Two Chicago College of Pharmacy Students Among Eight National Award Winners

Each year, Walmart and Pharmacy Times present the RESPy AWARD (Respect, Excellence, and Service in Pharmacy) to eight students (one each month) who have made a difference in his or her community by demonstrating excellence in pharmaceutical care. During the 2011–2012 academic year, two of the eight student recipients from across the country are from Midwestern University Chicago College of Pharmacy (MWU-CCP).

Maria “Renee” Advincula and Allyson Greenberg, now fourth-year pharmacy students (also known as PS-IV students), received their recognition in January 2012 and May 2012, respectively. Selected from among all nominees, RESPy Award recipients receive a $1,000 tuition scholarship, an original handcrafted piece of commemorative art, and are featured in an article in Pharmacy Times, which is a monthly publication that is sent to more than 170,000 community pharmacists in the U.S. To receive the award, Colleges of Pharmacy may nominate outstanding student pharmacists for their contributions to community service based on the following criteria:

- Demonstration of voluntary public service activities;
- Demonstration of a high level of professional/public health-related activities outside the classroom;
- Demonstration of a high level of effort to advance the profession of pharmacy in the public arena.

Iqbal Atcha, B.S., R.Ph., M.B.A., Regional Talent Specialist for Walmart, and 1999 graduate of CCP, formally presented the awards to Renee and Allyson during a recent PS-IV rotation orientation session. “I have always been extremely proud of Midwestern University, but this is way beyond what I ever expected! In addition to MWU-CCP being my alma mater, the school has consistently produced leaders in the corporate world, as well the community,” commented Iqbal. “When two students from the same school receive an award like the RESPy Award from Walmart in the same year, it is an amazing feat! The recognition and reflection on the school and what it stands for is taken to a new level.”

“We are very proud of both of them,” adds Nancy Fjortoft, Ph.D., Dean and Professor, Chicago College of Pharmacy. “Each of them were singled out from amongst 40 other highly-qualified nominees from across the country.”
The place was packed. Students were cheering. Cameras were flashing. Everyone was having a great time! These describe one of the most successful student fundraisers for the Midwestern University Downers Grove Campus on the evening of March 5, 2012, at Ballydoyle Irish Pub in downtown Downers Grove. Students from all four colleges on the Midwestern University Downers Grove campus coordinated and participated in this fundraiser for St. Baldrick’s Foundation, a charity committed to funding the most promising research to find cures for childhood cancers. Student participants raised money with the guarantee of getting their heads shaved on this evening in sympathy with children who are suffering from the harsh effects of cancer treatments.

By the numbers: 61 Midwestern University students were the event’s “shaves,” including five females, Dr. Niiro (faculty member and Chair of the Midwestern University Anatomy Department), 20 pharmacy students, 20 medical students, eight dental students, and the remaining from other Midwestern University programs.

A total of $25,721.63 was raised, which surpassed the initially audacious goal of $25,000. This was comprised of more than $20,000 in electronic donations solicited through prospective shavees’ emails, Facebook postings, and word of mouth. Plus there were matching donations, as well as a 10 percent kickback donation from Ballydoyle for all food and drinks sold that evening. Additionally, Zazu Salon partnered with the students to do the head shaving, Ballydoyle donated their venue, and Midwestern University donated through all the colleges’ student councils.

This is only the second year for this event, which was lead by Thomas Grawley, (now a third-year medical student), Joseph McCue (also now a third-year medical student), and Haresh Desai (now a third-year pharmacy student), who emceed the event.

“The Midwestern University chapter of Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA) was the medical club primarily responsible for the event,” explained Tom Grawley. “Next year, the Midwestern University chapter of Student National Pharmaceutical Association (SNPhA) will take on a big portion of the planning and hosting of the event. The student council from the dental school helped us with the other positions, and we asked our friends in other programs to help us in planning tasks such as being team captains. Thus, this event was clearly a collaborative effort by the programs.”

“This event was a lot bigger this year than last year,” added Haresh Desai. “Last year only 25 people were shavees and none were female. This year we had more than double the number of shavees, plus some women. This jump was a lot bigger than we were expecting, and the turnout and support we had were great! The event was packed with a great atmosphere!”

Rebekah Costello (then a second-year medical student) was one female student shavee. When asked what inspired her to participate with her son, she replied, “My son heard about this event and felt sorry for the kids who have cancer. So he asked me, ‘Mom, if I raise $500, will you get your head shaved, too?’ And I said, ‘Absolutely!’ And we actually raised more than $2,000.”

**A Winning Team**

The Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy (AMCP) MWU Student Chapter recently hosted its annual Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P & T) Committee Competition. Nineteen teams of four self-selected members competed in a cost-benefit analysis of a given drug. The winning team of (pictured from left) Jessica Thoma, Danielle Leav, Adrienne Ordonez, and Erin Quinn provided the most complete written entry and verbal presentation.
A Student’s Perspective: 
First Quarter of Pharmacy School

By Lisa Tran, PS-I Student

I’m here! I’m here! I’m finally in pharmacy school, all settled in. It feels a bit surreal.

The school is in an excellent location. It’s tucked away just off a busy street in the village of Downers Grove, a western suburb of Chicago. I live a stone’s throw away from the Metra train station and about 40 minutes by car to downtown. I feel safe; I have no qualms about walking to the library, or the gym, or the student center after dark. Security is very visible (and friendly!).

The White Coat Ceremony actually took place a month into the quarter, but it was worth the wait. It gave everyone time to let the excitement sink in. It’s true what they say – strangers are friends who haven’t yet met! Midwestern University is a professional school for many health-related disciplines, so I’ve had opportunities to meet people studying dentistry, physical therapy, and osteopathic medicine. Everyone is strong, smart, and sophisticated. I am incredibly proud to be a part of the pharmacy class.

There are a few campus housing options, and I decided to live in the dorms, at least for my first year. This has proven to be useful for my 7AM morning exams! I really like the other residents on my floor and the staff is nice.

There are many student organizations. From managed care to hospital based pharmacy, from different religious groups to population based settings, I had a hard time choosing which is right for me; mostly because I wanted to make sure I had time to study.

I even pledged a pharmaceutical honors fraternity. Meeting the upperclassmen has been exciting; I love seeing familiar faces on campus! My “Big” (sister) adores me, and I appreciate that she has taken me under her wing.

My only regret is that, during the first few weeks, I wish I had bought more school spirit clothing. Student organizations sell MWU logo stuff as their fundraisers; I need more! The options for custom colors and quotes were overwhelming. I should have just bought everything. Now, I must wait almost a year to buy all that I want.

All in all, it’s been a great first quarter. November brings the beginning of final exams and the close of my first part of my PS-I year. I am so pleased with my choice; I am thrilled to be spending my next four years here at Midwestern University Chicago College of Pharmacy.

Midwestern University: 
Students Reach Out to the Community for American Pharmacists Month

By Steven Sidelsky, APhA-ASP President, PS-III Student

The Midwestern University Chicago College of Pharmacy Chapter of APhA-ASP strives to advance our profession through advocacy and education. This year, we promoted the profession in a unique way. When speaking with local community members, we often find that many are unaware of the impact that pharmacists make in the practice of patient-centered care and the healthcare system as a whole. As a result, one of our goals is to reach out to the immediate community and educate them on the pharmacist’s impact.

October is American Pharmacist Month. We, as pharmacists and student pharmacists, are all well aware of this recognition, yet a significant portion of the community is not. So we decided to focus our outreach efforts to educate community members about our University, and more importantly, our profession. Through our hard work and dedication to the community, the Village of Downers Grove agreed to proclaim that the month of October is American Pharmacist Month in the Downers Grove community.

Downers Grove Mayor Martin T. Tully delivered this proclamation at the Village Council meeting on Tuesday, September 18, 2012. Broadcast on local television, I gladly accepted the proclamation on behalf of our organization and Midwestern University, then delivered our message promoting the profession and the University to all in attendance at the Council meeting, as well as the television audience.

My chapter colleagues and I are hoping that this initiative takes off from city to city. Recognizing that pharmacists are an integral part of patient care is critical to the future of our profession. Our long-term goal is to make the role of pharmacists known nationwide. With this project a success, the Midwestern University Chapter of APhA-ASP is proud to Make Our Mark on the community and the profession of pharmacy and encourages all other universities to seek proclamation in their respective city halls.
Fall color on campus

CCP Alumni Shared Career Insights with Students

Sixteen CCP alumni who now practice in various pharmacy careers returned to the Downers Grove campus recently for the opportunity to mentor current CCP students. Over breakfast, they met with roughly 50 CCP students and offered their insights and experiences in the job market.

The CCP alumni spoke about their careers in community pharmacies, different clinical settings, consulting, corporate research and development, and residencies in round-table formats with two alumni at each table. Students could ask questions and engage in dialog with the alumni and change tables every 15 minutes to meet more alumni mentors.

Spearheaded by the CCP Alumni Council, alumni were eager to reach out to students and help develop their career interests. “We really enjoyed meeting with the students and discussing our chosen careers,” said Megan Corrigan, Pharm.D., BCPS, President of the CCP Alumni Council, and CCP graduate from the Class of 2006. “We all remember what it was like for us as students, and it’s a chance for us to give back. These students asked really good questions, too.”

Likewise, students appreciated the opportunity to gain some good insight in the job market. “This was a great program,” commented Scott Snyder, PS-III and President of the CCP Student Council. “I learned a lot that will be very helpful to me.”

Scott Snyder and other CCP students receive career insight and advice from Paul Kellogg, R.Ph., Pharm.D., PMP, CCP alumnus from the Class of 1999, and now Associate Director for Clinical Supplies Strategy at Takeda Global Research & Development Center.

Contact Us . . .

With any questions, concerns or future submissions, please contact Damienne Souter, Assistant to the Dean, at 630-515-7373 or dsoute@midwestern.edu.

Calendar

PharmCAS online application, fees and transcripts due - January 5, 2013
Dual Acceptance Program applications due - February 15, 2013
Supplemental applications and fees, PCAT scores and Letters of Recommendations due to MWU Office of Admissions - March 1, 2013