentation at the University of Houston College of Pharmacy’s inaugural Lokhandwala Lecture & Research Convocation, renowned physician, scientist, author and vaccine advocate Peter J. Hotez, M.D., Ph.D., encouraged current and future health professionals to be more vocal in engaging with patients about the safety and science behind vaccines.

Hotez is dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine and Professor of Pediatrics and Molecular Virology & Microbiology at Baylor College of Medicine where he is also the co-director of the Texas Children’s Center for Vaccine Development (CVD) and Texas Children’s Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics.



As co-director of the Texas Children’s CVD, he leads a team and product development partnership working on new vaccines for hookworm infection, schistosomiasis, leishmaniasis, Chagas disease, and SARS/MERS/SARS-2 coronavirus diseases.

During his presentation titled “COVID-19 and Vaccines: Science vs. Anti-

science,” Hotez discussed his academic and research journey and his willingness to speak out on public health matters in the news and social media, despite facing insults and threats from the misinformed to fanatical conspiracy theorists.

The event also featured three-minute TED Talks by UHCOP graduate students **Kalyani A. Kulkarni, Tarilate Temedie Asogwu, Prachet Bhatt, Sayantap Datta** and **Jieni Li** on their current research.

The convocation and lecture series honors UHCOP Professor Emeritus and former dean **Mustafa F. Lokhandwala, Ph.D., FAHA, FASN**, for his commitment to advancing the college’s academic and research programs.

## ACCP Bestows Miller Award to Garey

Kevin W. Garey, Pharm.D., M.S., FASHP, FIDSA, FCCP, Robert L. Boblitt Endowed Professor of Drug Discovery, received the 2022 Russell R. Miller Award from the American College of Clinical Pharmacy at the 2022 ACCP Global Conference on Clinical Pharmacy Oct. 15-18 in San Francisco.



The award recognizes an ACCP member who has made outstanding contributions to the professional literature of clinical pharmacy.

With a body of work that exceeds 250 peer-reviewed journal articles, several book chapters and 200-plus presentations, Garey has twice won both the Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists’ Impact Paper in Infectious Diseases Pharmacotherapy Award and the Top 10 Paper in Mycology Award from the Interscience Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy, as well as earning the ASHP Drug Therapy Research Award and the Best Review Paper from the *Journal of Hospital Infection*.

Recognized as an ACCP Fellow at the organization’s 2021 meeting, he has been a member of ACCP since 1996 and served as a journal reviewer for its publication *Pharmacotherapy* since 2006.

## Dagher Wins Abstract Award at AAPS PharmSci 360

Fatima Dagher, a Ph.D. student in the Pharmaceutical Sciences-Pharmaceutics Concentration program, was recognized with a 2022 Best Abstract Award at the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists’ PharmSci 360 meeting Oct. 16-19 in Boston.

Dagher’s abstract, “Pharmacodynamic Assessments of Paclitaxel in Combination with Calcipotriol in Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinoma (PDAC),” was one of 10 abstracts selected for the award among more than 900 project submitted to the meeting.



Fatima Dagher, center, is congratulated by coauthors Victor Lincha, Ph.D. alumnus, and Diana S-L. Chow, faculty advisor.

# SNPhA Chapter Earns Multiple Honors at National Meeting

The UHCOP Chapter of the Student National Pharmaceutical Association locked up several national scholarships and awards at the 2022 SNPhA National Conference in Atlanta, Ga.

The chapter brought home five out of eight possible awards for their work implementing local projects based on the SNPhA national initiatives **Bridging the Gap, Fighting Diabetes, Mental Health, Power to End Stroke** and **Project Keepsake**.

Pharm.D. candidates **Lauren Lee** and **Noemie Senawong** and student **Josiah Willingham** – working as the “Lung Defenders” – won first place and a \$10,000 scholarship in the Walmart Prescription for Service competition. The UHCOP team was one of three finalists invited to present their projects nationally after earning \$2,500



projects grants at the regional level.

Pharm.D. students **Andrew Jiang** and **Trina Mercado** finished second in the Kroger Clinical Skills Competition, while Pharm.D. candidate **Rhedda Onihana** took second place in the AstraZeneca Medical Science Liaison Competition.

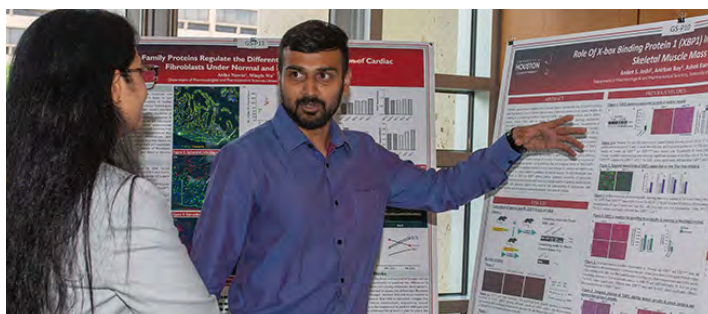
In addition, Onihana and fellow student **Yashvi Patel** teamed with Texas Southern University Pharm.D. students Chidindu (Chiddy) Aderibigbe and Janai Minga to take

third place in the LEAP at Lilly® Business Competition.

Senawong and fellow Pharm.D. candidate **Andrew Doan** earned the National Pharmaceutical Association Foundation’s Dr. Barry Bleidt Endowed Scholarship and the Walmart Health and Wellness Endowed Scholarship, respectively.

In addition to the chapter being recognized for hosting a SNPhA regional conference in the spring, UHCOP Associate Professor and Chapter Advisor **Louis Williams, Ph.D.**, was presented with the Advisor of the Year Regions III, IV & V Conference Award.

Overall, the chapter was honored as the runner-up finalist in the Large Chapter category for the SNPhA/Rite Aid Chauncey I. Cooper Chapter Excellence Award (aka “chapter of the year”).



Undergraduate and graduate students as well as postdoctoral associates from across UH shared their latest research findings at the 2022 PPS Research Symposium hosted Aug. 10-11 by UHCOP’s Department of Pharmacological and Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Awards were bestowed on the highest scoring presentations:

**Graduate Student Poster** — First Place to **Kavya Mathukumalli** for “Targeting TAK1 signaling in Rhabdomyosarcoma,” and Second Place to **Jacob McPherson** for “Functional and Metagenomic Evaluation of Ibezapolstat for Early Evaluation of Anti-Recurrence Effects in *Clostridioides difficile* Infection.”

**Graduate Student Oral** — First Place to **Mehrdad Rajaei** for “ $\beta$ 2AR-Gas and  $\beta$ 2AR- $\beta$ arr2 Fusion Proteins for Studying  $\beta$ 2AR Biased Signaling in Heart Failure,” and Second Place to **Brianna Eales** for “Impact of an iron chelator on in vitro and in vivo growth of *A. baumannii*.”

**Postdoctoral Oral** — First Place to **Lianjie Miao, Ph.D.**, for “Tunneling Nanotube-Like structures regulate distant cellular interactions during heart formation,” and Second Place to **Arfaxad Reyes-Alcarez, Ph.D.**, for “A Small Molecule that in vitro Neutralizes Infection of SARS-CoV-2 and its most Infectious Variants, Delta, and Omicron.”

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Pharm.D. student **Kayla Valigura** won the 2022 PCCA ISTX Scholarship Contest and presented her response to the contest topic “How will you be the pharmacist that changes our compounding pharmacy profession for the better?” during PCCA’s International Seminar Oct. 26-29 in Houston. She also has been invited to attend PCCA’s ACT Legislative Conference 2023 in Washington, D.C.

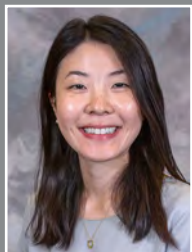
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Pharm.D. student **May Vorarath** has been recognized as an Albert Schweitzer Fellow for Life after a year of leading weekly beading sessions aimed at improving mental health and creative expression among residents at the nonprofit New Hope Housing-Perry. Started by a UHCOP student in 2017, “Healthy Habits for Idle Hands” is the longest-running program at the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship Houston-Galveston.

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Pharm.D. students **Hayden Huynh, Jennifer Ng** and **An Tran** recently were awarded scholarships from the Vietnamese American Pharmacists Association (VAPhA).

UHCOP has welcomed **Jinhee Jo**, Pharm.D., BCIDP, research assistant professor, and **Riyasat Ali**, Ph.D., research assistant professor.



Jo

After receiving her Pharm.D. at the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Pharmacy, Jo completed a PGY-1 residency at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center.

Jo recently completed the three-year Infectious Diseases Pharmacy Fellowship program between UHCOP and fellow Texas Medical Center institution CHI St. Luke's Health-Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center.

Jo has received consecutive IDWeek Trainee travel awards to present her research at the 2022 and 2021 IDWeek meetings.

Jo's research focuses on host microbiome colonization resistance against bacterial pathogens, including *C. difficile* and other multidrug resistant organisms, and antimicrobial resistance.



Ali

Ali joined UHCOP in 2018 as a research associate under Tahir Hussain, Ph.D., FAHA, Joseph P. and Shirley Shipman Buckley Endowed Professor and associate dean for Research and Graduate Programs.

As a member of Hussain's lab, Ali has been investigating the renoprotective roles of the AT2 receptor and its correlation with immune cell infiltration in kidney diseases. Most recently, Ali

has shown that AT2R activation reduces the kidney infiltrating immune cells, thereby limiting post-IR kidney injury, and enhancing the tissue repair.

Until 2018, Ali served as a postdoctoral fellow and research associate at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York. Ali completed his Ph.D. degree in biochemistry/immunology at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi.

Five faculty members have been promoted: **Susan Abughosh**, Ph.D., professor, **Greg Cuny**, Ph.D., professor, **Aditi Marwaha**, Ph.D., instructional associate professor, **Douglas Thornton**, Pharm.D., Ph.D., associate professor with tenure, and **Tyler Varisco**, Pharm.D., Ph.D., assistant professor. In addition, Cuny and **Kevin W. Garey**, Pharm.D., M.S., FASHP, FIDSA, FCCP, have been appointed Joseph P. & Shirley Shipman Buckley Endowed Professor and Robert L. Boblitt Sr. Endowed Professor, respectively.

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**Krishna Boini**, Ph.D., assistant professor, has received a \$511,151 subcontract from Arkansas Colleges of Health Education for the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute-funded project, "Role of Trimethylamine-N-oxide in endothelial dysfunction."

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**Diana S-L. Chow**, Ph.D., FNAI, John J. & Paula Lovoi Endowed Professor of Drug Discovery and Development, was honored with the Ohio State University's 2022 Jack L. Beal Postbaccalaureate Distinguished Alumni Award in October and the American College of Clinical Pharmacology's "Excellence in Achievement" Program in August. Chow received a \$627,496 subcontract from UT MD Anderson Cancer Center for the National Cancer Institute-funded project, "Pre-IND Development of Polymeric Micelles with Dual Drug Payloads for HCC Therapy."

**World's Top  
2%  
Most-Cited**

- Rajender Aparasu
- Richard Bond
- Gregory Cuny
- Kevin Garey
- Ming Hu
- Mustafa Lokhandwala
- Ruiwen Zhang

Source: <https://elsevier.digitalcommonsdata.com/datasets/btchxktzyw>

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**Austin De La Cruz**, Pharm.D., BCPP, clinical assistant professor, was recently recognized by the American College of Clinical Pharmacy for his outstanding contributions as a reviewer for the Pharmacotherapy Self-Assessment Program.

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**Xinli Liu**, Ph.D., associate professor, has received a \$208,875 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for her project, "Oral Toxicity Assessment of PAH Mixtures using an in Vitro 3D Cell Culture Bioreactor Mimicking the IN VIVO Intestinal Tract Environment."

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**Alexander Statsyuk**, Ph.D., assistant professor, has received a \$372,100 subcontract from the University of Arizona for the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute funded-project, "Anaplerotic Reprogramming of Endothelial Cells in Pulmonary Hypertension."

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**Mingfu Wu**, Ph.D., associate professor, has received a \$124,000 subcontract from the University of Washington for the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute-funded project, "Regulation and function of mitochondrial calcium uniporter in the heart."

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## Recent Publications

Fusion of the  $\beta_2$ -adrenergic receptor with either *G $\alpha$ s* or  $\beta$ arrestin-2 produces constitutive signaling by each pathway and induces gain-of-function in BEAS-2B cells. **Emilio Y. Lucero-Garcia Rojas; Arfaxad Reyes-Alcaraz; Kehe Ruan; Bradley K. McConnell; Richard A. Bond.** FASEB BioAdvances. 2022; 00: 1-17. doi: 10.1096/fba.2022-00038

Health-related quality of life of patients with multiple sclerosis: Analysis of ten years of national data. **Li J, Zakeri M, Hutton GJ, Aparasu RR.** Mult Scler Relat Disord. 2022 Oct;66:104019. doi: 10.1016/j.msard.2022.104019. Epub 2022 Jul 5. PMID: 35839614

Association Between Initial Opioid Prescription Duration and 30-Day Risk of Receiving Repeat Opioid Among Children. **Nair AA, Placencia JL, Farber HJ, Aparasu RR, Johnson M, Chen H.** Acad Pediatr. 2022 Jul 18:S1876-2859(22)00299-6. doi: 10.1016/j.acap.2022.06.006. Online ahead of print. PMID: 35863737

A surrogate marker for very early-stage tau pathology is detectable by molecular magnetic resonance imaging. Parekh P, Mu Q, Badachhane A, Bhavane R, Srivastava M, Devkota L, Sun X, Bhandari P, **Eriksen JL, Tanifum E, Ghaghada K, Annapragada A.** Theranostics. 2022 Jul 18;12(12):5504-5521. doi: 10.7150/thno.72258. eCollection 2022. PMID: 35910789

Ablation of Siglec-E augments brain inflammation and ischemic injury. Li L, Chen Y, Sluter MN, Hou R, **Hao J, Wu Y, Chen GY, Yu Y, Jiang J.** J Neuroinflammation. 2022 Jul 20;19(1):191. doi: 10.1186/s12974-022-02556-1. PMID: 35858866

Structural studies of antitumor compounds that target the RING domain of MDM2. Terrell JR, Tang S, Faniyi OO, Jeong IH, Yin J, Nijampatnam B, Velu SE, **Wang W, Zhang R, Luo M.** Protein Sci. 2022 Aug;31(8):e4367. doi: 10.1002/pro.4367. PMID: 35900024

Appropriate cleaning reduces potential risk of spore transmission from patients with Clostridioides difficile infection treated in outpatient infusion centers. Schroeder CP, Hengel RL, Nathan RV, Ritter TE, Obi EN, **Lancaster C, Van Anglen LJ, Garey KW.** Anaerobe. 2022 Oct;77:102617. doi: 10.1016/j.anaerobe.2022.102617. Epub 2022 Aug 6. PMID: 35940371

Dose-dependent relation between metformin and the risk of hormone receptor-positive, her2-negative breast cancer among postmenopausal women with type-2 diabetes. **Chikermane SG, Sharma M, Abughosh SM, Aparasu RR, Trivedi MV, Johnson ML.** Breast Cancer Res Treat. 2022 Oct;195(3):421-430. doi: 10.1007/s10549-022-06706-0. Epub 2022 Aug 15. PMID: 35969285

Development of the invasive candidiasis discharge [I Can discharge] model: a mixed methods analysis. **Jo J, Tran TT, Beyda ND, Simmons D, Hendrickson JA, Almutairi MS, Alnezary FS, Gonzales-Luna AJ, Septimus EJ, Garey KW.** Eur J Clin Microbiol Infect Dis. 2022 Oct;41(10):1207-1213. doi: 10.1007/s10096-022-04473-w. Epub 2022 Aug 25. PMID: 36002777

Optimal ceftazidime/avibactam dosing exposure against KPC-producing Klebsiella pneumoniae. **Tam VH, Merlau PR, Hudson CS, Kline EG, Eales BM, Smith J, Sofjan AK, Shields RK.** J Antimicrob Chemother. 2022 Aug 29;dkac294. doi: 10.1093/jac/dkac294. Online ahead of print. PMID: 36031868

Optimization of a cell surface vimentin binding peptoid to extract antagonist effect on lung cancer cells. **Zhang H, Gomika Udugamasooriya D.** Bioorg Chem. 2022 Sep 6;129:106113. doi: 10.1016/j.bioorg.2022.106113. Online ahead of print. PMID: 36108586

Significant Publications on Infectious Diseases Pharmacotherapy in 2021. Nguyen N, Chua HC, Drake T, **Jo J, Stramel SA, Vuong NN, Gonzales-Luna AJ, Olson K,** On Behalf Of The Houston Infectious Diseases Network. J Pharm Pract. 2022 Sep 19:8971900221128334. doi: 10.1177/08971900221128334. Online ahead of print. PMID: 36122416

Intention to get naloxone among patients prescribed opioids for chronic pain. **Huang Y, Lyu N, Gohil S, Bapat S, Essien EJ, Thornton JD.** Harm Reduct J. 2022 Sep 22;19(1):104. doi: 10.1186/s12954-022-00687-5. PMID: 36138420

The fibrotic niche impairs satellite cell function and muscle regeneration in mouse models of Marfan syndrome. **Tomaz da Silva M, Santos AR, Koike TE, Nascimento TL, Rozanski A, Bosnakovski D, Pereira LV, Kumar A, Kyba M, Miyabara EH.** Acta Physiol (Oxf). 2022 Sep 27:e13889. doi: 10.1111/apha.13889. Online ahead of print. PMID: 36164969

Black salve: risky escharotic. **Rosario N, Castro JF.** Scars Burn Heal. 2022 Sep 21;8:20595131221122376. doi: 10.1177/20595131221122376. eCollection 2022 Jan-Dec. PMID: 36157312

The Angiotensin AT2 Receptor: From a Binding Site to a Novel Therapeutic Target. Steckelings UM, Widdop RE, Sturrock ED, Lubbe L, **Hussain T, Kaschina E, Unger T, Hallberg A, Carey RM, Summers C.** Pharmacol Rev. 2022 Oct;74(4):1051-1135. doi: 10.1124/pharmrev.120.000281. PMID: 36180112

Clinical efficacy and safety of cannabidiol for pediatric refractory epilepsy indications: A systematic review and meta-analysis. **Talwar A, Estes E, Aparasu R, Reddy DS.** Exp Neurol. 2022 Oct 4;359:114238. doi: 10.1016/j.expneurol.2022.114238. Online ahead of print. PMID: 36206805

Patient-Reported Barriers to Adherence Among ACEI/ARB Users from a Motivational Interviewing Telephonic Intervention. **Majd Z, Mohan A, Johnson ML, Essien EJ, Barner JC, Serna O, Gallardo E, Fleming ML, Ordonez N, Holstad MM, Abughosh SM.** Patient Prefer Adherence. 2022 Oct 4;16:2739-2748. doi: 10.2147/PPA.S360461. eCollection 2022. PMID: 36217375

Medication Complexity Among Older Adults with HF: How Can We Assess Better? Kwak MJ, Cheng M, Goyal P, Kim DH, Hummel SL, Dhoble A, Deshmukh A, **Aparasu R, Holmes HM.** Drugs Aging. 2022 Oct 13. doi: 10.1007/s40266-022-00979-2. Online ahead of print. PMID: 36227408

Endothelial Acid Sphingomyelinase Promotes NLRP3 Inflammasome and Neointima Formation during Hypercholesterolemia. Yuan X, Bhat OM, Zou Y, **Li X, Zhang Y, Li PL.** J Lipid Res. 2022 Oct 14:100298. doi: 10.1016/j.jlr.2022.100298. Online ahead of print. PMID: 36252682

Patterns of Lipid Lowering Therapy Use Among Older Adults in a Managed Care Advantage Plan in the United States. **Vadhariya A, Sharma M, Abughosh SM, Birtcher KK, Chen H, Mohan A, Johnson ML.** J Pharm Pract. 2022 Oct 21:8971900221128850. doi: 10.1177/08971900221128850. Online ahead of print. PMID: 36268844

Review of Best Practices for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committees Within Colleges of Pharmacy. Kolluru S, **Wanat MA, Ficzer CH, Akiyode O, Haber SL, Hayastshahi A, Caldwell D, Raman-Wilms L, Edwards KL.** Am J Pharm Educ. 2022 Oct 21:9043. doi: 10.5688/ajpe9043. Online ahead of print. PMID: 36270665