



Report to the Texas Pharmacy Congress — November 13-14, 2019

UH SCCP NAMED OUTSTANDING STUDENT CHAPTER FOR 2ND YEAR

The UH College of Pharmacy chapter of the Student College of Clinical Pharmacy (SCCP) claimed the first-ever back-to-back Outstanding Student Chapter awards from the American College of Clinical Pharmacy at the 2019 ACCP Annual Meeting Oct. 26-29 in New York, N.Y.

The chapter served more than 1,000 patients, providing free blood glucose and blood pressure screenings, body mass index (BMI) readings, and diabetic foot exams; seasonal flu immunizations; and medication reviews and counseling on topics ranging from diabetes to alcohol and smoking cessation.

The chapter also hosted a research mentorship program to match students interested in



undertaking a research project with faculty members, as well as workshops and seminars focused on such topics as research posters, clinical skills development, infectious diseases,

LGBTQIA patients, organ donation, and the role of technology to boost medication adherence.

In addition, SCCP had dozens of students participating in the local equivalents of national competitions in clinical pharmacy and research.

Another focus of the chapter was continuing its efforts on naloxone education to raise awareness of the opioid misuse epidemic as well as use of the overdose reversal medication. SCCP members provided nearly 50 presentations to more than 1,500 fellow students across a range of majors, campus police and student housing personnel from UH and other institutions as well as area social service organizations.

PHARM.D STUDENT WINS AWARD, CE PRESENTATION INVITE FOR PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGY DRUG PROJECT

Pharm.D. student Kristen Underbrink's volunteer work to improve communication with patients and caregivers about potential side effects from chemotherapeutics and other treatment plan drugs received national recognition by the Children's Oncology Group (COG) at the organization's Annual Meeting Sept. 10-13 in Atlanta, Ga.



Underbrink was one of two finalists invited to present their projects as part of a pharmacy continuing education session at the meeting, with Underbrink's being named the Best Pharmacy Abstract in Pediatric Oncology following the sessions. Underbrink's work, completed as a volunteer during the summer, involved collaborating with clinical staff at Texas Children's Cancer and Hematology Centers (TXCH) and faculty members in the

Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) Department of Pediatrics.

The sheets, which are based on a Cancer Therapy Evaluation Program (CTEP) template of the National Cancer Institute, are intended to help in the decision-making process as well as both prepare patients and caregivers of what to expect in terms of the occurrence and severity of side effects from the drugs.



PHARMACOLOGY STUDENT EARNS NIH FELLOWSHIP AWARD FOR OBESITY STUDY

Pharmacology Ph.D. student Elizabeth Gray has earned a three-year, \$102,558 F31 Predoctoral Individual National Research Service Award from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases for her investigation into a potential new combinatory therapeutic approach to protect the kidney from salt-induced hypertension in obesity.

Working with Joseph and Shirley Shipman Buckley Endowed Professor Tahir Hussain, Ph.D., Gray is investigating a neprilysin inhibitor-angiotensin 2 receptor agonist combination to increase Ang-(1-7) and attenuate Ang II, by increasing angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 activity and expression. The project will also involve development of a new LC-MS/MS method through collaboration with UHCOP Professor Ming Hu, Ph.D., to quantify the Ang peptides.

PHARMD/PHD AMONG AACP EXPRESS SCRIPTS SCHOLARS

The American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy named UH College of Pharmacy Pharm.D./Ph.D. dual-degree candidate Elise M. Waldron-Young as a 2019 Express Scripts Scholar at the AACP Annual Meeting.

The program provides four \$10,000 scholarships to enrolled dual-degree students to help offset tuition, fees, books or cost of attendance.

“I had a professor say, ‘The fight against resistant pathogens is a war, and not a battle.’ One way we fight this war is in the lab – developing unique, potent, safer anti-infectants,” Waldron-Young said. “Over the last half-decade, I have pursued my PharmD./Ph.D.,

to play my role in this war. With my Ph.D. in pharmacology with an emphasis in medicinal chemistry, I am learning multiple levels of drug development, from chemistry to pharmaceuticals to pharmacology.

“With this diverse training, I intend to apply my clinical and preclinical knowledge into a consulting role and develop more efficacious medical products.”

Waldron-Young’s dissertation project is “Synthesizing selective compounds to target *Cryptosporidium*,” under the supervision of Greg D. Cuny, Ph.D., UHCOP associate professor of Medicinal Chemistry.

“AACP received a record number of applications for the program this year, which is indicative of the growing popularity of dual-degree programs as more student pharmacists seek to align their education with their professional goals and interests,” said Libby J. Ross, senior director of student affairs with AACP.



HOUSTON MAYOR'S BACK 2 SCHOOL FEST



300+ BLOOD PRESSURE & BLOOD GLUCOSE SCREENINGS

200+ IMMUNIZATION RECORD SCREENINGS

3,200+ HEALTH & WELLNESS EDUCATION



Faculty members **Susan A. Abughosh**, Ph.D., **Kim K. Birtcher**, Pharm.D., M.S., BCPS (AQ Cardiology), CDE, FNLA, and **Samina Salim**, Ph.D., have been honored with the Rho Chi Society Beta Omicron Chapter’s 2018-19 Teaching Excellence Awards.

Rajender R. Aparasu, Ph.D., FAPhA, professor, has been awarded a one-year, \$260,100 grant from Astellas Pharma Inc. for the project, “Anticholinergic burden among overactive bladder patients in nursing homes.” A second edition of “Principles of Research Design and Drug Literature Evaluation,” which was co-edited and co-written by Aparasu, has been released by its new publisher, McGraw-Hill Education. Aparasu recently returned from a six-week assignment at Atma Jaya Catholic University in Jakarta, Indonesia, as part of the Fulbright Specialist Program.

Hua Chen, Ph.D., M.D., assistant professor, has received a two-year, \$99,783 grant from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) for the project, “Risk of Acute Asthma Associated with the Pediatric Use of Opioids.”

Julianna Fernandez, Pharm.D., BCPS, BCGP, clinical associate professor, has been elected Chair-elect of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy Geriatrics Practice and Research Network.

Tahir Hussain, Ph.D., Joseph P. and Shirley S. Buckley Endowed Professor of Drug Discovery, has been appointed associate dean for Research and Graduate Programs.

Sai S. Koka, Ph.D., R.Ph., research assistant professor, has been award-

ed a \$382,500 grant from National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute for her project, “Gutmicrobial Metabolite Trimethylamine-N-Oxide and Endothelial Inflammation Signaling in Cardiovascular Injury.”

Randall A. Prince, Pharm.D., Ph.D. (Hon.), FCCP, FCP, FISDA, professor emeritus, has been elected Fellow of the Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists (SIDP).

Samina Salim, Ph.D., associate professor, has been appointed assistant chair of the Department of Pharmacological and Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Jeff T. Sherer, Pharm.D., MPH, BCPS, CGP, has been promoted to Clinical Professor, and **Dhara N. Surati**, Pharm.D., BCPS, has been promoted to Clinical Associate Professor.

Elisabeth M. Sulaica, Pharm.D., has earned the Board Certified Cardiology Pharmacist (BCOP) from the Board of Pharmacy Specialties.

Douglas Thornton, Ph.D., Pharm.D., BCPS, assistant professor and co-director of The PREMIER Center, has received a \$170,442 grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse for his project, “Chronic Opioid Therapy-Associated Productivity Losses in U.S. Working Older Adults.”

Matthew Wanat, Pharm.D., BCPS, BCCCP, FCCM, has been appointed to the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy’s *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education* editorial board.

DAVIS, GEE AND WOLLEN JOIN PHARMACY PRACTICE FACULTY

UH College of Pharmacy recently welcomed three new Pharmacy Practice and Translational Research faculty members to the college.

Following her graduation from UHCOP, alumna and Clinical Assistant Professor **Shanteria Rayford Davis**, Pharm.D., BCPS, completed a PGY1 residency at Harris Health System.

She subsequently held clinical pharmacy positions at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center in Pittsburgh, Pa., Memorial Hermann The Woodlands Medical Center, and CHI St. Luke's Health-Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center as well as serving as an assistant professor and director of Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experiences (IPPE) at Texas Southern University College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences. Davis most recently served as a clinical pharmacy manager at Kingwood Medical Center.

In addition to her experience in Pharm.D. curricular/experiential program development, Davis also has helped to establish and manage a variety of clinical initiatives – such as a discharge medication counseling service and an antimicrobial stewardship program – during her career.

Fellow UHCOP graduate and Clinical Assistant Professor **Jodie S. Gee**, Pharm.D., BCACP, CDE, joined the college from Harris Health System, where she served as an ambulatory care clinical pharmacy specialist at the county health system's Smith Clinic. Gee completed a PGY1 residency at Harris Health and a PGY2 ambulatory care specialty residency at Parkland Health and Hospital System in Dallas.



DAVIS



GEE



WOLLEN

She then held faculty appointments at The University of Texas College of Pharmacy at Austin and University of Texas Health Science Center-San Antonio School of Medicine's Pharmacotherapy Education and Research Center, with a clinical practice site at MedFirst Northeast Clinic in San Antonio.

Gee has been recognized for her research presentations at conferences of the Texas Society of Health-System Pharmacists and the American Diabetes Association. She also has been honored for student/resident preceptorship excellence by UHCOP, Baptist Health System and UT College of Pharmacy as well as with the "Pharmacist of the Quarter" award and twice as a "Service First Hero" by Harris Health. Gee will serve as an ambulatory care clinical pharmacist and preceptor at Vecino's Denver Harbor Family Clinic.

Clinical Assistant Professor **Joshua Wollen**, Pharm.D., is a graduate of Creighton University School of Pharmacy and Health Professions in Omaha, Neb. After graduation, Wollen worked four years in community pharmacy, where he was recognized as the Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experiences Community Preceptor of the Year by his alma mater.

Wollen recently completed a one-year Academic Pharmacy Fellowship program at UHCOP after four years in community pharmacy. During his fellowship, he undertook a variety of classroom and skill-development teaching, academic research/administrative, and student precepting responsibilities as the college implemented a new Pharm.D. curriculum.

UHCOP WELCOMES HAO, KUMAR TO DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACOLOGICAL & PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES

UHCOP recently welcomed two National Institutes of Health-funded researchers to the Department of Pharmacological and Pharmaceutical Sciences: **Jiukuan Hao**, Ph.D., M.D., associate professor of Pharmaceutics, and **Ashok Kumar**, Ph.D., Else and Philip Hargrove Endowed Professor of Drug Discovery, professor of Pharmacology, and PPS department chair.

Hao earned his M.D. from China Medical University in China and his Ph.D. in Pharmaceutical Sciences from Texas Tech University. He joins the college from the University of Cincinnati, where started as an assistant professor in 2010, was twice awarded the Research Excellence Award from the UC's James L. Winkle College of Pharmacy, and earned the university's Faculty Excellence Award.

Hao currently is working on a \$1.76 million project, "Targeting the Hippo signaling at the Blood-Brain Barrier for Therapy of Ischemic Stroke," supported by the National Institute for Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) through 2023. In this current phase of his research, Hao is investigating the component activators of a signaling pathway as novel drug target for repairing the blood-brain barrier and limiting ischemic stroke-induced damage to the neurological system.

His previous work has been funded by the American Heart Association, the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, Maine Cancer Foundation, and the NINDS. Hao's research has been published in such journals as *Neuroscience*, *Molecular Therapy - Nucleic Acids*, *Frontiers in Neuroscience*, *Brain Research* and *Neuroscience Letters*.



HAO



KUMAR

Kumar joins the college from the University of Louisville School of Medicine in Louisville, Ky., where he served as a Distinguished University Scholar and Professor.

He has held postdoctoral positions at Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) and The University of Texas-MD Anderson Cancer Center, as well as faculty/research positions at BCM, Jerry L. Pettis Memorial Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and Loma Linda University School of Medicine.

He earned his Ph.D. in Biochemistry from the University of Delhi in India and an M.S. in Computer Science from the University of Houston-Clear Lake.

Kumar's research is focused on understanding the signaling mechanisms regulating skeletal muscle development, growth, regeneration and wasting; skeletal muscle stem cell homeostasis and function; and pathophysiological mechanisms in muscular dystrophy and cardiomyopathy. He is working on two National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases grant projects: the \$3.11 million project, "TAK1 Signaling in Skeletal Muscle," through 2023, and the \$1.68 million project, "MYD88 Signaling in Mammalian Myoblast Fusion," through 2020.

Kumar has authored or coauthored nearly 100 articles in such journals as *Nature Communications*, *Science Signaling*, *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, *Journal of Cell Biology*, *eLife*, *FASEB Journal*, *Molecular and Cellular Biology*, *Human Molecular Genetics*, *Journal of Biological Chemistry*, and *Autophagy*. He currently serves as an associate editor for *Frontiers in Cell and Development Biology* as well as an academic editor for *PLoS One*.

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