Introducing
INFLUENCE & IMPACT

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the School of Pharmacy
INFLUENCE & IMPACT

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INFLUENCE & IMPACT...
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R. Pete Vanderveen DEAN

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Celebrating the Class of 2011

“You are entering the practice of pharmacy at an incredible moment in our 160-plus year history. Never have the graduates of our colleges and schools of pharmacy been more well prepared to assume responsibility as the medication use specialist in a reformed health system... Your education is world class and your opportunities over the next 30 to 40 years are beyond our imagination.”

— Commencement speaker Lucinda Maine
left: Newly minted Doctor of Philosophy Jae An celebrates with her son at the reception.

right: School of Pharmacy alumni on hand to hood their graduating children include (left to right): Chi Cheng, PharmD (’78), and his son, Steven; Associate Professor Bill Gong, PharmD (’74), and his daughter, Cynthia; Mario Hazboun, PharmD (’74), and his daughter, Andrea Herold; and Jane Malmgren-Grant, PharmD (’80), and her daughter, Megan Grant.

**USC SCHOOL OF PHARMACY STUDENT AWARDS**

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The USC School of Pharmacy climbed up the rankings for total National Institutes of Health funding for pharmacy schools nationwide, moving from the number 17 spot in 2009 to the number 2 spot in 2010.

“We are encouraged by the support the NIH has provided to our work,” says School of Pharmacy Dean R. Pete Vanderveen. “The exceptional amount of funding we have received in the past year is a testament to the caliber of the cutting-edge research undertaken by our faculty.”

The rankings measure the total grant awards in which a faculty member is listed as the primary investigator at all pharmacy schools across the country. In 2010, the School of Pharmacy was awarded $20,044,604 from the NIH, more than triple the $6,621,824 received in 2009.

Associate Dean for Research Sarah Hamm-Alvarez, Gavin S. Herbert Professor in Pharmaceutical Sciences and associate dean for research, echoes Vanderveen’s sentiments. “We are so proud to be ranked second in total NIH funding for all schools of pharmacy nationwide,” she says. “The School of Pharmacy has worked hard to develop research in step with national priorities and that promises to solve pressing problems.”

The NIH supports a wide range of projects at the School from topics focusing on drug discovery and delivery to health economics and policy to nanoscience. The largest grant included in the NIH total is an $11.4 million project, headed by Associate Professor Jason Doctor, that aims to dissuade physicians from unnecessarily prescribing antibiotics for common acute respiratory infections.

Other projects supported by the NIH include the use of biomedical engineering tools to fight cancer and infectious disease, novel gene manipulation to combat diabetes, and a quest to identify antibody substitutes with potential diagnostic and therapeutic uses. Another project is currently in clinical trial, testing the effectiveness of a compound to manage menopause symptoms and age-associated memory decline.

While the NIH provides the bulk of school research funding, other sources also provide pivotal funding, including the Department of Defense, non-government organizations and industry. These funders are especially supportive of the school’s programs that feature clinical work and attendant research that promote new models that optimize health outcomes.

“The rise in NIH funding demonstrates the growing stature of the School of Pharmacy’s faculty and students,” says Randolph Hall, USC vice president of research. “Pharmacy is not just critical for our own health; it is critical for USC’s leadership in research that improves everyone’s health in the future.”
The School of Pharmacy awarded the Doctor of Regulatory Science to Martin Solberg, Michael Jamieson and Susan Bain at the USC commencement ceremony on May 13, an international first.

This professional doctorate is a novel, specialized program of study that cultivates research, leadership and inquiry skills in advanced students pursuing the emerging profession of global regulatory science. The curriculum focuses on product lifestyle strategy, project and personnel management, and global regulatory strategy and policy.

According to Professor Frances Richmond, who directs the regulatory science program, all students are required to visit regulatory agencies and leaders in both Europe and Asia as part of the curriculum.

To Martin Solberg, one of this year’s graduates, this offered a very extraordinary opportunity. As vice president for global regulatory affairs at Genzyme Corporation in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Solberg oversees regulatory issues in some 185 countries where his company does business.

“This program provides a framework through which to analyze a situation and put the pieces together, allowing you to effectively function in any country and to move projects forward,” says Solberg.

Given the global nature of today’s marketplace and the attendant international travel that comes with that, it might seem baffling that professionals working in this area are able to find time to pursue a professional doctorate. But like Solberg, Susan Bain, vice president of operations at SpineWorks, a medical device company in Huntington Beach, agrees that the program is of great value to a working professional. Bain is also a former FDA investigator.

“When you work at a start-up company, you need a ‘soup to nuts’ toolkit to navigate through licensing, regulatory, quality, manufacturing and clinical trials,” says Bain. “The doctoral program provided me access to the necessary tools and gave me unique insights into the international marketplace.”

Echoing his classmates, Michael Jamieson, who has worked in a variety of industry roles for nearly 30 years, found that the program offered him a distinctive opportunity to enhance his career. With broad global experience, Jamieson has provided regulatory consulting services to companies throughout North and South America and Europe.

In addition to the three doctoral degrees awarded at this year’s commencement, the regulatory science program also conferred 23 MS in Regulatory Science degrees. The School also offers PharmD students an opportunity to pursue a PharmD/MS in Regulatory Science dual degree. More information about the School of Pharmacy Regulatory Science Program is available at http://pharmacyschool.usc.edu/programs/rs/.
Associate Professor Mel Baron received the American Pharmacists Association Foundation Pinnacle Award for Individual Career Achievement at a ceremony at the APhA headquarters in Washington, DC on June 27.

The award recognizes individuals that have demonstrated exceptional leadership in enhancing health care quality and medication use.

“Baron is tireless when it comes to helping people get the information and services they need to optimize health,” stated the APhA in a release. “He has been a strong advocate for the profession of pharmacy for over 50 years, illustrating the pharmacist’s abilities to improve patient outcomes, educate the public and save health-care dollars.”

Believing that knowledge is a powerful tool and that effective health materials for low-literacy populations are especially lacking, Baron has led a team that has published a series of six fotonovelas, written in comic book fashion in both Spanish and English, that address medication compliance, diabetes, dementia, folic acid, depression and pediatric asthma. Each fotonovela is based on research conducted in Latino communities to determine what common myths and misconceptions exist and how best to address these issues to remove barriers to treatment adherence.

Empirical studies conducted by the Institute for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Research at USC and the Healthcare Management Corporation have shown that the fotonovelas are effective tools in increasing knowledge and changing behaviors among at-risk Latino populations.

Baron first realized the need for health literacy materials geared towards low-income, Spanish-speaking populations while working in the safety-net clinics that provide many of these patients with health care. He spearheaded the USC School of Pharmacy’s involvement in these clinics, where the integration of pharmacy services has produced stellar results.

What’s next for Dr. Baron? A fotonovela on childhood obesity is already underway as is a series of DVDs for prospective kidney transplant patients and their families, made possible by a grant from UniHealth Foundation.
Schaeffer Center Co-hosts
Health Economics Conference in Nation’s Capital

Dana Goldman welcomes participants to the Schaeffer Center - Brookings Institution event that explores biomedical innovation and economic value.

The Leonard D. Schaeffer Center for Health Policy and Economics at USC—a collaboration between the School of Pharmacy and the School of Policy, Planning, and Development—along with the Engelberg Center for Health Reform at the Brookings Institution hosted an event in Washington, DC on April 22 that brought together various stakeholders in the health care field to discuss current issues that stem from the new Affordable Care Act.

The Act calls for the implementation of new models for the organization, delivery and financing of care that will make health care providers more accountable for cost and outcomes, and also established the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute to develop better evidence on what health strategies work best. While some stakeholders have embraced these reforms, others fear they will stifle biomedical innovation.

The conference, “Promoting Biomedical Innovation and Economic Value: New Models for Reimbursement and Evidence Development,” included keynote speeches from former House Speaker Newt Gingrich and former Office of Management and Budget Director Peter Orszag, as well as panel discussions with representatives from the pharmaceutical industry, payers, patient and consumer advocacy organizations, the Food and Drug Administration and academia.

Topics discussed included fee for service versus “value-based” reimbursement, opportunities to drive innovation with new payment policies, and issues in measuring innovation and value. Dana Goldman, director of the Schaeffer Center, presented the welcome address and was the moderator for the fee-for-service versus “value-based” reimbursement panel.


STATE SENATOR HERNANDEZ VISITS SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

California State Senator Edward Hernandez (center right), who represents the district that encompasses the Health Science Campus, visited with School of Pharmacy Dean R. Pete Vanderveen (center left) in March to discuss health care in California and the role of the pharmacist on the health-care team. Also meeting to inform the senator about the school’s work in safety-net clinics were Associate Professor Steven Chen (far left), Hygeia Centennial Chair in Clinical Pharmacy, and Paul Gregerson (far right), chief medical officer at the JWCH Institute.
Tackling Diabetes

The School of Pharmacy has uncovered substantial findings when it comes to how best to care for diabetes patients, with one study discovering the importance of maintaining an optimal blood-sugar level, and another explaining how pharmacists can help achieve this level.

According to a new study published in *Diabetes Care*, high-risk adults with type 2 diabetes whose long-term blood sugar levels are very high or very low, may be at greater risk for heart attack and stroke compared to those whose levels stayed at the American Diabetes Association-targeted level of 7 percent.

“Our study shows that aggressive glycemic control may not always be the best treatment strategy for persons with type 2 diabetes,” said the study’s lead author Danielle Colayco, PharmD (’08), MS (’10), now a principal research associate in global health outcomes strategy and research at Allergan.

The study, conducted by Colayco along with Kaiser pharmacy analytical services biostatistician Fang Niu, Kaiser research scientist T. Craig Cheetham, PharmD (’78), and School of Pharmacy professor Jeffrey McCombs, analyzed clinical and laboratory information from Kaiser Permanente members throughout Southern California.

“Foraging research in partnership with Kaiser Permanente colleagues allowed for findings that are generalizable to a wider population of patients than those often included in randomized controlled trials,” Colayco said.

For a person living with type 2 diabetes, the take-away message is to remain involved in your own care and be aware of potential benefits and risks related to treatment. “Patients need to have an ongoing dialogue with their health care professional, and treatment plans need to be customized for each patient,” Colayco explained.

Danielle Colayco, Research Associate, Allergan
A second study led by School of Pharmacy faculty members Kathleen Johnson, Steven Chen, Mel Baron and Jeffrey McCombs demonstrates that integrating pharmacist-led management of type 2 diabetes into safety-net clinics improves patient outcomes.

The study appeared in the December issue of *The Annals of Pharmacotherapy*, a PubMed journal. Other authors on the study include Paul Gregerson, chief medical officer at the JWCH Institute; I-Ning Cheng, a clinical pharmacy specialist at HealthCare Partners; and Carla Blieden, a clinical pharmacist, and Mimi Lou, project manager, both at the USC School of Pharmacy.

The researchers found that diabetic patients who received care that included pharmacists had blood sugar levels reduced, on average, by 1.38 percentage points compared to those without pharmacist involvement in treatment. This is a clinically meaningful improvement, making it three times as likely for patients to achieve a blood sugar level of less than 7 percent, the typical treatment goal.

Pharmacists in these settings taught patients self-management skills essential to the success of diabetes management, and also reviewed medical, laboratory and medication histories, evaluated and modified drug therapy, ordered routine laboratory tests, monitored adherence to drug therapy regimens and provided follow-up care and referrals.

“Patients cared for in safety-net clinics often rely on emergency rooms when complications occur or as their source of primary care, so improving their outcomes in patient-centered medical homes will ultimately save health-care dollars,” said Chen.

Read the full studies: [http://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/34/1/77.full](http://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/34/1/77.full) and [http://www.theannals.com/cgi/content/abstract/aph.1P380v1](http://www.theannals.com/cgi/content/abstract/aph.1P380v1)

**IMPROVING HEALTH OUTCOMES**

**Weighing in on medication therapy management**

Is medication therapy management the best way to ensure that the high-cost, high-impact biologics often used to treat cancer patients are used correctly?

Experts in pharmacy and health economics were called upon to answer this question in the Spring 2011 issue of *Biotechnology Healthcare*, including the School of Pharmacy’s Associate Professor Geoffrey Joyce, who is also director of health policy at the USC Leonard D. Schaeffer Center for Health Policy and Economics.

The article takes a critical look at medication therapy management (MTM), the assessment and evaluation of a patient’s complete medication therapy regimen, a measure pharmacists are particularly adept at performing given their expertise on medication use. MTM has the potential to save large amounts of health-care dollars, considering the tremendous costs attributed to medication errors.

“In theory, MTM is a no-brainer if done correctly,” states Joyce in the article. To him, this means that there needs to be a study that concludes MTM generates a worthwhile return on investment in a real-world setting, something he and his team at USC are working on in a Medicare environment. Also required is a way to scale up MTM in a manner that prevents fraud and abuse.

Bearing those points in mind, according to Joyce “it absolutely makes sense, given the high cost of these therapies,” to provide MTM to patients taking biologics.

Pharmacists proven vital resource in area of travel health

If you’re planning an international getaway and want to make sure you’ve taken all the necessary health precautions, you may want to skip a visit to your general practitioner and talk with a pharmacist instead.

According to a study published in the international *Journal of Travel Health Medicine* conducted by School of Pharmacy scientists Melissa Durham, Jeffery Goad and Mimi Lou, pharmacist-run pretravel clinics improve patient compliance more than a consultation with primary care providers.

The data collected in “A Comparison of Pharmacist Travel–Health Specialists’ versus Primary Care Providers’ Recommendations for Travel-Related Medications, Vaccinations, and Patient Compliance in a College Health Setting,” which appears in the publication’s 2010 issue, demonstrated that the pharmacist-run clinic recommended more appropriate medication and vaccinations, and patients received their medications and vaccinations more often than in consultation with a physician.

“Primary care providers (PCPs) are frequently called upon to provide pretravel advice and recommendations, but may lack sufficient knowledge, training, and time to adequately provide such services,” the article explains.

However, pharmacists who specialize in travel medicine can greatly benefit anyone taking an international trip, providing them with the knowledge and resources to avoid travel-related health risks. “I would definitely recommend travelers to visit to a pharmacist-run travel clinic before their trips if they want to ensure their safety and health,” said Goad, who has directed the USC International Travel Health Services since 2000.

USC is home to its own International Travel Health Clinic, located on the Health Sciences Campus at 1510 San Pablo, Suite 144, and is open to the community. If you’re planning on making a trip abroad, set up an appointment by calling (323) 442-5882.

Read the full study: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21199138

TAKING ON MENTAL ILLNESS

Shedding light on PTSD

In the case of post-traumatic stress disorder, not all symptoms are created equal.

A study led by Jason Doctor, associate professor at the School of Pharmacy, is the first to examine which problems associated with PTSD actually correspond to lower quality of life, as indicated by the patient’s willingness to die sooner or to risk life-threatening treatment to relieve their symptoms.

“These findings identify targets for treatment that may improve quality of life among people with the disorder,” said Doctor.

The researchers found that, of four major symptoms associated with PTSD, not all were associated with a patient’s immediate quality of life. Distressing recollections of a traumatic event and avoidance of certain activities and thoughts had little correlation to a patient’s reported sense of well-being. However, symptoms tied to heightened arousal, such as trouble sleeping, irritability and vigilance, were associated with lower quality of life among patients. Anxiety and depression were also associated with lower quality of life.

Lori Zoellner of the University of Washington, Seattle, and Norah Feeny of Case Western Reserve University in Ohio were co-authors of the study. The researchers interviewed 184 persons seeking treatment for PTSD at two treatment sites in different regions of the United States. The research was funded by the National Institute of Mental Health.

Read the full study: http://www.healthmagdaily.com/which-symptoms-of-ptsd-do-the-most-damage.html
Filling in gaps in health care

School of Pharmacy Associate Professor Julie Dopheide and researcher Idriani Wang collaborated with Paul Gregerson, chief medical officer of the JWCH Institute, in a report about the experience of a psychiatric pharmacist at the Center for Community Health (CCH) safety-net clinic in Skid Row, providing a previously unavailable service to patients there.

In “Role of a Psychiatric Pharmacist in a Los Angeles ‘Skid-Row’ Safety-Net Clinic,” which appears in the Journal of Urban Health, the researchers explain that many homeless people using the clinic have mental disorders, but do not have access to a psychiatrist. The team decided to bring in a psychiatric pharmacist and residents, all from the School of Pharmacy, to provide patients with education, drug monitoring and outcome monitoring through rating scales.

Since the implementation of a psychiatric pharmacy team in July 2009, the researchers have observed positive outcomes in the 26 treated patients, including two who reached remission for depression and 77 percent showing improvement overall.

“The homeless population at CCH can benefit from a multidisciplinary approach involving a psychiatric pharmacist to improve access to quality psychiatric medication follow-up,” explained the study. “Other safety-net clinics may benefit from utilizing a similar collaborative practice model.”

Read the full study: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21512832

CRITICALLY EXAMINING A CURRENT HEALTH-CARE TRENDS

A study led by Jeffrey McCombs, director of graduate studies at the School of Pharmacy, discusses how methods underpinning comparative effectiveness research (CER), an approach receiving national attention owing to $1.1 billion in dedicated funding reallocated in the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, need to be looked at more closely.

CER, also called evidence-based health care, evaluates how various drugs, treatments and services stack up against one another in real-word effectiveness and cost. There is a current emphasis on physicians to consider this research when selecting a patient’s treatment course as the best way to compare the many available treatment options, and as a way to standardize care across the country.

The study, “Impact of Drug Treatment History on Comparative Effectiveness Research in Schizophrenia,” which appears in the journal Value in Health, takes a critical look at CER relating to patients prescribed treatments for schizophrenia.

It found that these studies sample from patient populations that are not representative of a wide range, meaning the results will not apply to the majority of patients seeking care. McCombs discovered that patient outcomes varied significantly with treatment history, especially episode type, something that is not always taken into account when conducting CER.

“Concern should extend to any disease state in which long-term drug therapy is indicated,” he explains. “Hopefully, the standard of practice for this type of research will move toward including the full range of treated patients, accounting for each patient’s treatment history in their analyses.”
The annual School of Pharmacy Alumni/Senior Awards Banquet honored Irwin Sitkoff and Papatya Tankut as Alumnus and Honorary Alumnus of the Year, respectively. The celebration was held at the Langham Huntington Hotel and attended by nearly 400 students, faculty, preceptors, alumni and friends. Hosted by the School of Pharmacy Alumni Association, the evening was marked with shared experiences and a celebration of the pharmacy profession.

Hats Off to the Classes of 2011 & 1961

left: Irwin Sitkoff, PharmD ('54), was recognized as the 2011 Honorary Alumnus and Papatya Tankut, RPh, was named Honorary Alumnus of the Year at the annual banquet.

middle: Recipient of the Adrianna “Terri” Weissman Memorial Award, Jaquelyn Manougian, PharmD ('11), with Associate Dean for Academic and Clinical Affairs Fred Weissman

right: Jessica Abraham, PharmD ('11), took home the most awards of the evening, winning the Albertsons/Sav-on Drugs Award, a Merck & Co. Award and the Pharmacist Letter Award.
This is truly an evening I will not forget. Through my role at CVS Caremark, I have had the distinct pleasure of working with Dean Vanderveen and the faculty and staff at USC School of Pharmacy for many years. Throughout those years, there has been one thing that has remained constant- the USC School of Pharmacy continues to lead the path around innovation, creativity, and excellence in pharmacy.”

— HONORARY ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR PAPATYA TANKUT, RPh, VICE PRESIDENT OF PHARMACY PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR CVS CAREMARK
THANKING OUR generous SUPPORTERS

On the evening of June 26, the Health Sciences Campus Quad was transformed by lantern lights and music to honor the School’s most ardent supporters — the Pharmacy Associates.

“As a Pharmacy Associate, you are a vital part of the fabric that has made USC one of the nation’s undisputed elite pharmacy schools. You make this happen by being there when the School needs you with financial support and expert insights contributing to the innovative progress of the School and the leadership position we have taken nationwide.”

— DEAN R. PETE VANDERVEEN

Kicking Off The Evening’s Celebration With The Dedication Of The Dianne Kwock Jung and Lunny Ronnie Jung Centennial Park

Ron Jung, PharmD (’72), and his wife Dianne Jung, PharmD (’74), who recently made a $1 million gift naming the School’s Dianne Kwock Jung and Lunny Ronnie Jung Centennial Park, “cut the ribbon” to officially name the park. They are joined by Dean Vanderveen and their two sons Jason (second from left) and Nicholas (far right). Dr. Ron Jung is a member of the Board of Councilors.
left: Josephine and William Heeres, PharmD ('63), with Kathleen Johnson, PharmD, MPH, PhD, who holds the William A. and Josephine A. Heeres Chair in Community Pharmacy, during the Pharmacy Associates Dinner.

middle: Helen and Raymond Poon, PharmD ('71), a member of the Board of Councilors, Dean Vanderveen, and Mike Quick, vice president of sales, west region of AmerisourceBergen.

right: Guests Annie Siu, DDS, Tim Siu, MD, Norma and Keith La Fond, PharmD ('63), enjoy the reception prior to the park dedication. Dr. Siu and Dr. LaFond are both members of the School’s Board of Councilors.

SEEN AT THE PHARMACY ASSOCIATES CELEBRATION...

1: Dean Vanderveen with Davies and Angie Wong, PharmD ('83)
2: Edith and George Sheu, PharmD ('55), with Sarah Hamm-Alvarez, Gavin S. Herbert Professor in Pharmaceutical Sciences and associate dean for research.
3: Dean Vanderveen with Board of Councilors member Gale Bensussen and Ron Barnes, executive director of the Kenneth T. and Eileen L. Norris Foundation.
4: Karen and David D’Altoria, PharmD ('77)
5: Sylvia Moore, PharmD ('61), and Ken Thai, PharmD ('02)
For Dimple Modi, an MS in Pharmaceutical Sciences student in the lab of Ronald Alkana and Daryl Davies, being part of a global pharmacy community has been a truly enriching experience.

As chairperson of Pharmacy Education for the International Pharmaceutical Students’ Federation (IPSF) – the leading advocacy organization for pharmacy students from around the world – Modi has recently attended two major international meetings that took place in Den Haag, Netherlands, where she learned and discussed ways to improve pharmacy education, curriculum development and professional conduct throughout the globe.

“In an increasingly global world, this exchange helps students contribute to strengthening health care in their countries and enhancing the role of pharmacist in it,” says Modi.

Modi’s position at IPSF gives her the opportunity to talk to other international pharmacy organizations and collaborate with them to find ways to adopt and improve pharmacy school curricula in countries around the world.

Hovik Mekhjian and Parth Parikh, PharmD candidates, have successfully begun an outreach project that educates pharmacy students in India about clinical aspects of the profession, a facet not currently emphasized in Indian programs.

“India has the fastest growing diabetic population in the world, and pharmacy students can play an integral part in dealing with the current health-care gaps stemming from this epidemic,” says Mekhjian.

With the help and support of colleagues, the students founded Project India, which has just completed its pilot phase. Part one of the project included two training sessions where 52 students from four different schools of pharmacy in India were trained to screen patients and counsel them about diabetes.

The students also organized seven health fairs where over 1,000 participants were screened, with nearly 7 percent of those screened being referred to local physicians for follow-up care. At these health fairs, Indian students who participated in the training sessions were given the opportunity to utilize their newly acquired skills in both screening and educating the community.

“Because India has a fee-per-service healthcare model, people don’t often get regular check-ups and screenings unless they are feeling sick,” notes Mekhjian. “We want to empower people to get the help they need, and empower pharmacy students to provide the type of hands-on clinical practice they are equipped to do.”

Mekhjian and Parikh hope to expand the project with its next phase, including the use of video capture training to allow students to be educated remotely, and the expansion to a more interdisciplinary approach to care.

The project was co-sponsored by the International Pharmaceutical Students’ Federation, Global Health at USC, Project KADAM, the State Health Department of Gujarat, Ganpat University S.K. Patel College of Pharmaceutical Education and Research, Nirma University Institute of Pharmacy, L.M. College of Pharmacy, Anand College of Pharmacy, the Indian Pharmaceutical Association Student Forum in India and the Indian Pharmacist Association of California.
The prestigious chair supports excellence in clinical pharmacy and the advancement of the pharmacy profession.

Steven Chen Appointed to HYGEIA CENTENNIAL CHAIR

Dean R. Pete Vanderveen announced the appointment of Steven W. Chen, associate professor of clinical pharmacy and program director for the pharmacy practice and residency in ambulatory care at the School of Pharmacy, to the Hygeia Centennial Chair in Clinical Pharmacy at the School of Pharmacy.

Steven W. Chen, associate professor of clinical pharmacy and program director for pharmacy practice and residency in ambulatory care at the School of Pharmacy

“Dr. Chen has well represented the pharmacy profession to our health-care colleagues, showing the value of the pharmacist on the team and working collaboratively to provide the best possible care for the patients he and his colleagues serve,” said Vanderveen. “He is an extraordinary clinician and is preeminently qualified to teach the next generation of pharmacists, evident in his exemplary work with students and residents.”

Well known at USC for his extraordinary work in the clinical pharmacy arena, Chen, PharmD (’89), is also recognized as a national leader in establishing the pharmacist as a pivotal member of the health-care team and in utilizing the pharmacist in this role to improve health outcomes while saving health-care dollars in clinics serving homeless and uninsured patients. His pioneering work in Los Angeles safety-net clinics has emerged as a national model that has been replicated at clinics across the country. Further, he has served as national co-chair of the Health Services Research Agency’s National Collaborative, which is exponentially expanding the footprint of clinical pharmacy services in clinics nationwide.

Chen is also a fellow of the Center for Excellence in Teaching at USC, which strives to foster and enhance learner-centered education. He is also among the leaders of the Interprofessional Education Committee on the Health Sciences Campus, designed to promote collaboration in the training of the next generation of health professionals among USC health science schools.

The Hygeia Centennial Chair was established in 2002. Supporters of the Chair include Deanna and Thom Allen, Lorraine and Mel Baron, Al Berliner, John Bruce, Ivy and David Bruhn, William Cockrell, Karen and David D’Altorio, Rosemary and David Fong, Jane and Henry Fong, Leticia Hernandez, Debbie and Lee Klevens, Mary and Ben Lepkin, Mildred and Sandy Lin, Helen and Raymond Poon, Judy and Gerald Rosenberg, George Sanders, Anita and Michael Shum, Sandy and Irwin Sitkoff, Melinda and Fidel Valenzuela, Jennifer and Bill Watson, and Mary Jo and Louis Wong.
Dana Goldman, director of the Schaeffer Center for Health Policy and Economics at USC, has been awarded the inaugural MetLife Foundation Silver Scholar Award by the Alliance for Aging Research and the MetLife Foundation.

Goldman, the Norman Topping/National Medical Enterprises Chair in Medicine and Public Policy at USC, is honored for his work that helps better define the value of healthy life and healthy aging. The 2011 MetLife Foundation Silver Scholar Award was given jointly to Goldman and David Cutler, Otto Eckstein Professor of Applied Economics at Harvard University, who submitted a proposal together.

The award carries a cash prize of $75,000 and supports the work of economists, demographers and other researchers who provide important health economic data examining the burden of disease and the value of medical innovations that allow people to live longer in good health.

With the award, Goldman and Cutler plan to expand on their current research, exploring how advances in slowing aging can be beneficial for government spending as well as individual health. As part of the terms of the award, Goldman and Cutler will prepare a review or analysis to be published in a peer-reviewed journal with the next year.

“Dr. Goldman’s research exemplifies the spirit of the MetLife Foundation Silver Scholar Award. He has contributed significantly to increasing our understanding of the relationship between aging, health care and economics. We are pleased to recognize and further support his work on changing the way we value innovation and life after 65,” said Daniel Perry, president and CEO of the Alliance for Aging Research.

The award will be presented by the Alliance for Aging Research at their Annual Bipartisan Congressional Awards Gala in Washington, DC on September 13.
School of Pharmacy in LA TIMES FESTIVAL OF BOOKS

The Los Angeles Times Festival of Books serves as one more way the USC School of Pharmacy can interact with the surrounding community, and this year’s event included a School-hosted booth and a presentation from Associate Professor Mel Baron.

The Festival was held on the USC University Park Campus April 30–May 1, and featured author events, storytelling, cooking demonstrations, poetry readings and nearly 300 exhibitor booths.

Mel Baron, PharmD, presented a staged reading of his fotonovela “Sweet Temptations” followed by a discussion about diabetes. The comic book-like health literacy tool, written in both English and Spanish, educates Latino populations about diabetes symptoms and the importance of keeping up with diabetes treatment regimens. Its effectiveness in increasing diabetes awareness in minority populations is supported by two separate studies, one conducted by the USC Institute for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Research and another conducted by Healthcare Management Corp., a subsidiary of WellPoint, Inc.

“Sweet Temptations” is one of the six fotonovelas produced by Baron and his team at the School of Pharmacy, the latest of which is entitled “Forgotten Memories” and discusses dementia. Baron is currently in production on a fotonovela focusing on childhood obesity.

The Festival of Books also housed a booth hosted by the USC International Travel Health Clinic, a School of Pharmacy-run service that helps prepare people for all of their international travels by educating them about health risks, administering immunizations and providing travelers with customized pre-travel health plans. The Clinic is directed by Associate Professor Jeffery Goad and run with assistant professors Edith Mirzaian and Melissa Durham, all of whom hold the Certificate of Knowledge in Travel Health from the International Society of Travel Medicine.

Resident Rachel Sperling, Assistant Professor Edith Mirzaian and Hasmig Ekme-kdjian, PharmD (’11), at the School of Pharmacy International Travel Health Clinic booth at the Festival of Books.
Mel Baron, PharmD, won the 2011 APhA Pinnacle Award — Individual Award for Career Achievement; presented “Health Literacy and Its Impact on Patient Outcomes,” at the CPhA Outlook 2011 meeting in Palm Springs in February.

Daryl Davies, PhD, awarded a second year of funding for the project entitled “A Potential Role for ATP-Gated P2X4 Receptors in Alcohol Consumption;” awarded $10,000 grant, along with co-PI Marco Bartolato, MD, PhD, from the USC Undergraduate Research Associates Program for the project titled “P2X4 Receptors Play an Important Role in Regulating the Intake and Behavioral Properties of Alcohol”.

Jason Doctor, PhD, had his research about which symptoms of PTSD were most harmful cited by the Armenian Medical Network and Disabled World in March and by Health and Medicine News in April; had his article entitled “Comparison of One and Two-Stage Revision for the Infected Total Hip Arthroplasty: A Markov-Expected Utility Decision Analysis,” at the 63rd Annual Meeting of The Association of Bone and joint Surgeons, in Dublin, Ireland, in June.

Julie Dopheide, PharmD, BCPP, interviewed by Medscape as an expert on ADHD in April.

Melissa Durham, PharmD, was the commencement speaker at the satellite ceremony for the USC physician assistant program.

Jeffery Goad, PharmD, MPH, director of student outreach for community health, is the 2011 recipient of the APhA Academy of Pharmacy Practice and Management Distinguished Achievement Award in Clinical/Pharmacotherapeutic Practice.

Dana Goldman, PhD, awarded the inaugural MetLife Foundation Silver Scholar Award by the Alliance for Aging Research and the MetLife Foundation; had his research featured on Fox News Orlando affiliate WOFL-TV, which found that men over 40 who use erectile dysfunction treatments are more likely to pick up a sexually transmitted disease in January; featured in the Los Angeles Times and Reuters for his research that showed that patients treated in high-spending hospitals were less likely to die in the hospital in February; featured in Annals of Internal Medicine for a study that found that for hospitalized patients with a variety of acute conditions, more spending is associated with lower death rate in February; had his study that found a correlation between increased Internet access and rising admissions for treatment of prescription drug abuse featured in TechNewsDaily and Billings Gazette in May; co-authored an op-ed in The Huffington Post about Congress’ attitude toward Medicare in May.

Bill Gong, PharmD, FASHP, published on Medscape with an article about the use of aspirin for primary prevention in diabetes in January.

Joel Hay, PhD, was quoted by Reuters about drug price increases associated with Medicare and President Obama’s Affordable Care Act in March; interviewed on NPR Marketplace about recent studies that show that giving patients more say in their care does not save money for Medicare in April; interviewed by BBC Radio about drug legalization in June.

Geoffrey Joyce, PhD, quoted in Biotechnology Healthcare about how to implement medication therapy management in June.

Jeffrey McCombs, PhD, director of graduate studies, presented “The Incremental Cost of Alzheimer’s Disease to the California State Medicaid Program,” at the American Academy of Neurology 63rd Annual Meeting, in Honolulu, in April; presented “Impact of Newly Diagnosed Hepatitis C Infections on Health Care Costs” (selected as a poster of distinction) and “Real-World Evaluation of the Economic Impact of Duration of Drug Therapy in the Treatment of Hepatitis C Virus (HCV),” at the AASLD Digestive Disease Week, in Chicago, in May.

Tien Ng, PharmD, FCCP, BCPS, presented “Antiplatelets and Anticoagulation for the Prevention of Thromboembolism in Patients with Heart Failure,” at Heart Failure 2011: An Update on Therapy in Los Angeles in January; presented “Comparison of the Efficacy and Safety of Various Diuretic Regimens Used to Overcome Diuretic Resistance in Acute Heart Failure,” at the American College of Cardiology 2011 Annual Scientific Session, in New Orleans, in April.


Neeraj Sood, PhD, featured in a Fox News segment about rising health care costs in February; published on the Council on Foreign Affairs website for his research about the effect of health care reform on businesses in February; had his research about the costs associated with obesity cited in The Boston Globe in February; featured in The New Republic for his research, which found that in families with high-deductible health plans, children were less likely to get immunizations and adults were less likely to get cancer screenings in April.

Bradley Williams, PharmD, published “Alzheimer’s Disease Management Guideline: Update 2008” as part of the California Workgroup on Guidelines for Alzheimer’s Disease Management.

Michael Wincor, PharmD, associate dean of globalization and continuing professional development, was quoted by CNN about the risks of multiple doctors overmedicating a patient in May.

Julie Zissimopoulos, PhD, presented her research on the well-being of the elderly across time and across country, at the Population Association of America 2011 Annual Meeting, in Washington, DC, in March; presented “Gain and Loss: Marriage and Wealth Changes Over Time” at “The Roles of Job Loss, Disability and Changing Family Structure” conference, for which she served as co-organizer, in San Francisco in May.

Numerous faculty members presented at the APhA Annual Meeting & Exposition, in Seattle, WA, in March, including: Julie Dopheide, PharmD, BCPP; Jeffery Goad, PharmD, MPH; Kathleen Johnson, PharmD, MPH, PhD; and Edith Mirzaian, PharmD.

Faculty participants at the ISPOR 16th Annual International Meeting, in Baltimore, MD, in May, include: Jason Doctor, PhD; Kathleen Johnson, PharmD, MPH, PhD; Jeffrey McCombs, PhD; and Michael Nichol, PhD.
Nouri Neamati has been awarded a grant from the Department of Defense to develop drugs for breast cancer patients.

Associate Professor Nouri Neamati has been granted a two-year, $607,500 Idea Award from the Department of Defense Congressionally Directed Breast Cancer Research Program for his grant entitled, “Design of GRP78 Inhibitors as Novel Therapeutics for Breast Cancer.”

Neamati is collaborating on this project with co-investigator Amy Lee, associate director for basic research at the USC Norris Cancer Center, who originally cloned the GRP78 several years ago. Graduate student Kavya Ramkumar and postdoctoral fellows Drs. Bikash Deb Nath and Hiroyuki Otake are spearheading the work in the Neamati lab.

“This study aims to predict a novel approach to treatment for recurrent and resistant cancers,” says Lee, who holds the Freeman Cosmetic Chair in Basic Science at USC.

The project, which focuses on breast cancer but can be applied to other cancers as well, explores the overexpression of the GRP78 gene in cancers, which promotes the growth of tumor cells and increases cell resistance to chemotherapy.

“Drug resistance is what often causes cancer treatment therapy to fail, so decreasing this resistance would have significant impact and could help eradicate the cancer,” explains Neamati.

The goal of the project is to better understand the drug resistance mechanisms of the GRP78 gene and to design novel therapeutic agents to overcome them. Neamati and his team aim to counteract GRP78 by discovering ways to decrease its expression and to selectively inhibit its enzymatic activity in cancerous cells.

“It is expected that by blocking the survival effects of GRP78, cancer cells will become more susceptible to chemotherapy,” says Neamati.

Neamati’s lab has already identified two novel compounds that reduce GRP78 expression and inhibit its enzymatic activity with the help of a $120,000 seed grant from the L.K. Whittier Foundation, on which Dr. Lee was the primary investigator. The DOD funding will build on the Whittier grant’s findings to investigate the molecular mechanisms and anticancer effects of these compounds.

“We will validate the therapeutic utility of these inhibitors as a novel approach to treat GRP78-overexpressing breast cancer,” says Neamati. “Successful completion of these studies will expedite the development of these drugs for use in cancer patients.”

This is the fourth DOD grant awarded to Neamati. In addition to grants from the DOD and the Whitter Foundation, he has received support from the Susan Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, University-wide AIDS Research Program, the American Lung Association and the National Institutes of Health. His research specialty is the utilization of a robust chemoinformatics platform, which he uses to design novel small-molecule drugs for various diseases, with a focus on cancer and HIV/AIDS.
Sarah Hamm-Alvarez is one of seven researchers to receive innovation funding from the USC Stevens Institute.

**Scientists Receives Funding for Breakthrough Translational Research**

A groundbreaking diagnostic tool for the autoimmune disease, Sjogren’s syndrome, has been developed at the School of Pharmacy, and now with funding from the USC Stevens Institute for Innovation, it will enter the clinical study needed to take it to market.

Sarah Hamm-Alvarez, chair of the department and associate dean for research affairs, has developed a novel tear-based diagnostic tool for Sjogren’s syndrome, which occurs when the immune system attacks the moisture-producing glands in the body. Four million Americans are affected by this chronic autoimmune disease, and when left untreated it can lead to a range of complications, some of which are life-threatening.

Because dry-eye is a symptom of the disease, Sjogren’s syndrome is often misdiagnosed as chronic dry-eye, and is even sometimes mistaken for depression. There are currently no simple tests for early identification, so consequently the average time for a Sjogren’s syndrome diagnosis is almost seven years, opening the door for added complications and risks.

“The test we’ve developed provides a low-cost diagnostic tool that has the potential to increase early identification of Sjogren’s syndrome patients,” says Hamm-Alvarez, who is the Gavin S. Herbert Professor in Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Of further interest, the assay can easily be added to the current diagnostic tool kit used by ophthalmologists and optometrists, making it a low-cost, accessible way to test patients for Sjogren’s syndrome when patients present with dry eye symptoms.

Working with Annette Kleiser of the Stevens Institute, Hamm-Alvarez has already found great industry interest in the innovative diagnostic tool. However, additional clinical data from focused populations has been requested before it can be marketed.

The Stevens Institute for Innovation, a university-wide resource that spearheads tech transfer between USC professors and venture capitalists and industry, has identified the Hamm-Alvarez project as a breakthrough innovation that has high potential, and will provide financial support to conduct this larger-scale clinical trial through their Ideas Empowered Program.

Hamm-Alvarez, along with co-investigators John Irvine of the Keck School of Medicine and Doheny Eye Institute and William Stohl, chief of the Division of Rheumatology at the Keck School of Medicine, will test this novel diagnostic tool on 350 female patients over the course of eight months. The clinical study will also be conducted with J. Martin Heur, Doheny Eye Institute and Daniel Arkfeld, Keck School of Medicine. Wendy Mack, also of the Keck School of Medicine, will provide statistical guidance on the clinical trial through the CTSI statistical core.

The translational trial is the next step in moving the Hamm-Alvarez invention into a marketable product that can be used by ophthalmologists and optometrists to simply and affectively diagnose a potentially dangerous disease.

“This is an exciting next step for us,” says Hamm-Alvarez.
Jim Adams, PhD, was quoted in the Los Angeles Times and interviewed by Fox News-Sacramento KTXL-TV about opioid pain killer addiction in relation to the television show “Nurse Jackie” in April.

Ronald Alkana, PharmD, PhD, associate dean of graduate studies and curricular development, participated in the APSA Pharmacy Career Roundtable in March; participated in the panel discussion, “On Track to Tenure Track: What to Do Now to Get an Academic Job Later,” as part of the HSC Governing Council Professional Development Week in March; attended and served as poster judge at the annual meeting of the American Pharmacists Association, in Seattle, WA, in March.

Marco Bartolato, MD, PhD, and Daryl Davies, PhD, awarded $10,000 grant from the USC Undergraduate Research Associates Program to fund one USC undergraduate for the summer and three to four additional students during the fall and spring semesters for the project titled “P2X4 Receptors Play an Important Role in Regulating the Intake and Behavioral Properties of Alcohol”; received $16,300 for an international collaboration with the University of Cagliari, Italy, to evaluate the therapeutic potential of sigma-1 receptor ligands and neurosteroids in animal models of Tourette syndrome; received grant from National Institute of Child Health and Human Development supporting research on MAO-A with vulnerability factors for aggression.

Enrique Cadenas, MD, PhD, Charles Brown/Alumni Professor, named chair-elect for next Gordon Conference, to take place in Il Ciocco, Italy in 2013.

Roger Clemens, DrPH, interviewed by MSNBC, KROQ (LA), KMOX (St. Louis), WTSB (Raleigh), WBEN (Buffalo), KTRS (St. Louis), WISR (Pittsburgh), WMGS, WBHT, WBSX, WJIR, WARM (Wilkes Barre), WLV (Cincinnati), WQBM (NY), WMPI (Louisville), WLHT, WIGR, WTRV, WGRD (Grand Rapids), KLBJ (Austin), WSJS/WSML (Greensboro) and KINK (Portland) about the 2010 Dietary Guidelines; quoted in the Los Angeles Times about how to remove radioactivity from food in March.

Sarah Hamm-Alvarez, PhD, Gavin S. Herbert Professor in Pharmaceutical Sciences, chair, associate dean for research, received innovation funding from the USC Stevens Institute for translational research of a groundbreaking diagnostic tool for the autoimmune disease Sjögren’s syndrome.

Nouri Neamati, PhD, awarded two-year $607,500 Idea Award from DOD Congresionally Directed Breast Cancer Research Program for his grant entitled “Design of GRP78 Inhibitors as Novel Therapeutics for Breast Cancer”.

J. Andrew MacKay, PhD, awarded $45,000 grant from the Board of Trustees of the Robert E. and May R. Wright Foundation and the Southern California Clinical and Translation Science Institute for the project titled “Biomolecular Engineering of Sustained-Release Disintegrins for Cancer Therapy”.

Jean Shih, PhD, University Professor, Boyd & Elsie Welin Professor, was an invited distinguished visiting professor at Duke-National University of Singapore, Graduate Medical School, Singapore, in April; presented “Transcriptional Regulation of MAO A and B” as distinguished lecturer at Neuroscience Research Center, Duke-National University of Singapore, Graduate Medical School, Singapore, in April; presented “Multiple Functions of MAOs” as distinguished lecturer, Department of Physiology, National University of Singapore, Singapore, in April.

USC HOSTS SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BIOMEDICAL COUNCIL

The School of Pharmacy hosted the Southern California Biomedical Council’s “Opportunities in Drug Discovery” Networking Forum for Academia and Industry in April, an event that brought together scientists, engineers, biotech and pharmaceutical company executives, venture capitalists and start-up entrepreneurs for an evening of networking and presentations. The forum showcased School of Pharmacy teams that are spearheading the next generation of drug design, targeting, delivery and discovery research platforms. The event, sponsored by the School of Pharmacy and Med Exec International, featured associate professors Julio Camarero, Nouri Neamati, Bogdan Olenyuk and Clay Wang. Attendees included (left to right) Dean Vanderveen, Associate Dean for Research Sarah Hamm-Alvarez, Board of Councilors member and event co-sponsor Rosemarie Christopher, and SoCalBio President Ahmed Enany.
Although the quest to identify new therapeutics is a huge undertaking, the cutting-edge methods of getting there are on a molecular scale.

Such was the consensus at the “Drug Design and Molecular Pharmacology” symposium, presented by the School of Pharmacy’s Department of Pharmacology and Pharmaceutical Sciences in February.

At the event, six outstanding researchers from across the United States came together and shared their experiences of searching for drug candidates and developing therapies from simple molecular experiments in the lab, putting them through clinical trials and finally, implementing them in medical practice.

Doris Benbrook, PhD, Shaomeng Wang, PhD, and Ruiwen Zhang, MD, PhD, DABT, all spoke about molecular targeting. Benbrook, a researcher from the University of Oklahoma, emphasized the need to think 3-dimensionally about biological targets, as the molecules identified for therapeutic targeting in a given disease often communicate with dozens of other molecules in cells.

Wang, from the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center, expanded on Benbrook’s ideas, speaking about his efforts to target the interactions between proteins. He explained that the more specific the targeting, the greater efficacy and the less side effects. As a founder of two start-up companies with multiple compounds currently in clinical trials, Wang further discussed how his lab concentrates efforts on designing compounds for particularly difficult cancer targets.

Wang’s focus on specificity was reinforced by Zhang, from Texas Tech University, who spoke about his research dealing with the p53-MDM2 protein. Zhang is searching for compounds to target this particular protein in the development of anti-cancer treatments.

Dale Mierke, PhD, of Dartmouth College, detailed his work on new screening methods for a class of cell receptors that are in every tissue of the body and are a critical element in cell signaling. Next up was a talk entitled “Drug-Induced Hearing Loss: Fishing for Answers,” by Julian Simon, PhD, from the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. Simon uses the zebrafish to screen for drugs that can prevent tumors in cells without diminishing efficacy.

The concluding talk of the day was offered by C. Patrick Reynolds, MD, PhD, from Texas Tech University. Reynolds discussed his drug delivery work focusing on fat-soluble drugs. These are typically extremely effective against certain tumors; however, their insolubility in water makes them very difficult to deliver in adequate concentrations. Reynolds described his “lipid glove”, a delivery method designed to overcome this limitation.

The event was attended by some 80 students, faculty and researchers.

“From day one, our goal is to do science that benefits patients,” says Wang.

Wang’s focus on specificity was reinforced by Zhang, from Texas Tech University, who spoke about his research dealing with the p53-MDM2 protein. Zhang is searching for compounds to target this particular protein in the development of anti-cancer treatments.

Dale Mierke, PhD, of Dartmouth College, detailed his work on new screening methods for a class of cell receptors that are in every tissue of the body and are a critical element in cell signaling. Next up was a talk entitled “Drug-Induced Hearing Loss: Fishing for Answers,” by Julian Simon, PhD, from the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. Simon uses the zebrafish to screen for drugs that can prevent tumors in cells without diminishing efficacy.

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The event was attended by some 80 students, faculty and researchers.

“It was an honor to host so many experts in the field,” said Associate Professor Nouri Neamati, who organized the event. “This was a great opportunity for the USC community to hear about cutting-edge research in drug design and delivery.”
Students and donors gathered at the yearly event to celebrate the generous contributions that enable the School’s continued success attracting top students. The event, which took place March 16 on the Health Sciences Campus Quad, was a unique chance for students to meet and thank the benefactors who have helped make their education possible.
HONORED AT THE SCHOLARSHIP LUNCHEON FOR HIS PIVOTAL SUPPORT

Mike Quick, lead vice president of the west region at AmerisourceBergen Corporation, was honored for his ongoing support of School of Pharmacy students and professional initiatives that propel the industry forward. Each year, Quick organizes the Good Neighbor Pharmacy/Institute for Community Pharmacy Scholarship Golf Classic, which has provided over $1 million in scholarship funding.

DEAN R. PETE VANDERVEEN ANNOUNCED THE FOLLOWING NEW SCHOLARSHIPS AT THE EVENT:

- Jennifer and William Watson Endowed Scholarship
- Lyndall and Ronald Otto Endowed Scholarship
- Mary and Robert Hahn Endowed Scholarship
- Leticia Hernandez Endowed Scholarship
- George Sanders Endowed Scholarship
- Connie and Alexander Cao Annual Scholarship
- Mildred Lim Lin and Sandy Lin Endowed Scholarship
- Sandra and Robert Brooks Endowed Scholarship
- Lorraine and Melvin Baron Endowed Scholarship
- Shahrzad Arzani Annual Scholarship

Town and Gown Scholars Lucas Hill, PharmD ('11), and PharmD candidates Jasmine Chung, Kimberly McVicker, Parth Shah and Grace Kim with Town and Gown Scholarship committee chair Kathy Lingle.
Byron Brown, PharmD (’71), died in February following a long illness. He was a former employee at Irvine Medical Center.

Frank Keneley, BS (’49), died in March. He was a United States Air Force veteran of World War II, where he flew over 22 combat missions. He practiced pharmacy for 36 years in South Laguna Beach, at Village Coast Pharmacy. He is survived by his wife Hilde and two daughters.

Marisa Lee, PharmD (’92), passed away in February following a battle with Crohn’s disease. She worked in several pharmacies, including Group Health and Madigan Army Medical Center. She is survived by her son Zachary, father Dr. Roger Lee, her brother Dr. Ryan Lee and his wife Dina, and their three children, Alex, Quentin and River.

Margaret LaRue Vidulich, BA (’43), passed away in May. She worked with her father in the family store, LaRue Pharmacy, for 30 years. She was preceded in death by her husband, John N. Vidulich. She is survived by her sister, Catherine Muller; sisters-in-law, Carol LaRue, Mary Whitt and Eleanor Papac and numerous nieces and nephews.

Lee “Buzzy” Klevens, PharmD (’74), served on the Board of Councilors since 2004 where he was an active participant on the Innovative Practice Models Committee. A dedicated and enthusiastic Trojan, Klevens was a major donor to the school and a committed presence at USC events. Dr. Klevens was the director of the Department of Pharmacy Services at the Riverside County Medical Center and Clinics. There he advocated for advanced practice models in clinical pharmacy services, allowing him to provide exemplary care and training sites for pharmacy student rotations. His team at Riverside includes many USC School of Pharmacy alumni. His daughter, Ashlee Klevens, has just completed her second year in the PharmD program.

The family has requested that any memorial gifts be directed to a scholarship in his memory. Gifts can be forward to: Mary Wackerman, USC School of Pharmacy, 1985 Zonal Avenue #711, Los Angeles, CA 90089-9121.

Paul Drogichen, PharmD (’67), passed away in April. Dr. Drogichen was a passionate advocate and leader in the profession of pharmacy for several decades. He was active on the Board of Directors for the Alumni Association at USC, and served as a member of the CPhA Board of Trustees and on the Board of Directors for the Pharmacists’ Professional Society of San Fernando Valley. He was a member of the Central Coast Counties Pharmacists Association as well. Additionally, Dr. Drogichen served on the CPhA Emergency Preparedness Coalition and was a member of the Medical Reserve Corps.

The family has requested that any memorial gifts be directed to a scholarship in Paul’s memory. Gifts can be forward to: Mary Wackerman, USC School of Pharmacy, 1985 Zonal Avenue #711, Los Angeles, CA 90089-9121.
Leah Amirian, PharmD (’08), has received her Certificate in Travel Health credential.

Steven Baskin, PharmD (’66), PhD, has authored 14 patents that impinge on many scientific areas, including converting solid waste to high-grade fertilizer, improved packaging of nitroglycerin for medical users, development of anions as suitable pharmaceutical products, a method of finding nerve gas in sand, finding a more sensitive in situ method for measuring cyanide and a superior antidote for cyanide poisoning.

Roslyn Ellison Blake, PhD (’92), to be featured in Million Dollar Conversations, a book series published by Insight Publishing.

Connie, PharmD (’87), and Walter Ching, PharmD (’89), are the owners of Arcadia Center Pharmacy and Arcadia Medical Pharmacy. Jim Wilson is the owner of 612 Pharmacy.

Karen Chu, MS (’10), and Sara Zolfaghari, MS (’10), co-authored an abstract with Associate Professor Jeffrey McCombs entitled, “The Incremental Cost of Alzheimer’s Disease to the California State Medicaid Program,” presented at the American Academy of Neurology 63rd Annual Meeting, in Honolulu, HI, in April.

Mark Henschke, PharmD (’83), has been recognized by MDx Medical, Inc. for a national “Patients’ Choice” Award for the third year in a row.

Lisa Johnson, PharmD (’95), has opened Raindrop Pharmacy in Manhattan Beach.

Afrouz Nikmanesh, PharmD (’96), is now CEO of Pharmacist’s Remedy, a company with a range of health and wellness products.

Michael Rigas, PharmD (’81), has been named chief clinical officer for KabaFusion, LLC, based in Norwalk.

The Phi Delta Chi AAAE Active Alumni Dinner held in April honored James Roache, PharmD (’70), as the 2010 AAAE Alumnus of the Year. Scott Evans, PharmD (’98), received the Leader in Pharmacy Award.

Alumni presenting posters at the ISPOR Annual Meeting included:

- Gustavo Aranda, PharmD (’04), MS (’06)
- Arie Barlev, MS (’04)
- Morgan Bron, MS (’01)
- Craig Cheetham, PharmD (’80), MS (’97)
- Kristina Chen, MS (’01)
- I-Ning (Elaine) Cheng, MS (’08)
- Danielle Colayco, PharmD (’08), MS (’10)
- Ning Yan Gu, PhD (’09)
- Lihua Zhang, MD, PhD (’07)
- Lizheng Shi, PhD (’01)
- Juliana Setyawan, PharmD (’02), MS (’04)
- Kimberly Sterling, MS (’02)
- Hae Sung Suh, PhD (’09)
- Patrick Sullivan, PhD (’01)
- Qiong (Eric) Wu, PhD (’02)
- Andrew Yu, PhD (’05)
- Kim Sterling, MS (’02)

Bakersfield Dean’s Roundtable

PharmD student Ali Zanial, Dean Vanderveen, and PharmD student Joy Wang, join Dixie and Frank Fornasero, PharmD (’58), at a Dean’s Roundtable in Bakersfield. Roundtable have been held and will continue to be held throughout the region, giving friends and alumni an opportunity to hear about the latest happenings at the school and in the profession.
EXPLORING our IMPACT

Commencement speaker Lucinda Maine, executive vice president and CEO of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy, toured the School of Pharmacy’s model programs in safety-net clinics around Los Angeles. Maine (second from left) is pictured with (left to right) Michelle Lee, PharmD, Associate Professor Steven Chen, and Sandy Song, PharmD (’11), at the Center for Community Health at the JWCH Institute on Skid Row.

HELPING THOSE Who Need it Most

Pharmacy students from Skull and Mortar and USC’s Operation Immunization spent an afternoon at the Fred Jordan Missions in downtown Los Angeles, providing free flu vaccines to the homeless and lower socioeconomic population in the area.

Melanie Cheng, PharmD candidate, administers a flu vaccine.

Returning to His ROOTS

School of Pharmacy Associate Professor Mel Baron returned to his former elementary school, Sheridan Elementary School in the Boyle Heights area of Los Angeles, to present a check for $500 towards the Wonder of Reading organization’s project to build a new library facility there. Baron also donated copies of all his bilingual health literacy fotonovelas to help fill its shelves.

Associate Professor Mel Baron with students from Sheridan Elementary School.
The School of Pharmacy’s SHARE (Students Helping and Receiving Education) program has been working with the Weingart Center, a residence for homeless men and women in the Skid Row area, to provide mental health education classes. Many of the residents are afflicted with mental illnesses that often go untreated, and so the students have prepared seminars that encourage medication adherence and to help remove the stigma from these diseases.

Terrance Yu, PharmD candidate, counsels patients at the Weingart Center.

USC’s Skull and Mortar Honorary Service Fraternity hosted the 5th annual “Senior Prom” event this April, which invited local senior citizens from the St. Barnabus Senior Center to let loose and dance to live music, as well as receive information and health screenings. Screenings for blood pressure, diabetes and cholesterol were made available, as well as educational booths to inform the seniors about preventive measures for falls, arthritis, asthma and heartburn.

Members of Skull and Mortar danced along with local senior citizens at the annual “Senior Prom.”

PharmD candidates Aimi Vo, Mari Kaneko, Angela Lee, Jasmine Chung, Sarah Ma and Nathan Cheung hosted the safari-themed Kids’ Day event.

The School of Pharmacy hosted students from El Cerrito Middle School as part of the 14th Annual Kids’ Day event, which took place in March. The event was sponsored by the School of Pharmacy’s Skull & Mortar Honorary Service Fraternity, and had a “Safari Dreams” theme. The day included educational workshops that covered numerous topics relevant to the students from El Cerrito, such as avoiding gangs, healthy living, resisting substances, safe sex and how to start a career in the health professions. The kids also enjoyed interactive games and prizes, and performances by the pharmacy students during their lunch break.

PharmD candidates Aimi Vo, Mari Kaneko, Angela Lee, Jasmine Chung, Sarah Ma and Nathan Cheung hosted the safari-themed Kids’ Day event.
Emmanuel Akinwole, PharmD candidate, will be interning in Johns Hopkins Outpatient Pharmacy Operations in May-August 2011.

Jennifer-Ann Bayan, PhD ('11), won the Rachmil Levine Scientific Achievement Award for the third time, winning the other two in 2008 and 2009.

Melissa Millard, PhD candidate, named the 2010-2011 recipient of the Charles Heidelberger Memorial Predoctoral Scholarship in Cancer Research for her proposal entitled, “Preclinical Biodistribution and Mechanistic Studies of Novel Phosphonium Salts Targeted to Cancer Cell Mitochondria,” received a travel award from Seahorse Biosciences, which supported her attendance at the 102nd Annual Meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research where she presented a poster entitled, “Preclinical Evaluation of Novel Triphenylphosphonium Salts with Broad-Spectrum Activity”.

Martha Pastuszka, PhD candidate, was awarded a fellowship from the American Foundation for Pharmaceutical Education for her project entitled, “Development of a Rapid, Reversible Protein Switch for Studying Cellular Biology in Eukaryotes”.

Divya Pathania, PhD candidate, awarded a $20,000 Oakley Fellowship for the academic year 2011-2012; presented her poster entitled, “Design and Discovery of Novel Small Molecule Modulators of Reactive Oxygen Species-Mediated Cell Signaling,” at the 102nd Annual AACR meeting, in Orlando, FL, in April.

Eunice Rhee, PharmD candidate, was named the 2011 Student Leadership in Health-System Practice Award Recipient.

Tino Sanchez, PhD candidate, had his master’s thesis entitled, “Discovery of HIV-1 Integrase Inhibitors: Furan and Sulfonamide-based Integrase Inhibitors,” published on paperback by VDM Verlag Dr Müller.

Erik Serrao, PhD candidate, has been accepted into the Pre-doctoral Clinical & Translational Training Program by the Center for Education, Training and Career Development under the Southern California Clinical and Translational Science Institute.

Megan Yardley, PhD candidate, was awarded a $6,500 fellowship from the American Foundation for Pharmaceutical Education for the 2011-2012 academic year for her project entitled, “Assessment of Ivermectin as a Therapeutic Agent for Alcohol-Use Disorders”.

ISPOR ANNUAL MEETING: Jae An, PhD ('11), won Best Student Podium Presentation at the International Society for Pharmaceoeconomics and Outcomes Research held in Baltimore, in May. Other students presenting posters include: Jerry Chang, Janice Chung, Yao Ding, Flavia Ejzykowicz, Yawen Jiang, Kevin Livengood, Jiat Poon, Nazia Rashid, Janet Shin, Jae Suh, Thomas Tencer, Reginald Villacorta, Zheng-Yi Zhou, and Sara Zolfaghari.

Pharmacy Student Named Schweitzer Fellow

Ashlee Klevens is one of 250 Schweitzer Fellows nationwide, each pursuing a project that aims to serve communities and address health disparities. Klevens, the only pharmacy student named to the award in Southern California, will work in the safety-net clinic setting.

USC Wins Top Prizes at Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy Meeting

At the Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy 23rd Annual Meeting & Showcase in April, the School of Pharmacy received the Best Student Poster Award, with the honor going to Kai Yeung, PharmD ('11), for his poster “Cost-Utility Analysis of the Use of Romiplostim versus Splenectomy in the Treatment of Chronic Refractory Immune Thrombocytopenic Purpura.” Yeung received a $500 prize, a one-year membership to the Association of Managed Care Pharmacy and a complimentary registration to the group’s fall conference in Atlanta.

Also taking home the top prize at the meeting were PharmD candidates Parth Shah, Ryan Hanks, John Ko and Andrew Chia, who participated in the AMCP National Student Chapter Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee Competition, beating out seven other schools.

TAKING HOME THE TOP PRIZE

PharmD students Folayemi Fashola and Saleema Kapadia won first prize in the Kroger Clinical Skills Counseling Competition at the Student National Pharmaceutical Association regional meeting held in Houston.

“We were well prepared, because counseling patients is something the School of Pharmacy emphasizes from day one and develops through our OTC and patient experience classes,” said Kapadia.
I have been blessed with opportunities and support from alumni and mentors from USC. Investing in the future of the profession ensures that students will continue to pursue pharmacy and cultivate leadership skills. Scholarships are just a small way of giving back to the pharmacy profession that we all love.”

KEN THAI, PHARMD ('02), CEO OF K & B PHARMACY ASSOCIATES, INC. 
BENEFACCTOR OF THE KHANH-LONG THAI ENDOwED SCHOLARSHIP

To learn how you can change a life, contact Mary Wackerman at 323.442.1360 or mwacker@usc.edu.
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HSC Quad
Information: 323-342-1383 or horgan@pharmacy.usc.edu

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Information: 323-442-1360 or mwacker@usc.edu

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2011 Career Day Showcase
Information: 323-442-1738 or stanovic@usc.edu

October 15, Saturday
Class of 2012 Interview Day
Health Sciences Campus
Information: 323-442-1738 or stanovich@usc.edu

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7th Annual Alumni and Friends Golf Outing
Brookside Golf Course
Information: 323-442-1738 or stanovich@usc.edu

November 12, Saturday
Homecoming and Class Reunions
University Park Campus
Information: 323-442-1381 or carr@usc.edu

January 27-29 (2012), Friday-Sunday
17th Annual Winter Retreat
Ojai Valley Inn & Spa
Information: 323-443-1360 or mwacker@usc.edu