

# SHOWGLOBE

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF PHARMACY | WINTER 2017

## Meet Our New Dean

Dr. Bill Petros, pictured here with his wife Karen, is the first alumnus to serve as the WVU School of Pharmacy's dean.



 West Virginia University

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# A Message From the Dean

Sixteen years ago, I received an unexpected call from Dr. Eddie Reed, a prominent oncologist who was the newly appointed director of the WVU Cancer Center. He wanted me to come home to West Virginia to help build infrastructure and expertise to provide clinical trials for West Virginians who had to travel out-of-state for cancer treatments. Both Karen (BS Pharmacy Class of '83/ICU Clinical Pharmacy Specialist) and I (BS Pharmacy Class of '83/Clinical Pharmacology Cancer Researcher) had excellent positions and a comfortable life with our young family in Durham, NC. We were certainly not in the job market, but as we considered our potential impact in West Virginia, and more importantly, what WVU had done to propel our careers, it all started to make sense. Both of us were first-generation college graduates and left the state with what we found to be unbelievable skills that set the stage for professional growth beyond our imaginations.

Fast-forward 14 years: a successful clinical trials infrastructure built and operational, when the Vice President for WVU Health Sciences, Dr. Clay Marsh, presented me with another unexpected challenge – to be the interim director of the WVU Cancer Institute. I accepted, and it took nearly two years to find the right physician director. In those two years, we made fantastic progress and I grew as a leader. One important thing that I learned was how personally rewarding leadership can be when you support others in a quest to do their best. I inherited a service leadership style from both Drs. Reed and Marsh, who espoused to such roles as they helped the Health Sciences Center transform the way we work, teach and care.

Throughout our 104-year-old history, the School of Pharmacy has produced many examples of incredible leaders, some of whom



▲ Dean Petros and Dr. Sidney Rosenbluth (SOP Dean 1981-1994)

are obvious, as they have made a national impact. Others have had more of a local influence and, arguably an impact on thousands of individual patients or research that has potential to touch tens of millions of lives.

As students, who amongst us realistically thought as we walked through the Health Sciences Center Pylons that we would have such opportunities? Over 30 years ago, I would saunter through the Pylons every morning, wondering how Drs. Ma, Lim, Malanga, Miller, O'Donnell, Stevenson, Covington, Jackowitz, Ponte, Abate, etc. would challenge me that day.

I still make it a point to walk through those same Pylons, but now my thoughts are focused on what I am going to do today to make a difference for our students, faculty, staff and the people we serve. As pharmacists, leaders, teachers and researchers, I am sure many of you have the same calling.

This edition of the Showglobe features stories of the various ways alumni, students and faculty are giving back to the profession we love. As your dean, I pledge to do all I can to do the same, and I encourage you to join me.

*William P. Petros*

**William Petros, PharmD, FCCP**  
Dean and The Gates Wigner Endowed Chair

***“What we have  
done for ourselves  
alone dies with us;  
what we have done  
for others and the  
world remains  
and is immortal.”***

—ALBERT PIKE

## About Dean Petros

Born in Wheeling, West Virginia

Married to Karen Ollis Petros  
PharmD, Class of 1983

Children:  
Katy (1999)  
Nate (1995)

1983 BS Pharmacy, WVU

1984 Hospital Residency,  
Tampa VA Medical Center

1987 PharmD, Philadelphia  
College of Pharmacy

1987-90 Research Fellowship,  
St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

1990-2001 Faculty, Duke  
University Cancer Institute/  
School of Medicine

2001-2015 Faculty, WVU School of  
Pharmacy and Associate Director,  
Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center

2015-2017 Interim Director,  
WVU Cancer Institute

Over 100 publications and  
book chapters, primarily in  
clinical cancer research

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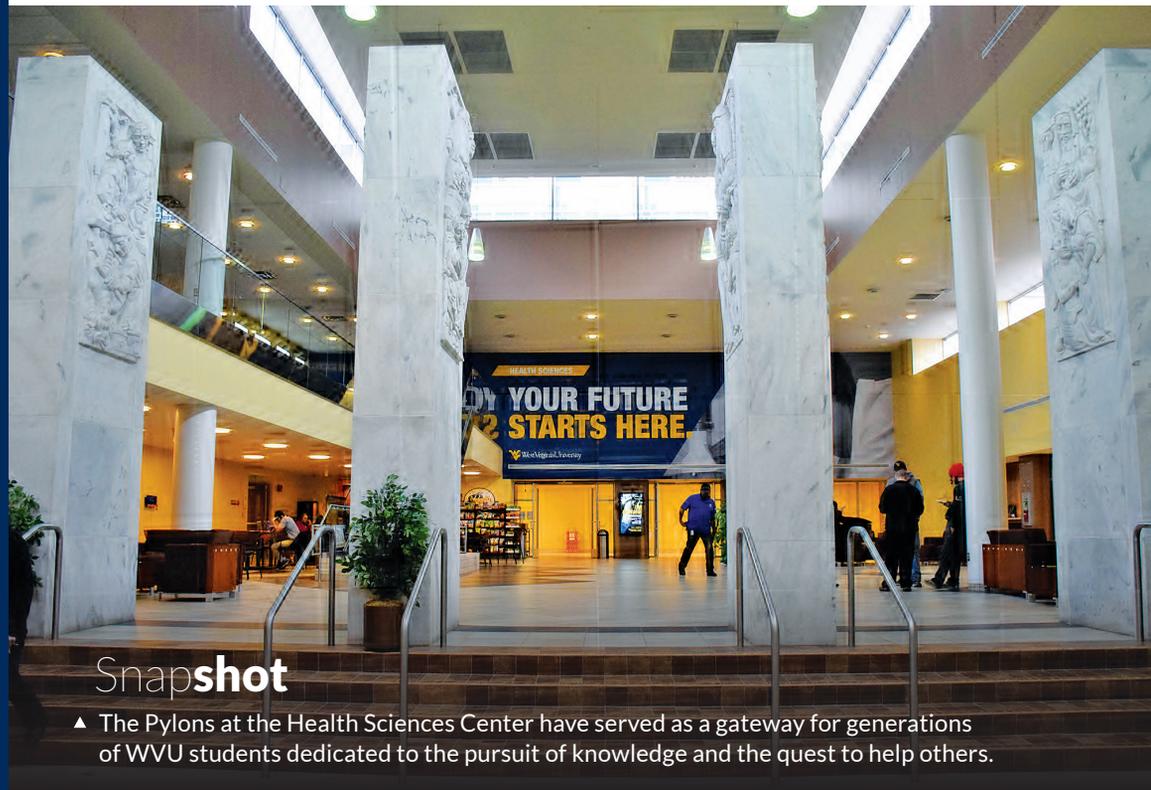
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▲ The Pylons at the Health Sciences Center have served as a gateway for generations of WVU students dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the quest to help others.

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# Heeding the Call

▲ Students Wes Kafka and Haley Smith, Class of 2017, administer tetanus shots to Greenbrier County residents following the 2016 floods.

WRITTEN BY AMY NEWTON

**In June 2016, flooding devastated several counties in southern West Virginia. Homes and businesses were destroyed, and many families and business owners were left with uncertain futures. As the floodwaters continued to rise, alumna Patty Johnston, who serves a preceptor for the WVU School of Pharmacy, reached out to check on a former student.**

"I had just worked with a student from Rainelle in Greenbrier County," said Johnston. "I texted her to see if she was okay, and she told me that a friend who worked at Rainelle Medical Center needed help giving tetanus shots."

Johnston, a 1977 graduate, is the former owner of Colony Drug and Wellness Center in Beckley, West Virginia, about 26 miles from Rainelle. Students Wes Kafka and Haley Smith, Class of 2017, were on rotation at Colony Drug and Wellness Center when the flood occurred. Johnston quickly mobilized them into action — taking supplies to a makeshift headquarters at a local shopping center.

"It was pretty organized considering the devastation. None of the pictures or videos [of the floods] really capture what happened down there," said Johnston. "Between vaccinations we helped with unloading ice and water — whatever was needed we did. I don't think Haley and Wes sat down at all that first day."

The team administered between 100 and 200 tetanus vaccinations on the first day. Johnston said the experience was

a good reminder of the important role pharmacists play in our communities.

"In the grand scheme of things, our contribution was minuscule compared to what others were doing, but we were there to help and ease the burden," said Johnston. "I feel that it was

***"It showed how quickly a pharmacist can respond to the health needs of a community and how integral we are to providing care in rural communities."***

— PATTY JOHNSTON

a great learning experience for our students. It showed them how quickly a pharmacist can respond to the health needs of a community and how integral we are to providing care in rural communities, especially when disaster strikes." ♡

▼ Berhanu sings a moving rendition of 'West Virginia Strong' at the WVU Cancer Institute Spring Gala in White Sulphur Springs.



▲ Pictured from L-R are Katie Purnell (SOP student), Sarah Reed (community pharmacy resident), Jennifer Wick (community pharmacy resident), Sean Clark (community pharmacy resident), Kelci Jones (SOP student), Krista Capehart (SOP faculty).

# West Virginia Strong

WVU Pharmacy Student Writes Song to Benefit Disaster Relief Efforts

WRITTEN BY AMY NEWTON

**You never know where you'll find your next source of inspiration. For pharmacy student Rebecca Berhanu, Class of 2019, it was Twitter.**

Following the 2016 floods in southern West Virginia, the hashtag #WVstrong began to trend on social media. Berhanu's heart broke for the victims as she scrolled through the many stories associated with the hashtag. As a native West Virginian, Berhanu felt compelled to help her fellow Mountaineers, but instead of using her pharmacy skills, she used her voice.

Berhanu, an accomplished singer, decided to put her feelings into music. She took her idea to the WVU student-run record label Mon Hills Records – a component of the Music Industry program at WVU's College of Creative Arts. Berhanu's connection with Mon Hills Records started the year before when representatives offered her a contract after hearing her sing in a competition. So, for them, Berhanu's idea was a no-brainer.

As a result of the collaboration, Berhanu wrote and recorded her first single, "West Virginia Strong." It was released in fall 2016 for digital download on iTunes, Google Play, Amazon and on streaming services such as Spotify, Apple Music, Pandora and many other music outlets. Since then, Berhanu has donated 100% of her royalties to Dollars for Disaster, a campaign created by the American Red Cross. 🙏

## Students Offer Health Screening at State Fair

WRITTEN BY AMY NEWTON

**This summer, WVU Pharmacy students took their Operation Diabetes campaign to the West Virginia State Fair in Lewisburg. Members of the WVU School of Pharmacy chapter of the American Pharmacists Association-Academy of Student Pharmacists (APhA-ASP) provided more than 200 free blood glucose screenings to attendees.**

"Diabetes is a huge health concern in the state of West Virginia," said trip organizer Dr. Krista Capehart, "We provided a simple glucose screening for fair attendees who visited our booth. We also provided educational materials to the patient based on the results of his or her screening."

Dr. Capehart, a clinical associate professor in the Department of Clinical Pharmacy, Charleston Division, has coordinated the event at the State Fair for the past four years. She says the Fair is an excellent place to host Operation Diabetes because it attracts individuals from all over the state who may or may not receive healthcare services on a regular basis.

"These patients may be making less than optimal health choices, such as eating too much junk food or not getting enough exercise," said Capehart. We provide an educational environment for them to learn and become aware of potential health issues that they can then take back to their health providers for additional testing."

According to the American Diabetes Association, 13,000 West Virginians are diagnosed with diabetes each year. 🙏

Support the effort by downloading "West Virginia Strong":





PHOTO: SHERRI FRIEND, NIOSH

## *Breathing New Life into the Fight Against Work-Related Lung Disease*

WRITTEN BY **AMY NEWTON**

**Protecting employees who work in industries such as mining, drilling and sandblasting is a priority for Dr. Vincent Castranova. Throughout his entire 40-year career as a researcher, he has focused on studying work-related lung disease.**

Castranova, a professor in the School of Pharmacy's Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, received his PhD in physiology from West Virginia University in 1974. He later completed a postdoctoral fellowship in physiology at Yale University. Castranova returned to Morgantown in 1977 to work at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), an institute interested in adverse health effects to workers.

"I was trained in physiology, or how the body works normally, including the heart and lungs," said Castranova. "Once I got to NIOSH, it was an easy transition to go from understanding the normal function of the body to understanding how that normal function is altered in disease processes caused by particle exposures. The lab in Morgantown started out focusing on adverse lung effects

in coal miners, which is why they were so interested in coal and silica dust. This work began my interest in pulmonary toxicology in regards to occupational health."

Castranova's earliest research involved analyzing and discovering mechanisms involved in the initiation and progression of lung disease in workers. He focused on two diseases, coal workers' pneumoconiosis – CWP or "black lung" – and silicosis that occurs in workers associated with surface mining or rock drilling and sandblasting.

On this particular project, Dr. Castranova worked with Dr. N. Lee Lapp, a pulmonary physician and faculty member at the WVU School of Medicine. Lapp worked directly with coal miners to establish a diagnosis and determine the extent of the disease – early or late progression – if the disease were present. If the disease were present, Castranova would then look at the inflammatory and fibrotic markers, and try to correlate the extent of these markers with the course of coal workers' pneumoconiosis.

“If we knew how the disease were initiated and how it progressed, we had a better chance of preventing the disease,” said Castranova. These research studies were part of the body of literature used by NIOSH to support lowering the recommended exposure limit for coal dust from 2 mg/m<sup>3</sup> to 1 mg/m<sup>3</sup>. This recommendation has been used recently by the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) in lowering its coal mine dust exposure limit to 1.5 mg/m<sup>3</sup>.

Another project was intended to develop an understanding of what can interfere with the pathogenesis of silicosis, a lung fibrosis that affects workers exposed to silica dust. For this project, Castranova collaborated with retired School of Pharmacy professor Joseph Ma. Dr. Ma was interested in finding a therapeutic drug that would either slow down or stop the progression of silicosis, or reverse the disease. They analyzed the effect of an herbal medicine compound called tetrandrine on the progression of silicosis and found that it blocked some inflammatory and fibrotic mediators, and slowed the progression of fibrosis. Over the years, Dr. Castranova’s work on silicosis was supported by NIOSH and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). This work was cited in the body of literature used by OSHA to support lowering the permissible exposure limit for crystalline silica from 1 mg/m<sup>3</sup> to 0.5 mg/m<sup>3</sup>.

Other research projects in collaboration with professors from the Schools of Medicine and Pharmacy focused on the effects of air pollution particles stemming from industrial exhaust, dust from surface mining, diesel pollution and other sources. In working with Dr. Tim Nurkiewicz in the Department of Physiology and Pharmacology at the WVU School of Medicine, they studied residual oil fly ash — the particles emitted from an oil-fired electric plant — as a model air pollution particle. They found that when animal models were exposed to these particles, not only were there changes to the lungs, but there were also changes to the cardiovascular system, with blood vessels becoming resistant to dilation.

“Studies have shown that on high air pollution days, there are more hospitalizations for heart attacks and cardiovascular events,” said Castranova. “Our research associated well with human epidemiologic studies, and it shows and reinforces the importance of controlling air pollution.”

Working with Dr. Yon Rojanasakul, professor in the School of Pharmacy Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Castranova conducted research on nanoparticles, specifically carbon nanotubes. Because multi-walled carbon nanotubes are relatively strong structures — picture a long, thin, multilayered tube — yet are very light in weight, they are used in materials such as bumpers of cars, tennis rackets, golf clubs and other items that you want to be strong, but light and flexible. They are also great conductors of electricity, so they are used in computers and batteries. However, when particles

are that small — nanoparticles are between 1 and 100 nanometers, about the size of a virus — their physical properties change. This interested Castranova and Rojanasakul because if carbon nanotubes have such unusual properties, would they have unusual effects in the lung and possibly cause pulmonary disease?

Through their research, it was determined that initiation and progression of lung cancer can in fact result from inhalation of multi-walled carbon nanotubes. Research by Castranova and colleagues was cited by NIOSH in setting a recommended exposure limit of 1 ug/m<sup>3</sup> for carbon nanotubes and by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) in classifying multi-walled carbon nanotubes as a possible human carcinogen.

The findings of Dr. Castranova’s research and work at NIOSH and WVU have helped both workers and the general population of West Virginia. However, his service to the state does not stop in his lab. He is also helping educate the next generation of researchers and scientists.

Castranova is the leader on a five-year graduate training grant in nanotoxicology funded by the National Science Foundation.

Graduate students taking part in this initiative analyze engineered nanoparticles that have unique properties and are used in commercial applications, but may also have unique biological activity. The grant ends in August 2018, but 14 graduate students each year have been able to participate in this research training program.

What sets this training grant apart from other programs is that each student is paired with two mentors: one from physical sciences and one from biological sciences.

“There’s a lot to be learned concerning the physical and chemical properties of these particles, and there’s also a lot to be learned concerning the biological effects of exposure to these particles,” Castranova said. “Instead of only getting half of the story, we have a physical scientist and a biological scientist who are advising the student and then helping the student with the research. This helps the student get a more complete picture of this new field of nanotechnology, and they can then do a better job of looking at the toxicology or possible adverse effects of exposure to these particles because they will be trained in understanding how to measure physical and chemical properties of these particles, as well as measuring biological effects.”

Students often discuss their research with Dr. Castranova and ask for his advice. He has even been a part of dissertation committees.

“It is very rewarding working with PhD students,” he said. “Seeing them develop and grow, so that by graduation they have become critical thinkers and independent researchers, is very rewarding. In my career, I’ve actually been able to keep in touch with many of my students decades after they have left my lab, and I take great pride in their professional success.” 🍷

***“Instead of only getting half of the story, we have a physical scientist and a biological scientist who are advising the student. This helps the student get a more complete picture of this new field of nanotechnology, and they can do a better job of looking at the toxicology or possible adverse effects of exposure to these particles.”*** —VINCENT CASTRANOVA

## Opioid Addiction Panel

In fall 2016, Senator Joe Manchin visited WVU for a community roundtable discussion on opioids and opioid addiction. **Sara Mantick, Class of 2017**, participated on the education panel, **Assistant Professor Mark Garofoli** and **PhD student Doug Thornton** participated on the treatment panel and **Associate Professor Erin Winstanley** participated on the research panel.

## Health Services and Outcomes Research PhD Program

Congratulations to our newest graduates **Ebtihag Alenzi, Ishveen Chopra, Rahul Garg, Abdulkarim Meraya** and **Doug Thornton!**

**Snow Xue Feng** won a travel award for her podium presentation at the 2017 Mid-year Meeting of the International Society for Pharmacoepidemiology (ISPE) held in London.

## Softball for a Cause

The **WVU chapter of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy-Student College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP-SCCP)** hosted its third annual softball tournament in September 2017. The chapter donated \$200 from its proceeds to the WVU Medicine Pediatric Critical Care Services Fund. The chapter also hosted the October 2017 “Dean’s Hour” presentation with guest speaker **Dr. Michael Newton, Class of 1997 and 1999**. Newton is a medical scientist in Immuno-oncology Global Medical Development at AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals.

## Southern West Virginia Health Screenings

Members of the **WVU chapter of the American Pharmacists Association-Academy of Student Pharmacists (APhA-ASP)** traveled to Beckley, West Virginia, in fall 2017 to provide health screenings at Bridge Day at the New River Gorge. **Morgan Petite, Class of 2018**, coordinated this activity. Our students provided over 60 blood glucose and A1C screenings, and distributed Medicare Part D sign-up brochures and information on vaccinations to others who visited the booth. Our students also partnered with students from the WVU School of Dentistry to provide information about tobacco cessation and oral health, and they distributed 50 tobacco “quit kits” and counseled approximately 75 other individuals on smoking cessation.

▼ Members of WVU APhA-ASP at Bridge Day on October 23, 2017.



▲ Pictured from L to R are Chibuzo Iloabuchi, Xiaohui Zhao, Pragya Rai, Drishti Shah and Jayesh Patel.

Members of the **WVU student chapter of the International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research (ISPOR)** received several awards at the 22nd Annual ISPOR International Meeting in May 2017. **Jayesh Patel, Pragya Rai, Drishti Shah**, and **Xiaohui Zhao** won second place in the Student Research Competition. **Rahul Garg** won the best podium presentation for his work, “Impact of Diffuse Large B-Cell Lymphoma on Visits to Different Provider Specialties among Elderly Medicare Beneficiaries: Challenges for Care Coordination.” **Abdulkarim Meraya** was selected as a Presentation Award finalist for his poster presentation, “The Dynamic Relationships between Economic Indicators and Physical Health Measures among Working-Age Adults in the United States.” **Drishti Shah** was selected as the Presentation Award finalist for her poster presentation, “Healthcare Expenditures and Patterns of Opioid Use for Non-cancer Pain.” **Xiaohui Zhao** was selected as a Presentation Award finalist for her poster presentation, “Incremental Healthcare Expenditure of Anxiety Disorders among U.S. adults with Arthritis.”

# Kappa Psi



**Kappa Psi** raised \$482 for the WVU Cancer Institute - Mary Babb Randolph Comfort Fund through its 9th Annual School of Pharmacy Variety Show.



**Kappa Psi** and **APhA-ASP** partnered with WVU's LGBTQ+ Center to raise funds for Caritas House — a support agency for people in North Central West Virginia who are affected by HIV/AIDS. The organizations raised \$1,008.



**Kappa Psi** also hosted its 4th Annual Golf Scramble and raised \$1,363 for the American Red Cross.



The **WVU chapter of the American Pharmacists Association-Academy of Student Pharmacists (APhA-ASP)** coordinated the School-level Patient Counseling Competition. **Katie Cuervo, Class of 2018**, represented the School in the national competition at the 2017 APhA Annual Meeting in San Francisco.

The **Rho Chi Alpha Mu** chapter hosted the 53rd Annual Bergy Lecture, which was held on April 10, 2017. Kevin W. Garey, PharmD, of the University of Houston College of Pharmacy, was the guest speaker.

## Taking the Plunge

The **WVU School of Pharmacy/Phi Lambda Sigma** and **WVU Medicine Hospital Pharmacy Polar Plunge Team** raised \$4,057 for Special Olympics WV. For the team's efforts, Drs. Gretchen Garofoli and Doug Slain took the plunge. For the full Polar Plunge photo album from February 2017, visit our Facebook page.



The **Phi Lambda Sigma (PLS) Alpha Eta** chapter hosted the second annual Louis A. Luzzi Lectureship in March 2017. The lecture is intended to give students insight into being a leader in pharmacy by featuring alumni who have fashioned unique careers and have made significant contributions to the profession of pharmacy. The speaker was **Dr. Frank Alderman, Class of 1990**, CEO of MedExpress.



PHOTO: AMY NEWTON

# Pharmaceutical Sciences PhD Student Presents Research at International Conference

WRITTEN BY JORDAN JASPER

**While most students spend hours reading about research by some of the biggest names in science, Afroz Mohammad had the opportunity to present alongside some of them.**

Mohammad, a student in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, was one of about 200 students selected worldwide to present at the Gordon Research Conference in New London, New Hampshire. Applicants went through a rigorous screening process to be accepted, including submitting detailed abstracts outlining their research and reasons why attending the conference would help them in their research.

The Gordon Research Conferences are a series of conferences dealing with research in the biological, chemical and physical sciences. Some of the biggest names in research, whether in academia or industry, from around the world attend these meetings.

Mohammad attended the "Barriers of the Central Nervous System Conference." His research deals with unlocking ways to infiltrate the blood-brain barrier, a filtering mechanism of blood vessels that work to keep certain things in and other things out of the brain. Mohammad realized that this was the area on which he wanted to focus his research while he was working toward his master's degree.

"I was fascinated by the blood vessels in the brain because they are different than the blood vessels in the rest of the body," said Mohammad. "After reading more about this, I realized how challenging it is to deliver drugs to the central nervous system. If we were able to do that, we could find many solutions to central nervous system diseases."

The Gordon Conference did more than allow Mohammad to present his research along with some of the biggest names in his field. The conference fosters collaboration between many different researchers with interests in the same field. For professors, there is a chance to meet another faculty member, or person in their industry, with whom they can collaborate or share information. For graduate students, there are opportunities to find someone to work with after graduation or postdoctoral studies.

"The format of the conference brings people very close together," Mohammad said. "I strongly believe that collaboration is the future of scientific research. I am very thankful for the people at the School of Pharmacy who helped me get this opportunity, especially my mentor Dr. Paul Lockman. Being able to attend this conference was a wonderful opportunity and experience for me." 🐾

# Baugh Named Director of Interprofessional Education for Health Sciences



WRITTEN BY AMY NEWTON

**Gina M. Baugh, PharmD**, associate professor and director of Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experiences at the West Virginia University School of Pharmacy, has been named director of interprofessional education for the WVU Health Sciences Center.

As director of interprofessional education (IPE), Dr. Baugh will be responsible for the development, implementation and evaluation of all IPE programs at Health Sciences. She will work closely with the academic leadership in each health sciences discipline to ensure they meet all program and accreditation standards, as well as work collaboratively with the West Virginia Simulation Training and Education for Patient Safety (WV STEPS) Center to create and evaluate learning activities that involve students from multiple health professions.

“Healthcare is a team approach,” Baugh said. “We are teaching our health profession students now how they will be working with each other to help patients in the future. I am looking forward to working with our WVU health sciences students and creating programs that will make them successful practitioners.”

Baugh is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy and worked as a clinical pharmacy specialist at UPMC Health Plan before joining the faculty at the WVU School of Pharmacy. She is actively involved in experiential learning at both a local and national level. She is currently serving as the chair of the Experiential Learning Committee at the WVU School of Pharmacy and as a member of the Leadership Development taskforce for the Experiential Learning Section of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP).

## Lockman One of Four 2016 Benedum Distinguished Scholars



**Paul Lockman, BSN, PhD**, professor and the Douglas Glover Endowed Chair for Pharmaceutical Sciences, was selected as a 2016-2017 Claude Worthington Benedum Distinguished Scholar. Dr. Lockman’s work on mathematical modelling of drug entry into the brain has led to an understanding of how a specialized system of blood vessels in the brain can prevent chemotherapy from

reaching some cancer at effective concentrations. He has published approximately 80 peer-reviewed manuscripts and/or book chapters, which have been cited collectively more than 4,000 times. Lockman has received more than \$11 million dollars to help fund his or his collaborators’ research. He currently serves as a grant reviewer for the National Institutes of Health.

## Madhavan Named to Fulbright Specialist Roster



The U.S. State Department has added **S. Suresh Madhavan, PhD**, to the Fulbright Specialist Roster for the next three years. Dr. Madhavan, professor and chair of the Department of Pharmaceutical Systems and Policy, is an expert in health services research, with particular emphasis on improving access to and quality of health and preventive care services. Since joining WVU in 1988, Dr. Madhavan has

worked with a number of state and federal agencies to complete projects that have had an impact on the health of West Virginians and people across the U.S. The appointment by the State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and World Learning makes him eligible to be matched with proposed projects designed by host institutions in over 150 countries.



# Griffith Retires

WRITTEN BY AMY NEWTON

**When former students describe Dr. Robert Griffith, phrases like “quick wit,” “sense of humor” and “talented professor” top the list. For 30 years, Dr. Griffith has been inspiring future pharmacists and researchers to pursue their passions, and now he’s taking some time to pursue his own — outside of the classroom.**

Griffith, an associate professor of medicinal chemistry in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, retired in spring 2017 after three decades of service to the School of Pharmacy and the University.

He joined the WVU School of Pharmacy in 1987. He accomplished numerous publications, presentations and hundreds of thousands of dollars in awarded grants to conduct research over the course of his career. But, at the heart of it all was his love for his students.

From PHAR 716 and 726: Chemistry of Drug Action, to PHAR 752: History of Drug Discovery and many other courses, Griffith dedicated himself to the education of our students. A testament to his teaching, he received the Outstanding Teaching Award — awards given to faculty by our student-pharmacists — in 1988, 1990, 1996, 2006, 2010, 2014

and 2016. He also served as a faculty advisor for the Kappa Psi co-educational pharmaceutical fraternity from 1989–2017.

“Dr. Griffith is an exceptionally talented professor in that he could capture and hold your attention for an entire medicinal chemistry lecture — and that held true for each of his lectures,” said R.J. Jacobs, a member of the Class of 2018. “He has a special skill for weaving interesting historical context or humorous anecdotes into his explanations of difficult concepts, which made his class quite enjoyable. Dr. Griffith was the type of professor you would have fun talking to outside of class, too. He knew how to relate to his students on both a personal and professional level, and I think his former students would agree with me in saying how fortunate we were to have him teach us.”

His students were not the only ones who recognized Griffith’s commitment to educating future pharmacists and researchers. The School’s Visiting Committee presented him with the Outstanding Accomplishments in Teaching Award in 2012.

▲ Dr. Griffith (center) pictured with Dr. Arthur Jacknowitz (left) and Clarke Ridgway (right) at his retirement party.



▲ Dr. Griffith prepares to take the plunge to raise money for Special Olympics.

Griffith also gave countless hours of service to the University by serving on numerous committees and boards, most recently as a member of the WVU Board of Advisors (2000–2001), chair of the WVU Faculty Senate (2001–2002) and as a member of the WVU Board of Governors (2009–2016).

“Dr. Bob Griffith has served this University in many capacities — as a teacher, scholar and University citizen,” said Dr. E. Gordon Gee, president of WVU. “He has excelled in all of these areas and made this University better. He was selected by his colleagues to serve as a member of the University’s Board of Governors and represented our faculty very ably as their long-term representative on the Board. In that capacity, he garnered great respect from the other Board members and was key in implementing changes that have made significant differences at this University. His decision to retire is a real loss for the University and, certainly, a personal loss for me as I consider him a very dear friend.”

One project near and dear to his heart was the Summer Undergraduate Research Education (SURE) program – a project in conjunction with Marshall University through the West Virginia IDeA Network of Biomedical Research

**“Dr. Griffith was the type of professor you would have fun talking to outside of class. He knew how to relate to his students on both a personal and professional level, and I think his former students would agree with me in saying how fortunate we were to have him teach us.”** —R.J. JACOBS, CLASS OF 2018

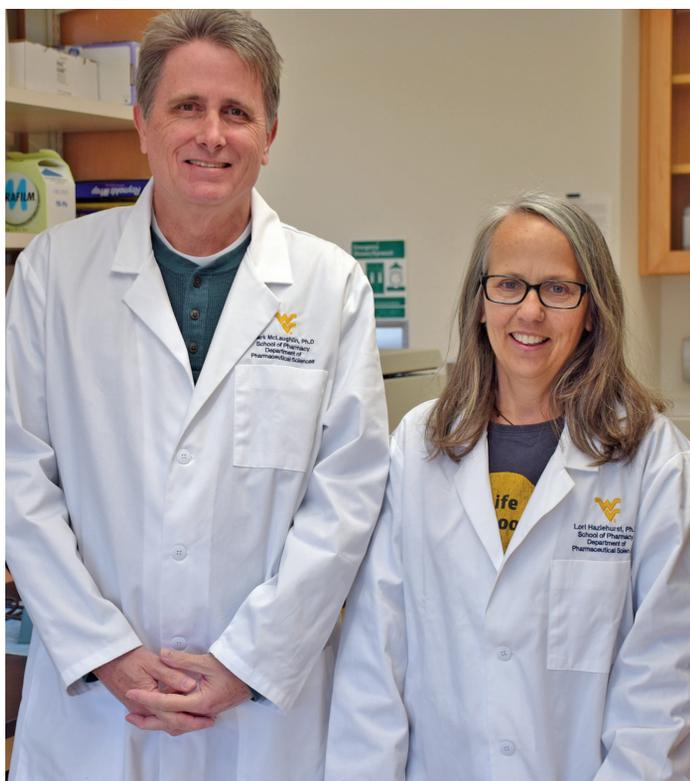
Excellence (WV-INBRE) funded by the National Institutes of Health. Griffith served as the research development coordinator of the WV-INBRE program for the past 14 years. The SURE program gives students around the state the opportunity to conduct and participate in biomedical research — opportunities students who are interested in research otherwise may not have.

Our faculty, staff and students will fondly remember Dr. Griffith not only for his work and service but also for his care, his love of Bridge Day in Fayette County and the joy he gave to students (and the great stories) through the spelunking excursions he offered to students.

We wish you well on your next adventure, Dr. Griffith. You will be missed. 🙌

# Modulation Therapeutics: WVU Professors Foster Early Drug Development

WRITTEN BY AMY NEWTON



▲ Dr. Mark McLaughlin and Dr. Lori Hazlehurst in the Health Sciences Innovation Center.

**Collaboration and determination to conquer a disease are the building blocks of successful research. For two researchers at the WVU School of Pharmacy, their commitment to finding new medications for cancer treatments is a force to be reckoned with.**

Lori Hazlehurst, PhD, and Mark McLaughlin, PhD, are professors in the School's Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences and members of the Alexander B. Osborn Hematopoietic Malignancy and Transplantation program at the WVU Cancer Institute.

Their partnership began when Hazlehurst, a pharmacologist, and McLaughlin, a medicinal chemist, worked on a multiple myeloma project centered on a linear peptide. Hazlehurst focused on the discovery of the linear peptide, and McLaughlin optimized it to have greater efficacy and extended half-life.

As a result of their work, Hazlehurst and McLaughlin founded Modulation Therapeutics, a company dedicated to the rapid and cost-effective advancement of early-stage, first-in-class molecules that target the "home" of the cancer cell, known as the tumor microenvironment.

"Our work is important for research and drug discovery because the process of pioneering new therapeutic drugs can be risky until it has been deemed safe for human clinical trials," said Hazlehurst. "When the time comes, we hope to conduct those trials here at WVU."

Modulation Therapeutics is housed in the WVU Health Sciences Innovation Center (HSIC). HSIC Director Rich Giersch helped secure funding for the project and provided mentorship around business strategy.

"Start-up companies at WVU like Modulation Therapeutics are doing world-class research and development," said Giersch. "Not only does this type of project create international recognition, but it brings in outside funding, creates jobs and improves the health of people in West Virginia and around the world."

McLaughlin was recently awarded a \$2 million contract for Modulation Therapeutics from the National Cancer Institute. In collaboration with researchers at Moffitt Cancer Center and Wake Forest University, he is working to make a radiopharmaceutical that targets the melanocortin 1 receptor to treat uveal melanoma, a deadly cancer of the eye.

So far, McLaughlin and his colleagues have been able to target tumors and treat both melanoma of the skin as well as melanoma of the eye in animal models without harming the animal.

"We show that with a single dose, the tumor in some cases is cured, but in every case, there is a clear reduction in tumor burden," said McLaughlin. "We anticipate that when we can administer this treatment in humans with multiple dosing, we might be able to have an even more robust therapeutic effect."

Hazlehurst recently received a National Institutes of Health Small Business Innovation Research award for \$2 million over the next two years to continue her research on multiple myeloma. The money will allow her and her team to complete the studies necessary for an investigational new drug application.

If you would like to learn more about Modulation Therapeutics, Drs. Hazlehurst and McLaughlin welcome your inquiries. They can be reached at [lahazlehurst@hsc.wvu.edu](mailto:lahazlehurst@hsc.wvu.edu) or [mark.mclaughlin@hsc.wvu.edu](mailto:mark.mclaughlin@hsc.wvu.edu). 🐦

The Health Sciences Innovation Center is part of the WVU IDEA Ecosystem, a University-wide network of centers, offices and programs that fosters and supports innovation and entrepreneurship among WVU students, faculty and staff while engaging the statewide community. A visual map of the full ecosystem and detailed information about the resources included can be found at [ideahub.wvu.edu](http://ideahub.wvu.edu).

## WVU PharmD Program Receives Reaccreditation

WRITTEN BY AMY NEWTON

The School of Pharmacy's Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) professional program has been reaccredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) for the maximum length of eight years. The continued accreditation, received in February 2017, is valid until 2025.

"To receive the maximum length of reaccreditation is confirmation of the quality of our PharmD program," said Mary Stamatakis, PharmD, who served as interim dean of the WVU School of Pharmacy during reaccreditation. "Our reaccreditation status is a result of the work and dedication of our faculty and staff. Through their work, we can provide our students with the highest quality education and practice experiences that will prepare them to deliver exceptional patient care."

ACPE is the national accreditation agency of professional pharmacy degree programs and providers of continuing

***"To receive the maximum length of reaccreditation is confirmation of the quality of our PharmD program."***

—MARY STAMATAKIS, FORMER INTERIM DEAN

pharmacy education. The School of Pharmacy's reaccreditation review took place in November 2016 and included interviews with faculty, students and preceptors.

"The reaccreditation of the professional pharmacy program is not a surprise to those of us who are familiar with the faculty and students of the School," said Clay Marsh, MD, WVU's vice president and executive dean for health sciences. "They always uphold the highest standards of education, patient care and professional excellence. WVU is known around the country as a leader in pharmacy education."

WVU's School of Pharmacy was the first in the state and has been educating leaders in the profession for over 100 years. U.S. News & World Report ranks the WVU School of Pharmacy among the top 20% of pharmacy schools in the nation. 🏆



## Leadership Council Helps Set Course for School

WRITTEN BY AMY NEWTON

The WVU School of Pharmacy is committed to helping students gain the opportunities and skills necessary to excel in the pharmacy profession and be competitive in their field. In an effort to do this, the School of Pharmacy relies on its alumni for feedback and guidance. That is why the Leadership Council is crucial to our future.

The Leadership Council's purpose is to support the School's mission to improve the health of West Virginians through educating health professionals; conducting basic and clinical translational health research; improving rural health and wellness; providing continuing professional education; and providing direct, supportive and preventive healthcare.

Members of the Council are appointed by the WVU vice president for health sciences by recommendation from the dean and approved by the WVU President's Office. The Council is comprised of individuals who are interested in fostering high-quality pharmacy education, research and service to West Virginia and the nation. While the Council does not have programmatic, administrative or legislative authority, members do advise the School in general and serve as ambassadors to help bridge connections between the School, students, alumni and other constituents.

Current members represent a wide array of pharmacy including pharmaceutical industry, community pharmacy, institutional pharmacy, professional pharmacy organizations, academia and information technology.

Members of the Leadership Council have greatly assisted the School through the years in an advising capacity, as well as helping students through building scholarships. In 2016, the Council helped to endow the D. Stephen Crawford Memorial Scholarship. As a result, the School awarded it for the first time at the April 2017 Awards and Scholarships Convocation. The scholarship was created in memory of alumnus D. Stephen Crawford, Class of 1968, who passed away in May 2007.

### Leadership Council

#### CO-CHAIRS

Thomas Menighan  
Bruce T. Roberts

Elizabeth Keyes  
Heather Knight-Trent  
Brian Lawson

#### COUNCIL MEMBERS

Vince Anido, Jr.  
J.J. Bernabei  
Pravin Chaturvedi  
Bob Foster, Jr.  
Beth Fullmer  
Kent Hunter  
Art Jacknowitz  
Patty Johnston  
John Kessler

Jenna Merandi  
Susan Meredith  
Andrea Miller  
Judy Riffée  
William Riffée  
Jann Skelton  
Jason Turner  
Tricia Lee Wilkins  
Albert Wright  
Lisa Zannoni



# Direct Admission Pathway Program Secures Leaders in the Profession

WRITTEN BY AMY NEWTON

**The WVU School of Pharmacy's Office of Student Services strives to recruit high-achieving students who will become leaders in the pharmacy profession. With 141 schools of pharmacy across the U.S. and Puerto Rico, the School is taking action to ensure the best and brightest students choose WVU.**

In 2015, the School of Pharmacy implemented a Direct Admission Pathway program (DAP) — the first in the state — designed for high school students who want to pursue a career in pharmacy. This fall, the first cohort of students processed into the PharmD program.

To be accepted, students need to complete a level of requirements in high school. Once they are enrolled in WVU, they complete the second level of requirements, some of which include maintaining a 3.2 or higher GPA, taking pre-pharmacy courses during their first four semesters and participating in PHAR 199, a first-year

School of Pharmacy Experience Seminar course. In addition to their coursework, DAP students are trained in interviewing, writing, application completion and PCAT test preparation.

Students who take advantage of the program acquire a better understanding of pharmacy and the pharmacist's role in patient care — equipping them to make better career decisions earlier in the process. Associate Dean of Student Services Mary Euler, PharmD, says another benefit of the program is that students get more time to make critical connections.

"The Direct Admission Pathway program has been working very well," said Dr. Euler. "We get to start working with the students early in their college studies before they apply to the School's Doctor of Pharmacy program, so we get to know them a full two years before they enter the PharmD program and we get to bond with them and help them on their path to success."

▼ The first cohort of DAP students in the School's PharmD program.



PHOTO: CHRISTA CUREY

## ***DAP students are trained in interviewing, writing, application completion and PCAT test preparation.***

Parents and guardians who have questions about the admissions process, life and studies at the School, are also able to connect earlier with the Office of Student Services.

"All indications from our first class of DAP students enrolled in the professional curriculum show a high level of engagement, academic ability and leadership," said Euler.

The School is looking for alumni who are interested in being onsite facilitators for the program, providing a learning experience at their practice site, or promoting the DAP program in their communities. **Contact Dr. Mary Euler at 304.293.7806 or [mleuler@hsc.wvu.edu](mailto:mleuler@hsc.wvu.edu).**

# STEPS FOR ADMISSION INTO THE PATHWAY PROGRAM

## 1 HIGH SCHOOL

Graduating GPA  $\geq 3.5$

ACT Composite Score  $\geq 26$  or a

RSAT composite  $\geq 1250$

(Revised SAT: taken after March 2016)

ACT Math Score  $\geq 26$ , or a

RSAT Math Score  $\geq 620$

(Revised SAT: taken after March 2016),

- or -

ALEKS placement in Math 150, 153 and 154,

or 155 and Chem 115

**Apply to WVU as a pre-pharmacy major**

## 2 WVU UNDERGRADUATE

Enroll in pre-pharmacy courses (semesters 1-4)

Maintain GPA of  $\geq 3.2$

Participate in the School of Pharmacy First-Year Experience Seminar Course PHAR 199

Join APhA-ASP

Prepare and register for July PCAT during the second semester of first year (Score  $\geq 50$ th percentile composite score)

**Apply through PharmCAS for WVU School of Pharmacy Early Decision**

## 3 ADMISSION TO SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

Late September-early October interview

Notification of admission by mid-October

Finish prerequisites by end of fourth semester and maintain GPA of  $\geq 3.2$

At the forefront of tackling



# ABUSE

in West Virginia

WRITTEN BY **DALIA ELSAID**

When it comes to America's opioid crisis, pharmacists are in a difficult position – torn between patients in dire need of relief and addicts who will stop at nothing to get their hands on a prescription of pain medication.

Three professors at the WVU School of Pharmacy have formulated a plan to help their fellow healthcare specialists in the consulting, prescribing and monitoring phases of medication treatment – and ultimately, to save lives.

Suresh Madhavan, MBA, PhD; Stephen Small, MS; and Mark Garofoli, PharmD, MBA, are professors in the School's Department of Pharmaceutical Systems and Policy. Together they created the West Virginia Safe and Effective Management of Pain (SEMP) Guidelines.

The SEMP guidelines were intended to build upon the CDC's 2016 chronic pain opioid guidelines by providing a risk reduction strategy and clinical pain treatment algorithms. The overall purposes of the guidelines are not only to improve health-related quality of life of those suffering from chronic pain, but to also save lives by promoting the values of safe and effective management of pain.

"We really felt there was a need within our state for a standardization of pain management so that prescribers can carefully follow pain guidelines, and patients know what to expect," said Small, a clinical professor at the School.

Assistant Professor Mark Garofoli coordinated the West Virginia Expert Pain Management Panel that was formed to create the SEMP guidelines. The panel is a geographically and professionally diverse group, and includes healthcare professionals in the fields of pharmacy, medicine, osteopathy, nursing, psychology, dentistry and public health in addition to representatives from insurers and the state Prescription Drug Monitoring Program.

"West Virginia leads the world in drug overdose deaths, so where better than from within our own state to find solutions to the problem," Dr. Garofoli said. "Our WVU School of Pharmacy aims to be a leader in improving the lives of the residents of our state, therefore our efforts combine the medication expertise of pharmacists with the vast need of our state to take action in preventing further harm. Collaborating with other healthcare professionals was instinctive as the opioid epidemic touches the lives of so many. It affects every healthcare specialist along the path of treatment - from prescribers to clinical specialists to insurance payers."

As of February 2017, multiple healthcare professional organizations within West Virginia, including the state medical, pharmacy and nursing associations, have endorsed the SEMP guidelines.

Next in the plan came the Safe and Effective Management of Pain Program (SEMPP) - a coordinated care program headed by Dr. Garofoli for patients on chronic opioid therapy. The program is pharmacist-developed and driven, while also incorporating the expertise of other healthcare professionals. The program is designed for enrollees in the West Virginia Public Employee Insurance Agency (PEIA) and West Virginia Medicaid, with funding support through a CDC Prescription Drug Overdose Prevention for States grant, in conjunction with the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources.

Using this enhanced system, pharmacists review patient cases for drug interactions, appropriate doses, proper patient education, and risk evaluation, among numerous other factors while making suggestions to prescribers regarding the safety and efficacy of a given patient's pain management plan. The process of monitoring incorporates the CDC guidelines for opioid use to include non-

therapeutic pain management techniques as a starting point and, when opioids are used, avoids their high dose and protracted use. The net results of the work of the SEMPP? Pharmacists not only affect real patients directly, but also aim to facilitate an overall improvement of patient care from the healthcare providers' knowledge, skills and practice. Pain specialists from WVU Medicine are involved with the reviews when necessary and address complex cases when direct provider intervention is beneficial.

The SEMP Guidelines and SEMPP efforts to push the best practices within pain management as the new standard of care have also resulted in the creation of prescriber education initiatives. Members of the Safe and Effective Management of Pain Program team have had discussions with prescribers regarding the

**"West Virginia leads the world in drug overdose deaths, so where better than from within our own state to find solutions to the problem." -MARK GAROFOLI**

best practices within pain management and ways to incorporate these practices into their respective clinical practice. The SEMP Guidelines have been disseminated within our state and beyond through social media, the website ([sempguidelines.org](http://sempguidelines.org)), and through presentations, and exhibit booths at various healthcare professional conferences. The SEMPP and SEMP Guidelines efforts truly portray the medication expert role of pharmacists within interprofessional teams, as approximately one-third of the panelists and leaders are pharmacists.

"Pharmacies are the access points for opioid medications, and pharmacists have a critical role to play in ensuring safe and appropriate use of opioids for the relief of pain," S. Suresh Madhavan, PhD, professor and chair of the WVU School of Pharmacy Department of Pharmaceutical Systems and Policy and principal investigator of the SEMPP initiative, said. "Who better than pharmacists—the medication experts—to lead the battle in overcoming the epidemic and to save lives? The Safe and Effective Management of Pain program and guidelines provide a great opportunity to ensure that patients are obtaining opioids they need for their health condition only after non-therapeutic and therapeutic options have been tried to experience relief of pain. When the patients do receive an opioid treatment for their pain, it is done for the right health condition in the right dose for the right duration, and it is stopped when the treatment is no longer necessary or effective."

As the best practices evolve into standards of care, the Safe and Effective Management of Pain program will continue to collaborate with healthcare professionals throughout the state to improve patient care. 🌟

### The School of Pharmacy is participating in various other approaches to addressing the opioid crisis, including:

Collaborating with the School of Nursing to educate 8th graders on drug prevention  
**(Dr. Gina Baugh)**

Running the substance abuse early warning network and real-time toxico-surveillance for non-fatal cases (West Virginia Poison Center/  
**Dr. Elizabeth Scharman)**

Investigating genetic factors that may determine efficacy of addiction treatment  
**(Dr. Marina Galvez Peralta)**

Identifying patterns postmortem that led to drug-related deaths  
**(Dr. Marie Abate)**





WIN TER 2017



# GLOBAL ROTATION EXPERIENCE:

## Thailand

WRITTEN BY JORDAN JASPER

**During the 2016-2017 academic year, two students from the School of Pharmacy boarded a plane and traveled to Bangkok, Thailand, for a rotation experience they will never forget.**

Wes Kafka and Tony Nguyen, members of the Class of 2017, jumped at the opportunity to be the first students to participate in this new rotation experience. Not only were they excited to experience the culture of a new country, but to also see the various aspects of healthcare practice outside the United States.

The first week of rotation consisted of lectures and orientation. During week two, the student-pharmacists were able to observe the differences between the U.S. and Thai healthcare systems through their experience in a hospital. They took note of procedures and practices that worked well in the Thai system and exchanged ideas about practices that worked well in the U.S. Both students admired the healthcare and technology advances within Bangkok.

“One country’s practices are not better than the other,” said Kafka. “What’s important is that we are able to bring ideas together to advance the practice of pharmacy as a whole for the betterment of healthcare,” Kafka said.

During the third week, the rotation began to focus more on ambulatory care. The students were given the chance to participate in home visits with patients, and Nguyen believes this is a great way to better understand and serve patients.

“Sometimes, patients will tell you, ‘I take the medicine every day at home,’ and you have to rely on their word,” said Nguyen. “When you can visit their homes and see how many medications they have, you get a better picture of whether they are actually taking the medications. You also get to see if there is anything else in the home that may affect their health, like stairs or tripping hazards.”

Kafka and Nguyen were the first students to participate in the Thailand rotation. They say they are extremely grateful to have had this unique experience.

“I cannot express how appreciative I am to have participated in this rotation,” said Kafka. “I have always wanted to see what healthcare practice is like outside the U.S. and how pharmacists and healthcare professionals make a difference in their countries. Being able to share ideas

and practices to improve a patient’s health was a great feeling. The role of a pharmacist is extremely important in a patient’s plan of health no matter where you go.”

“Awesome doesn’t describe the entire feeling,” said Nguyen. “I was nervous at first, but after experiencing the culture and seeing the advancements the Thai have made in their pharmacy practices, I’m glad that I did it. I’m a better pharmacist because of this experience.” ♡

**“One country’s practices are not better than the other. What’s important is that we are able to bring ideas together to advance the practice of pharmacy as a whole for the betterment of healthcare.”**

—Wes Kafka, '17

◀ Pharmacy students Tony Nguyen (left) and Wes Kafka (right) pose in front of the Wat Phakhao Temple in Chiang Mai, Thailand.



◀ Tim and Mary Whitten

***“Combining science and business will provide WVU students a fairly unique and versatile skill set right out of school that can be applied in a variety of health-related industries.”*** –TIM WHITTEN, '79

“Obviously we hope it means a little less debt for the student recipients,” said Tim. “We like the new dual PharmD and MBA degree that WVU offers. Combining science and business will provide WVU students a unique and versatile skill set right out of school that can be applied in a variety of health-related industries.”

The College of Pharmacy, in partnership with the WVU College of Business and Economics, offers this joint degree program to expose students to the

business side of pharmacy while improving their problem-solving, leadership and communication skills. Starting in the second year of the PharmD program, students complete 39 credit hours of online MBA coursework. The remaining nine credit hours are fulfilled in the PharmD curriculum.

Tim, who currently serves as the chief commercial officer for Taiho Oncology, Inc., believes the program will open a broad range of opportunities for students, including in the biotech and pharmaceutical industries, where he has spent the majority of his career.

A native of Beckley, West Virginia, Tim is a first-generation college student who graduated from the School of Pharmacy in 1979. He says the Whitten Family Scholarship, in essence, recognizes his parents, who highly valued education and always encouraged him to earn a college degree.

Mary is a native of New Jersey. She graduated from WVU in 1980 with a degree in Agriculture and Forestry. She started a trend within her family as well, leading her brother and sister to attend WVU.

“The importance of WVU runs deep in our families,” said Tim. 🍂

# Scholarship Established for Dual-Degree Program Students

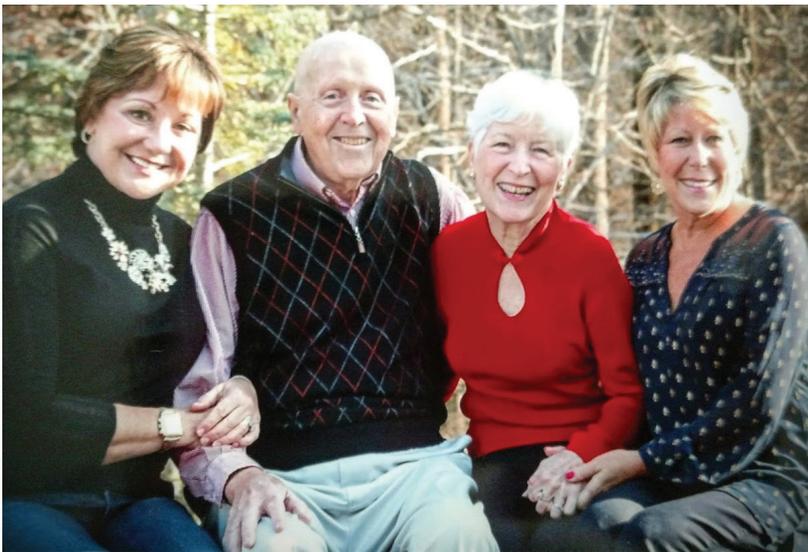
WRITTEN BY HANNAH D'ENTREMONT

**When alumni Tim and Mary Whitten learned about the School of Pharmacy's new PharmD/Online MBA program, they knew they had a unique opportunity to help future pharmacists explore their entrepreneurial interests.**

The Whittens' passions for education, business and pharmacy led them to establish the Whitten Family Scholarship. Their gift, totaling \$30,000, will help deserving PharmD and MBA dual degree students further their educations and pursue careers in entrepreneurial pharmacy. It was awarded for the first time in spring 2017 to student Tyler Bailey.



Watch a video about the Pharm.D./Online MBA program at [youtu.be/uGONM2ErFIA](https://youtu.be/uGONM2ErFIA)



▲ Photo Collage: Top left: Jack H. Smith; right: Lewis H. Smith, Jack's father; bottom left: Suzanne Smith-Fox

Bottom: The family pictured with the recipient of the Jack H. Smith Family Pharmacy Scholarship Morgan Petite, center, Class of 2018.

Above, left: (l-r) Suzanne Smith-Fox, eldest daughter; Jack H. Smith, father; Mary Margaret Jenkins Smith, mother; Margaret Ellen Hamman, youngest sister.

# New Pharmacy Scholarship Honors Longtime West Virginia Pharmacist

WRITTEN BY HANNA D'ENTREMONT

**When Suzanne and Timothy Fox decided to establish a scholarship to help support pharmacy students at their alma mater, they had a very special person in mind — Suzanne's father.**

Suzanne describes her father, Jack Smith, Class of 1956, as a great pharmacist with a charming attitude and a million-dollar smile. She says her father believed in community involvement, quality citizenship and a passion for education. To carry on Smith's legacy, the Fox's established the Jack H. Smith Family Pharmacy Scholarship and requested that it be awarded to a qualifying student who possesses similar qualities to her father.

"He would be very humbled [by the scholarship]. Education, Pharmacy, WVU — those were all things that were very important to Daddy," said Suzanne.

The endowed scholarship also honors Jack's father (Suzanne's grandfather), who was a pharmacist in Parkersburg, West Virginia.

With a corporate match from Tim's company, T. Rowe Price Group, the couple was able to make a combined gift totaling \$25,000. Preference will be given to West Virginia residents, but the scholarship may be awarded to any student who fits the description.

Suzanne and Tim grew up in Fairmont, West Virginia, where Suzanne's father practiced as a pharmacist. Tim is a 1979 graduate of the College of Business and Economics. Suzanne is a 1981 School of Pharmacy graduate. Jack's wife, Mary Margaret, Class of 1955, and another daughter, Margaret Ellen, Class of 1983, both graduated from WVU with degrees in Elementary Education.

Suzanne and Timothy are major supporters of the University and big believers in giving students a quality education. Their gift was made to the WVU Foundation in conjunction with A State of Minds: The Campaign for West Virginia's University, which continues through December 2017. ♡

# New Faces in the School of Pharmacy



**Lexie Bramer** is the college recruitment specialist for the West Virginia University School of Pharmacy. During her studies at WVU, Bramer shared her love of the University with prospective students and their families as a tour leader and graduate assistant for the WVU Visitors Center. She was also an intern and traveling admissions representative for the WVU Office of Admissions. Bramer can be reached through the School's Office of Student

Services regarding any questions about admissions to the WVU School of Pharmacy.



**Wei Du, MD, PhD**, is an assistant professor in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences and a member of the WVU Cancer Institute in the Alexander B. Osborn Hematopoietic Malignancy and Transplantation program. Dr. Du originally trained as a physician in China, and was then selected as an exchange student to study in Japan. After receiving her PhD in pediatric oncology from Tohoku University in Japan, she completed postdoctoral

training at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. Before joining WVU, she was a faculty member of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. Dr. Du's research is focused on molecular analysis of abnormal hematopoiesis, primarily on the molecular pathogenesis of bone marrow failure and leukemia. Her research has been published in over 30 peer-reviewed articles and has contributed to the understanding of the pathophysiology of cancer-prone diseases, including Fanconi anemia.



**Megan Elavsky, PharmD**, is a clinical assistant professor in the West Virginia University School of Pharmacy Department of Clinical Pharmacy. She is a graduate of the Northeast Ohio Medical University and completed a PGY-1 pharmacy practice residency at Carolinas Medical Center followed by a PGY-2 geriatrics residency at the Louis Stokes Cleveland Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Dr. Elavsky practices as a family medicine clinical specialist at the

WVU Medicine University Town Centre office, where she provides interdisciplinary care and focuses on COPD, diabetes, anticoagulation and medication therapy management. She also provides services at Sundale Rehabilitation and Long-Term Care aiding with hospice and rehabilitation therapies. Dr. Elavsky's areas of interest include COPD management, deprescribing and polypharmacy, as well as interdisciplinary education. She is active on the national level for the American Society of Health System Pharmacists as a member of the New Practitioners Forum Career Development Advisory Group.



**Ahmad Hanif, PhD**, is a new faculty member in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences. He received his bachelor's degree in pharmacy in 1998 from the University of Jordan College of Pharmacy and obtained his PhD in Pharmaceutical and Pharmacological Sciences from the WVU School of Pharmacy Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences in 2016. Dr. Hanif has worked in the pharmaceutical industry for 13 years

and was certified by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy in 2006. He has taught pathophysiology and basic and biochemical pharmacology at WVU and was selected for the NIH Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Disease Training Grant appointment. Dr. Hanif's research interests include investigating the protective role of augmenting CYP epoxygenase-EETs pathway against cardiac ischemia and the changes in oxylipins associated with it.



**Kevin Tephabock** is the director of development for the School and has over two decades of progressive development, stewardship and leadership experience. He has served in a number of leadership roles with the American Cancer Society, (ACS) including state vice president for West Virginia, interim vice president for Metro Washington D.C., and most recently as the senior director of primary care systems, overseeing seven states.

Tephabock developed a strong development team at the ACS, which produced over \$50 million during the course of his career. He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from the WVU College of Business and Economics and brings with him a wealth of knowledge in management and fundraising donor and community relations experience.

# Alumni President's Message



Fall in Morgantown is one of my favorite times of the year—colorful leaves, WVU Football and new students who are eager to make a difference in the world. As a faculty member at my alma mater, welcoming new students during the White Coat ceremony brings back warm memories of when I received my first white coat in 2005.

In addition to my duties at the School of Pharmacy, it has been a great honor to serve as your Alumni Association President. This past June, we held our annual Spring Alumni Weekend, when members of the Class of 1967 celebrated their 50th reunion. The event raised money for the Alumni Association Scholarship, with the goal of reaching endowment level.

We also awarded Clarke Ridgway with the WVU School of Pharmacy Outstanding Alumnus Award and Mary Stamatakis with

the Outstanding Service Award for her dedication to the School and her service as interim dean. Dr. Stamatakis was also inducted as an Honorary Alumnae.

This fall, we had our Homecoming celebrations. We broke out our Clarke Ridgway shirts once again, as he was the 2017 recipient of the University's David Jacobs Lifetime Service Award. Not only was he honored on the field at halftime of the WVU-Texas Tech game, but he also participated in the Homecoming parade. Members of the Alumni Association gathered for a parade watch party on High Street. We also had our annual Homecoming tailgate at Mountaineer Field on game day.

If you missed these great events, you'll have another chance in June. You are invited to the School of Pharmacy's Spring Alumni Weekend where we will celebrate everything WVU. Information regarding the activities will be updated on the School of Pharmacy website and on social media, so please stay tuned. We hope to see you there!

### Let's Go Mountaineers!!!

Ashlee McMillan, President, Class of 2009

## New Alumni Association Officers

### President-Elect

Troy Biery '88

### Secretary

Susan Meredith '67

### Treasurer

Scot Anderson, '68

### Alumni Representatives at Large

Abbi Blevins '16

Olivia Kinney '16

### Student Representative

Lori Neely P-3



◀ Class of 1967 celebrates 50th year reunion at 2017 SOP Spring Alumni Weekend.

Center left: A future pharmacist at the 2017 Homecoming tent prepares to cheer on the Mountaineers.

Center right: Alumni, faculty and friends of the School at the 2017 Homecoming parade watch party on High Street.



## WVU School of Pharmacy 2018 Spring Alumni Weekend

June 8-9

Join us for an all-years reunion at Mountaineer Field's Touchdown Terrace on Friday night.

Educational programming is being planned for Saturday.

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter for updates.



◀ WVU Alumni Association President Sean Frisbee and Association Chair Malene Davis, along with WVU President E. Gordon Gee, congratulate Clarke Ridgway, the 2017 David Jacobs Lifetime Service Award winner.

## Class Notes

### 1980s

**Michael J. Ruffing, '83**, was named 2016 Michigan Society of Health-System Pharmacists (MSHP) Pharmacist of the Year.

### 1990s

**Amy (Grogg) Taylor, '99**, was named the 2017 Walmart pharmacy manager of the year for store 6951 in Sutton, West Virginia.

### 2000s

**Ami M. Vyas, '14**, was a recipient of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy 2017 New Investigator Award for her research, "Trajectories of Psychotropic Polypharmacy among Cancer Patients."

**Pramit A. Nadpara, '13**, was a recipient of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy 2017 New Investigator Award for his research, "Duration of First-Line Chemotherapy for Advanced Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer and Survival among the Elderly."

## We'd like to hear from you.

Do you have news to feature in Class Notes? Stay connected by submitting your information online: [pharmacy.hsc.wvu.edu/alumni/alumni-update-news-form/](http://pharmacy.hsc.wvu.edu/alumni/alumni-update-news-form/).

## In Memoriam

The WVU School of Pharmacy wishes to acknowledge our alumni who have recently passed away.

### 1940s

Marion J. Hardwick '48

### 1950s

Christopher Apesos, '52  
Frederick L. Dearman, Sr., '52  
John H. Furbee, '53  
Sarah Zinn Wallace, '53  
Robert J. Watz, '53

### 1960s

Samuel G. Starcher, '66  
Robert B. Lowe, '68

### 1970s

Edward M. Nelson III, '72

### 1980s

Shawn M. Moczek, '84

**Dr. Robert Bruce Lowe, '68**, passed away May 28, 2017. Dr. Lowe was an assistant professor of clinical pharmacy at WVU from May 1971 to July 1976. He also served in a part-time capacity after 1976 as an associate professor. Students may remember Lowe from Pharmacy 211 – Sterile Products, Pharmacy 252 – Institutional Pharmacy Externship, Pharmacy 283 – History of Pharmacy, Pharmacy 293 – Pharmacy Practice and Pharmacy 297 – Clinical Pharmacy. In addition to teaching, Lowe served as the faculty advisor for the Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity and was the 1974-1975 vice president and 1975-1976 president of the School's Alumni Association.

**Thomas M. McIntire, '71**, passed away June 15, 2016. He was a clinical instructor from 1998 to 2010. Students may remember McIntire from learning to make troches, lollipops and other medications, as well as learning to compound sterile products in his instructional labs. He also taught the Pharmacy Automation elective. McIntire expressed his enjoyment for working with students by volunteering as a referee for the American Pharmacists Month Flag Football games. He was a loyal School of Pharmacy alumnus and repeatedly helped the School's Alumni Association by taking photographs each year at the Alumni Association banquets.

# Future Pharmacists

**Calling all new moms, dads, and grandparents! Have you recently had a little bundle of joy arrive at your home?** The WVU School of Pharmacy wants to know! Please send an e-mail with news about your baby or grandchild to Christa Currey at [christa.currey@hsc.wvu.edu](mailto:christa.currey@hsc.wvu.edu) to receive a "Future Pharmacist" baby shirt (shirt is only available in size 6 months). In exchange, we ask that you send a photo of your new "Future Pharmacist" to include in the next issue of The Showglobe.



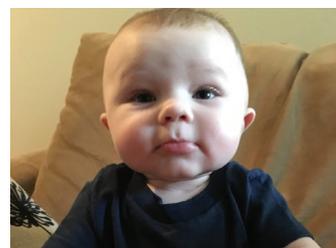
Jakob William Abel is the Future Pharmacist of **Erik Abel, '06**, and his wife. Jakob joins his big brother, Lukas.



**John Dolan, '10**, and his wife, Ashley, are proud to present their Future Pharmacist, Emmaline Mae.



**Brianne (Lykins) Fairchild, '03**, and her husband, Shane Fairchild, are proud to present their Future Pharmacist, Savannah Faith Fairchild.



Jaxson Gandee, born November 24, 2015, is the Future Pharmacist of **Vanessa (Law) Gandee, '12**, and Richard Gandee.

# Future Pharmacists



Luke Garofoli is the Future Pharmacist of WVU School of Pharmacy faculty members **Drs. Gretchen and Mark Garofoli**.



William Joseph Goldman is the Future Pharmacist of **Lindsey (Koliscak) Goldman, '09**, and Matthew Goldman.



**Chris Gianni, '11**, and his wife, Chelsea, are proud to present their Future Pharmacist, Maxwell Christopher Gianni.



**Leah (Glasgow) Hall, '11**, and her husband Joshua, welcomed their Future Pharmacist, Noah, in September 2016.



Zoriona Rasicci is the Future Pharmacist of **Brandy (Hukill) Rasicci, '11**, and her husband.



**April (Tomlinson) Jafari, '09** and her husband, Tony, are proud to present their Future Pharmacist, Aubrey Shae.



**Ben Lopez, '08**, and his wife are proud to present their Future Pharmacist, Jonathan Bowie Lopez.



Joslyn Jade McGraw, born November 12, 2015, is the Future Pharmacist of **Amanda Shrewsbury-McGraw, '13** and her husband David.



**Holly (Evans) Mick, '10**, and her husband, **Jeff Mick, '06**, are proud to present their Future Pharmacist, Deacon James Mick.



**Pam (Spohn) Murdock, '05**, and her husband, Ed, are proud to present their Future Pharmacist, Ava Lani, born January 30, 2015.



**Jessica (Wolfe) Peaslee, '09**, and her husband, Justin, are proud to present their Future Pharmacist, Lucas Tyler Peaslee. Lucas joined his older sister, Maria, on February 17, 2016.



Cooper John Perdue is the Future Pharmacist of **Jaison Perdue, '10** and his wife.



**Gretchen (Peirce) Semsick, MS '11**, and her husband Joshua, are proud to present their Future Pharmacist, Dagny Louise Semsick. Dagny joins her big brother, Forrest.



Kimberly Victoria Sigley is the Future Pharmacist of **Melisa (Keenan) Sigley, '07**, and her husband, Claude.



Miles Trickett is the Future Pharmacist of **Hannah (Chambers) Trickett, '10**, and her husband, Randall. Miles is wearing his big sister Everly's Future Pharmacist shirt.



**Casey Watts, '08**, and his wife, Kendra, are proud to present their fourth Future Pharmacist, Maggie Rebekah Anne Watts. In September 2015, Maggie joined big sisters Allie, Lucy, and Emma.



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WVU is an EEO/Affirmative Action Employer — Minority/Female/Disability/Veteran. The WVU Board of Governors is the governing body of WVU. The Higher Education Policy Commission in West Virginia is responsible for developing, establishing and overseeing the implementation of a public policy agenda for the state's four year colleges and universities. WVU is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Many WVU programs hold specialized accreditation.

# DOCTOR OF PHARMACY

## WVU SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

**6** AREAS OF  
OPPORTUNITY  
FOR CAREER  
SPECIALIZATION

CONDUCT RESEARCH AT AN

**R1**

DOCTORAL UNIVERSITY,  
THE HIGHEST RESEARCH  
ACTIVITY AS DESCRIBED  
BY THE CARNEGIE  
CLASSIFICATION OF  
INSTITUTIONS OF  
HIGHER EDUCATION.

**104**  
YEARS OF  
EDUCATING  
PHARMACISTS

**96%** ON-TIME  
GRADUATION  
RATE

**4,000+** ALUMNI

**TOP 20%**  
RANKING IN PHARMACY SCHOOLS NATIONWIDE  
BY U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

**4**  
NUMBER OF  
INTERNATIONAL  
ROTATION  
EXPERIENCES  
AVAILABLE