



# PHARMACY PERSPECTIVES

Spring 2009

## CONTENTS

### 2 Diabetes

Students teach diabetes patients to help themselves

### 6 Medical Mission

Faculty member revisits Haiti

### 9 Student News

Students take shot at the flu

### 13 Alumni News

Family Ties – B & B Pharmacy Profile

### 15 Alumni Notes

“White coats” aren’t immune to frailties essay



## Class of 2012 white coat ceremony

The presentation of the white coats to students is symbolic of their entry into the pharmacy profession and the opportunities and responsibilities associated with being a health care professional – including their personal commitment to both the individual welfare of patients and the general welfare of society.



Members of the Class of 2012 recite the Oath of the Pharmacist during the white coat ceremony

First-year pharmacy student, Jennie Brunkan, proudly displays her white coat

## Pharmacy clinic benefits patients and students

The Denver Indian Health and Family Services Medical Clinic extends the care patients receive by offering expanded clinical pharmacy services. As this is the only clinic providing primary care and wellness services for Native American patients in Colorado, patients come seeking health care from all over the state. Many patients travel to the clinic from reservations in nearby states.

A large underserved Native American population made it challenging for the clinic’s overworked medical staff to meet all the needs of their patients until Connie Valdez, PharmD,

MS.Ed, established two rotations (clinical rotation and faculty rotation) at the clinic three years ago.

“Since the clinic is grant-funded, it doesn’t have the funds to pay for a full-time clinical pharmacist,” said Valdez, assistant professor and site co-preceptor. “Students take patient histories, review the patient’s labs and chart to make an assessment and plan. Students then furnish a summary of the patient’s status with their recommendations to the provider. The clinic appreciates this service as it frees up provider time.”

In the ambulatory (patient)

care rotation, pharmacy students participate in direct patient care activities such as giving immunizations, triaging patients, performing point-of-care laboratory testing, interviewing patients, presenting patient cases to the provider accompanied by therapeutic and non-therapeutic recommendations, counseling patients on medications and lifestyle, answering any clinical questions and managing the Patient Assistance Program.

Most of the clinic’s patients are uninsured and often cannot afford the medication they need. When the

“This experience has made me more interested in working in a community-based pharmacy.” 

continued on page 2

# Students teach **DIABETES** patients to help themselves

It's no secret that diabetes is rampant in this country. More than 23 million Americans have diabetes and an estimated one-third of the population has the disease but is unaware of it. In Colorado, the number of individuals diagnosed with diabetes has risen to nearly half a million.



Unmanaged diabetes exacts ferocious damage in the body, leading to an array of medical complications – kidney failure, heart attack, amputation and blindness.

Responding to this burgeoning health crisis, faculty at the School of Pharmacy are ensuring that students are well skilled to counsel the growing numbers of patients on how to manage this complex disease.

With a grant from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Education, diabetes self-management clinics are being established in pharmacies in underserved areas of Colorado. Fourth-year pharmacy students teach patients about nutrition, exercise, medications and how to check their blood sugar, calculate carbohydrates and use syringes.

Assistant Research Professor Wesley Nuffer, '99 PharmD, directs the diabetes self-management clinics project at the school.

"More than 90 percent of the work that needs to be done to manage the disease falls squarely on the

person who has it," said Nuffer. "All of a sudden their life has completely changed and that can be overwhelming."

In a dedicated space in the local pharmacies, patients meet with a pharmacy student for about an hour once a month for six months under the supervision of the on-site precepting pharmacist. In addition to counseling the patients, students perform a basic health exam checking blood pressure, weight, waist circumference, A1C levels, cholesterol and blood glucose levels.

Students then write a report about what was discussed with the patient and goals for subsequent meetings. After the preceptor approves the student's suggestions regarding non-drug goals and medication recommendations, the report is sent to the patient's physician.

During her rotation at Barnes Pharmacy in Sterling, Colo., last summer, fourth-year pharmacy student Brittany Hanselin learned that the key to a successful counseling session is to tailor the information to the individual and to take the time to listen to the patient.

"Some patients were skeptical that I could tell them anything they hadn't already been told by their doctor," said Hanselin, "but doctors don't have that kind of time to spend with patients. I took the time to go in depth on the various subjects we covered. I learned that every patient is different and that you have to involve their family, because the family's lifestyle changes too. When patients began eating healthy meals and exercising, their family members often lost weight too," she said.

Nuffer has learned that for a self-management diabetes clinic to be successful, crucial components must be in place:

- interested physicians;
- a community that understands the need for the services;
- a local pharmacist who is motivated to help manage the clinic;
- dedicated space within the pharmacy to counsel patients.

"One of the most important lessons we've learned is that we can't just pick a pharmacy out of the air and decide to put a clinic in it," he said.

In addition to the original clinics set up five years ago in Sterling and Estes Park, clinics have been



established in pharmacies in Limon, Pagosa Springs, Stout Street Clinic in Denver (which serves the homeless), Walgreens in Aurora and Denver and two in Durango. In the works are pharmacies in Palisade, Fraser and Pueblo.

Nuffer feels strongly that pharmacists are the most qualified health professionals to provide medical management therapy.

"Pharmacists have the most training of any profession in managing drug therapy," he said. "We're the most accessible health providers for patients."

---

## Pharmacy clinic

*continued from page 1*

students initially assess the patients and make medication recommendations, they check if the drug is listed on the \$4 medication discount program offered at pharmacies in K-Mart, Target, King Soopers, etc. If it is not on the list, students check whether the drug is available through the RxAssist Patient Assistance Program run by pharmaceutical companies to provide free medications to people who cannot afford to buy their medicine. RxAssist is part of a larger organization dedicated to helping safety net organizations care for the uninsured.

Fourth-year student Janessa Pedroza found the ambulatory care rotation to be rewarding and confidence-boosting while working with this underserved population.

"This experience has made me more interested in working in a community-based pharmacy," she said. "I like the follow-up with the patients and seeing their progress over time."

*Articles by Kenna Bruner*

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Good news for donors

In October 2008, Congress extended the Pension Protection Act of 2006, allowing taxpayers at age 70 ½ to make tax-free charitable gifts totaling up to \$100,000 per year from their IRA plans directly to the charity of choice, including schools and universities.

This is good news for donors who may have rolled over part of an IRA directly to the University of Colorado Foundation to benefit the School of Pharmacy in 2008, as the provision is retroactive to January 1, 2008. Further, for those who wish to provide support for the new building, students, faculty, research programs and other projects in 2009, the provision extends your ability to benefit from this extension through December 31, 2009.

Using IRA assets for the charitable portion of your estate planning has always been a good way to maximize your ability to provide for your heirs

and the organizations in which you believe strongly. If you leave IRA assets to your favorite tax-exempt charitable organization, the full amount of your gift will go for your intended purposes. Then you can leave your family and friends other estate assets like cash, stock and real estate that are income tax-free. While this new law is in place, IRAs also make sense for immediate charitable giving, so you can witness the benefits of your generosity in your lifetime.

We at the School of Pharmacy would be delighted to speak with you about the details of such an arrangement to benefit the school. Here are some key points about the new law:

- The provision is effective retroactively for 2008 and remains effective only for tax year 2009;
- You must have reached the age of 70 ½ by the time the gift is made;
- The rollover allows charitable gifts of up to \$100,000 for each individual's IRA (which could mean \$200,000 for husband and wife);

- The rollover must be a direct payout from the IRA to the University of Colorado Foundation and the rollover cannot be used to fund a life-income gift;
- The rollover may be used to satisfy your required minimum distribution in 2008 or 2009, in full or in part;
- The rollover amount will not be included in your adjusted gross income, nor will you receive a deduction for the gift, so the rollover gift can be made in addition to other charitable gifts you have planned.

If you are interested in supporting the School of Pharmacy by making a gift from your IRA, please contact Sheldon Steinhauser, School of Pharmacy Director of Development (303-724-3591; sheldon.steinhauser@cufund.org) or Marsha Dawe, Foundation Director of Gift Planning (303-813-7925; marsha.dawe@cufund.org). They can provide you with sample gift letters and letters of instruction for your IRA custodian to initiate the transfer.

### Let the building begin

Planning for the new building to house the Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences is moving along smoothly. Site preparation, including some demolition and the installation of new storm sewer lines, is complete and excavation for the foundation has begun. The expected move-in period is January 2011.

Fundraising for the School's new home is also well under way. Many of our alumni have chosen to contribute to the building fund as a way of giving back to the School that helped launch their careers. They have been joined by foundations, friends, the

State of Colorado, local businesses and the university – all who understand the valuable programs that this new building will make possible. Yet, more is needed to make this vision a reality. If you have made your contribution to the building fund already, please accept our sincere appreciation. If not, we would be grateful for your consideration at this time.

In addition to the building fund, support for scholarships, endowments and planned gifts is most welcome.

Help us transform the lives of students and the community by contacting Sheldon Steinhauser, Director of Development, at 303-724-3591, sheldon.steinhauser@cufund.org.



1382

### How to reach us

*Pharmacy Perspectives – Volume 1, Issue 1*

Is published twice annually by the University of Colorado Denver for alumni and friends of the School of Pharmacy. We welcome your comments, news and story ideas.

University of Colorado Denver  
School of Pharmacy  
C238-L15, Academic Office 1  
12631 E. 17th Avenue, Aurora, CO 80045

SOP.alumni@ucdenver.edu • 303.724.4618

### King Soopers Gift

Dean Ralph Altieri recently accepted a check of **\$100,000** DOLLARS from Ms. Marla Frawner, head of pharmacy operations for Denver-area King Soopers/City Market Stores, to help in the construction of the School's new \$59.5 million, 165,000 square foot building.

The gift was presented at the semi-annual meeting of the School of Pharmacy Development Council – a forum for individuals and corporations who help guide the school's advancement and provide crucial financial support to scholarships, facilities and programs.

10110 1381: 00944 519# 1382

# NMR SPECTROSCOPY

moves the School of Pharmacy and pharmaceutical research forward

During the past fifty years nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy, commonly referred to as NMR, has become the preeminent technique for studying the physical, chemical and biological properties of matter.

In the pharmaceutical sciences, its use is pervasive throughout nearly every sub-discipline, including the areas of toxicology and pharmacology. Even the development and refinement of testing drug formulations make use of NMR methods.

NMR spectroscopy – arguably the single most powerful experimental tool for chemistry-related research – enables researchers to process and analyze the effects of different chemical compounds on research samples in ways many institutions and some drug companies cannot.

Soon, the School of Pharmacy will have its own NMR spectroscopy facility, thanks to a gift made recently by Carol Stehley, the daughter of the late Pearl S. Stehley, '25 – an active pharmacist, teacher and volunteer throughout her life.

The younger Stehley, a former teacher herself, understands how important it is for the School to keep pace with rapidly-changing advances in pharmacy and in cancer research. “Cancer is a horrible disease,” she says, “and anything anyone can do to help find a cure is beneficial.”

According to David Ross, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences and professor of toxicology, the new NMR will be a significant benefit in the School's re-design of Medicinal Chemistry.

The NMR will help build up the synthetic chemistry program by better enabling the identification and characterization of compounds before they go off for testing as potential new drugs and by helping establish large screening programs for the development of new compounds as anti-cancer agents.

“The key to the whole process,” says Ross, “is structural characterization and how many hits you get in the screens, and that's where the NMR is critical.”

To accommodate the superconducting magnets of the NMR, the infrastructure of the lab in Research 2, where the machine will be placed, has been specially adapted. The School's future home – the Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences – has also been designed to handle the supercharged magnets and to incorporate chemistry-specific laboratories for use in drug design, molecular modeling and high throughput screening of thousands of compounds against particular cancer targets. Also, several new faculty positions are currently being filled by medicinal chemists who will focus on the design of new anti-cancer agents.

“This generous gift from Carol Stehley,” says Dean Ralph Altieri, “will enable the School of Pharmacy to compete in the areas of translational biology and the application of chemistry to new drug development. Combined with a clear focus on what it is going to do for our research in medical chemistry, the NMR spectroscopy takes us one step further in strengthening our position as one of the nation's top pharmacy schools.”

“This generous gift from Carol Stehley will enable the School of Pharmacy to compete in the areas of translational biology and the application of chemistry to new drug development.” 🌱



*Researchers make preparations for an experiment using an NMR spectroscopy.*

## Insight on the NMR spectroscopy

What is an NMR spectroscopy anyway? While the term NMR spectroscopy can refer to a scientific technique exploiting the magnetic properties of certain nuclei, it also references a specific tool used in chemistry-related research.

The primary component of the NMR spectroscopy tool is a superconducting magnet. Also the most expensive component of the NMR, the superconducting magnet is an electromagnet made of superconducting wire – as long as several miles in length – that is wound into a multi-turn solenoid or coil.

The magnet is supported by three or more “legs” and the “stacks” coming out of the top of the magnet are bore holes, with the bore hole in the center of the assembly being where the probe containing the research sample is inserted.

The heart of the spectrometer is a computer. The spectrometer operator controls all of its components through a computer terminal, using a keyboard and a mouse to provide input. Some spectrometers may also have a separate interface for carrying out some of the more routine procedures on the spectrometer. The operator can see spectra on the computer monitor and perform other tasks to filter, digitize, print or copy it.

School of Pharmacy labs, in Research 2 and the new pharmacy building, where the NMR spectroscopy facility will be located, will be specially adapted to accommodate the machine’s superconducting magnets, and any influence these magnetic fields may have on the electronic circuitry supporting the computer functions of the NMR.



Vitamin D insufficiency is something that needs to be recognized by pharmacists, primary care physicians, nurses and others.

## Publication of VITAMIN D study results receives broad media coverage

A School of Pharmacy Vitamin D study published mid-2008 in the *Journal of the American Pharmaceutical Association*, received a significant amount of coverage by print and electronic media.

Versions of the articles printed by *The Denver Post* and the *Rocky Mountain News*, as well as those published by electronic media outlets, remain accessible via the respective news archives of each publication or website.

The study, which found that a simple educational intervention provided by a pharmacist can make a significant impact in the amount of vitamin D intake in geriatric outpatients and result in increased serum or blood levels of this key nutrient, also revealed that the overall increase in serum levels in the patients who received the intervention were still not in the target range.

“The educational intervention was simple to administer and can be reproduced by pharmacists in a variety of settings, including a community pharmacy or a clinical practice site,” said Joseph Vande Griend, PharmD, assistant professor in the Department of Clinical Pharmacy and lead author of the paper. “Geriatric patients are at risk of medical complications from vitamin D insufficiency, including osteoporosis, and pharmacists, physicians, and other point-of-contact health care representatives can make a difference by recognizing vitamin deficiencies in their patients and taking the time to talk about the importance of key nutrients like vitamin D.”

Following the initial publication of study results in the *Journal of the American Pharmaceutical Association*, a burst of articles on the study appeared in Denver-area newspapers, *The Denver Post* and *Rocky Mountain News* newspapers, as well as other print and online news media, such as Medscape, from *WebMD*, the National Society for Hispanic Professionals Network, *Health NewsDigest*, *AScribe* and *HandsNet*.

“The pharmacy profession is changing,” added Vande Griend. “Many pharmacists today are focusing on research, and are making many recommendations to physicians and other health care providers to improve care of patients. Vitamin D insufficiency is something that needs to be recognized by pharmacists, primary care physicians, nurses and others. This study is a first step in that direction and shows that pharmacists’ interaction with patients within care settings can make a huge difference.”



## FACULTY NEWS

# HAITI revisited

In 2008, SOP faculty member Kathleen McCartney, PharmD, visited Haiti as part of a medical mission. One year later, she was back. Amazed by the positive changes that had occurred during that short time, Kathy reflects on the “audacity of hope” that is Haiti.

### *Why we went back*

I returned to Haiti for a second year on a medical mission trip sponsored by the Colorado Haiti Project (CHP) this January 15-28, along with 12 other medical professionals and lay people. We were returning to St. Paul's Episcopal Church and School in Petit Trou de Nippes, a rural village about 90 miles west of Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital. We would spend a week providing primary medical care to about 1000 people from this region of approximately 13,000 people.

Our reasons for returning were all individual and personal, but I had been captured by the grip of the paradoxes, mysteries, joy, and friendships discovered on last year's trip. We had heard about the devastation from a series of hurricanes that hit Haiti in late summer 2008, killing over 600 Haitians; we had heard about the collapsing schools and people eating mud cakes, but how would things be for the Haitians we knew?



Kathy McCartney, surrounded by co-workers at the Haiti clinic where she volunteered

### *Development through Relationships and Vision*

Haiti is a patchwork of projects started, sometimes abandoned, sometimes completed, by well-intentioned non-profit groups. The CHP has implemented a model of community development based on established relationships with the community, doing projects deemed important by the Haitians, and supporting the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

As a result of these partnerships, CHP has built a 2-story, cement primary school now educating 750 children; a women's vocational training center; a large church that doubles as a community center; and in February 2009, started exploratory drilling for a system of wells that will bring water to within a 10-minute walk of most residents in the area.

When our team completed the mission trip in January 2008, we felt frustrated by the limitations of practice (no labs, no visualization technology) and lack of connection to the existing Haitian medical services. We doubted the value of what seemed like a small Bandaid applied to a large wound. We saw conditions that would be serious, but treatable, here. We saw an infant with severe burns from a Kerosene lamp, a toddler with hydrocephalus, an infant dying of malnutrition, and a woman with probable stage III breast cancer. The best we had to offer was wound care, palliative care, some money for transport to a distant hospital, and a hand-written letter of referral. We left determined to do better this year.

During the intervening year, CHP's medical director, Dr. Mike Earnest, a retired

### *Inside the Colorado Haiti Project*

The Colorado Haiti Project (CHP) was founded in 1989 to extend aid to the poorest of the poor in a rural area called Petit Trou de Nippes, about 80 miles west of Port-au-Prince. Since 1989, CHP has been sending mission trips to Petit Trou de Nippes. While mission is the heart of CHP, the hands-on services provided during a mission are invaluable for both those being served as well as those doing the serving. To learn more about sending a healthcare kit and other items to the Colorado Haiti Project, or to obtain information about CHP programs, mission trips and events, telephone (303) 938-5021. To learn more about CHP, visit [www.coloradohaitiproject.org](http://www.coloradohaitiproject.org)

neurologist from Denver Health, returned to Haiti to develop relationships with the regional government health minister, the nearest hospitals and clinics, and to establish a process for contacting emergency services and making referrals. He became familiar with a public health outreach program of CHP that is using 34 Haitian women to educate others about clean water and basic life-saving skills for childbirth. I created a database of all the patients we had seen. We also looked for a better source of medications, and we established protocols for hypertension, scabies and vaginal candidiasis.

### *Our experience in 2009*

When we returned to Petit Trou de Nippes in January 2009, we discovered changes that we never would have predicted the year before. The school now had a lab with 11 computers and a wireless router; there was a school nurse on site; the church had fixed pews and screens on every window; and there was an ambulance to call, even though two hours away by rough road.

Some of the changes we made to the clinic process seem obvious and simple; however, they helped streamline care. We made a deliberate selection of medications to take, created a printed formulary and a referral slip in English and Kreyol, placed pre-packs of over-the-counter medications at each healthcare provider station, and improved the clinic patient data sheet. We had a urine dipstick kit, one glucometer, and a quick test for malaria. With these items, we were able to diagnose one young girl with type-1 diabetes, and treat three people for malaria.

What does pharmacy practice mean in a place with few medications and no computerized records? Is it only dispensing? On the contrary, we faced issues of how to treat hypertension in a setting of no follow-up, and decisions about diagnostic testing. What should labeling be in a non-English-speaking population with a 50% illiteracy rate? Does it matter that patient counseling is done through a Haitian interpreter? Does it make sense to label a metronidazole prescription with "no alcohol" in a population that may not know where its next meal is coming from, much less where to get a beer?

As a pharmacist, I found joy in making a significant difference in the clinic processes and in participating in patient care. I was honored to get up twice one night to check on a 24-year-old man we were treating for malaria. As a team, our high-point was the evening when we called an ambulance for a woman suffering from a severely painful, intra-abdominal process of unknown cause. We started her on an IV in the afternoon, hung a liter of normal saline, and watched over her as she lay on a mat on the floor of the church. We were thrilled when the ambulance came, no siren, but lights, and took her to a hospital about 30 miles away. We still do not know her diagnosis or outcome.

Another high point for me was getting better acquainted with the Haitians with whom I had worked in the pharmacy last year, and who were there again this year. I knew I had made friends when one young man, Wilbens Pierre, greeted me in halting English, saying, "I want to work with you in the pharmacy. I want to learn English." We spent the week counting tablets, labeling prescription bags, and jointly working on our English and Kreyol. I was invited to Ysior's house where he chopped a coconut with a machete in such a way that we could drink the milk, then scoop out the soft, white pulp.

### *There is hope for Haiti*

Last year, we despaired that any progress could be made in this country where many people have no running water or electricity, and have little food, education, health care or economic prospects. Yet in this place, people connect to each other by cell phone, Internet, and human touch. On Tuesday, January 20, Inauguration Day, Haitians came into the pharmacy saying "Yes We Can!" with big smiles and giving the thumbs up sign. With no radio, television, or newspaper, they knew Barack Obama would be sworn in as US president that day. Our motto for the pharmacy and clinic became "Wi Nou Kapab!" ("Yes We Can" in Kreyol).

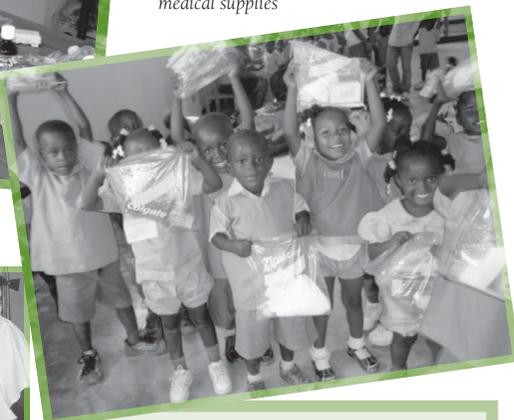
My hope for future work in Haiti includes providing more appropriate labeling of medications; implementation of an electronic medical record system; development of a system for patient follow-up using local providers, or monitoring from Colorado over the Internet. I would like to train the Haitian clinic workers in basic medical protocols and pharmacy procedures, and align the activities of the week-long medical mission trips with the Millennium Development Goals and the goals and capacity of the local health care system in Haiti. Clearly, my affair with Haiti has another chapter to be written.

*By Kathleen McCartney, PharmD  
Coordinator, Continuing Education & Operations  
Office of Postgraduate Professional Education*



*Kathy hard at work dispensing medications*

*Haitian children proudly display their medical supplies*



*Colorado Haiti Project: An Integrated Model of Community Development*

### United Nations Development Programme Millennium Development Goals

Adopted by 190 nations  
around the world, as well as the  
United States Episcopal Church,  
the Millennium Development Goals  
are aimed at improving the human condition.

They are:

- Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger
- 
- Universal access to primary education
- 
- Gender equity  
and the empowerment of women
- 
- Reduction in child mortality
- 
- Improvement in maternal health
- 
- Combating HIV/AIDS,  
malaria and other diseases
- 
- Steps to insure environmental sustainability
- 
- Developing global partnerships.

For more information on the  
Millennium Project, visit  
<http://www.undp.org/mdg/>

## FACULTY NEWS

### Birth Announcements



Top to bottom:

Blake Garrett Kiser born November to Ty and Jennifer Kiser

Isabella Olivia Rapacchietta born to Olivia Rapacchietta

Alena Jiangwei Vondracek adopted in March by Sheryl E. Vondracek

Tony Ndikum born to Hilda Bi Ndikum

Liam Ellis O'Bryant born to Sam Ellis and Cindy O'Bryant

### New faculty members

#### **Daniel V. LaBarbera, PhD,**

assistant professor in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, earned his BS in biochemistry and PhD in organic chemistry from Arizona State University. Before coming to the School of Pharmacy he was an NIH/NRSA Postdoctoral Fellow, Marine Natural Products and Multidisciplinary Cancer Research at the University of Utah and the Huntsman Cancer Institute.

LaBarbera's research is focusing on the discovery, development and clinical translation of novel therapeutic agents for the treatment of human disease, but especially in the discovery and development of anti-cancer agents for the treatment of metastatic disease.

#### **Peter J. Rice, PharmD, PhD**

is associate dean for academic affairs and a professor in the Department of Clinical Pharmacy.

After completing degrees at Northeastern, Ohio State, and a post-doctoral position at West Virginia University under the well-known pharmacologist, William Flemming, Rice landed at East Tennessee State University where he helped build the pharmacology program from the ground up. In a career that has spanned only 22 years thus far, he holds the title of Emeritus Professor in the ETSU College of Medicine.

In his new role as associate dean for academic affairs at the University of Colorado Denver, he will be focusing his immediate attention on the SOP accreditation process. "I've been involved in several different pharmacy schools," he says, "and when you see what other schools are doing, you can recognize that what Colorado is doing is far above the norm of the others."

When Rice isn't totally absorbed by the accreditation process, he will be teaching, and jumping in, "... wherever there is an opportunity to do something I think the school should be doing."

Rice is married with four children, one a pharmacy resident at UC-San Diego Naval Medical Center, two others in college, and one still at home attending high school.



### Faculty Notes

**Jennifer Kiser, PharmD,** assistant professor in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences had her abstract titled, "Pharmacokinetics (PK) of Isoniazid (INH) in Preventing Tuberculosis (TB) Disease and Latent Infection in African HIV-

Exposed Uninfected and HIV-Infected Infants – Pediatric AIDS Clinical Trials Group Study 1041 accepted for oral presentation at the 49th Interscience Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy, held October 25-28 in Washington, DC. Kiser also was invited to join the Organizing Committee for the International Workshop on Clinical Pharmacology of Hepatitis Therapy and nominated to be an investigator-at-large for the Adult AIDS Clinical Trials Group Hepatitis Committee.

**Carol Balmer, PharmD, BCOP,** assistant dean and associate professor of postgraduate professional education retired in 2008 on the heels of two major achievements. First, Balmer received a national level oncology practice award from the Hematology/Oncology Pharmacists Association (HOPA). While admitting it has been a number of years since she moved away from her work in clinical oncology, Balmer eagerly acknowledges the honor she feels for having received the award. "There are such wonderful clinicians in pharmacy practice, so to get this honor from my peers and colleagues was really quite nice. I was pleased about that," she says.

Balmer's second major achievement was celebrating the non-traditional PharmD program's tenth anniversary, a program she's headed since its inception. "I think we have had a successful program over the years," says Balmer, "and we've helped quite a few working pharmacists meet their educational needs."

**Dennis Petersen, PhD,** professor of pharmacogenetics and pharmacology in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, has received an NIH NIAAA MERIT award of \$2.6 million over 5 years, for research focusing on the mechanisms of alcohol-induced liver injury.

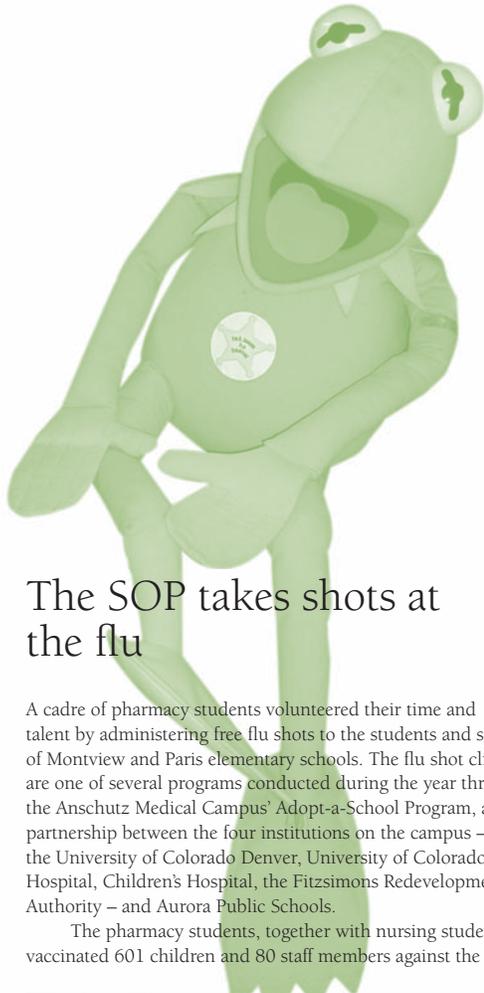
MERIT Awards provide long-term support to investigators whose research competence and productivity are distinctly superior and who are likely to continue to perform in an outstanding manner. Petersen's award is one of largest ever received by an individual in the School of Pharmacy.

Petersen has also received an NIH NIDDKD grant to examine mechanisms in non-alcoholic fatty liver disease.

#### *Faculty Promotions*

- Samuel (Sam) Ellis, PharmD, from assistant to associate professor
- Sunny Linnebur, PharmD, from assistant to associate professor
- Robert (Rob) Valuck, PhD, from associate to full professor
- Peter (Pete) Anderson, PharmD, from assistant to associate professor with tenure
- Marianne McCollum, PhD, from assistant to associate professor with tenure
- Richard Radcliffe, PhD, from assistant to associate professor with tenure
- Patrick Sullivan, PhD, from assistant to associate professor with tenure

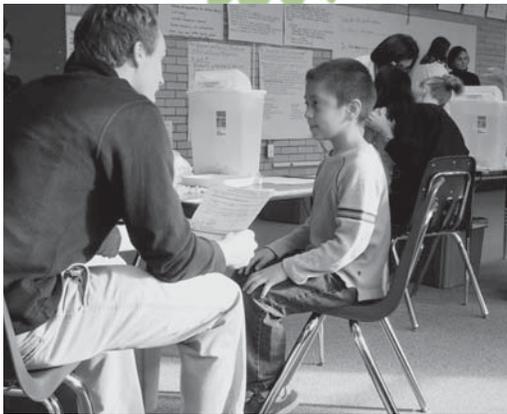
## STUDENT NEWS



### The SOP takes shots at the flu

A cadre of pharmacy students volunteered their time and talent by administering free flu shots to the students and staff of Montview and Paris elementary schools. The flu shot clinics are one of several programs conducted during the year through the Anschutz Medical Campus' Adopt-a-School Program, a partnership between the four institutions on the campus – the University of Colorado Denver, University of Colorado Hospital, Children's Hospital, the Fitzsimons Redevelopment Authority – and Aurora Public Schools.

The pharmacy students, together with nursing students, vaccinated 601 children and 80 staff members against the flu.



Montview Elementary School students check-in to receive their free flu shot.

### Dean's List

#### School of Pharmacy Dean's List – Spring 2008

##### *P1 Class of 2012*

Abata, Anita  
Adams, Matthew  
Agwe, Julius  
Beede, Sarah  
Brown, Carvel  
Clark, Jeffrey  
Dawson, Jordan  
Desta, Mariamawit  
Dietrich, Scott  
Ehlers, Morgan  
Eshgi, Mitra  
Finnegan, Kimberly  
French, Thomas  
Gradisar, Jeremy  
Hammond, Kyle  
Henderson, Kevin  
Johns, Ria  
Kanack, Alexander  
Knapp, Kathryn  
Lee, Aaron  
Lewis, Adam  
Lintz, Lashell  
Lo Sordo, Steven  
Moore, Nicole  
Needle, Charles  
Opferman, Renee  
Parke, Cade  
Peterson, Nicole  
Puszka, Joanna  
Reynolds, Paul  
Schwab, Jennifer  
Sedillo, Samantha  
Settje, Sara  
Smith, Emily  
Smith, Stacey  
Stroh, Sarah  
Thompson, Ella  
Thoresdale, Karen  
Turner, Shane  
Tyler, Rebecca  
Vaughn, Jessica  
Walthall, Tyler  
Walton, Christopher  
Weiss, Aaron  
Yanashyan, Marianna  
Zie, Emil

##### *P2 Class of 2011*

Blocher, Andrea  
Blunt, Nnenne  
Calvert, Paul  
Carlstrom, Kelley  
Cook, Jesse  
Crona, Daniel  
Decker, Kimberly  
Dixon, Keri  
Frame, Kelli  
Kennedy, Jill  
Kim, Miron  
Krisl, Jill  
Larkin, Adrian  
Le, Minh  
Li, Xiao-Meng  
Luetters, Angela  
Nicolarsen, Lana  
Paul, Jennifer  
Singer, Brenda  
Tran, Anna  
Urban, Jamela  
Wrightnour, Yvonne  
Zhen, Danna

#### School of Pharmacy Dean's List – Fall 2008

##### *P1 Class of 2012*

Ames, Ella  
Bae, Jennifer  
Baily, Ali  
Barker, Dana  
Berman, Rachel  
Bitto, Joseph  
Braschler, Kristin  
Bratten, Chad  
Brunkan, Jennie  
Brym, Derek  
Cantin, Amanda  
Cassidy, David  
Cheung, Stephen  
Delgado, Ana  
Draper, Ashley  
Drayna, Caitlin  
Duewall, Jennifer  
Engstrom, Trista  
Fling, Daniel  
Fogo, Kristopher  
Gard, Aaron  
Hall, Matthew  
Jessup, Anna

##### *P2 Class of 2011*

Johnson, Eric  
Johnson, Krista  
K C, Sweta  
Kalaaji, Mohamad  
Keeley, Robynn  
Konieczny, Jennifer  
Kwasnicki, Robert  
Lahr, Jesse  
Lam, Tan  
Liang, Janet  
Looper, Courtenay  
Luong, Lan  
Mang'eni, Edward  
Markham, Luke  
Meacham, Heather  
Metz, Kelli  
Meyer, Melissa  
Morrow, Kristen  
Neumann, Emily  
Nevo, Ofir  
Nguyen, Diana  
Peterson, Brigitte  
Pham, Christine  
Phu, Kathleen  
Sauerman, Melanie  
Schenk, Matthew  
Seidel, Lisa  
Smith, Tyler  
Stahl, Amanda  
Stockton, Megan  
Thompson, Linsey  
Wang, Andy  
Wolanin, Aleksandra

##### *P2 Class of 2011*

Bannon, Jessica  
Block, Alexander  
Caughran, Jonathan  
Clark, Jeffrey  
Ehlers, Morgan  
Hammond, Kyle  
Johns, Ria  
Kanack, Alexander  
Knapp, Kathryn  
Lee, Aaron  
Puszka, Joanna  
Reynolds, Paul  
Schwab, Jennifer  
Smith, Stacey  
Thoresdale, Karen  
Turner, Shane  
Vaughn, Jessica  
Walton, Christopher

##### *P3 Class of 2010*

Adams, Jody  
Alquist, Elizabeth  
Asuquo, Helen  
Blocher, Andrea  
Blunt, Nnenne  
Calovich, Emily  
Calvert, Paul  
Cao, Bich-Chi  
Carlstrom, Kelley  
Clark, Dain  
Cochran, Rachel  
Cook, Jesse  
Crona, Daniel  
Decker, Kimberly  
Floyd, Corinne  
Frame, Kelli  
Godfrey, Maria  
Hutchinson, Michael  
Johnson, Steven  
Kanani, Zanette  
Kennedy, Jill  
Kim, Miron  
Krisl, Jill  
Larkin, Adrian  
Le, Minh  
Leech, Jonathan  
Li, Xiao-Meng  
Luetters, Angela  
Nicolarsen, Lana  
Paul, Jennifer  
Pham, Myhao  
Podkonjak, Adio  
Salmon, Stephanie  
Schneider, Jennifer  
Singer, Brenda  
Tran, Anna  
Urban, Jamela  
Vandiver, Jeremy  
Wagner, Hilary  
Wrightnour, Yvonne  
Yacoub, Basheer  
Yeung, So  
Zhen, Danna

## Students walk for ADA

Pharmacy school students organized team “Operation Diabetes” in October. Lead by team captain, Steven Losordo, the students walked and raised money for the American Diabetes Association.



## Students compete in CSC

The Clinical Skills Competition (CSC) is supported by the American Society of Health Systems Pharmacists (ASHP) and has been in operation since 1996. The purpose of the CSC is to facilitate clinical skill development for pharmacy students by encouraging cooperation and teamwork. The CSC is designed to facilitate an interactive, team-based analysis of clinical scenarios for hospital/health-system pharmacists to help patients make the best use of their medications.

**The goals of the CSC are to:**

1. Foster the development of clinical practice skills
2. Reinforce the pharmacist's responsibility for optimal drug therapy outcomes
3. Facilitate the effective use of a systematic approach to clinical problem-solving

4. Enhance oral and written communication skills

In the written portion of the competition, students complete a process of analyzing and identifying crucial data elements. This process is an essential component of the clinical skills method. While some have the ability to complete this process naturally, without committing information to paper, it is important for those who don't have the benefit of learning these important skills to familiarize themselves with the process.

In the Clinical Skills Competition, students work on case studies in pairs. Teams compete by demonstrating their skills in assessing patient information and current therapy, identifying and prioritizing drug therapy problems, identifying treatment goals, and recommending a

pharmacy care plan. A panel of evaluators determines the winner of the competition using the criteria provided.

Each year, students at each college/school of pharmacy have the opportunity to participate in their local (school-wide) competition. The University of Colorado Denver competition, held in September, was comprised of 10 teams made up of P2-P4 students. Winning team members from each school competition receive a complimentary registration to the ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting – held each year in Orlando Fla. – where they compete in the national competition. This year, local winners were:

First Place: Brittany and Michele Hanselin

Second Place: Jamela Urban and Emily Oien

Third Place: Stacy Schomberg and Dominique Minjarez

Top ten finalists teams winning a place in the national competition each receive a \$100 ASHP gift certificate, which is good for membership, meetings, and products and services. They also receive a copy of ASHP's Pharm-Prep, a case-based board preparatory tool with CD-ROM.

The team members winning the national competition each receive a trophy and a \$500 cash award, as well as a trophy to take back to their school.

Since entering the national competition for the first time in 2005, the UCD School of Pharmacy has had one local team place in the top ten.

## Student Organization Officers

### School of Pharmacy Student Council 2008-09

#### Student Council P4

President: Lam Nguyen  
 Vice-President: Dmitri Cohen  
 Secretary: Michele Hanselin  
 Treasurer: Brittany Hanselin  
 Senators: Kassandra Bankovich & Patricia Ezidinma

#### Student Council P3 & Student Council Officers

President: Kelli Frame  
 Vice President: Greg O'Malley  
 Secretary: Kenda Zoffka-Zimmerman  
 Treasurer: Troy Westerberg  
 Senators: Becky Cochran & Mia Ajekwu

#### Student Council P2

President: Nicole Sheldahl  
 Vice-President: Myo Zan Aung  
 Secretary: Geri Weinstein  
 Treasurer: Stacey Smith  
 Senators: Katie Knapp & Angela Stephan

#### Student Council P1

President: Monica Evans  
 Vice-President: Heather Woodward  
 Secretary & Student Council Sec: Christine Vi Dang  
 Treasurer: Melissa Meyer  
 Senators: Trista Engstrom & Danielle Arossa

#### APhA-ASP

President: Michelle Wolke (P3)  
 President Elect: Katie Knapp (P2)  
 Vice-President: Brooke Glasmann (P3)  
 Secretary: Kennda Zoffka-Zimmerman (P3)  
 Treasurer: Jen Kryskalla (P3)  
 Membership  
 Vice-President: Kelley Carlstrom (P3)  
 SPIN coordinator: Greg O'Malley (P3)  
 Arapahoe House: Dan Crona (P3), Shaun McDonald (P3), & Yvonne Wrightnour (P3)  
 IPSPF: Lana Nicolarsen (P3) & Parag Sheth (P3)  
 Operation Diabetes: Mia Ajekwu (P3) & Steven Losordo (P2)  
 Heartburn Awareness: Rachel Lowe (P3) & Chris Walton (P2)  
 Operation Immunization: Chad Wahlgren (P2) & Brenda Singer (P3)

Operation Hypertension: Nick Bennett (P2) & Kennda Zoffka-Zimmerman (P3)  
 Faculty Advisor: Brian Hemstreet, PharmD

#### CSSH

President: Angela Luetters (P3)  
 President-elect: Jessica Bannon (P2)  
 Vice: Nick Bennett (P2)  
 Secretary: Kelli Frame (P3)  
 Treasurer: Emily Calovich (P3)  
 PR/Historian: Rachel Lowe (P3)  
 Brown Bag Coordinators: Brenda Singer (P3) & Shaun McDonald (P2)  
 Events Coordinators: Yvonne Wrightnour (P3)  
 Policy/Legislation Chairs: Renee Opferman (P2)  
 Faculty Advisor: Shawna Vigil Kaciri (P3) & Patrick McDaneld (P3)  
 Robert Page, PharmD

#### NCPA

Co Presidents: Emily Calovich (P3) & Brooke Glasmann (P3)  
 Vice President: Michelle Wolke (P3)  
 Secretary: Erin Samura (P2)  
 Treasurer: Tosha Bowen (P2)  
 Faculty Advisors: Sam Ellis, PharmD & Wes Nuffer, PharmD

#### Phi Delta Chi

WCC President: Mick Burgeson (P3)  
 WVC Vice-President: Meki Orr (P3)  
 WKF Treasurer: Kelli Frame (P3)  
 WP Prelate: Rhonda Martinez (P3)  
 WMA Master of Arms: Amy Ogawa (P3)  
 WIG Inner Guard: Jim Rose (P2)  
 WAL Alumni Liaison: None  
 WC Correspondent: Sabrina Gregory (P3)  
 WKRS Secretary: Shawna Kaciri (P3)  
 Faculty Advisors: Doug Fish, PharmD

#### Phi Lambda Sigma

President: Rachel Lowe (P3)  
 Vice President: Angela Luetters (P3)  
 Secretary: John Burgeson (P3)  
 Treasurer: Adrian Larkin (P3)  
 PR/Historian: Zhanette Kanani (P3)  
 Faculty Advisors: Joe Saseen, PharmD & Sunny Linnebur, PharmD

#### Rho Chi

President: Jill Krisl (P3)  
 Vice President: Adrian Larkin (P3)  
 Secretary: Lana Nicolarsen (P3)  
 Historian: Brenda Singer (P3)  
 Treasurer: Angela Luetters (P3)  
 Senate Representative: Dan Crona (P3)  
 Faculty Advisor: Rob MacLaren

#### SNPhA

President: Zhanette Kanani (P3)  
 President Elect: Felipe Ballina (P2)  
 Vice President Elect: Vanessa Hennes (P2)

Vice President: Emily Arndt (P3)  
 Treasurer: Adrian Larkin (P3)  
 Secretary: Jill Krisl (P3)  
 PR/Historian: Shawna Kaciri (P3) & Heather Woodward (P1)

Webmaster: Nora (Xiao-Meng) Li (P3)  
 Affiliate Directors: Nicole Sheldahl (P2) & Monica Evans (P1)

Social Chair: Yvonne Wrightnour (P3)  
 Alumni Liason: Jody Adams (P3)  
 GBLT Chair: Dallas Hill (P2)  
 Faculty Advisors: Connie Valdez, PharmD & Hilda Bi Ndikum, PharmD

#### Pharmacists for Christ

Co-Presidents: Mike Brady (P3) & Lindsay Ingrassia (P2)  
 Faculty Advisor: Laura Hansen, PharmD

## SOP's 15th Annual Holiday Drive delivers good cheer

In hard times, especially, many Denver area families fight the plight of poverty. This year, the School of Pharmacy helped bring the holiday spirit to the impoverished families by participating in the 15th Annual Holiday Drive. Coordinated this year by SOP student, Kennda Zoffka-Zimmerman, students, faculty and staff donated non-perishable food items as well as toys for the Santa Claus shop of the Colfax Community Network (CNN).

Located near the Anschutz Medical Campus in Aurora, Colo., CNN, advocates for families and children residing in low-income, transient housing along Colfax Avenue. By providing information, services and programs that serve those who need it most, the group works to improve family and community life.



## What a difference six years make

Six years ago, Lauren Johnson was at a low point. Barely making above minimum wage, divorced, and raising two young children on her own, Lauren wondered what her future would hold. “I realized that this was not how I wanted to live. I didn’t want my kids to watch me struggle and say to themselves – ‘that’s how life is,’” recalls Lauren.

So, at 24 she resolved to change her situation.

Armed with a dream of becoming a pharmacist and the will to accomplish it, she enrolled in the Community College of Aurora where she started taking science courses necessary to qualify for



pharmacy school. “It’s a minimum six year commitment, which can get very costly,” says Lauren. Fortunately for Lauren she discovered Mile High United Way, a non-profit organization that provided scholarships to help defray the cost of undergraduate school. “The funds they provided helped take the pressure off. I really did not want to face six years of student loans upon graduation,” says Lauren.

With money to pay for her undergraduate courses, Lauren faced another challenge – getting into pharmacy school. “You don’t just set your sights on going to pharmacy school and once you apply you’re in!” shares Lauren.

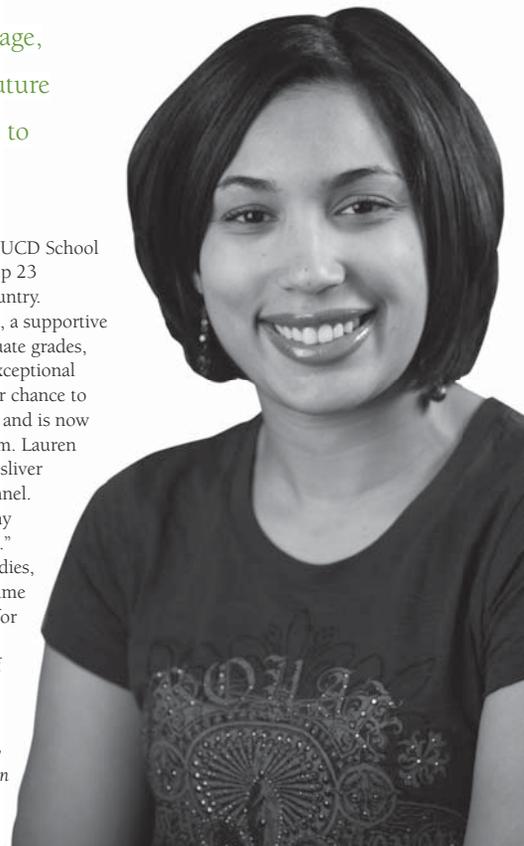
With nearly 2,000 applicants vying for only 146 positions at the University of Colorado Denver School of Pharmacy – one of the top schools in the nation – Lauren received a berth in the class of 2011 (the 98th class to graduate from this prestigious school). According to

U.S. News & World Report, UCD School of Pharmacy is one of the top 23 pharmacy schools in the country.

Through perseverance, a supportive family, excellent undergraduate grades, recommendations and an exceptional interview, Lauren earned her chance to pursue a pharmacy degree, and is now halfway through the program. Lauren says, “I’m just now seeing a sliver of light at the end of the tunnel. Things are tight, but I tell my sons that we’re almost there.”

Currently juggling studies, motherhood and two part-time jobs, Lauren’s role model for her sons and is well on her way to achieving her goal of becoming a pharmacist.

*Second-year pharmacy student, Lauren Johnson*



## Gone fishin’

**1** Early in September, former School of Pharmacy deans Gene Erwin (right) and Louis Diamond enjoyed a day of late-summer fly fishing together in the Colorado high country. Dr. Erwin served as dean from 1974 to 1984. Dr. Diamond succeeded Dr. Erwin and served until the end of 2006.



**2** School of Pharmacy alums gather for their annual dinner in South Fork, Colorado. Left to right: John Palmer, MD, PhD ('54); Richard Deitrich, PhD ('53); John Biles, PhD ('44) and Gene Erwin, PhD ('60). Dr. Palmer is a professor in the Department of Pharmacology at the University of Arizona College of Medicine; Dr. Deitrich is Professor Emeritus



in the Department of Pharmacology at the University of Colorado Denver School of Medicine; Dr. Biles is Dean Emeritus at the University of Southern California School of Pharmacy; and Dr. Erwin is Dean Emeritus at the University of Colorado Denver School of Pharmacy. Drs. Palmer and Erwin have summer residences in nearby Crede, Colorado. Dr. Biles, whose permanent residence is in Pacific Palisades, California, also has a summer home in nearby Del Norte, Colorado. Dr. Biles served as dean at USC for 28 years.

# FAMILY TIES

## Father and son pharmacists team up in Brush, Colorado

By Iva Kay Horner, Publisher/Editor, Brush News-Tribune, Reprinted with permission

The addition of Ben Brunner to B&B Pharmacy is allowing the father-son team to not only expand upon its services, but also is providing the public with a diverse educational background at the locally-owned pharmacy.

A recent graduate of the University of Colorado Denver School of Pharmacy, Ben joined his father's long-time Brush business inside Brush Grocery Kart after passing his state boards on July 2.

The addition of his son, who spent time interning in the local business while in school, gives the owner more time to deal with the business-end of the pharmacy, as well as allows for the men to split business hours, overlapping where needed, depending on what needs to be done on a particular day.

"What this does is several things. It increases safety to the public and decreases errors," Dave explained.

At the same time, Ben's education is affording B&B Pharmacy the opportunity to expand upon its services, including the addition of immunization clinics as Ben holds a certificate to provide that service for residents. A shingles clinic already has been held, with future plans involving the possibility of conducting a flu clinic this fall, said Ben. "We'll see how that goes."

The men are in the process of working on a new project with the University of Colorado with more to be released on that as the project proceeds. "We're trying a whole new line of things," Ben explained.

"I'm pretty excited about joining the business," he continued. "This will give us both more time to expand upon the business," the 1993 Brush High School graduate commented.

"Ben's education is different than mine. He is more clinical than I am," the elder Brunner stated. "Ben's was the same type of what physicians do - diagnosing, learning the diseases and how to detect, while mine was straight pharmaceutical. I compounded prescriptions," he noted.

As part of his education, the younger Brunner was required to spend his final year of school in eight different environments, including the retail sector, a teaching school, hospitals and a diabetes clinic.

"Pharmacy has come a long way from when I was in school. We now have the updated version and the one from the dinosaur ages," Brunner laughed.

It is not only the field itself that has changed throughout the years.

A graduate of Sterling High School and the University of Colorado in 1973, Brunner received his state license on June 30, 1974.

When the father portion of the newly-created team came to Brush in 1974, he was located on Cambridge Street in what he refers to as an "apothecary-type" store. After selling his store to B&B in 1978, Brunner moved to downtown Brush where he was employed by Harry Bolinger. "I spent two years there and bought the store from Harry and Iva," he explained. "I was downtown until August of 1998 when we moved to the Grocery Kart location."

"I have been serving this community for 38 years," he proudly stated.

In those years, B&B Pharmacy has built up a clientele that spreads from Stoneham to Last Chance, east to Merino, Holyoke and Wray, as well as west to Wiggins. "We have a large drawing area," he stated. "We cover a lot of area in this store. We fill as many prescriptions as others in the area."



Dave Brunner (left) along with Rosie Garvik (center) and Diana Hernandez (right) are part of the B&B Pharmacy team that have welcomed Ben Brunner (back) to the family-owned business.

The pharmacist credits part of his success in being competitive with the larger stores due to a new advertising plan, along with his format of educating the public over the years. The business also provides delivery service to Akron on a daily basis.

Additionally, he said, "The advantage to this store is that we get to know all of the people. You have a better camaraderie." Brunner also feels that Brush is a "better place to raise your children and a really good place to live."

While Dave commented that he doesn't have spare time, he admits he has "hobbies" that include raising and racing greyhounds, something he has done since 1982. He also enjoys yard work, golfing and traveling. In addition to their son, Dave and his wife of almost 40 years, Barbara, also have a daughter, Brandy, who is a dental hygienist in Thornton.

When Ben, who also earned his A.S. degree from NJC in 2004, is not working, he can be found spending time with his wife, Jaime, and their three daughters, Ali, age eight, Hailey, seven, and Kenedi, four years old, as well as golfing and working in the yard.

B&B Pharmacy employs five full-time residents. Filling those needs are Rosie Garvik and Diana Hernandez, who serve as pharmacy technicians, bookkeeper Kim Harbert, and Donna Kramer and Ofelia Castaneda, who provide their assistance with counter sales and service.

*"Pharmacy has come a long way from when I was in school. We now have the updated version and the one from the dinosaur ages" 🌿*

## ALUMNI NEWS

### Scholarships change lives

In the early 1990's, when Stephen Cook fell victim to one of Colorado's gloomy economic periods by losing his job at a Denver oil company, his prospect for a job with the federal government provided no refuge. "I was taking an organic chemistry class," notes Cook, "to augment a volunteer position I had taken in hazardous materials management with the EPA. However, halfway through the course, the agency had become entangled in superfund lawsuits and put a hiring freeze in place." Not sure which way to turn next, Cook realized a lot of students in his OCHEM class were

going into pharmacy. "That made me start thinking," admits Cook, "that [pharmacy] might be a pretty good way for me to go as well."

And so it was.

While enrolled, Cook got involved in student organizations and received scholarship monies to help him through. He obtained his BS degree from University of Colorado School of Pharmacy

just before the PharmD program took effect.

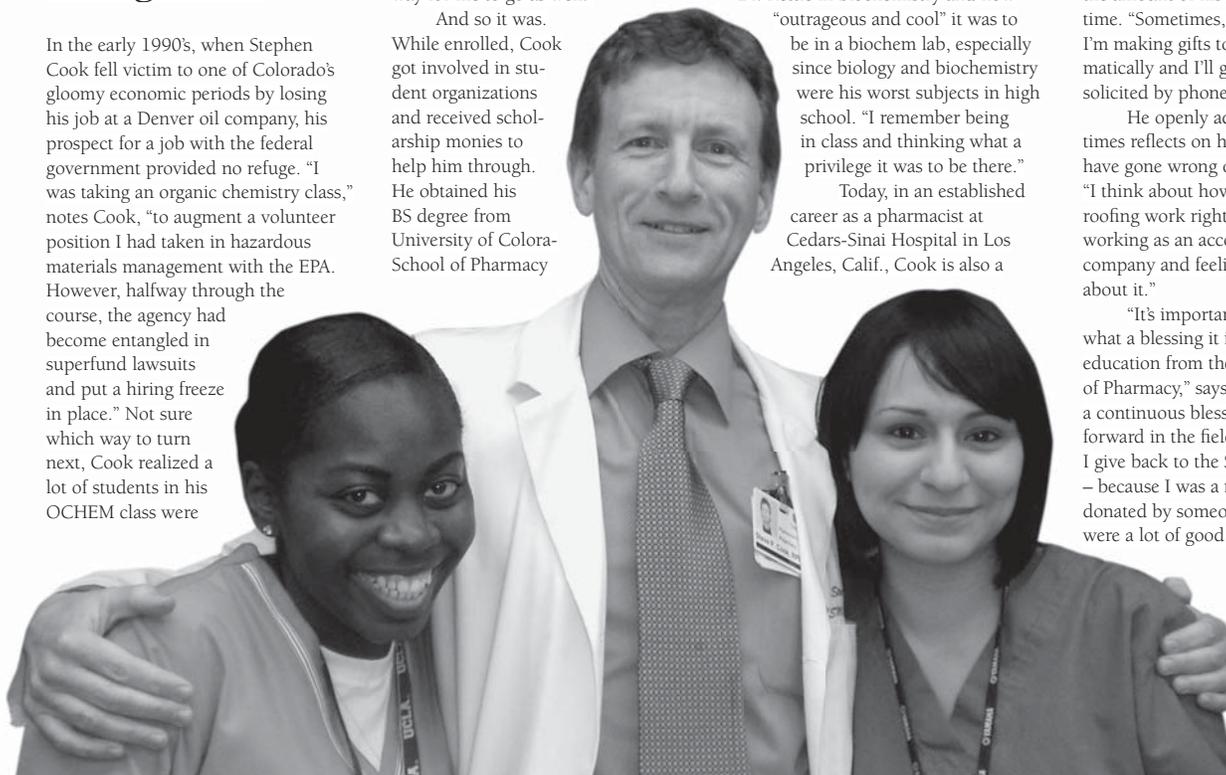
Cook recalls working with Dr. Kettle in biochemistry and how "outrageous and cool" it was to be in a biochem lab, especially since biology and biochemistry were his worst subjects in high school. "I remember being in class and thinking what a privilege it was to be there."

Today, in an established career as a pharmacist at Cedars-Sinai Hospital in Los Angeles, Calif., Cook is also a

consistent donor to the School of Pharmacy. He makes his gifts through electronic funds transfer and increases the amount of his gift gradually over time. "Sometimes," he says, "I forget I'm making gifts to the school automatically and I'll give again if I am solicited by phone."

He openly admits that he sometimes reflects on how things could have gone wrong or gone differently. "I think about how I could be doing roofing work right now," he says, "or working as an accountant for that oil company and feeling miserable about it."

"It's important to think about what a blessing it is to have received an education from the UC Denver School of Pharmacy," says Cook, "and what a continuous blessing it will be going forward in the field. That's one reason I give back to the School of Pharmacy – because I was a recipient of money donated by someone else and there were a lot of good moments there."



Stephen Cook, BS '97, with co-workers at Cedar-Sinai Hospital

### Alumni notes

**Hien Pham, PharmD '05**, received a Vincentian Day Award for Service to the Poor from Providence Hospital in Mobile, Ala. Hein was nominated by her peers in the pharmacy department; the diabetes center; the radiation center; and multiple nursing units to receive the award for providing Vietnamese translation and other services to patients at the hospital.

**Steven Ray Harvey, BS '94**, works for Mental Health America of Ariz., an affiliate of The National mental Health America in Washington, DC and is recognized as a successful mental health advocate throughout Arizona. Classmates may contact Steve at [stevensharvey@netzero.com](mailto:stevensharvey@netzero.com).

**1 Laura (Nunn) Lakvold, PharmD '05**, married John Lakvold on April 19, 2008 and is living in Graham, Wash. Laura may be reached by classmates at [lblakvold@hotmail.com](mailto:lblakvold@hotmail.com).

**2 Adam and Jamie Poust, PharmD '03**, welcomed their first child, Garrett Jacob Poust in August. Adam is currently the Pharmacy Director at Chartwell Rocky Mountain Region Home Infusion Company and Jamie is an Oncology Pharmacy Specialist at the University of Colorado Hospital. They can be reached at [apoust@chartwellrmr.com](mailto:apoust@chartwellrmr.com) and [jamie.poust@uch.edu](mailto:jamie.poust@uch.edu).

**3 Peggy, '46, and Jack Holden** celebrated two wonderful milestones in February. Jack's 85th birthday fell on January 10 and on January 20, the couple celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary.



*In Memoriam*

## “Whitecoats” aren’t immune to frailties

It’s been said of life that since we’re just passing through, we should make the most of it. So, it’s especially peculiar that everyday health-care professionals don’t embrace this little ditty with a stranglehold.

It’s not that “whitecoats” like me are any more astute than anyone else. It’s more we work in the everyday business of taking care of people and making them better.

From this vantage point, one quickly recognizes there are some patients you can’t make better, those who just can’t be “fixed.”

You walk out of some unfortunate patient’s room and realize your own life is pretty darn good. In the briefest of perspectives, you came to see them. Still, those inside starched white coats or the less-than-well-pressed green scrubs are like everyone else. Raising kids, running them to all their events, keeping on top of aging parents. We can forget how lucky we are to simply be healthy – but not for very long.

Bryn Cooper, our 29-year-old oncology pharmacist and PharmD ‘06, was diagnosed with acute lymphocytic leukemia last year. She felt particularly exhausted after a few training runs for a local marathon.

An exam, a few samples of blood and several hours later, Bryn’s role in this world changed from caregiver to patient – on her very own 11th floor at the University of Colorado Hospital.

This was where Bryn – an idealistic young pharmacy specialist – practiced with three other veterans of the floor, going about the business of optimizing oncology drug regimens and acting as gatekeepers for patients’ well-being and safety. Her energy, enthusiasm and approachability made her the perfect fit in a very complex medical and social environment.

From what I saw, those aspects of her character and her need to always do the best for her patients made her so universally admired it was as if she were enveloped in some sort of halo.

Given her background, training and knowledge in this field of medicine, the diagnosis could not have been easy for Bryn. There would be chemotherapy, radiation and, finally, a bone-marrow transplant.

Still, Bryn handled all of it with her characteristic dignity and, somehow, humor.

She could have dwelled on the terrible irony of her illness or even the absolutely horrendous timing of it, being newly married and all. She did not; she kept positive – I’d swear for no other reason than for the sake of all her stunned family and co-workers.

Bryn was that unselfish. If there was any way she demonstrated negativity, I never saw it in my too-few visits with her in a now very different role on 11-North. We talked about food, wine, a trading of hobbies – she’d dust off her bike do a long distance cycling event like the MS ride with me if I’d lace up running shoes and do a half-marathon with her.

Our few chats would end, and maybe she could get some rest before the next caregiver was in for the real business of giving medication, taking vitals, taking her for a test, performing a lumbar puncture. I’d go off on my way to the office or other patients, leaving Bryn in the solitude of what I could only hope was not her own private agony.

Once, she talked of having children. She worried so much that was not going to happen. I felt if anyone could endure what she was going through, she’d be a great mom, and I told her that no matter what names she picked for her children I would always call them “Mini Coopers,” like those little automobiles. She liked that, and I smile thinking of just how much I’d have liked that too.

This was just not in the cards. Her last birthday was spent in one of our ICUs, but she could not make it a few days longer to Christmas, her favorite holiday.

While I’m very confident she received the best care from some of the world’s very best at our hospital, I will forever remain uncomfortable and frustrated that somehow, some way, we could have done more for one of us. The world has been deprived of Bryn and the Mini Coopers that she and her husband, Scott, no doubt would have raised right.

The patients on 11-North, and throughout our hospital, have lost a terrific advocate, and exceptional caregiver.

The sudden death of a colleague, especially to illness, strikes the whitecoats as a sucker-punch in the stomach. You tend to patients and do your very best, every once in a while thanking God it’s not you lying in that bed – then you are jolted back into the reality of how, in a single horrendous instant, it certain could be.



*Bryn Pieschel Cooper, PharmD '06, succumbed to acute lymphocytic leukemia in December 2008*

Once, a long time ago, I was doing surgical-wound rounds, looking in on patients who’d undergone complex surgery in a cancer hospital and assessing their surgical sites for signs of infection.

I came to see this fragile older woman, for whom the gifted hands of a very talented surgeon could no longer make a difference.

I leaned over to assess her wound and with strength that startled me, she grabbed the lapels of my white lab coat. She practically pulled me on top of her while lifting her upper body from the bed. Our faces, inches apart, she demanded of me: “Young man, you live every delicious second of your life.”

I’m certain Bryn did just that.

I try, but every now and then I lose track of life’s truly precious priorities, and why it must take that stomach-punch to place me, place us, back on course, I don’t know. We all should try a little harder and be ever grateful for those aspects of good health that we have.

*By Gerry Barber, originally printed in the 1/6/09 issue of The Denver Post. Reprinted with permission*

*Gerry Barber is a pharmacy specialist for the Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committee at the University of Colorado Hospital in Aurora. He can be reached at [Gerard.barber@uch.edu](mailto:Gerard.barber@uch.edu)*

University of Colorado Denver  
 School of Pharmacy  
 Mail Stop C-238-L15  
 P.O. Box 6511  
 Aurora, CO 80045  
 Address service requested

Nonprofit  
 Organization  
 U.S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Denver, CO  
 Permit NO.2378

## Save the Date... Upcoming Educational Programs

### Evening of May 14 at Anschutz Medical Campus

*Stemming the Tide of Diabetes:  
 the Role of Pharmacists in Treatment and Education*  
 2-hour ACPE-accredited program

### May 18 Federal and Colorado pharmacy law review at Anschutz Medical Campus

*A Review of What You Need to Know to Take the  
 Colorado Jurisprudence Exam*  
 Michael Smith, PharmD, JD and Tisha Silva, PharmD  
 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM; advance registration required.

For more information on these events visit  
[www.uchsc.edu/sop/conted/3.Upcoming\\_Programs.html](http://www.uchsc.edu/sop/conted/3.Upcoming_Programs.html)

A portion of proceeds from these alumni events will benefit students  
 through scholarships at the University of Colorado Denver.



**Saturday, June 27, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.**  
**\$10 per person, includes admission and picnic lunch**  
 Looking for fun, inexpensive entertainment for you, your family, friends and colleagues? Dive into Denver's 18-acre aquatic adventure. From sightings to Sumatran tigers, you won't want to miss more than a million gallons of underwater tanks and interactive exhibits teeming with life. Enjoy the picnic lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on the aquarium grounds. This event is open to alumni, faculty, staff, students and friends of the University. For tickets, visit [www.ucdenver.onlincommunity.com](http://www.ucdenver.onlincommunity.com)

## Downtown Denver Aquarium

# We'd like to hear from you

Comings, goings, marriages, births, retirements, honors, accolades and other events that are important to you are important to us, too. Tell us your news and we'll share it with classmates, alumni, students, faculty and friends. Use the form below to send a class note OR an e-mail to [SOFAlumni@ucdenver.edu](mailto:SOFAlumni@ucdenver.edu)

Please mail to: School of Pharmacy  
 C238-L15, Academic Office 1  
 Aurora, CO 80045

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Degree(s) and Year: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State and Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
 You may publish my:  Address  Phone  E-mail  
 Spouse also an alumna/us?  No  Yes Year: \_\_\_\_\_  
 I'd like my former classmates to know: \_\_\_\_\_