

Invest in Success

GLENN VAN BUSKIRK and Tyler Redelico will tell you that their relationship started with an email. But that modest assertion reveals neither the generosity, on the former's part, nor the gratitude, on the latter's, that were the true sparks. The email that Redelico, now a P4 student, sent in 2012 was a note thanking Van Buskirk for the scholarship that had helped to make his pharmacy education possible.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER · FALL 2014



DONOR GLENN VAN BUSKIRK
PHARM'69 readily confesses that scholarship recipient Tyler Redelico PHARM'15 "trounced" him on the Rutgers golf course.

EXCEPTIONAL FACULTY: TAMARA MINKO

Fellowships Honor an Outstanding Career

TAMARA MINKO, a distinguished professor and chair of the Department of Pharmaceutics, has been elected a fellow of both the Controlled Release Society (CRS) and the American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering (AIMBE). In addition, she has been selected to serve on the Nanotechnology Study Section, Center for Scientific Review, of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), in which capacity she will help to assure the quality of the NIH's peer review process. ♦ Limited to five per year, worldwide, the CRS fellowship recognizes members who have made outstanding contributions to delivery science and technology over a minimum of 10 years. AIMBE fellows are selected through the nomination of peers and represent the top 2% of leaders and innovators in the field. Offering his congratulations, Dean Joseph A. Barone stated, "These honors are well deserved, for both her groundbreaking research and her outstanding professional leadership in the field." ♦ Minko conducts research on the nanoscale-based targeted delivery of drugs, peptides, and nucleic acids; most recently, a drug-delivery system targeting the CD44 protein has shown promise in the treatment of advanced-stage ovarian cancer. She is the author of more than 400 publications and the recipient of numerous other awards.



BIG NUMBER

30

Marking **three decades** as the preeminent **pathway to industry** for PharmD graduates is the Rutgers Pharmaceutical Industry Fellows Program. Since 1984, nearly **800 fellows** have launched their professional careers through the program.

FROM THE DEAN

Working as a Team

LITTLE MORE THAN a year has passed since the creation of Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS). Already there is a remarkable synergy among its eight healthcare professional schools, including the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy. Critically important, as we strive to train the next generation of pharmacists, is the opportunity to deliver an education that is distinctively interdisciplinary and interprofessional, thus paralleling the team approach to healthcare that is transforming the pharmacy profession.

This synergy manifests broadly and builds on existing relationships, from the addition of new clinical practice sites for our students to the creation of new degree programs with our RBHS peers. Both the PharmD/MD, offered with Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, and the master's degree in health outcomes, policy, and economics, offered with the School of Public Health, enrolled their inaugural classes this spring. Hand in hand with what we offer is how we teach in this collaborative environment. I am delighted that the first pharmacist elected to the Master Educators' Guild is our own Anita Siu, who will work to strengthen interprofessional education across RBHS and then share those results with the pharmacy faculty.

As healthcare reform evolves, pharmacists are sure to be critical team players, working cooperatively with physicians and others to improve patient outcomes and utilize therapies as effectively and efficiently as possible. By continuing to advance a culture and a curriculum

that reflect this shift toward collaborative care, our school is poised to become a national model for graduating pharmacists who have the education and the experience to make immediate contributions to interprofessional healthcare teams.

Joseph A. Barone, PharmD, FCCP
DEAN AND PROFESSOR II



PHOTOGRAPH: NICK ROMANENKO

School Spotlights

OUR CAMPUS COMMUNITY continues to build an impressive record of achievement that places the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy among the nation's best.



MILESTONES

PharmD/MD Welcomes Inaugural Class

The first students have been admitted to Rutgers' new PharmD/MD program, believed to be the first in the country. Available only to PharmD students currently enrolled at the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy, the program is a collaborative effort with Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. With the ultimate goal of achieving more-comprehensive patient care, the program is designed to train an elite cadre of practitioners with an expert understanding of both the diagnostic and therapeutic sides of health care. Congratulations to the six students of the inaugural class: Daniel Haddad, Donald Langan, Shirin Poutschi, Michelle Vizzi, Qi Wang, and Yan Zhu.



GRANT NEWS

Faculty Win Busch Biomedical Research Grants

The work of three faculty members will be supported by two \$40,000 Busch Biomedical Research Grants, which are designed to enhance health-related research at Rutgers and to strengthen award-ees' competitiveness for external funding. Luigi Brunetti, clinical

associate professor of pharmacy practice and administration, and Leonid Kagan, assistant professor of pharmaceuticals, will study the mechanisms of oral absorption and the drug-interaction potential of dabigatran etexilate, a novel anticoagulant drug. Suzie Chen, professor of chemical biology, is conducting research on the therapeutic potential of riluzole combined with focal radiation in melanoma that has metastasized to the brain.



STUDENT OUTREACH

Counseling the Community on the ACA

Pharmacy students have teamed up with Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey to spread the word about the importance of health insurance and preventive care and to inform target populations about the Affordable Care Act. Through a series of community-based health fairs, specially trained students are answering questions, sharing expertise, and providing audience-specific resources to Korean, Hispanic, and young adult communities. To date, events have been held at Holy Name Hospital in Teaneck, the Brazilian Weekend Festival in Newark, and Fright Fest at Six Flags Great Adventure. Taking the lead on the project is the student chapter of the Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy.

STUDENT VOICES

"The legislators were impressed that so many pharmacy students were willing to travel to the State House to advocate for our profession."

— QUANHAO FU '17 AND LYDIA CHOU '17,
ON LEGISLATIVE DAY IN TRENTON

RUTGERS
Ernest Mario School
of Pharmacy

Rx, the newsletter of the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, is published twice a year for alumni, friends, and supporters. Please address any comments or queries to alumni@pharmacy.rutgers.edu or call 848-445-2675.



The Bottom Line Is Better Outcomes

AMONG THE ISSUES reshaping health care is the urgent need to balance access with economics—and the concomitant demand for well-trained professionals who can do so. As young pharmacists, Agnes Hong and Joseph Feliciano believe their clinical expertise in the medication management of disease could make them valuable contributors in this emerging career field. They are well positioned to accept that challenge as members of the inaugural class of Rutgers' new master of science program in health outcomes, policy, and economics.

A joint effort of the School of Pharmacy and the School of Public Health, the new graduate program will train a cadre of healthcare professionals with the know-how to evaluate biomedical research and economic models in deciding how to achieve the best outcomes for patients, payers, and providers through informed allocation of medical treatments and financial resources. One of the few such degree programs in the country, says executive director Kimberly McGuigan, it integrates coursework and interdisciplinary research across the fields of health economics, epidemiology, biostatistics, and U.S. healthcare policy.

With the passage of the Affordable Care Act, and the addition of millions more patients to insurance rolls, the demand for complex cost-benefit analyses will only grow, says Agnes Hong PHARM'13. A decision about what treatment to offer a diabetic patient today, for example,

may avert the progression to insulin therapy or retinopathy—and its added economic burden—tomorrow.

Industry, too, benefits when the therapeutic and economic benefits of a drug are fully understood and wisely balanced. That's what attracted Joseph Feliciano, who holds a PharmD from MCPHS University in Boston, to the Rutgers program. Currently working at Sanofi as a Rutgers Pharmaceutical Industry Fellow, Feliciano believes that these professionals "will be key players in quantifying the value of a product in terms of its short-term and long-term benefits and then extrapolating that to entire populations and in comparison with other drugs in the formulary."

Of the inaugural class of 10 students, says McGuigan, the majority holds PharmDs, but the program "is also a great choice for established healthcare professionals, students in professional healthcare

degree programs, and applicants with a background in economics, statistics, public health, and related areas. This is a promising career field with excellent job prospects."

Also seeing the potential are several top pharmaceutical and healthcare companies donating more than \$2.5 million to jumpstart the program. Says Hong, who is currently a Rutgers Pharmaceutical Industry Fellow with Pfizer Consumer HealthCare, "Rutgers is just the place to step up when there is an unmet need and train the professionals who will influence U.S. healthcare practice for the better."

"Why I am so passionate about this field is its potential for making decisions based not only on efficacy but on quality outcomes for both the patient and the healthcare system."

AGNES HONG PHARM '13

PHOTO BELOW: DON HAMERMAN



ACADEMIC INNOVATION

ANITA SIU IS THE FIRST PHARMACIST ELECTED to the Master Educators' Guild of Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS). The guild recognizes faculty with a true gift for teaching and supports innovation in health sciences education in classroom, laboratory, and clinical settings. "Being a part of the Master Educators' Guild will allow me to share in modeling and improving education with interprofessional colleagues from all schools within RBHS," says Siu, a clinical associate professor and co-chair of the experiential program development committee. As an officer of the guild, she will work to strengthen interprofessional education (IPE) and serve on the guild's IPE Faculty Development Committee.

"Called to Serve": Pharmacist in Africa

WHEN SANETA LIN PHARM'13 packed her bags for Zambia last year, she made sure to leave room for an indispensable resource: her pharmacy school notes. She knew that in the rural area surrounding Mukinge Hospital, where she was to serve as pharmacist, there would be no Internet access. She drew repeatedly on her class notes, as well as her clinical rotations in infectious disease, to treat villagers who walked as many as two days to receive care.

It was a choice that might have intimidated even a veteran pharmacist, but as a newly minted PharmD, Lin says she "felt called to serve." Her one-year position at the 200-bed hospital was sponsored by SIM, an international mission organization. Here, she cared for patients with HIV/AIDS, malaria, typhoid, tuberculosis, and meningitis, among other conditions, while often relying on donated or makeshift equipment, such as heating pads in lieu of incubators in the NICU.

During a severe malaria crisis, as area clinics ran out of medication, patients flocked to Mukinge Hospital for care. At one point, about 60 children had to be housed on mattresses and blankets on the floor: the hospital had run out of beds. Working with colleagues to develop "proper inventory management and medication usage projections," she says, "we were able to overcome a malaria treatment and antibiotics shortage that had lasted more than two months."



As the hospital's first on-site pharmacist, she was charged with setting up the hospital's pharmacy practice and developing many of its protocols. Wanting to "venture out and learn as much as I could," she made both inpatient and outpatient rounds with the hospital's physicians and nurses, including riding with a mobile medical unit to care for patients in nearby villages. She also taught a pharmacology class for a nursing school affiliated with the hospital.

"This was the most challenging, yet most rewarding, time of my life," says Lin, who returned from Zambia this past August and is considering career options. "Loving and serving people with the clinical knowledge and experience I gained at pharmacy school was so fulfilling. I am truly thankful."

SANETA LIN AND her colleagues visited nearby villages to care for patients with leprosy and HIV/AIDS.

Accolades & Achievements

TANNAZ RAMEZANLI, a doctoral candidate in pharmaceuticals, is one of five graduate students worldwide selected as a Life Science Leader of Tomorrow for her groundbreaking research on stem cells as novel carriers for cancer therapy. The honor comes from the Catalent Applied Drug Delivery Institute and the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists.

OUR STUDENT CHAPTER OF THE CONTROLLED RELEASE SOCIETY was awarded the 2014 Student Chapter of the Year Award. Three of the NY-NJ-PA Student Chapter's four executives and its faculty adviser, Bozena Michniak-Kohn, are members of our Rutgers pharmacy community.

BLESSY GEORGE, one of the first students in our PharmD/PhD dual-degree program, was selected as the 2014 First-Year Fellow by the Rho Chi Pharmacy Honor Society and the American Foundation for Pharmaceutical Education. George, who completed her PharmD in May, received the award in support of her PhD studies.

THE RUTGERS STUDENT CHAPTER OF THE ACADEMY OF MANAGED CARE PHARMACY was one of only four student chapters invited to the academy's 2014 annual meeting in Tampa. The students presented on their chapter project, the Health Literacy Initiative, a collaboration with Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield, and attended a leadership academy in managed care topics.

STUDENT OUTREACH

LANAYA BOOKER WILL BE REMEMBERED as "a beautiful eight-year-old who loved every moment of every day" by the members of the Rho Chi Pharmacy Honor Society. Through the RU4Kids program, organized by Rutgers Dance Marathon and the Embrace Kids Foundation, Rho Chi members supported Lanaya and her family during her two-year fight with cancer, sharing dance recitals, clinic visits, and holiday parties with her. Two weeks before her death on September 24, Lanaya, her family, and members of Embrace Kids and Rho Chi were introduced on the field during halftime ceremonies at the Rutgers vs Penn State game. "Lanaya taught us so much, with her positive outlook and love of everyone around her," says Bivin George, Rho Chi's liaison to RU4Kids.





STUDENT RECIPIENTS value the opportunity to meet—and personally thank—donors for their generosity at the annual Scholarship Appreciation Dinner.

Invest in Success (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

“Tyler’s note was genuinely touching and gracious,” says Glenn Van Buskirk PHARM’69,GSNB’73,’79, a long-time supporter of the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy Scholarship Fund. The note led to email exchanges that blossomed into dinner outings and, most recently, a game on the Rutgers golf links. Such friendships between donors and recipients, says Van Buskirk, an independent consultant and a former vice president of Purdue Pharma, show that the scholarship fund “is not a faceless or nameless fund. Your giving will be, just as mine has been, a gift to one or more students whom you will most likely get to meet.”

Last year alone, alumni generosity allowed the School of Pharmacy to provide more than \$390,000 to 230 pharmacy students who had requested scholarship assistance. Scholarships are awarded at the beginning of each semester based on students’ academic merit and financial need. Many of these students are, like Tyler Redelico, first-generation collegians who rely on family contributions, part-time work, and financial aid to fund the six-year PharmD course of study.

“Our school has always had a deep commitment to first-generation students,” says Dean Joseph A. Barone,

noting that many peer pharmacy schools charge tuition that is easily double that of Rutgers. Scholarships help to keep a high-quality pharmacy education within reach for students of all means and backgrounds. Alumni support, continues Dean Barone, “helps to ‘pay it forward’ for a new generation of hardworking pharmacy students.”

Benefit accrues to donors, too, as Van Buskirk well knows. Taking some of the financial weight off the shoulders of students “is money well invested,” he says. “The caliber of students we graduate each year is inspirational. These bright, energetic, and engaging students represent the next wave of pharmacy.” He and his wife, Leslie, see their support for the scholarship fund “as a way to say thank you for what Rutgers and a pharmacy education has done in our lives.”

That legacy—gratitude repaid with generosity—resonates with scholarship recipient Redelico, a former president of the Rho Chi Pharmacy Honor Society and current co-president of the Rutgers Drug Information Association. By serv-

ing as a student leader, he is providing an early return on the generosity of donors like Van Buskirk. “These donors have decided to invest in our future, and it’s up to us to make this investment worthwhile,” he says.

Support a Student

Your donation can help to support:

•
**PHARMACY ACADEMIC
EXCELLENCE FUND**

•
**PHARMACY SCHOLARSHIPS
AND FELLOWSHIPS**

•
**PHARMACY GRADUATING/SENIOR
CLASS FUNDS**

.....
Contact Joan Russo,
director of development,
at 848-445-6245 or
joan.russo@pharmacy.rutgers.edu.

PHOTOGRAPH: LAUREN GIULIANO

Alumni Support: Myth vs Fact

“Does my contribution really matter?” Yes! Alumni support is critical if Rutgers, a public institution, is to maintain excellence while remaining accessible to students of all means. Here are the facts:

1 MYTH: RUTGERS IS TAXPAYER SUPPORT-ED. IT DOESN'T NEED MY DONATION.

FACT: Since 1990, the percentage of a Rutgers education paid by state appropriations has fallen from 67% to 32%. Support from alumni helps fill the gap and keep a Rutgers education affordable.

2 MYTH: RUTGERS IS A MEMBER OF THE BIG TEN. IT HAS ALL THE MONEY IT NEEDS.

FACT: It will take years for Rutgers to receive the full benefit of Big Ten membership. Major investments are needed now if we are to compete among our new peers: prestigious public and private research institutions.

3 MYTH: MY GIFT WOULD BE TOO SMALL TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

FACT: In fiscal year 2013, contributions of \$10 to \$300 added up to an impressive \$2.4 million, the equivalent of a full year of in-state tuition for 225 undergraduate students. Every gift, large or small, matters.

RUTGERS

Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy

160 Frelinghuysen Road
Piscataway, NJ 08854
848-445-2675
pharmacy.rutgers.edu

PSRT-STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
STATEN ISLAND,
NY
PERMIT NO. 169



PHARMACY ADVOCACY MONTH

Students visited the State House in Trenton on October 16 to advocate for pharmacy and showcase the skills of pharmacists, performing health screenings for legislators and answering their healthcare questions.

OUR
RUTGERS
OUR
FUTURE
A CAMPAIGN FOR EXCELLENCE

BE A PART OF THIS MOMENT

MAJOR EXPANSION IN THE HEALTH SCIENCES

Two medical schools, a dental school, a pharmacy school, a nursing school, and a comprehensive cancer center: these are among the 13 academic and research units that form Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences. The uniquely interdisciplinary division is one of several milestones that make this moment one of the most exciting in the university's nearly 250-year history.

Help give the recently expanded Rutgers what it needs to succeed.

SUPPORT OUR RUTGERS, OUR FUTURE TODAY.

GIVE NOW | SUPPORT.RUTGERS.EDU/MOMENT-2014