Summer Breaks Offer CCP Students Opportunity to Expand Horizons

Our Chicago College of Pharmacy (CCP) students have summer breaks after their first and second years in the curriculum. Many students take advantage of this time to participate in internships or research opportunities to maximize their real world pharmacy experiences. This helps guide them when choosing classroom and rotation electives later in the curriculum.

Here are a few of the numerous CCP students that participated in summer internship opportunities last summer, after their PS-I and PS-II years (their current year in school is noted). Here, they talk about their experiences and how those are impacting their future pharmacy career paths and professional growth.

Lauren San Juan, PS-II
Illinois Pharmacists Association (IPhA)
Summer Internship
Springfield, IL

How did you obtain this internship?
There was only one intern position for this statewide association, so the application process was very competitive. I believe that networking helped me obtain the position. I had met the IPhA Executive Director, Garth Reynolds, previously at Legislative Day, and again in Orlando, Florida, at the 2014 American Pharmacists Association (APhA) Annual Meeting. When I received the email about the internship, I contacted him to ask more questions about it. It may have helped to have my face associated with a name on an application.

What did you do in this unique internship?
I was never doing the same thing for more than one week at a time. I worked on a variety of projects. A typical day included working on my assigned project and attending conference calls or meetings. My favorite projects were reading over the Proposed Rules of the Illinois Pharmacy Practice Act and the Controlled Substances Act and then providing feedback on those recommended changes. It was interesting to see how the proposed rules reflected current trends in pharmacy.

What did you enjoy most about your opportunity?
I enjoyed seeing firsthand what IPhA does for its members and what association management entails. I liked that my internship was very diverse, and the lessons I learned will resonate with me, no matter what practice setting I decide on in the future. I was also surprised at how many people called the IPhA office with questions regarding the law. It never occurred to me that IPhA could be used as a resource for these questions. We received many calls when hydrocodone was switched to Schedule II. Once we also had the local news stop by to get IPhA’s comment about a health-related news story.

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A Student’s Perspective: How I Spent My Summer Vacation

By Jan Di Kum, PS-II

Every fall, the Chicago College of Pharmacy (CCP) hosts a Community Health Fair at the Downers Grove Park District for residents in the Downers Grove community. This educational event gives Midwestern University student volunteers a chance to showcase the skills and knowledge we have acquired through our studies. Our goal is to bring health education to our community by providing free screenings, flu shots, and health information.

As CCP’s Executive Council Vice President, it was my responsibility to coordinate this big event and build upon the success of the past health fairs with new ideas. Assuming this role demanded organizational, communication, analytical, troubleshooting, and public speaking skills – characteristics that I wasn’t confident that I possessed. Naturally, my initial reaction was marked with a great deal of uncertainty. How am I supposed to spearhead and oversee one of Midwestern University’s biggest events when I can’t even successfully plan a small get-together with my friends?

In pharmacy school, time is at a premium and planning the fair during the school year would have been tough and most likely resulted in a disastrous event. Lucky for me, I did most of my preparation over my summer break without the stresses of school. This was my chance to wisely use my three-month break as an opportunity for professional growth by improving my project management skills. Best of all, I had the support of the Health Fair Committee members composed of student leaders, professors, and school staff to share my responsibilities as a leader.

My greatest challenge was forming a communication platform to connect all 21 committee members remotely, as many had gone home for the summer like I had. Without in-person meetings to hold one another accountable, I feared some might lose sight of their tasks and perhaps result in unfulfilled goals and deadlines. To the contrary, I learned that working with like-minded leaders with shared visions and common purposes made tasks easier to achieve. We met goals remotely with the conveniences of virtual applications like Google Sheets, weekly phone conferences, and never-ending emails. Surprisingly, even with a remote environment, the entire planning process was extremely fast-paced. As a matter of fact, we were ready to host the fair before fall quarter started!

With the combined efforts of the committee members, many changes were implemented to make this event the most successful yet. I was most excited about the addition of the Children’s Health section. We dedicated about one-third of all booths to the children of our community. These booths included a teddy bear clinic, face painting, and make-your-own-hand-sanitizer. Although the health fair is a student-run event, we reached out to our community resources to help us expand this new section, including the Downers Grove Park District, Police Department, Fire Department, Public Library, and the AAA Automobile Club. Aside from the addition of Children’s Health, other notable additions included a canned food drive, raffle prizes, and a marketing committee.

Needless to say, the summer preparations were worthwhile! The actual execution of the Health Fair was less stressful, and I had a chance to sit back and watch all of our hard work unfold. Specifically, I enjoyed watching children get their faces painted, the elderly receive health screenings, and Martin Tully, the mayor of Downers Grove, receive his annual flu shot. Community members ranging from infants to elderly in their 90s had a chance to visit 38 health information booths with 177 student volunteers and more than 40 faculty members. By the end of the day, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that the successful expansion of the health fair promotions from the marketing committee resulted in approximately double the attendance from previous years!

Taking on this role was a priceless opportunity to acquire skills that have extended beyond this project. More importantly, I learned the core value of teamwork, and I am in respectful admiration of all the Midwestern University volunteers involved. I can only envision the optimistic improvements to Chicago College of Pharmacy’s Health Fair for years to come and the impact it will have on the lives of our community.

Midwestern University Community Health Fair

Second-year pharmacy students Joseph Hegazin and Sibel Islanoglu counsel patients about their blood glucose screening results at the annual Community Health Fair. Spearheaded by the CCP Student Council, this event gathers together students from all Midwestern University programs to offer free health screenings and flu shots to the community, as well as answer patients’ questions on various health topics.
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How did this experience shape your future as a pharmacist?
I am still unsure about which area of pharmacy I’d like to pursue. But, this experience allowed me to see the importance of being involved in professional organizations, and how important it is to advocate for the profession, whether it is through reaching out to the community or reaching out to your legislators. I am committed to continuing my involvement in professional associations throughout my career.

Priya Shah, PS-III
Target Pharmacy
Summer Internship
Norridge, IL

What did you enjoy most about your internship?
I really enjoyed the business aspect of it. Not only did I learn the role of the pharmacist as a leader, but I also saw how the company worked as a whole. I experienced each of the different work centers/departments and had the opportunity to help drive sales through the pharmacy.

How did this experience differ from your rotation experiences?
With this internship, I learned to grow as a leader. There were many opportunities for me to lead my pharmacy team, do what my pharmacist did on a daily basis, and interact with district managers/other substantial key players. Our district managers checked in on us throughout the internship, whether it was a conference call or an in-person meeting, to see our progress and be there to help us improve. I also traveled to other stores in the area and had a different experience each time.

What surprised you?
I was surprised with how much I grew as a person during my time at Target. Part of my training focused on strengths and weakness. Along with that, I was taught how to utilize my strengths to teach my team members and improve sales at the same time. This experience gave me a better perspective on the retail aspect of pharmacy.

What advice would you give to prospective pharmacy students?
Be open to trying new things and get out of your comfort zone. Ask questions, because this is the time to learn all that you can! This internship connects you to so many important members of the company who could become your future manager or colleague.

Daniel Dinh, PS-II
Walgreens Pharmacy
Summer Internship
Seattle, WA

How did you obtain this internship?
I first learned about Walgreens internships from my cousin who completed a Walgreens internship a few years ago, and who is now a Midwestern University alumnus. I applied for the summer internship online as well as contacted the district supervisor and pharmacy manager to express my interest. I'm not originally from the Seattle area, but I wanted to travel to this area because my older brother and cousins live there, and I wanted to spend the summer with them.

What did you enjoy most about your internship?
I enjoyed doing health screenings (blood pressure, body composition, blood glucose) at community events near Seattle. It was very festive, and I gained much experience and practice. This experience differs from my community pharmacy rotation because I had the opportunity to meet with many district supervisors around Seattle, as well as other corporate staff members. It was a great opportunity for networking.

What surprised you?
Because the pharmacy manager was my mentor, I learned about all the responsibilities involved in managing a pharmacy, and this surprised me. This experience helped me solidify the area of pharmacy I'd like to pursue once I graduate, which is retail pharmacy. And because this internship was in another state, this was a great learning opportunity, as I learned the differences in state laws and insurances between Illinois and Washington. I may want to return to Seattle for one of my fourth-year rotation blocks.

Paul Myles, PS-II
Albertsons (Jewel-Osco)
Summer Internship
Gurnee, IL

How was this internship structured?
The program focused on enhancing counseling skills, clinical skills, leadership, team building, and most importantly on the management and business component of retail pharmacy.

At the end of the internship program, we were required to present a detailed Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis of our pharmacy sites and implement a novel idea that could potentially impact the future of the company. Each intern was required to put in anywhere from 30 to 50 hours of work into these presen-
Student Research Poster Presentations

Numerous CCP students participate in research opportunities with faculty members. The result of some of their work is reflected in posters that were accepted for display at the recent American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) Clinical Midyear Meeting in Anaheim, CA. Listed below is the collection of posters presented by students who lead these research investigations under the mentorship of Marc Scheetz, Pharm.D., M.Sc., BCPS, AQ-ID, Associate Professor in Pharmacy Practice. Please note this does not represent all posters presented by CCP students at this meeting (there were many more!). CCP students are noted in bold. CCP faculty, residents, and fellows are noted in italics.

**Tran, Chau; Pham, Cecilia; O'Donnell, John; Rhodes, Nathaniel J.; Scheetz, Marc H.** “Antimicrobial use and resistance unit-specific antibiogram: A retrospective database study.”

**Tuveill, Merika; Arai, M; Eckout, J; Rhodes, Nathaniel J.; Wagner, J.** “Relationship between carbapenem utilization and patient outcomes at two academic medical centers: preliminary results from the MAD-ID research network’s carbapenem use evaluation.”

**Day, John; Jett, Rebecca; Rhodes, Nathaniel J.; O’Donnell, John; Scheetz, Marc H.** “Correlations between piperacillin-tazobactam minimum inhibitory concentration and clinical outcomes.”

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tations and present them in front of corporate leaders of the company. Although the idea was intimidating at first, the work we put in on our individual projects was an incredibly rewarding experience once we understood how much of a potential impact we made on the future of the company.

**How would you compare this to your rotation experiences?**

This experience was much different from the community pharmacy rotations we did in our first year at CCP. Although our rotations were a good way to gain a general exposure to retail pharmacy, they didn’t scratch the surface of the true nature and opportunities available in retail. One key difference was being able to engage in detailed counseling sessions with patients under the supervision of my preceptor. My first official counseling session was one of the most satisfying experiences I’ve had as a pharmacy student, as I realized the difference I was making to improve the quality of life of another person.

Furthermore, the internship offered a refreshing perspective of the importance of working diligently with a healthcare team and keeping a positive attitude when the work environment proved to be stressful. After interning with Jewel/Albertsons, the internship truly opened my eyes to the dynamics of retail and how it is rapidly changing to a more clinical emphasis, and the importance of being empathetic and patient with both your team and your patients.

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**Calendar**

Dual Acceptance Program (DAP) applications due - **February 15, 2015**

Fees, PCAT scores, and letters of recommendation due to MWU Office of Admissions - **March 2, 2015**

**Contact Us**

For any questions relating to your application and/or admission, please call the Midwestern University Office of Admissions at **800/458-6253** or admissIL@midwestern.edu.