CCP Student Travels to Serbia for Summer Internship Experience

Have you ever wondered what pharmacy is like outside of the United States? This past summer, third-year pharmacy student, Daniel Chen, traveled to Serbia for a six-week pharmacy internship. The American Pharmacists Association’s Academy of Student Pharmacists (APhA-ASP) Student Exchange Program selected him among many applicants nationwide for this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

“I have always had a passion for traveling and would always look for ways to include traveling abroad with my education,” said Dan. “When I was a first-year student, I heard about this program from an upperclassman who showed us around the Midwestern University campus during orientation. She was planning on applying for the program during her second year, and later she succeeded in getting placed in her first choice, the Czech Republic.”

Dan continues, “I had a lot of time to research where I wanted to go and had her guidance while applying this past year. I was then able to narrow down my choices based on what I believed would give me a memorable experience and teach me the most.”

Becoming a pharmacist in Serbia is similar to becoming one in the U.S. In Serbia, it is a five-year program where students earn both a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree in Pharmacy. There is no doctorate degree. There is an entrance exam to get into a program, and then at the end of the program there is a national exam for licensure. A thesis defense is also required. Students can choose to go into a community or industry setting, while others choose to go into a hospital/clinical setting. Most graduates in Serbia migrate to Germany or western Europe to practice pharmacy.

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Midwestern University Embraces One Health Philosophy

Midwestern University has a long-standing commitment to interprofessional education. In an effort to expand that commitment, the University adopted the principles of One Health. Simply put, One Health recognizes the connection between human, animal, and environmental health. The University’s One Health Initiative promotes collaboration between faculty and students in our colleges of osteopathic medicine, dental medicine, pharmacy, veterinary medicine, health sciences, and optometry. This initiative aims to unite the efforts of physicians, veterinarians, and research scientists to gain insights into the complex interrelationships between global biodiversity, sustainability, and public health.

The Chicago College of Pharmacy integrates One Health in its curriculum in a number of ways. In the required Pharmacotherapeutics courses, faculty discuss insect, plant, and environmental causes of various diseases and proper drug disposal. There are several elective courses that emphasize One Health. For example, Introduction to Veterinary Pharmacy introduces students to issues associated with the provision of veterinary-focused pharmacy services and the management and prevention of common diseases found in pets.

All students at Midwestern University may enroll in Pharmaceutical and Personal Care Products in the Environment which informs students on how the improper disposal of medications and personal care products can have negative consequences on other species and the environment. The Development of Newly Approved Drug Therapies course is also available to all students at Midwestern University. This course teaches students about new therapies for both animals and humans and discusses how new drug discoveries may come from plants, animals, and sea life.

One Health is also evident in the College’s research projects. For example, pharmacy faculty are working with colleagues in the basic sciences on studies on dog pneumonia and infections in baby elephants.

Midwestern University expects the new One Health philosophy to inspire students, faculty, and staff to work collaboratively on understanding the interconnection between animal, human, and environmental health. This, in turn, will positively impact the patients we serve.

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CCP Student Travels to Serbia for Summer Internship Experience

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“My healthcare-related experiences overseas were not quite what I expected. It was very eye-opening because their healthcare system practices were so different,” comments Dan.

“For example, hospitals in the U.S. seem to outsource everything. In Serbia, they made almost everything. During my first three weeks working in the Serbian hospital, I was able to see how they prepared their purified water and sterile water for injection, which is something most American hospitals just purchase. They also tend to use their own brand name drugs; they don’t really use generics. Whereas generic medications are most often used in the states.”

For students interested in studying abroad, Dan offers three pieces of advice: “First, think about why you’re going and what you want to get out of it. Second, be flexible. And lastly, don’t be afraid to try the local cuisine. It doesn’t get any more authentic than when it’s cooked there.”

Two other CCP students were also fortunate to be selected to participate in APhA-ASP’s Student Exchange Program last summer:
- Hillary Kerns traveled to Vienna, Austria
- Liz Madrzyk traveled to Nancy, France

Dan and his fellow exchange students took some free time to visit Saint Sava’s temple in Belgrade, Serbia.
A Student’s Perspective: The Transition to Pharmacy School

By Dean Brock, Second-Year Pharmacy Student

After graduating from the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign with my Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology/Pre-Pharmacy, I began the application process to Midwestern University’s Chicago College of Pharmacy (CCP). I received my much-anticipated letter of acceptance. I knew that pharmacy school would be difficult, but I looked forward to the challenge.

Having completed my undergraduate education at a university that utilizes semesters, it took me a couple weeks to adjust to the quarter system at CCP. I soon realized that I would need to immediately improve my time management skills in order to excel academically. While it was not easy, through much trial and error, I devised my perfect time management system to do very well throughout my first year of pharmacy school.

I base my time management regimen on both logical and simplistic concepts. First, I go to bed in the early evening and start my day in the early morning. The strategy is that at the end of my academic day, my brain is exhausted, so it makes more sense for me to go to bed early and study in the very early morning when my mind is fresh.

Second, I write down all of my assignments and assessments along with their due dates in the notes section of my iPhone the Sunday prior to each week. This allows me to adequately budget my study hours on a daily basis.

Third, I cook and meal prep the night before each day, so when my day begins, my only concern is to heat up my food.

As I complete each quarter, I gain more and more confidence in my time management skills, which have allowed me to take my exams in a more relaxed manner. For me, getting an early start and planning ahead as much as possible has decreased the amount of stress that pharmacy school can present on a regular basis. CCP is a very structured and organized college, therefore, reading all of the course syllabi and block schedules ahead of time allows me to effectively budget my daily study hours. I will continue to work hard to achieve academic excellence at CCP, so that I can confidently practice effective patient-centered care.

Do you want to hear more about CCP’s heroes and happenings as they occur?

Like us on Facebook:
Midwestern University Chicago College of Pharmacy

Follow us on Twitter: @mwuccp

Here are a few of the stories posted recently:

- CCP’s chapter of APhA-ASP won the Midyear Regional Meeting Award for its Operation Diabetes Program.
- Third-year student, Shantel Jones, won the IPhA Achievement Award for her leadership of the GenRx Project.
- Pharmacy students took advantage of the 25 pharmacy recruiters on our campus at the annual CAREERxPO in October.

Fourth-year CCP student, Dalila Masic (pictured left), won the IPhA Student Counseling Competition at their Annual Conference, which was held September 29 through October 1, in Normal, IL.

CCP Student Wins Patient Counseling Competition

Fourth-year student pharmacist, Dalila Masic, won first place in the Student Counseling Competition at the Illinois Pharmacists Association (IPhA) Annual Conference recently in Bloomington-Normal, IL.

The patient counseling competition is a way for students to demonstrate the counseling skills they have learned within their didactic curriculum, volunteering, and/or work experiences. It involves the student participant role-playing as a pharmacist who is dispensing a prescription to a patient/caregiver. During the five-minute counseling session, the student pharmacist should be able to ask the three prime questions, convey appropriate counseling points, and answer any patient questions.

“Dalila did a wonderful job representing CCP at this competition,” comments Nancy Fjortoft, Ph.D., Dean of the Chicago College of Pharmacy. “She will do very well with patients in her pharmacy career.”
Calendar & Contact Us

High School Seniors: Dual Acceptance Program (DAP) and Pre-Pharmacy Advantage (PPA) Program applications due by February 15, 2017.

Traditional Applicants: Fees, PCAT scores, and letters of recommendation due to MWU Office of Admissions by March 1, 2017.

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

Mayor Proclaims October as American Pharmacists Month in Downers Grove

On October 4th, members of the American Pharmacists Association’s Academy of Student Pharmacists (APhA-ASP) received the annual proclamation from Downers Grove Mayor Martin Tully (pictured far right) announcing October as American Pharmacists Month in the Village of Downers Grove. “Pharmacy is one of the oldest of the health professions concerned with the health and well-being of all people,” proclaimed Mayor Tully. “We are proud to partner with Midwestern University to promote this awareness to the community.”

Immediately following the proclamation formalities at the Village Council meeting, which is locally broadcast, CCP’s APhA-ASP Chapter president and third-year student, Maria Ochoa, gave a brief speech promoting the profession of pharmacy. “We care deeply about the health and safety of our community,” said Ms. Ochoa. “Pharmacists devote their careers to improving patient outcomes through research and the development of new treatments.”

Alumni Networking Breakfast

On September 23rd, our third-year students enjoyed breakfast and networking opportunities on campus with our generous CCP alumni who shared their career experiences. They spoke about their careers in community pharmacies, different clinical settings, consulting, corporate research and development, and residencies in roundtable 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.

Advocacy 101:

Preparation for Legislative Day

CCP’s student chapter of the Illinois Council of Health-System Pharmacists (ICHP) welcomed ICHP Executive Vice President, Scott Meyers, as he motivated students to become involved in the legislative process, be proactive in the dialog to introduce effective pharmacy bills and lobby for appropriate laws. This event was in preparation for the annual Legislative Day in Springfield, Illinois, where pharmacy students meet with legislators and talk about current pharmacy bills under consideration by the Illinois House and Senate.

CCP’s ICHP student e-board with ICHP Executive VP Scott Meyers (center) and Dr. Jen Phillips, CCP faculty mentor and ICHP Immediate Past President (far right).

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