

Spring 2018

NSU Sharks Rx-Spring, 2018

College of Pharmacy

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SHARKS

SPRING 2018

X NSU College of Pharmacy



YEARS OF
EXCELLENCE
AND
INNOVATION



SHARKS

Volume 4, Number 1

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Upcoming Events

May 5–6

Continuing Education—The 29th annual Contemporary Pharmacy Issues for Pharmacists and 29th annual Contemporary Pharmacy Issues for Pharmacy Technicians and alumni lunch/social at the NSU Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus

July 12–15

Florida Pharmacy Association annual meeting in Bonita Springs, Florida

July 20–22

Continuing Education—Physical Assessment Institute in Patient Care Management and alumni lunch/social at the NSU Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus

July 21–25

American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy annual meeting in Boston, Massachusetts

August 3–5

Florida Society of Health—System Pharmacists annual meeting in Orlando, Florida

November 2

College of Pharmacy Alumni Homecoming Reunion at the NSU Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus

November 3–4

Continuing Education—Fall Classic and alumni lunch/social at the NSU Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus

For more information about continuing education events, please visit pharmacy.nova.edu/ce, email pharmce@nova.edu, or call (954) 262-1328. To learn more about alumni events, visit pharmacy.nova.edu/alumni, email copalumni@nova.edu, or call (954) 262-1380.

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Dean's Message



IN THIS ISSUE of *SharksRx*, we proudly highlight accomplishments of our students, faculty and staff members, and alumni. Success comes in many forms, but our high achievers all possess laudable qualities, including a strong work ethic with great motivation to succeed. This combination of traits, now commonly referred to as grit, helps separate great performers from the pack, more so than natural talent.

As we celebrate the NSU College of Pharmacy's 30th anniversary, symbolized by a pearl, we proudly review our tremendous growth and development over the years as a tribute to all those who had the vision and grit to ensure our success in so many ways.

What started as a "pearl" of an idea is now one of the largest colleges of pharmacy in Florida and Puerto Rico, providing professional, research, and leadership training to more than 1,100 students at four campuses. Under the leadership of inaugural dean G. Joseph Norwood, Ph.D., and successive deans William Hardigan, Ph.D., Andrés Malavé, Ph.D., and myself, the college has continued to thrive.

Today, we offer four professional and graduate degrees: the Pharm.D., a Ph.D. in Pharmaceutical Sciences, an M.S. in Pharmaceutical Affairs, and an M.S. in Pharmaceutical Sciences. Our new Pharm.D. curriculum, to be introduced in fall 2018, will provide students with an innovative program of study grounded in patient care and drug delivery, while integrating leadership and professional development, to educate a new generation of pharmacy practitioners. Our innovative programs, curricula, research, and leadership development programs will be the standard other colleges strive to achieve.

The College of Pharmacy provides students with myriad curricular and cocurricular opportunities to help find their individual passions and guide them toward their professional pathways. Wide-ranging experiences—including participation in student organizations, travel study, international advanced pharmacy practice experiences, research, medical outreach trips, health fairs, residency preparation, dual degrees, educational symposia, and leadership development—help our students find their true passions. We are especially excited about the opening of our CareerRx Center, which is providing students individualized career guidance to empower their success.

As we celebrate the successes of our pharmacy family, we thank all our alumni and friends who help us help our students find their passion.

We love to hear from you, so keep us updated with your information and share your stories of success and achievement at copalumni@nova.edu.

Shark Pride!



Lisa M. Deziel, Pharm.D., Ph.D.
Dean, College of Pharmacy
Nova Southeastern University

Interim Chancellor's Communiqué



NSU'S HEALTH PROFESSIONS DIVISION (HPD) has evolved into one of the largest and most comprehensive health care education institutions in the United States, comprising 8 unique colleges and more than 60 degree and certificate programs.

In late January, NSU announced the attainment of significant financial gifts, which resulted in the renaming of two HPD colleges. The College of Allopathic Medicine became the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine, while the College of Nursing was renamed the Ron and Kathy Assaf College of Nursing. This altruistic trend continued in February 2018, when a significant gift from Martin and Gail Press resulted in the renaming of the HPD Library.

From our newest college, the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine, to our oldest, the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine, each college enhances NSU's esteem by providing high levels of innovation and distinctiveness. The allopathic college, which is already in the process of matriculating its inaugural class, will offer students an innovative model of teaching and practicing medicine.

The osteopathic college, established in 1979, is distinguished by its hallmark D.O. program, but it also consists of five master's programs and one bachelor's program—with more on the horizon. Similarly, the Dr. Pallavi Patel College of Health Care Sciences has experienced explosive growth, with 10 distinct health care disciplines and 29 degree programs represented among its academic offerings.

The College of Pharmacy continues to push the envelope regarding innovation. To provide its students with the most up-to-date training, the college is launching a new Pharm.D. curriculum in August, which will focus on patient care and drug delivery and integrate leadership and professional development principles.

To provide its students with the best hands-on training possible, the College of Optometry upgraded its Ophthalmic Optics/Contact Lens Lab and the Pediatrics/Low Vision Lab. Its Procedures Lab also was transformed with new exam rooms that include electronic presentation capabilities and video slit lamps, as well as a room with procedure simulation equipment.

In 2017, 12 students and 2 faculty members from the College of Dental Medicine were inducted into the Omicron Kappa Upsilon Chi Psi chapter, the national dental honor society. Additionally, the college's faculty members are conducting cutting-edge research in areas such as diseases that develop bone lytic lesions.

The Ron and Kathy Assaf College of Nursing has much to be proud of as well. Its Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Program achieved a 100 percent pass rate on the state licensure exam in the 2016–2017 academic year, while its Entry B.S. in Nursing Program has an average state licensure exam rate of 98 percent throughout the college's three campuses.

These ongoing achievements enhance our growth, visibility, and position in the health professions marketplace.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Irving Rosenbaum', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Irving Rosenbaum, D.P.A., Ed.D., M.P.A.
Interim Chancellor
Health Professions Division

Celebrating



Years of Excellence

By Arnie Rosenberg

IN APRIL 1987, Robert Colosimo, Pharm.D. ('91), had just graduated from Florida Atlantic University. He wanted to pursue a pharmacy degree, but he was sure it was too late to think about either of Florida's two pharmacy colleges—the University of Florida or Florida A&M University.

Then he heard about a fledgling program beginning that fall at Southeastern College of Pharmacy in North Miami Beach, Florida. Still, he figured, it was too late to apply for the same year. But he gave it a shot. "I interviewed,

filled out the application, and paid my fees on a Monday," he recalled. "I went home and got my letter of acceptance on Wednesday."

It was that easy to become one of the 49 members of the charter class of what was to become the Nova Southeastern University College of Pharmacy (NSU COP). Now, as the college marks its 30th anniversary, Colosimo is a manager of a Walmart pharmacy in Pembroke Pines, Florida, and his classmates are established in pharmacy positions in South Florida and across the country.

Members of the charter class and some 150 other alumni, faculty members, administrators, and friends celebrated this milestone on November 4, 2017, with poolside cocktails and an anniversary program at the DoubleTree Resort in Hollywood, Florida.

“The pressure was on us to succeed,” said Mark Youngross, B.S. ('90), another charter class member and a Walgreens pharmacy manager in Deerfield Beach, Florida. “We needed to pass, and the professors needed us to graduate for the college to become fully accredited, so it was a symbiotic relationship.”

While some NSU pharmacists encountered a healthy dose of stigma and skepticism in the profession in those early years—Youngross still remembers hearing, “Well, it’s not a real school” and “Well, you’re not a real pharmacist”—others remember those times differently.

“We took it as a challenge that people felt we could not be successful,” said Frederick Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D., NSU’s interim executive vice president and chief operating officer and a founder of the COP. “Rather than trying to prove we could be successful, we challenged ourselves to show people we were right, that there was a tremendous need, and that we were going to obligate ourselves to filling the void.”

That void was the lack of a pharmacy college in fast-growing South Florida. The new pharmacy program was the first approved in the United States in 18 years. Indeed, the vision of those founders has been proven right over the past 30 years.

“The profession today has the highest regard for our program,” said Lippman, “because our graduates have shown the quality of their education in their careers through industry-distribution pharmacy, hospital management, and hospital pharmacies. They’re at the highest levels of reputation.”

While the NSU COP has looked with pride at the achievements of its alumni throughout its 30 years, a culture shift has brought new recognition to the program, according to the college’s dean, Lisa Deziel, Pharm.D., Ph.D. Today, research—which is a key to funding—is a critical component of what the college does.

“As a younger, new school without research infrastructure, we weren’t able to compete for federal funding, and funding is one way schools are ranked,” she said. “Now, the university has the necessary research infrastructure, and faculty members know if they’re going to work here, research is an expectation that’s positive for their individual development, for the college, and for our students.”

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“We took it as a challenge that people felt we could not be successful. Rather than trying to prove we could be successful, we challenged ourselves to show people we were right, that there was a tremendous need, and that we were going to obligate ourselves to filling the void.”

— **Frederick Lippman**
NSU interim executive vice president
and chief operating officer



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“We have a good reputation. People just don’t know the breadth of what we offer. But, I find when I get people on campus, they’re very impressed by our faculty members, students, facilities, resources, education, and projects. We’re starting to see more collaborations with other universities and research organizations.”

—Lisa Deziel, dean

According to Deziel, increasing research, greater faculty and alumni participation in committees, and more faculty members and alumni in leadership roles in national organizations create greater visibility for the college. That greater awareness also feeds the entire university’s fund-raising efforts.

All these efforts boost initiatives, such as NSU’s Realizing Potential philanthropic campaign, which recently surpassed its goal to raise \$250 million by 2020 to benefit students and faculty members and support a progressive 21st-century education across all colleges.

Deziel lamented that, even after 30 years, many people still don’t recognize the complexity of the COP and all it offers. She proselytizes among all of NSU’s other colleges, deans, and faculties and encourages everyone at the college to do the same.

“We have a good reputation. People just don’t know the breadth of what we offer. That’s been the struggle,” Deziel explained. “But I find when I get people on campus, they’re very impressed by our faculty members, students, facilities, resources, education, and projects. We’re starting to see more collaborations with other universities and research organizations.”


The College of Pharmacy recently completed a new strategic plan, which Deziel hopes leads to greater national recognition and all the benefits that come along with it.

“What I would like to see is that students come here because they look at the opportunities, and they say, ‘That’s the school that’s going to get me where I want to go,’ as opposed to the school closest to home—or near the beach in Fort Lauderdale,” she said. “I want to be a destination college where people come because we can help create their futures, and we can help them be what they want to be.”

“We love to have our residents report that they compete well with graduates from other schools.”

—Lisa Deziel

One of the advantages of being a large pharmacy school with a complicated set of logistics is that we have the faculty and the infrastructure to help all of those students.”

Deziel added, “As faculty, the greatest achievement is to see our students graduate and be very successful alumni. And, we are, in fact, seeing our alumni be very successful within the profession,” she said proudly. “We love to have our residents report that they compete well with graduates from other schools. You know then they had a sense, too, that they had a quality education.” 

“Good news is seldom as good as we think it will be when we first hear it, and bad news is seldom as bad. Life has a way of evening things out.”

—Jean Latimer, Ph.D.



Clear skies, cocktails by the Intracoastal Waterway, and catching up with old friends. It was the perfect setting to celebrate the college's 30th anniversary. NSU COP was proud to host the third annual Alumni Homecoming Reunion on November 4, 2017, at the DoubleTree Resort in Hollywood, Florida.

More than 150 alumni and guests celebrated while enjoying drinks and appetizers with former classmates and some of their favorite faculty members. Thanks to generous sponsors, the college raised funds to celebrate the value of community, honor extraordinary achievements in pharmacy education, and benefit pharmacy scholarships.



Members of the charter class—and Lisa Deziel, dean, far left—are shown at the 30th-anniversary celebration.



Alumni and the dean are pictured at the 30th-anniversary celebration.

Dean Envisions a New Path

By Arnie Rosenberg



Lisa Deziel, Pharm.D., Ph.D., was no newcomer to the College of Pharmacy when she became dean in 2013.

For 24 years, she had been a faculty member, as well as executive associate dean, interim dean, and assistant dean. She even previously declined consideration to be appointed dean in order to spend more time with her young daughter.

Now, after five years at the helm, Deziel not only looks back at what she has accomplished and how the college has grown but also looks forward to the path she has helped set for the College of Pharmacy into the future. It's marked by greater visibility for the college, a quest for innovation, and continued opportunities for students.

“Where we have been successful, and where we shine, is our willingness to push boundaries to look at innovative projects and invest in them,” said Deziel, pointing to the Accountable Care Organization project, which puts faculty members in physician offices, as one example. Other points of pride include a contract with Correct Care Solutions to run the pharmacy at South Florida State Hospital, the successful operation of NSU’s own community pharmacy, a recent contract to provide services for the Independent Colleges and Universities Benefits Association, continued use of video-conferencing, innovation in research, and new degree programs.

For students, innovation also means the advanced-standing Pharm.D. program for international pharmacy graduates, creation of a student career-advising program, global travel opportunities, and beginning in August, a block curriculum that will deliver students the same academic content but in a way that’s pedagogically very different, Deziel said.

Her work as dean doesn’t go unnoticed, both within NSU and outside. “She’s a star of stars,” said Frederick Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D., interim executive vice president and chief operating officer, who was a founder of the College of Pharmacy. “She’s got tremendous respect from her faculty and staff. The hardest thing to do in any business, particularly in the field of education, is to create stability and the highest level of educational morale. We’ve adapted new methods of teaching into the way we present our programs, and she has been able to hold onto that rudder through all those changes. And, that makes her not only a star up front, but also the stabilizer at the back end.”

Recognition of Deziel’s contributions as dean also comes from beyond NSU. “It’s really a feat that she is able to lead so well, and a testament to her leadership style and skills that she is able to continue to move four campuses forward, to continue to innovate and have a global view of the world, and yet support and encourage faculty to do things within the community,” said Ruth Nemire, Pharm.D., Ed.D., associate executive vice president of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. Nemire,

If you’re not going to take risks,
even if you’re really good,
you’re going to get passed by
the visionaries who are willing
to take on innovative projects.”

—Lisa Deziel, dean



a former College of Pharmacy faculty member and administrator for nearly 10 years, said Deziel has done a great job, especially in handling distance-education programs.

For her part, Deziel said the past five years have taught her to be a team builder and a risk taker. “As dean, I’ve learned the importance of having a very strong team around me, and I’m lucky to have that here. I’ve learned you have to take risks. If you’re not going to take risks, even if you’re really good, you’re going to get passed by the visionaries who are willing to take on innovative projects,” she explained. “By supporting risk and innovation, NSU has allowed us to create an exciting and growth-positive environment for faculty members and students alike. It’s constantly changing, and I wouldn’t want to work anywhere else.” 🍷



Surviving Hurricane Maria: Puerto Rico Regional Campus Stands Strong

Just months after a Category 4 hurricane struck Puerto Rico, NSU's College of Pharmacy campus on the island is standing sturdier than ever.

By Anika Reed

WHEN HURRICANE MARIA formed in September 2017, Puerto Rico was directly in the storm's path of destruction and received the brunt of the damage. The island had just been hit by Hurricane Irma two weeks prior, so Hurricane Maria's onslaught was even more devastating.

"A Category 4 hurricane was not something easy at all," said third-year Pharm.D. student Ariel Tarraza Santos. "It was hard for a lot of students to retain their communication." Faculty and staff members had just hours to help secure the campus, including computers and equipment, before evacuating to prepare their own homes before the storm.

Blanca Ortiz, Pharm.D. ('03), assistant dean, and Enrique Nieves, Ph.D., professor of pharmaceutical sciences, were among the last faculty members on campus the day before the storm reached Puerto Rico. "There are no words to describe what things looked like the day after the hurricane," Ortiz said. "I couldn't even recognize the area. I passed by the school twice. That's how bad the area was."

"We didn't have Internet, and we didn't have mobile signals either. It was a mess," Nieves said about the time after the storm passed.

Of course, the campus wasn't the only place affected by the storm. Hurricane Maria decimated people's homes, stripped the island of power, and made transportation and communication nearly impossible. "I personally didn't have power or water for almost 42 days after the hurricane," Tarraza Santos said. "Everyone here has some kind of damage at home, too," Nieves said. "NSU was nothing compared to what people suffered at home."

Still, the students and faculty and staff members found the strength to continue with their educational mission. "The faculty members here have been working really hard to keep us on schedule," said Tarraza Santos. "We're here, and we're stronger than ever."

Because of the amount of time the campus was closed following the storm, the College of Pharmacy students have to complete their academic requirements in a significantly shortened period. "We're trying to cover everything from 16 weeks into 8 or 9 weeks," Tarraza Santos pointed out.

"When we came after the storm, I thought that it was going to be impossible to finish the semester," Ortiz said. "I have to confess that when I saw all the devastation, I cried, because I remembered my promise to the students that we were going to be able to finish the semester. I thought for a while that I wasn't going to be able to keep that promise. We had to do something beyond expectations, and we had to act really quickly to save the semester."

Faculty and staff members had just hours to help secure the campus, including computers and equipment, before evacuating to prepare their own homes before the storm.

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▲ A makeshift hospital in a basketball arena post Hurricane Maria

▲ Puerto Rico faculty members and students assist refugees at the Caguas Health Fair.



Faculty members and students at the Puerto Rico Regional Campus after Hurricane Maria #PRStrong

Not surprisingly, the faculty is helping the students meet those goals every step of the way. “It took a couple of days until we as a faculty figured out how to take over the semester,” Ortiz said. “We divided the material, and we set a plan to be able to finish the semester even if we didn’t have access to the lectures from the Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus.”

Students have had to reconfigure their lifestyles in order to complete the semester, but the faculty members are also trying to figure out how to move forward. “It’s the same for us. We have to prepare courses that we normally don’t teach,” Nieves said. “We are all students to some extent.”

Faculty members and students were provided copies of the lectures on thumb drives flown to the island on a charter plane provided by the Drs. Kiran & Pallavi Patel Family Foundation, which also delivered basic supplies to the campus. The university provided hot lunches to students daily for weeks after the campus opened post-hurricane, which was often their only hot meal of the day. “Every day, we were provided water and snacks, and we’re really thankful for that,” Tarraza Santos said.

Knowing what he has at stake from firsthand experience, Tarraza Santos remains grateful for all the opportunities he has earned. “I have grown so much in all terms,” he said. “It’s really good to focus on the academics, but also if you have the chance to grow yourself in different areas—for example, the extracurricular activities or the internships—there are a lot of opportunities for students. If you use those opportunities, you grow as a professional and as a student.” 🍷

To provide assistance to students and faculty members at the Puerto Rico Regional Campus still dealing with Hurricane Maria’s impacts, contact Shannon Brown, HPD senior director of development, at sbrown2@nova.edu or at (954) 529-6776.



“Shift your focus from passing the class to learning the material.”

—Rochelle Nappi, Ed.D.

Transforming the Profession Through Legislation

How One Alumnus Is Making Health Care
More Effective and Economical

By Lona O'Connor



JOHAN MICHAEL O'BRIEN, Pharm.D. ('00), deftly guides his audience of pharmacy students through a thicket of algorithms and acronyms. Somehow, he transforms what could have been a dry dissertation into a breathtaking adventure.

In January 2017, O'Brien started as deputy assistant secretary for health policy at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Directing a staff of 55, he is one of the people making health care policy on Medicare, Medicaid, private insurance, and prescription drugs. His mission is nothing less than to make health care both effective and economical—one of the most difficult tasks of the 21st century.

He began that mission as a pharmacy student at NSU. "I became a pharmacist because my mom got sick when I was a kid," he told the NSU pharmacy students. "I watched prescription drugs make a real difference in my mother's life."

He also noticed right away that paying for prescription drugs is as important as which drug is used. His career in the private and public spheres has been devoted to analyzing and controlling those costs. In his role as deputy assistant secretary, he and his staff analyze those costs and make recommendations to the secretary of health and human services. "For example, if the Medicare program wanted to make a change, my department would do the financial projections on the cost of that change," O'Brien said.

Earlier in his career, when he worked in the pharmaceutical industry, he played a key role in helping states implement the Medicare prescription program, which began in 2006. At the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the job he held before going to the Department of Health and Human Services in January 2017, he launched a patient safety initiative, helping 3,500 hospitals prevent hospital-acquired infections.

While working at the CMS, he also helped change payment incentives. "We saved billions of dollars and millions of lives," he said. "I saw what a difference that made. Not only did my mom get drug coverage, but 90 percent of the seniors in this country got drug coverage, too."

"We saved billions of dollars and millions of lives. I saw what a difference that made. Not only did my mom get drug coverage, 90 percent of the seniors in this country got drug coverage, too."

—John Michael O'Brien

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“Think outside the pharmacy. The things you’re learning are incredibly important, but there are so many other things that will affect your patients, like payment and reimbursement and changing technology.”

—John Michael O’Brien



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His aunt, a gerontologist, told him when he was a teenager that the baby boom generation would soon make the financial issues absolutely critical. His first job was as a driver for a pharmacist in Palm Bay, Florida, where he delivered hospital beds and other medical equipment. “I noticed that what Charlie [the pharmacist] got paid often depended on what the state thought he should be paid.”

O’Brien had found his calling. “When I found myself in pharmacy school, always at the back of my mind was paying for prescriptions,” he said.

While at NSU, alumni Joy Marcus, Pharm.D. (’92), and Betty Jean Harris, Pharm.D. (’94), among others, recognized O’Brien’s skills and ambition and encouraged his interest in policy, for which he is still grateful. “I’m so lucky to have graduated from here,” he told the students.

In fact, O’Brien still displays his NSU Distinguished Alumnus award in his office. “It’s awesome,” he said. “It looks like a national championship trophy.”

With encouragement from Harris and Marcus, he applied to the American Medical Student Association (AMSA) for an internship that normally only accepted medical students. The AMSA interviewers were impressed, naming O’Brien the first pharmaceutical student to

receive that internship. “I got Potomac fever,” he told the students. “I went back every summer and worked on every project, but I tended to focus on policy.”

He arrived in Washington, D.C., at a watershed moment. In 2003, O’Brien worked on the Medicare Modernization Act and saw it go into effect three years later. During his career, he has shaved billions of dollars off health care costs—and he has the plaques on the wall to prove it. “When I was working in the pharmaceutical industry, we played a big role in helping states implement the Medicare prescription program,” he said. “We helped seniors sign up.”

He told the students to see opportunities everywhere. At his graduation, then-governor Jeb Bush spotted *JEB* painted on the mortarboard of O’Brien, who was a fan. When O’Brien approached to accept his diploma, Bush bear-hugged O’Brien and asked him what his career plans were.

“I hope to someday work for your brother (then-president George W. Bush),” replied O’Brien, while the line of graduates backed up behind him and the procession ground to a halt.

O’Brien urged the pharmacy students to “think outside the pharmacy. The things you’re learning are incredibly

important, but there are so many other things that will affect your patients, like payment and reimbursement and changing technology,” he said.

One of the many ways pharmacists can serve is in an accountable care organization (ACO), which works with physicians to improve patient health and save money. The ACO focuses medical groups’ efforts on patients with hypertension, asthma, diabetes, and other conditions that improve when patients are shown how to care for themselves. “If you can lower their spending by 2 or 3 percent, they give you a bonus,” O’Brien said.



John Michael O'Brien chats with Tom Price, former U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, at the Capitol.

He also told them about his own lessons in humility, quoting one of the Kappa Psi rules “There is no duty too large or too small.”

“Don’t think you’re too big to answer a telephone or make copies,” O’Brien added. He confessed that he learned this lesson the hard way. When someone asked him the difference between an intern and a fellow, he shot back, “I’m a fellow. I don’t make copies.” His manager overheard the flip remark and informed him the next day that he did indeed make copies.

Working in Washington, D.C., provided unique experiences. One day, another boss wanted him to get off the

phone and run an errand. O’Brien refused to hang up. Later, defending his apparently rude behavior in the boss’s office, he explained that he couldn’t hang up in the middle of briefing the surgeon general of the United States on a sterile syringe program for drug users. “That was an experience most students don’t have, an experience beyond anything I would have expected,” he said.

Even at the top of the heap in his field, O’Brien remains just a little starstruck. Besides having photos of himself with Jeb Bush, former vice president Joe Biden, and former secretary of health and human services Tom Price, he admitted to being thrilled just bumping into another former secretary of health and human services, Donna Shalala, in the hall at work. Later, he got his photo taken with her, too.

Pharmacy is changing rapidly, and pharmacists need to concentrate on the big picture for the sake of their own professional futures, O’Brien said. “I don’t want you to be in the place where your livelihood goes away because of technological innovation. I want you to create the new opportunity or ride the wave of that opportunity,” he explained. After his speech, O’Brien good-naturedly remained for 30 minutes of posing with the students for group photos, including making the NSU Shark fin sign with raised arms. Because he was president of NSU’s inaugural chapter of Kappa Psi, he sported what he called an “old-school” Kappa Psi pin on his lapel.

“He gave us a different perspective on the pharmacy profession,” said Raju Rajan, a third-year pharmacy student and a member of the dean’s ambassador student group, which represents the dean at events and networks with alumni. “He showed us the business and financial aspect. He also showed us how much innovation there is and how any of us can do it,” he added. 🍷



“Hard work, perseverance, and time-management skills are key ingredients for success.”

—Yesenia Prados, Pharm.D.

Our **30-Year** Foundation Guiding our Future



1987

Southeastern College of Pharmacy [SECO] admits its first class.



1988

SECO becomes Southeastern University of the Health Sciences [SEUHS].



Beyond 2018

Transforming the profession with innovation, entrepreneurship scholarship, research, and more.



2018

The new entry-level curriculum is unveiled.



2017

The M.S. in Pharmaceutical Sciences is established.



2016

The M.S. in Pharmaceutical Affairs is launched.



2015

The college receives eight-year accreditation.



2010

The Ph.D. in Pharmaceutical Sciences admits its first class. The Healing and Medicinal Garden and Reflexology Pathway are launched.



1994

Nova University and SEUHS merge to form Nova Southeastern University.



1995

The college offers its first continuing pharmacy education program.



1998

Postbaccalaureate program is established for pharmacists.



2000

The distance campus in Palm Beach County opens.



2001

The Puerto Rico Regional Campus opens in Ponce, Puerto Rico.



2002

The Advanced Standing Program for international pharmacy graduates launches.



2009

The Dean's Ambassador Program is founded.



2007

The inaugural Travel Study Program to China is established.





Alumna and Students: REALIZING THEIR POTENTIAL

By Anika Reed

Lianjie Xiong, Pharm.D. ('10), Diliam Jouve Gonzalez ('19), and Ariel Tarraza Santos ('19) are turning their academics into action. Just three of countless students at NSU's College of Pharmacy who have overcome obstacles to achieve their career goals, Xiong, Jouve Gonzalez, and Tarraza Santos have broken down barriers with the help of faculty and staff members, their peers, and their families. All three agreed that NSU provided them with the resources to excel in their areas of expertise and equipped them with the necessary experiences and research opportunities to do so.

"Right after I finish the curriculum in the program, I will definitely be completely confident that all the things I have learned, I will use them in a great way when I'm working," Tarraza Santos said.



Xiong

The advanced standing program for international students allowed Xiong to get into the pharmacy field in the U.S. Originally from China, Xiong earned her Pharm.D. degree from NSU in 2010. "The program was very vigorous because it was only two-and-a-half-years," Xiong said.

Fortunately, with the financial support of generous family members she completed her degree. "It was my sister and her husband who supported me through pharmacy school," Xiong said. "And I studied really, really hard."

Xiong hit a stumbling block, however, when she couldn't continue her academic pursuits without a green card. "I was an international student, so I couldn't do anything because of my visa status," she said. "Although I started to get the green card process going, the process is hard to predict." Xiong had to wait more than a year to get her green card, but she didn't falter in her commitment to continuing her quest toward pharmacy.

Xiong credits NSU with setting her on the right path to continue studying for her PGY1 and PGY2 residencies. “Those pharmacotherapy courses laid a super solid foundation for me to build up from there,” she said. “It’s a good knowledge base, so I really appreciate the faculty for those courses.” Despite financial and other challenges, she moved forward with her PGY1 residency at Palmetto Health Richland in Columbia, South Carolina, and is now completing her PGY2 residency at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee.



Gonzalez

Born and raised in Havana, Cuba, Jouve Gonzalez left her home country at age 18 to move to Austria for school before landing an opportunity to come to the United States. “I never knew I wanted to be a pharmacist. In fact, I was in Austria to study international business,” she said. “Once

I came here, I wasn’t able to start college right away. I went for a little course they were offering in Miami Dade, and I applied as a pharmacy technician. After volunteering for 600 hours at Walgreens, I got hired.”

Working at Walgreens allowed her to focus on one of her most beloved aspects of pharmacy: connecting with people. “Being there in the community pharmacy is something I started to like. That’s when I started to do all my prerequisites and ended up in the pharmacy school,” she said.

Spending time away from her mother and her grandmother in Cuba has been a struggle for Jouve Gonzalez. “While I’m in school, I have to work so I can sustain them,” she said. “There are people who depend on me, and that puts even more pressure on me.”

That pressure extends to completing a pharmacy degree. “You come from another country, and this isn’t your first

language,” Jouve Gonzalez said. “There were days that were very tough for me. It was very overwhelming.”

That feeling of being overwhelmed, however, has been alleviated with the help of NSU faculty members and a scholarship she earned to assist with financial difficulties. “Once, I decided to see one of the professors, and he was so understanding. All the professors are there to listen to you and help you with what you need,” she said.

Jouve Gonzalez has gone on to become president of Rho Chi, the academic honor society in pharmacy, and is an international student ambassador for NSU and the University of Havana in Cuba.




Santos

Earning a pharmacy degree from NSU’s College of Pharmacy is difficult enough on its own. Earning one with an accelerated academic schedule because of a devastating hurricane is nearly impossible. However, Tarraza Santos is making the impossible possible. His fall

semester was interrupted by Hurricane Maria’s devastation at NSU’s Puerto Rico Regional Campus, forcing him and his classmates to complete the fall semester in significantly less time.

“I’m also doing an internship with Kmart, and every Saturday I’m working in the community pharmacy with them,” Tarraza Santos said. “It’s really good experience, because right now, I’m in a pharmacotherapy course.”

Part of his drive comes from his desire to honor his mother’s legacy. His mother, Wanda Santos Marrero, Pharm.D. (’07), a graduate of NSU’s postbaccalaureate program in Puerto Rico, was recently recognized as an invaluable preceptor by the campus.

“To have the opportunity to serve, to help others, it’s my passion,” Tarraza Santos said. “That is why I study pharmacy.” 

College Pride

Travel Study Program Celebrates 10th Anniversary

IN 2007, the College of Pharmacy began the Travel Study Program, with 50 students and faculty members traveling to China to study traditional Chinese medicine. Under the direction of Leanne Lai, Ph.D., professor of sociobehavioral and administrative pharmacy, the program continued to grow, with Lai leading two additional travel study programs to China and Japan.

In 2009, Lai traveled to the United Kingdom and France with 44 students to study homeopathic medicine and the UK health system. “Travel study goes beyond traditional academic experiences and grants our students the opportunity to immerse in a new culture, a new language, and new surroundings,” Lai said.

Travel study programs provide opportunities for students to expand their practical knowledge through interprofessional education, to engage with health care professionals, and to experience diverse cultures. As part of the Slovakia Travel Study Program, students have the opportunity to study topics such as pharmaceutical technology, pharmacognosy, molecular drug design, and botany by visiting the medicinal garden at Comenius University in Bratislava. The Slovakia program has also included cultural and educational visits to exciting cities such as Budapest, Milan, Prague, Rome, and Vienna.

“As a pharmacy educator with more than 20 years of experience in academia, this has been the most rewarding experience I have had,” said Ana Castejon, Ph.D., associate professor of pharmaceutical sciences and coordinator of the Slovakia Travel Study Program. “Exposing my students to global pharmacy is a unique teaching strategy that allows them to appreciate their profession even more as they bond with professionals in the field from around the world.”

In Spain, students learn about the Spanish and European Union health care systems, the drug approval process in the European Union, and the future of health care. They also visit historic sites in Avila, Granada, Madrid, Salamanca, Segovia, and Toledo.

In 2017, the Travel Study Program expanded to Argentina, where students had the opportunity to expand their practical knowledge through hands-on interaction with patients, immerse in the epidemiological profile of the region, and learn about treatment and medication therapies for different pathologies.

Manual J. Carvajal, Ph.D., professor and chair of sociobehavioral and administrative pharmacy, has taken students on several programs to Spain and Argentina. He believes the programs “broaden students’ minds, allowing them to experience how pharmacists work in other parts of the



Travel Study
SPAIN



Travel Study
CHINA

world” and “how different strategies address different health care needs.”

Each year, the program seeks new opportunities to engage students in global pharmacy education. Since 2007, more than 350 students and faculty members have participated in the program. In 2018, the Travel Study Program will return to Spain, providing future pharmacists the opportunity to experience global education, engage in cultural activities, and continue the college’s quest to be known as a global leader that transforms the pharmacy profession. 🍷



College of Pharmacy faculty members and students participate in travel study programs.

College Pride

Employee Milestones

Each year, NSU recognizes employees who have reached milestone years of service. This year, the college is proud to celebrate the following employees who have contributed to growth through their ongoing dedication and commitment to the mission, vision, and core values of the College of Pharmacy.

30 Years



Gloria J. Crawford, secretary, joined the college in September 1987. As the college's longest-serving member, Crawford—or Ms. Gloria, as she is affectionately known—has a deep love for the college and has great affection for the students, faculty and staff members, and administrators with whom she has created deep bonds of friendship. Crawford, who is married with three children and eight grandchildren, has served under the leadership of four deans and is excited to play an important role in the continued growth and success of the college. She also is active in her community and in church activities.

(Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus)

25 Years



Appu Rathinavelu, Ph.D., professor of pharmaceutical sciences, associate dean of institutional planning and development, and executive director of the NSU Rumbaugh-Goodwin Institute for Cancer Research, is a Fulbright scholar and cancer researcher. Rathinavelu holds a U.S. patent and four international patents for the discovery of a small organic molecule called JFD, which is antiangiogenic, meaning it starves tumors and other cancer cells by preventing blood flow that supplies the tumors with oxygen and nutrients.

He also holds a U.S. patent for discovering a molecule called F16, which is more potent and is specifically designed to combat breast cancer and glioblastoma—an aggressive form of brain cancer. An author of more than 40 peer-reviewed research articles, he has served on the editorial board of several scientific journals and committees. In his spare time, Rathinavelu enjoys traveling, golfing, playing tennis, watching movies, and cooking.

(Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus)



Jose A. Rey, Pharm.D., M.S., BCPP, associate professor of pharmacy practice and a board-certified psychiatric pharmacist, is the clinical psychopharmacologist at South Florida State Hospital. His research interests include clinical neuropsychopharmacology, geropsychiatry, psychotropic polypharmacy, pain management with non-opioids, communication disorders, and clinical and pharmacoeconomic outcomes research with antipsychotics and antidepressants.

Rey, a respected presenter at national and international meetings, has published articles, abstracts, book chapters, and reviews in peer-reviewed journals and textbooks. He also is the director of a fully accredited American Society of Health-System Pharmacists residency in psychiatric pharmacy practice and psychopharmacology at NSU. In his spare time, the father of four enjoys coaching soccer and spending time with his wife, Carla Luque, Pharm.D. ['94].

(Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus)

15 Years

Ana M. Castejon, Ph.D.,
associate professor of pharmaceutical sciences
(Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus)

Lillian Arce de Malavé, Pharm.D.,
assistant professor of pharmacy practice
(Puerto Rico Regional Campus)

Miriam C. Metzner, Pharm.D.,
assistant professor of pharmacy practice
(Palm Beach Campus)

William R. Wolowich, Pharm.D.,
assistant professor of pharmacy practice
(Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus)

10 Years

Althea M. Harvey, M.S., research support specialist, Ph.D.
program *(Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus)*

Julie I. Marin, Pharm.D., director of experiential education
and assistant professor of pharmacy practice
(Puerto Rico Regional Campus)

Hossein Omidian, Ph.D., professor of pharmaceutical
sciences *(Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus)*

Silvia E. Rabionet, Ph.D., professor of sociobehavioral
and administrative pharmacy
(Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus)

Marie St. Hubert, financial analyst III
(Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus)

Mislady (Millie) Velez, M.S., director of alumni
development and professional affairs
(Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus)

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College Pride

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5 Years

Aisy Aleu, Pharm.D., clinical assistant professor of pharmacy practice

(Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus)

Mary Ann Andersen, administrative assistant I

(Palm Beach Campus)

Barry A. Bleidt, Ph.D., professor of sociobehavioral and administrative pharmacy

(Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus)

Andrea D. Levin, Pharm.D., assistant professor of pharmacy practice

(Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus)

Jose G. Rocca, Ph.D., clinical assistant professor of pharmaceutical sciences

(Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus)

Ricardo Rodriguez Millan, M.D., instructor/academic facilitator

(Puerto Rico Regional Campus)

LaTia K. Willis, M.S., coordinator of student services/recruitment

(Palm Beach Campus)

Faculty Promotions



Rais Ansari, Ph.D.,
associate professor of
pharmaceutical sciences



Alexandra Perez, Pharm.D., M.S.,
associate professor of
sociobehavioral and
administrative pharmacy



Michelle A. Clark,
Ph.D., professor of
pharmaceutical sciences



Ioana Popovici, Ph.D.,
associate professor of
sociobehavioral and
administrative pharmacy

Notable Publications and Presentations

January–December 2017

Genevieve Hale, Pharm.D., BCPS ('13), assistant professor of pharmacy practice, coauthored two articles that were published in the *Journal of Managed Care and Specialty Pharmacy*. The first article, "Integration Strategies of Pharmacists in Primary Care-Based Accountable Care Organizations: A Report from the Accountable Care Organization Research Network, Services, and Education [ACORN SEED]," was published in the May 2017 issue.

The article was coauthored with **Tina Joseph**, Pharm.D., BCACP, assistant professor of pharmacy practice; **Yesenia Prados**, Pharm.D., BCOG ('14), clinical pharmacist and director of the ATM Center; **Renee Jones**, Pharm.D., CPh, director of pharmacy partnerships and innovations of pharmacy practice; **Matthew Seamon**, Pharm.D., Esq., chair of pharmacy practice; and **Cynthia Moreau**, Pharm.D., BCACP, assistant professor of pharmacy practice.

The second article, "Acclimating to the Increase in Statin Use in Accountable Care Organizations Based on Changes in Quality Measures: A Report from ACORN SEED," was coauthored with alumna **Leah Bensimon**, Pharm.D. ('17), and published in the September 2017 edition.

Jeffrey G. Jurkas, M.B.A., director of student affairs and a member of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy Special Taskforce, coauthored a white paper on "Diversifying Our Investment in Human Capital," which was published in the *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*.

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"Information is power."

—Rais Ansari, Ph.D.

College Pride

(continued from previous page)

Anastasios Lympelopoulos, Ph.D., associate professor of pharmaceutical sciences, coauthored a textbook chapter, “Assays of Adrenal GPCR Signaling and Regulation: Measuring Adrenal β -Arrestin Activity in Vivo Through Plasma Membrane Recruitment,” in the textbook *Methods in Cell Biology* with Pharm.D. students **Reema Mody** ('19) and **Yelaisy Hernandez** ('18). He also coauthored the article “ β -Arrestin2 Improves Post-Myocardial Infarction Heart Failure via Sarco[endo]plasmic Reticulum Ca^{2+} -ATPase-Dependent Positive Inotropy in Cardiomyocytes” in the journal *Hypertension*.

Cynthia Moreau, Pharm.D., BCACP, assistant professor of pharmacy practice, coauthored the article “Assessing the Effect of Pharmacist Care on Diabetes-Related Outcomes in a Rural Outpatient Clinic: A Retrospective Case-Control Study,” which was published in the June 2017 issue of *Annals of Pharmacotherapy*. She is also the principal investigator for the grant “Advancing Interprofessional Education in Emerging Healthcare Models,” which was awarded in 2017 and is funded by the National Association of Chain Drug Stores Foundation Merit-Based Scholarship Award.

Alexandra Perez, Pharm.D. ('05), published an article with **Jose Valdes**, Pharm.D. ('12), **Carolina Gutierrez**, Pharm.D., ('16), and **Pierina Cabrera**, Pharm.D. ('16)—“A Comparison of the Use of Antidepressant Treatment Between Non-Hispanic Black and White and Mexican American Adults with Type 2 Diabetes and Depression: NHANES 2005–2012” in *The Diabetes Educator*. Additionally, Perez was awarded a faculty research fellowship as part of the Expanding National Capacity in PCOR Through Training (ENACT) program through the Institute for Clinical Research Education at the University of Pittsburgh.

Mutasen Rawas-Qalaji, Ph.D., and Ph.D. candidate **Rawan Bafail**, Pharm.D., M.S., presented two posters at the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists Annual Meeting and Exposition held November 11–15 in San Diego, California. The posters analyzed “The Combined Effect of a Penetration Enhancer and an Alkalinizing Agent on the Sublingual Permeability of Atropine from Fast Disintegrating Sublingual Tablets” and “Microenvironment’s pH Modification and its Effect on Enhancing the Sublingual Permeability of Atropine from Fast Disintegrating Sublingual Tablets.” They also filed an international patent application on September 5 assigned to NSU titled “Atropine Sulfate Rapidly Disintegrating Sublingual Tablets, Methods for Manufacture Thereof, and Methods for Use Thereof for Treatment of Acute Organophosphate Toxicity.”

Elizabeth Sherman, Pharm.D. ('07), assistant professor of pharmacy practice, copublished the text “HIV Pharmacotherapy.” This is the first comprehensive HIV pharmacotherapy reference textbook and is published by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists. Sherman also is a section editor with chapter coauthor and colleague **Marylee Worley**, assistant professor of pharmacy practice.

Devada Singh-Franco, Pharm.D., R.Ph., CDE, associate professor of pharmacy practice, discussed the topic “Pharmacology Update: 2017 Diabetes Medications” at the sixth annual Florida American Association of Diabetes Educators Conference held November 18, 2017, at NSU’s Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus.

Albert I. Wertheimer, Ph.D., professor of pharmaceutical sciences, coauthored two books: *Pharmaceutical Market Access in Developed Markets* and *Social and Administrative Aspects of Pharmacy in Low- and Middle-Income Countries*.

College of Pharmacy Scholarship Funds

Donations made to the College of Pharmacy promote student life, scholarship, and research.

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- Cardinal Health Scholarship
- Chancellor's Scholarship
- College of Pharmacy Scholarship
- CVS Caremark Charitable Trust, Inc. Scholarship
- CVS Hispanic Scholarship
- Foreman Endowed Scholarship
- Gil Pharmaceutical Endowed Scholarship Fund
- National Council for Prescription Drug Programs Foundation Scholarship
- Paul and Ellen Magalian Endowed Scholarship
- Publix Pharmacy Scholarship Endowment Fund
- Raj Mantena, R.Ph., Endowed Scholarship
- Richard and Hannah Stern Endowed Scholarship
- Sheila Tischenkel Pharmacy Endowed Scholarship
- Vernon Robinson, Sr. Changing Lives Memorial Scholarship
- Walgreens Diversity Scholarship
- Walgreens Nivia Santiago and Georgia Lehoczky Endowed Community Scholarship
- Walgreens Richard Ashworth Endowed Community Scholarship
- Walgreens Roy Ripak and Georgia Lehoczky Endowed Community Scholarship
- Walmart Scholarship
- William D. Hardigan Endowment Scholarship

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College Pride

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The college recognizes the following donors.

January–December 2017

\$100,000 and Above

Royal Dames of Cancer Research, Inc.* Δ

\$50,000–\$99,999

The a2 Milk Company

Brand Institute, Inc.

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\$25,000–\$49,999

Apotex Corp.

\$10,000–\$24,999

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Drug Stores Foundation

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Walgreens Company

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Deborah Brown

Cleveland Clinic Foundation

Lisa Deziel

Adam Doner

Fidelity Corporation on behalf of
Mr. and Mrs. Alan Stotsky

Ehab Hasoubah

Life Extension

NCPDP Foundation

John O'Brien

United Way of Broward County, Inc.

Walgreens of Puerto Rico, Inc.

Walmart Stores, Inc.

* NSU Rumbaugh-Goodwin Institute for Cancer Research

Δ Member of the Fellow's Society: Shark Circle (university-wide cumulative giving of \$1 million+)

For information on giving opportunities, contact Shannon Brown, HPD senior director of development, at sbrown2@nova.edu or (954) 529-6776.

"NSU COP has features and policies that many long-established colleges would like to emulate."

—Albert I. Wertheimer, Ph.D.



DONOR PROFILE

Unwavering Support of Royal Dames “Sheroes” Benefits RGI, Cancer Research

By Ellen Wolfson Valladares

THE MEMBERS OF the Royal Dames of Cancer Research, Inc., are South Florida’s “Super Sheroes.” For more than 48 years, this dedicated group of philanthropic women has been on a steadfast mission to raise funds to encourage, aid, enrich, and support educational programs and cancer research at the NSU Rumbaugh-Goodwin Institute for Cancer Research (RGI).

“The Royal Dames of Cancer Research was founded in 1969 by a group of ladies who cared deeply about funding cutting-edge cancer research in Broward County at the Leo Goodwin Institute for Cancer Research,” said Rhonda Ritchie, president of the Royal Dames.

When the Rumbaugh family made a significant contribution to the institute, it was renamed the Rumbaugh-Goodwin Institute for Cancer Research. In 2005, the institute merged with the NSU Health Professions Division. In the ensuing years, the RGI—a nonprofit organization—has continued to expand its programs and research activities, with the main goal of developing cancer therapies that can specifically target tumors, with minimal cellular damage and toxicity to the patient.

The RGI discovered and developed two new antiangiogenic cancer drugs that received patent approval in 2011. It also trains and educates undergraduate and graduate students who will conduct cancer research well into the future.

“Our scientists at the RGI are working very hard to find new and safer cures for cancers,” said Appu Rathinavelu, Ph.D., RGI executive director and professor of pharmaceutical sciences in the College of Pharmacy. “We share the same beliefs as the Royal Dames that no human being should die because of cancer or from the side effects caused by chemotherapeutic drugs.”

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Today, we remain a sisterhood of caring, passionate ladies focused on cancer research.



—Rhonda Ritchie,
president, Royal Dames
of Cancer Research

College Pride



From left:

NSU President George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D., with Royal Dames members Nell Lewis McGuire, Jacqueline Travisano, Carol Harrison Kalagher, Lorraine Thomas, Sharon and Barry Florescue, Lynne McGrath, and Rhonda Ritchie

Royal Dames *(continued from previous page)*

The RGI's research and breakthroughs would not be possible without the continuing support of the Royal Dames organization, which has raised millions of dollars for the RGI through its annual Tiara Ball and other events. "We greatly appreciate the Royal Dames' support of RGI research, providing wonderful opportunities for faculty members and students to innovate therapies that will make a positive difference in the future lives of cancer patients," said Lisa Deziel, Pharm.D., Ph.D., dean of the College of Pharmacy.

"Today, we remain a sisterhood of caring, passionate ladies focused on cancer research," Ritchie said. "This sisterhood is proud to be doing its part to ensure that a brighter destiny is ahead when death and sickness from cancer are things of the past." 🍷



Prema Rathinavelu and Appu Rathinavelu

"Education is not the learning of facts but the training of the mind to think."

—William Wolowich, Pharm.D.
(quoting Albert Einstein)



Visit rgicr.nova.edu for more information about the RGI. Visit royaldames.org to learn more about the Royal Dames organization.

Alumni Pride

28 Years of Dedication to the Profession, Students, and the College

By Ellen Valladares

Richard Finkel, Pharm.D. ('92), never shies away from trying new things. That's how his 28-year-long teaching career with the NSU College of Pharmacy (NSU COP) got started, and it just may be the secret sauce behind Finkel's zest for pharmacy, his students, his family, and life overall. While he recently cut back on his full-time teaching, Finkel, now an adjunct instructor, is still teaching courses in geriatric pharmacotherapy and nonprescription therapies.

Finkel's journey with NSU COP began in 1988, when it was Southeastern College of Pharmacy, and he joined the charter group of postgraduate pharmacists for the initial Pharm.D. program. He earned his bachelor's degree in pharmacy from the University of Florida in 1956, served as a pharmacist in the army from 1957 to 1959, and started his own pharmacy in North Miami Beach.

While he started the Pharm.D. program as a way to get his required continuing education credits, he soon found himself getting more out of it than he'd expected. "It turned out to be so much fun, absolutely a joy," he said.

In his second year of the postbaccalaureate program, Finkel was approached by a professor who needed help teaching a course on over-the-counter drugs. Even though Finkel had never taught before, he agreed to give it a try. He used his experience as a pharmacist to put together a talk on laxatives.



Finkel

"It was easy stuff. When it was over, the class applauded, and I told them maybe I'd see them again," Finkel said. "As I was leaving, the department manager asked me if I could do it again next week. They kept asking me to come back. Before I knew it, I was signing a contract, just for having fun."

Finkel, who became a full-time faculty member in 1993, has played a vital role in the growth and success of the Pharm.D. program and its students. His innovative contributions include the creation of online snippets—a teaching tool akin to Khan Academy lessons that aids students in learning course materials. His dedication to his students and his unique ability to pass on real-life experience in the classroom earned him the coveted Golden Apple Award seven times.

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Alumni Pride

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As the COP celebrates its 30-year anniversary, Finkel said he has seen the college evolve to keep up with the changing roles and demands on pharmacists. He has enjoyed helping so many students become better pharmacists over the years and says his teaching position also benefited him.

“It made me into a different pharmacist in my own store,” Finkel said. “Instead of just filling prescriptions, I looked at those prescriptions as suggestions from the doctor. If I knew the patient had other problems or was taking other medications, I would call the doctor and suggest another option. I learned to be proactive. Now, the thousands of students I taught are doing that in pharmacies everywhere. I trained

Instead of just filling prescriptions, I looked at those prescriptions as suggestions from the doctor. If I knew the patient had other problems or was taking other medications, I would call the doctor and suggest another option. I learned to be proactive. Now, the thousands of students I taught are doing that in pharmacies everywhere. I trained them to do what I learned to do. That’s just baseline. That’s what’s expected from a Doctor of Pharmacy.

—Richard Finkel



Richard Finkel has played a vital role in the growth and success of the Pharm.D. program and its students.

them to do what I learned to do. That’s just baseline. That’s what’s expected from a Doctor of Pharmacy.”

After devoting so much of his life to the college, Finkel is now enjoying more time with his wife of 56 years, Mary, and their children and grandchildren. At 84, he’s still trying new things. After moving into a new community in Plantation, Florida, Finkel was listening and humming along with a piano player when he was asked to cover for him while he took a break.

Finkel had never learned to play the piano, but he knew a few songs, so he gave it a try. Reminiscent of his first teaching gig, the piano player asked Finkel to come back again and again. He enjoyed it so much, he said yes. That meant he’d have to learn to play piano and learn more songs. “I went to YouTube, and the rest is history. I can play just about anything now,” Finkel said.

Now, he’s a regular, playing Saturdays for a growing crowd, and loving every minute of it. “It’s really thrilling,” he said. 🍷



Alumni Achievements

1991

Dina Besece, Pharm.D., is an associate director and medical scientist at Achaogen, a biopharmaceutical company in San Francisco, California.

1994

Miguel Lob, Pharm.D., was named executive medical science liaison CV metabolic at AstraZeneca in Tampa/St. Petersburg, Florida.

1995

Sylvia Torres, Pharm.D., was promoted to senior medical scientific liaison, infectious diseases, at Allergan. She completed her residency training in 2007 at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami, Florida.

1999

Richard Ashworth, Pharm.D., was named president of operations at Walgreens.

2000

Richard J. Weisler, Pharm.D., M.B.A., director of medical affairs at Seattle Genetics, returned to his alma mater to discuss the topic "Exploring Pharmacy Professions: From Student to Alumni to Practicing Professional."

2001

Ivette Bowers, Pharm.D., is the pharmacy manager at Emerald Hills Pharmacy, LLD, in Hollywood, Florida.

2004

Thomas Karadosta, Pharm.D., is the vice president of strategic marketing at ConsortiEX in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. ConsortiEX is a health care pharmacy information technology company.

2005

Angela S. Garcia, Pharm.D., M.P.H., was installed as president-elect of the Florida Pharmacy Association at its convention in July 2017.

2006

Damian Sinclair, Pharm.D., is the district manager at Walgreens Boots Alliance in Miami, Florida.

2007

Tessa Sturgill, Pharm.D., is the mail-order pharmacist at Mercy Health in Ohio.

2008

Joanna Armas, Pharm.D., is the regional medical director at Recro Pharma, Inc., in Malvern, Pennsylvania.

Helene Jacobson, Pharm.D., who is the operations specialist for Optum/UnitedHealth Group, was appointed by governor Rick Scott to the Medicaid Pharmaceutical and Therapeutics Committee.

Malisandra Menendez, Pharm.D., pharmacy manager at Walgreens, joined Seminole State College of Florida as an adjunct professor.

2010

David Pino, Pharm.D., pharmacy manager at the NSU COP Clinic Pharmacy, was honored by the Florida Pharmacy Association (FPA) for his three years of service as the FPA's House of Delegates director.

2011

Chih Chin, Pharm.D., is the new director of pharmacy at Westside Regional Medical Center in Plantation, Florida.

Kailin Li, Pharm.D., is an adviser at CVS Health in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, and has been with the company since 2007.

(continued on next page)

Alumni Pride

Alumni Achievements (continued)

Livia Macedo McCuitcheon, Pharm.D., was appointed assistant professor of pharmacy practice at Wilkes University in Pennsylvania.

Judy Maytin Seoane, Pharm.D., is a pharmacy information systems specialist at Epic, where she develops software for health care organizations.

2012

Bryan Wilson, Pharm.D., is affiliated with the Indian Health Center in Tucson, Arizona.

2013

Alicia Harvey, Pharm.D., BCPS, is a clinical pharmacy specialist at Broward Health in Fort Lauderdale.

2014

Mitchell Nazario, Pharm.D., was appointed chief of outpatient pharmacy for U.S. Army health care in Fort Hood, Texas.

2015

Diana Almasri, Ph.D., was named director of student activities and vice president of the Center for Alignment of Education Outcomes with the Labor Market at the King Abdulaziz University Faculty of Pharmacy in Saudi Arabia.

Deylen S. Aponte, Pharm.D., was appointed clinical pharmacy specialist at Central Texas Veterans Health Care System, a multispecialty outpatient clinic.

Angelica M. Borrero Olan, Pharm.D., is the clinical pharmacist at the University of Puerto Rico Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Valerie Guerrier, Pharm.D., is working as a clinical pharmacist at Wellington Regional Medical Center in Wellington, Florida.

Ahmad Noor, Ph.D., was promoted to chair of the clinical pharmacy department at the King Abdulaziz University Faculty of Pharmacy in Saudi Arabia.

Melissa Santibañez, Pharm.D., was named assistant professor at the Larkin University College of Pharmacy in Miami, Florida.

Alexa (Ali) Vyain, Pharm.D., is a clinical assistant professor at the University of Houston College of Pharmacy in Houston, Texas.

2016

Abdullah Alfaifi, Ph.D., is an assistant professor at the King Abdulaziz University Faculty of Pharmacy in Saudi Arabia.

Carolina M. Guterrez, Pharm.D., a clinical pharmacist in the Memorial Healthcare System, received the Patient First Award at Memorial Hospital Pembroke in Pembroke Pines, Florida.

2017

Stephanie Chassagne, Pharm.D., is a pharmacist at CVS Health.

Mercedes Dorado Rodriguez, Pharm.D., is working at Farmacia Cristina in Puerto Rico.

Akesha Edwards, Ph.D., is working as an assistant professor of pharmacy practice at the University of Findlay in Ohio.

Dhanush Haspula, Ph.D., is a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Biomedical Engineering at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee.

Wael Mahdi, Ph.D., is an assistant professor at the King Saud University College of Pharmacy in Saudi Arabia.

Suhaib Muflih, Ph.D., is an assistant professor at the Jordan University of Science and Technology Faculty of Pharmacy.

In Memoriam

Bernard Laguerre, Pharm.D. ('17) passed away in October 2017.



“Inspire your future.”

—Aiman Rahman, M.S.

SHARKS

Alumni Society

In 1987, Florida's third college of pharmacy was established in North Miami Beach as Southeastern College of Pharmacy. It began as a small charter class with visionaries initiating revolutionary ideas in the pharmacy profession. Thanks to the support and involvement of many, the college has reached many pioneering milestones in 30 short years.

The SharksRx Alumni Society was established to help support the college through the knowledge, skills, and financial resources needed to invest in the future of pharmacy education. To this end, the society's first and most critical goal involves helping grow student scholarship opportunities.

The society is seeking contributions to NSU for an endowed fund called the SharksRx Alumni Society Legacy Fund.

The fund's earnings will be used to award scholarships to students in the College of Pharmacy in perpetuity. The NSU threshold for specifically named endowed funds such as these is \$25,000. Any contributions made through a pledge, to be paid over a period of five years, will be counted toward reaching the \$25,000 goal. Distributions from the endowment, however, won't be made until the full \$25,000 is received.

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Share your accomplishments and life events with us for publication in ***SharksRx***.

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- conducted transformational research
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- received any awards or significant recognition

We also publish announcements about births, marriages, or recently deceased alumni.

We want to know about your achievements, so please email your information to ***copalumni@nova.edu***. Please include a high-resolution, original photo in a JPG or TIF format.

We look forward to hearing from you.

