

RESEARCH NEWS



NOTES FROM THE ADRGS



Each day in my role as Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, I have the privilege of supporting the scholarly and creative work that defines our school. My work ranges from meeting with faculty to discuss their research goals, to helping shape competitive grant proposals, to building partnerships that expand the reach and impact of our academic community. I also spend time reviewing research protocols, ensuring we uphold the highest standards of ethics and compliance, and connecting researchers with the resources they need to move their ideas forward. On the graduate studies side, I collaborate closely with program directors, support student success initiatives, and help maintain the academic quality that our graduate students expect and deserve. Whether I'm mentoring emerging scholars, advancing strategic research initiatives, or celebrating the achievements of our faculty and students, my focus is always on strengthening our school's research culture and elevating the graduate experience. It's a role that keeps me inspired every day, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to champion the work that makes our school such a vibrant intellectual community.

DEAN TSUJI WELCOME

Please join us in welcoming Dean Brian Tsuji, a nationally recognized leader in antimicrobial pharmacology whose research focuses on developing innovative combination therapies to combat antibiotic-resistant "superbugs." His work integrates advanced modeling with laboratory and translational studies to improve treatment outcomes and pave the way for new clinical strategies.

Dean Tsuji is equally committed to supporting graduate education, mentoring students through hands-on, high-impact research experiences. His current trainees include Lu Han (first year) and Yang Liu (third year), reflecting his dedication to developing the next generation of scientists.

We are excited to welcome his leadership and look forward to the continued growth of our research and graduate programs.



Manisha Patel, PhD, Anna Figueroa, Pharmaceutical Sciences PhD Student



Brian Tsuji, PharmD

The ADRGS is Here to Support

Supporting our faculty, students, and research staff is central to the School of Pharmacy's mission. The ADRGS team partners with you across the full research and graduate education lifecycle—from proposal development and award management to graduate training and program success.



Manisha Patel, PhD
Associate Dean for
Research and Graduate
Studies

ADRGS leadership - under the direction of the Director of Research Administration - provides strategic, academic, and operational oversight for research and graduate programs, ensuring strong infrastructure, compliance, and coordination across the School. Research Services are led by our Lead Grants Administrator and supported by Grants Specialists, who work closely with faculty and lab staff on proposal preparation, award management, reporting, and close-out to support responsible stewardship of research funding. Graduate Programs are supported by our Graduate Program Administrator and Graduate Program Coordinator, who manage day-to-day operations for MS and PhD programs, including admissions, onboarding, student progression, compliance, and program logistics.

We are committed to making research administration and graduate training as effective and seamless as possible. Please reach out—ADRGS is here to support your work.



Karen Kimes, MBA,
Director of Research
Administration



Lisa Gabory,
Lead Grants
Administrator



Isabella Jaramillo,
Principal Graduate
Programs Administrator



Cora Allen,
Intermediate Graduate
Programs Coordinator



Jonathan Chan,
Grants Specialist

Welcome Jonathan Chan to the ADRGS Team!

Please join us in welcoming the newest edition to the ADRGS team, Jonathan Chan, Grants Specialist! Jonathan recently joined the team in Spring 2026, and has already taken on a leadership position in the Staff Collective as the Treasurer. Jonathan moved from Nebraska, where he served as the Agency Budget Management Analyst for the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. He is eager to learn and serve the vibrant research community at the Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. We're excited to have Jonathan on board and look forward to the contributions he'll bring to the team and research community!



Jonathan Chan, Grants Specialist

SSPPS Graduate Student Symposium 2026

The SSPPS Graduate Programs hosted a dynamic and engaging Spring Symposium on April 17, 2026, bringing together students, faculty, and alumni for a full day of research presentations and community connection. The event began with a welcome from program leadership, followed by an inspiring keynote address from Dr. Ron Dror of the Stanford Artificial Intelligence Lab and an interactive Q&A session. Attendees explored a wide range of student research during platform presentations and two poster sessions, highlighting innovative work across the program. The symposium also featured an engaging alumni panel, offering valuable insights and career perspectives. The day concluded with award presentations and closing remarks, celebrating the outstanding achievements of student researchers. It was a vibrant day of discovery, collaboration, and celebration of graduate scholarship.



Keynote Speaker: Ron Dror, PhD



Emily Giedraitis, Ashlynn Barnes, PhD Students



Alumni Panel: David Tabano, PhD, Leah Jimmerson, PhD, Regina Bies, PhD, and Brandon Sonn, PhD

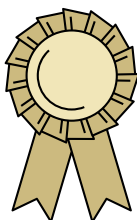


Award Winners: Anna Figueroa, Emily Giedraitis, Jon Woodward, Deepika Paratane, and David Angarita

Platform Talk Winner



Anna Figueroa,
Pharmaceutical Sciences PhD Student



Poster Presentation Winners



Pharmaceutical Sciences PhD:

Emily Giedraitis

Toxicology:

Jon Woodward

Pharmaceutical Outcomes Research:

Deepika Paratane

Pharmaceutical Sciences MS:

David Angarita

Graduate Student Social Events

To conclude the spring semester, activities were held to strengthen community ties among students in their respective programs. Student representatives from each program conducted surveys to gather input and ideas for these activities. By collaborating with the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, the Office of Culture and Wellness, Program Directors, Program Administrators, and Program Coordinators, the student representatives successfully brought these suggestions to life. We hope each activity served as a reminder of the camaraderie shared among students, both in and out of the lab, as well as the unwavering support their program provides.

Eat What You Cook!

Together, the Associate Dean of Culture and Wellness, Dr. Erika Freitas, and the Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, Dr. Manisha Patel, hosted a Graduate Cooking Class on Friday, April 3, 2026 at the CU Anschutz Health and Wellness Center kitchen. Two dietitians led students and faculty through the recipe, demonstrating key tasks such as knife safety skills and cooking techniques. Participants worked in pairs to cut, prepare, and cook the food, and concluded the class by enjoying a family-style meal together. It was a flavorful lunch filled with learning, laughter, and a dash of culinary creativity.



Mouna Dardouri, Brett McQueen, PhD, Cora Allen, Maria Chaves, Phaedra Whitty, Jeffrey Kearns, Manisha Patel, PhD, Becky McCullough, PhD, Anna Figueroa, Kristin Weininger

Pharmaceutical Sciences PhD Program

On Wednesday, May 27, 2026, graduate students from the Pharmaceutical Sciences PhD Program met at Friends of Friends located inside the Stanley Marketplace to get imaginative and paint some pottery. Creativity and conversation flowed, as everyone decorated their ceramic trinkets. The night ended with delicious Mediterranean food from Boychik. It was a memorable evening of creativity, good company, and great food!



Back Row: Anna Figueroa, Emily Giedraitis, Ashlynn Barnes, Phaedra Whitty, Jeffrey Kearns, Damien Trujeque, Cameron Lowry
Front Row: Cora Allen, Kelly Douglas, Brianna Hunt, Sarah Jacques, Lu Han

Toxicology PhD Program

Toxicology PhD students enjoyed an evening out at the Nature & Science Museum on Friday, June 5, 2026. The night began with a delicious dinner at Culinary Dropout, where students gathered to relax, connect, and enjoy great food together. Following dinner, the group headed to the museum to explore the exhibits without the usual crowds and experience the exciting World's Largest Dinosaur temporary exhibit. Overall, the evening was a wonderful opportunity for students to unwind, strengthen connections, and enjoy a memorable experience together outside of the classroom and lab.



Laura Calvimontes Barrientos & Sophia Rankin



Left: Gabriela Rizzo Kodama, Emily Mitchem, Kristin Weninger, Victoria Wei
Right: Maria Chaves, Michaela Hvizdak, Carly Chesterman, Shannon Kirkpatrick



Michaela Hvizdak & Laura Calvimontes Barrientos

Pharmaceutical Outcomes Research PhD Program

On Friday, June 5, 2026, graduate students from the Pharmaceutical Outcomes Research PhD Program met at EscapeWorks to work together as a team in an escape room. They were seconds away from escaping the room but the buzzer rang signaling they were out of time. The night went on with delicious Thai food from Aloy Modern Thai. It was a memorable evening of problemsolving, good company, and delicious food!



Right to Left: Deepika Paratane, Matthew McEnany, Mahesh Maiyani, Harry Gyimah Gyamfi, Mouna Dardouri and Sammi Chen.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Updates

Research In Progress Seminar Series 2025-2026

The Research in Progress seminar series has officially come to a close for the 2025-2026 year. Gathering on Thursdays from 11 am-12 pm, brought the research community closer together, as faculty, postdocs, and students got to learn about the research being done around the building. The Research in Progress format invited outside perspectives that strengthen research and invite new strategies to conducting experiments. Altogether, the series fostered a vibrant and collaborative research environment that will continue to inspire innovation and connection in the years ahead. Thank you to all of the knowledgeable presenters and enthusiastic MC's that participated in this year's RIP series!



Victoria Wei, Toxicology PhD Student



Julio Aguado Perez, PhD

ALUMNI CORNER

Greetings, Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Alumni!

The Alumni Association for the University of Colorado Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences sends its congratulations to the Class of 2026 on reaching this incredible milestone! The Alumni Association is here to support you every step of the way. Whether you're seeking career advice, networking opportunities, or ways to give back to the community, we offer a wealth of resources and connections to help you succeed. Stay engaged, stay connected, and continue to make us proud.

Whether you're a recent graduate or experienced alum, I'd love to connect. Your stories, memories, and ideas are what make our community so special. Please don't hesitate to reach out and connect with us!



Cheers,

Madison Crepeau, MA
Associate Director of Alumni Relations
madison.crepeau@cuanschutz.edu

Upcoming Events

September 25-27, 2026

All Alumni Celebration

October 3, 2026

CU Boulder Homecoming

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Student Successes

Comprehensive Exam Spring 2026

The comprehensive exam is designed to challenge students to step back from the specific deliverables expected in courses and reflect critically on their discipline through synthesis and integration of their knowledge, skills and experiences across significant topics in their academic discipline.

Passing a comprehensive exam indicates that a student is prepared to move into the dissertation phase of the degree.

Congratulations to the following students for passing the comprehensive exam spring semester 2026!

Toxicology

Taylor Lehner

Pharmaceutical Sciences

Anqi Li

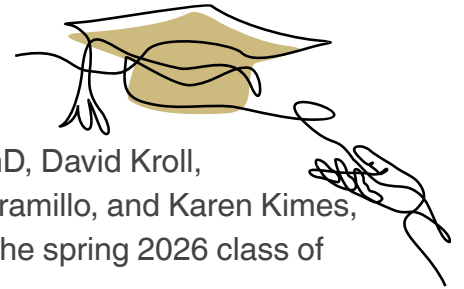
Hari Gopalakrishnan

Alexandra Dunbar

David Nerguizian

Congratulations to Spring 2026 Graduates

Manisha Patel, PhD, Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies; along with Program Directors, Laura Saba, PhD, Rebecca McCullough, PhD, David Kroll, PhD, Program Coordinator, Cora Allen, Program Administrator, Isabella Jaramillo, and Karen Kimes, Director of Research Administration, offer their sincere congratulations to the spring 2026 class of graduates.



Pharmaceutical Sciences PhD Program

Shilpa George
Alexandra Lucas

Pharmaceutical Sciences Masters Program

David Angarita	Peyton Smith
Natalie Carter	Alec Teel
Zoe Moss	Justin Wong
Akanksha Pawar	
Sebastian Santos De Leon	



GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Student Successes

Graduation Celebration and MS Hooding Ceremony

The Graduation Celebration and MS Student Hooding Ceremony was held on May 15th, 2026, to honor graduates receiving Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Science degrees in Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Faculty, family members, friends, and classmates gathered to recognize the dedication, scholarship, and perseverance of the graduating class as students marked an important milestone in their academic and professional journeys.



Nichole Reisdorph, PhD and Peyton Smith



Drs. Krishna Mallela, Jason Aoto, Nichole Reisdorph, Manisha Patel, Tom Anchordoquy and David Kroll



Jared Brown, PhD and Sebastian Santos De Leon



Manisha Patel, PhD



Praveen Ramaswamy, MS

Outstanding MS Student Award 2025-2026

Among those recognized was Praveen Ramaswamy. Praveen is the recipient of the Graduate School Dean's Outstanding Master's Student Award winner for the 2025-2026 school year. Mentored by Dr. Dan LaBarbera and Dr. Anastacia Garcia in Pediatrics/Cardiology, Praveen used high-content screening for novel therapeutics to treat hypoplastic left heart syndrome, while maintaining a perfect 4.0 GPA in graduate coursework. Praveen is the first recipient of the award from the Pharmaceutical Sciences Master's Program.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Student Successes

Pharmaceutical Sciences PhD Student Successes



Stephanie Bersie - Best Abstract Talk at the National Jewish Health Research Retreat



Daniel Breiner - Travel Award from the American Society for Mass Spectrometry (ASMS) Conference in Santa Fe, NM



Phaedra Whitty - Travel Award from American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET) Conference in Minneapolis, MN



Emily Gracey - Travel Award from American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET) Conference in Minneapolis, MN



Brianna Hunt - Travel Stipend from the American Society for Mass Spectrometry (ASMS) Conference in San Diego, CA



Emily Giedraitis - Travel Stipend from the American Society for Mass Spectrometry (ASMS) Conference in San Diego, CA

Toxicology PhD Student Successes



Michaela Hvizdak - Travel Award from the Society of Toxicology (SOT) Conference as a member of the Graduate Student Leadership Council in San Diego, CA



Jon Woodward - C. Werner and Kitty Hirs Travel Award to Attend the Society of Toxicology (SOT) Conference in San Diego, CA



Utibeabasi Ettah - Travel Award from the American Association of Immunologists (AAI) Conference in Boston, MA



Taylor Lehner - Offered and Accepted a CU Fellowship in Innovation as a Venture Fellow

Pharmaceutical Outcomes Research PhD Student Successes



Mouna Dardouri - C. Werner and Kitty Hirs Travel Award to Attend the Professional Society for Health Economics and Outcomes Research (ISPOR) Conference in Philadelphia, PA

Pharmaceutical Sciences MS Student Successes



Archi Shah, 2024 MSPS graduate in the LaBarbera lab, has been accepted into the PhD program in Health Services Research at the University of Iowa, College of Pharmacy for Fall 2026.



Yanhao Jiang, 2022 MSPS graduate in the Brown lab, defended his PhD thesis in Pharmaceutical Sciences (Pharmaceutics & Pharmacokinetics track) in the laboratory of Dr. Jianqin Lu at the University of Arizona's R. Ken Coit College of Pharmacy.

The following MSPS graduates have been accepted into PhD programs at the Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences for Fall 2026:



Sebastian Santos De Leon, MS will be joining the Toxicology PhD program



Natalie Carter, MS will be joining the Pharmaceutical Sciences PhD program



Fabiola Estrada, MS will be joining the Pharmaceutical Sciences PhD program



David Angarita, MS will be joining the Pharmaceutical Sciences PhD program



Abhinav Pentyala, MS will be joining the Pharmaceutical Sciences PhD program



Praveen Ramaswamy, MS will be joining the Pharmaceutical Sciences PhD program



COMING SOON

Skaggs Biomedical Symposium

The Skaggs Symposium will take place August 6-7, 2026. CU Skaggs School of Pharmacy, Dean Tsuji, Former Dean Altieri, and Dr. Manisha Patel, Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies proudly invite you to attend the Skaggs Biomedical Symposium. The Anschutz Campus is thrilled to host this event for all Skaggs campuses around the country that contribute meaningfully to the healthcare industry. This will be an eventful occasion, consisting of riveting keynote presentations, faculty and invited guest sessions, poster viewing, awards, and lively scientific discussions! Register by scanning the QR code and filling out the Registration form by July 15, 2026.



Postdoc Research Day

Mark your calendar for Postdoc Research Day: The Postdoc Collective on July 9, 2026, at CU Anschutz! Graduate students are invited to take part in this campus-wide event to explore the impact of team-based research, connect with the CU Anschutz community, and gain insight into postdoctoral research and career pathways.

Highlights include a keynote address by Dr. Luiz Bertassoni, a team science workshop led by Dr. Hannah Love and Dr. Ellen Fisher (Divergent Science), and postdoc-led poster sessions. Attendance is free, but registration is required by June 24.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PhD Stipend Increase July 1, 2026

The ADRGS is pleased to share that, in collaboration with the Graduate Program Directors, an increase in doctoral student stipend levels has been approved. Effective July 1, 2026, stipends will rise from \$41,921 to \$43,000 for all stipended PhD students, including those supported by T32 awards and direct admission.

This adjustment reflects the ongoing commitment to maintaining competitive stipend levels, with reviews planned annually to assess and respond to evolving needs.

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 9, 2026: **Postdoc Research Day**

August 6-7, 2026: **Skaggs Biomedical Symposium**

August 20, 2026: **PhD and MS Programs First Year Orientation**

