

Dean's Newsletter

Issue 4, April 2015

Note: The Dean's newsletter is published every second month and provides updates on academics, research, events, and other items of interest. Join us in celebrating our achievements by submitting your updates to kieran.kobitz@usask.ca.

MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **College leads development of new \$2 million innovation fund**

A consortium of Saskatchewan's leading innovation organizations have come together with The Centre for Drug Research and Development (CDRD), Canada's national drug development and commercialization centre, to establish a new \$2 million CDRD-Saskatchewan Innovation Fund. The fund will support and accelerate the commercialization of cutting-edge early-stage health technologies stemming from the province's top research institutions. [Read the full story.](#)



- **\$5 Million Endowed Chair in Rational Drug Design**

The endowment fund for the Saskatchewan-GlaxoSmithKline Research Chair in Rational Drug Design was granted to the College as part of GlaxoSmithKline's \$25 million Pathfinders Fund for Leaders in Canadian Health Science Research. The pathfinder program was established to help Canada become a world leader in research and development. It encourages health science research and fosters innovation in Canadian Universities. Funding for this chair was also provided by the Government of Saskatchewan, SaskTel, the University of Saskatchewan, and the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition. [Read the full story.](#)



- **Injection Training**

Pharmacists' Association of Saskatchewan, in partnership with the College, will cover the costs of the injection training for all practicing pharmacists through a training grant from PAS for \$350,000. This training support is being put in place to remove any financial barriers related to the required training for pharmacists to offer injections as part of the 2015 flu vaccination season. [Read the full story.](#)



- **Establishment of the Gordon McKay Graduate Student Award in Analytical Chemistry**

Through several generous donations the Gordon McKay Graduate Student Award in Analytical Chemistry has been established and will honour one graduate student in the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition each year with \$1,000 to travel to a national and international meeting to present their research. The award will be based on research excellence and a student's academic standings as determined by the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition Awards Committee.



MORE NEWS

Pharmacist Awareness Month

CAPSI University of Saskatchewan put on a series of events for PAM 2015. Some of the key highlights include:

- **PAM Ribbon Cutting & Kickoff**

PAM got off to a strong start on March 2 with the Ribbon Cutting & Kickoff held in the Health Sciences Atrium. Nearly 200 students, faculty, and staff were in attendance.



- **Mr. Pharmacy Pageant**

Congratulations to Stefano Barillaro on being named Mr. Pharmacy 2015! This year's pageant was the most successful one to date, including a full house at Louis' and a grand total of nearly \$8,000 raised for Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Canada.

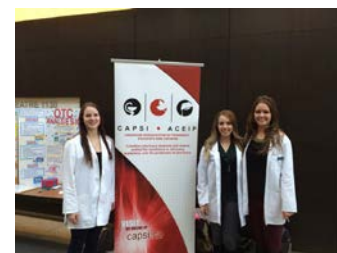
Thank you to the University of Saskatchewan Students Union for providing the venue at no cost, and to Scotiabank for matching some of the funds raised at the event.



- **PAM Booths**

The booths were joint effort between pharmacy students and practising pharmacists to inform and educate the public about health care and the role of pharmacists. Booth locations included Health Sciences, the Arts Tunnel, Lawson Heights Mall, and Market Mall.

- [View the full list of PAM 2015 events.](#)





MORE NEWS (cont'd)

Nutrition Month

March was also Nutrition Month, and our students and faculty were busy promoting the value of Registered Dietitians.

- **Balanced Plate Challenge**

The Balanced Plate Challenge was held in Marquis Hall on Wednesday, March 11. Student teams were challenged to build a balanced meal, while overcoming a number of physical challenges.

- **Dietitians Day Information Booth**

Dietitians Day was on Wednesday, March 18, and our Nutrition students held an information booth in the Arts Tunnel. Experts provided trusted, science-based advice, along with free chili and prize packages.

- **Dietitians Reception**

Our Nutrition faculty met with provincial government representatives during the Dietitians Reception at the Legislature in Regina on Monday, March 23.



PharmD Update

- Curious about where we're at with the PharmD development? Read the executive summary from the Faculty Retreat on February 25, which includes the proposed prerequisites for admission. [Read the blog.](#)
- PharmD Update is our blog to keep all of our stakeholders up to date on the PharmD curriculum development process. We want your feedback – feel free to post your comments or questions on the blog, our social media channels, or you can email our Communications Specialist at kieran.kobitz@usask.ca.

Dean's Pharmacists and Dietitians Celebration Tour

Dean Wasan visited owner **Courtney Junop (BSP, 2011)** at The Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy in Royal University Hospital.





MORE NEWS (cont'd)

medSask 40th Anniversary and Increased Funding

The medSask 40th Anniversary Celebration took place Thursday, March 26, at 4:00 pm in E-Wing, 3rd Floor. The College is excited to announce that medSask has received increased funding: approximately \$300,000 from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health, and \$100,000 from the Saskatchewan College of Pharmacists.

Aboriginal Achievement Week Student Awards Ceremony

Congratulation to Dallas Odgers and Kirsten Sweet on winning academic awards at this year's Aboriginal Achievement Week Student Awards Ceremony.

Dallas is a nutrition student and a member of the Metis Nation Saskatchewan. Throughout the nutrition program he has been able to apply health-related projects directly to the Aboriginal community. Also, throughout 2013-2014, he developed a comprehensive nutrition education booklet on Type II Diabetes for the Saskatoon Tribal Council.

Kirsten (BSP, 2014) is a member of the Cowessess First Nation. After graduating, she began a Pharmacy Residency program in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region. From May to August 2014, she was involved in a research project at the Pasqua Hospital in Regina. The research was a retrospective study of patients who visited the emergency department.

Dr. Jason Perepelkin is currently in Australia conducting an international comparative teaching research project with his colleague Phillip Woods. They are seeking to understand whether providing students with differing points-of-view with regard to health care systems, pharmacy ownership, pharmaceutical approvals, etc., followed by students completing a compare and contrast assignment, will enhance student engagement and learning.



He provided a series of lectures to third year pharmacy students at Griffiths University School of Pharmacy in Gold Coast, Australia.

Dr. Susan Whiting attended a CIHR Best Brains Exchanged on vitamin D held March 6, in Ottawa. It was a day long discussion on the benefits and drawbacks of vitamin D fortification in Canada.

IN THE MEDIA

Dr. Derek Jorgenson appeared in a CBC Marketplace series of segments on unnecessary medication reviews. (Photo: CBC)

[Read the article.](#)

[Watch the clip.](#)

Dr. Hassan Vatanparast was recently featured in the March 2015 Department of Pediatrics Research Report. His article "The Healthy Immigrant Children Program: Healthy communities for immigrant and refugee children" appears on the front page of the report. [Read the article.](#)





FACULTY AND STAFF NEWS

APPOINTMENTS

- **Dr. David Blackburn** will be promoted to Full Professor as of July 1, 2015. Please congratulate him on this important milestone in his career.
- **Dr. Kerry Mansell** (following formal approval from the Provost) has been appointed as Assistant Dean, Division of Pharmacy in the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition for a three year term effective July 1, 2015. We are pleased that Kerry has accepted this administrative role within the College and are looking for great things from him.
- The Provost has formally extended **Dr. Roy Dobson's** appointment as Acting Assistant Dean until June 30, 2015. Thank you Roy for continuing to provide important administrative service to the Division of Pharmacy and the College.
- **Dr. Fred Remillard** was reappointed as Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Affairs for one additional year to June 30, 2016. Fred has done an outstanding job as our Associate Dean and Dean Wasan thanks him for being willing to remain in this position for an additional year.

ALUMNI NEWS

Alumnus and frequent guest lecturer **Dr. Jaris Swidrovich (BSP, 2010; PharmD, 2013 Toronto)** was featured on the front page of the Star Phoenix on February 26.

The article discusses his work in Aboriginal health, and how he came to practice in this area: "It was very eye-opening. I absolutely took note of how much the aboriginal and northern community could benefit from some clinical pharmacist services," he said, noting that most people coming into the health clinic had never sat down with someone to discuss their medications. [Read the article.](#)

Jaris Swidrovich also appeared on Global Saskatoon Morning News today to talk about the unique role of hospital pharmacists. [Watch the clip.](#)

Jenna Farquharson Anderson (BSP, 2011) appeared on CTV Morning Live to talk about the expanded scope of practices, and how community pharmacists can help the public with a number of minor ailments. [Watch the clip.](#)

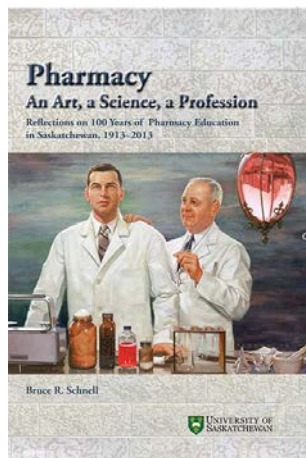
Lindsay Richels (BSP, 2007) appeared on Global Regina Morning News today to talk about Pharmacist Awareness Month and the services that the public might not be aware pharmacists can provide. [Watch the clip.](#)

Kelly Kizlyk (BSP, 2002) was on Global Saskatoon Morning News to explain which medications to bring on your warm winter vacation. [Watch the clip.](#)

Amanda Goodwin (BSP, 2007) presenting at CSHP's Professional Practice Conference 2015 in Toronto on Business Plan Preparations for Pharmacists: How to Get Your Ideas Noticed.



CENTENNIAL BOOK



Pharmacy An Art, a Science, a Profession – Reflections on 100 Years of Pharmacy Education in Saskatchewan, 1913-2013 by Dean Emeritus Bruce R. Schnell (BSP '60)

- The book is now on sale to the public at McNally Robinson in Saskatoon for \$19.99.
- Alumni and friends can get their complimentary copies of the book at the University Bookstore located in the Health Sciences Building, E-wing. Those people who are located outside of Saskatoon can contact the College to order their copy.

Do you have alumni news to share? Submit your story to kieran.kobitz@usask.ca to be featured in our next newsletter.

EVENTS

PAST EVENTS

The Twenty-Third Annual Academic Award Ceremony was held on Sunday, March 22, in 1150 E-Wing. We were honoured to have President Gordon Barnhart in attendance.

[See the pictures.](#)

[View the list of winners.](#)

The Fifth Annual Pharmasave-Rubicon Pharmacies Canada Inc. Pharmacy Student Business Plan Competition was held in Convocation Hall on Wednesday, March 25. Congratulations to Dog River Pharmacy on taking first place in the competition!



“Aboriginal History Health, and Cultural Safety” was presented by **Sherri Swidrovich (MA, 2005)** and **Dr. Jaris Swidrovich** on Monday, February 23. They spoke about about providing culturally safe healthcare to a growing Aboriginal population.



EVENTS (cont'd)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dietitians of Canada Saskatchewan Research Day 2015 will take place on Thursday, April 16, at the Wascana Rehabilitation Centre in Regina. **Dr. Kishor Wasan** will provide the opening remarks at the event. [Register for the event.](#)

Registration for the **2015 Pharmacists' Association of Saskatchewan Annual Conference** is now open. The College will host an Alumni Hospitality Suite after the SCP Opening Awards Banquet on Friday, April 24. [Register for the conference.](#)

Registration for the **2015 Canadian Pharmacists Association Conference** is also now open. Saskatchewan Night will be returning for another year, and will take place on Thursday, May 28, at Patty Boland's, 101 Clarence Street in Ottawa. This year's theme is 80's Night! More details will follow on our Facebook page. [Register for the conference.](#)

The SPNSS Points & Awards Banquet will be held on Monday, April 6. Congratulations to all of our students who get involved outside of the classroom!

The Nutrition Year 3 Celebration and Send-off will be held on Tuesday, April 7, at the University Club. This event marks the completion of the educational component at the University and the transition to internship in the Saskatoon and Regina Qu'Appelle Health Regions.

Dr. Kishor Wasan and Andy Collin, Development Officer, will be joining the **President's Tour in Calgary** on Tuesday, April 14, to meet with alumni. A networking luncheon will be held at the Delta Bow Valley.

The third **College-wide Faculty, Staff and Student Representative Meeting** will take place on Friday, May 15. Dean Wasan will provide an update on budget and resource allocations, as well as governance within the College.

RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

RECENT RESEARCH FUNDING

- **Dr. Carol Henry** and colleagues were successful in securing a 2-year \$100,000 grant from Saskatchewan Pulse Growers for their project entitled "Starting young: Incorporating local pulses in the menus of Saskatchewan childcare centres".

Two College-led research teams were awarded 1-year \$40,000 SHRF Collaborative Innovation Development grants:

- **Adil Nazarali** (Pharmacy) and Bogdan Popescu (Medicine), with co-investigator **Phyllis Paterson** (Nutrition) for Role of long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs) in myelination: multidisciplinary approach that combines histological, molecular and synchrotron techniques.



RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES (cont'd)

- **Ildiko Badea** (Pharmacy) with co-investigators Humphrey Fonge (Medicine), **Kishor Wasan** (Pharmacy), and Kamaljit Kaur (Pharmacy, UofA) for Development of theranostic agents for melanoma.

The Rx&D Health Research Foundation has awarded a \$120,000 Interdisciplinary Health Research Team grant to **Drs. David Blackburn** (Pharmacy) and Sharyle Fowler (Medicine) and their colleagues for a 3-year project entitled: Development and evaluation of an experiential training program for pharmacy students and community-based preceptors to improve the quality of health care for patients with inflammatory bowel disease in Saskatchewan.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- Singh, J, Michel, D, Getson, HM, Chitanda, JM, Verrall, RE, **Badea, I**. Development of amino acid substituted gemini surfactant-based mucoadhesive gene delivery systems for potential use as noninvasive vaginal genetic vaccination. (2015) *Nanomedicine*, 10 (3) pp 405-417
- Poorghorban, M, Das, U, Alaidi, O, Chitanda, JM, Michel, D, **Dimmock, J**, Verrall, R, Grochulski, P, **Badea, I**. Characterization of the host-guest complex of a curcumin analog with β -cyclodextrin. and β -cyclodextrin-gemini surfactant and evaluation of its anticancer activity (2015) *International Journal of Nanomedicine*, 10 pp 503-515
- Smith, AD, Olson, C, Lyons, B, Tran, D, **Blackburn, DF**. Adherence to abiraterone among the first 86 recipients after release in Saskatchewan (2015) *Current Oncology*, 22 (1) pp 64-67
- Alsabbagh, MW, **Mansell, K**, Lix, LM, Teare, G, **Shevchuk, Y**, Lu, X, Champagne, A, **Blackburn, DF**. Trends in Prevalence, Incidence and Pharmacologic Management of Diabetes Mellitus Among Seniors Newly Admitted to Long-Term Care Facilities in Saskatchewan between 2003 and 2011. (2014) *Canadian Journal of Diabetes* (in press)
- Fenton, EY, Fournier, NM, Lussier, AL, Romay-Tallon, R, **Caruncho, HJ**, Kalynchuk, LE. Imipramine protects against the deleterious effects of chronic corticosterone on depression-like behavior, hippocampal reelin expression, and neuronal maturation. (2015) *Progress in Neuro-Psychopharmacology and Biological Psychiatry*, 60 pp 52-59
- Varela, MJ, Lage, S, **Caruncho, HJ**, Cadavid, MI, Loza, MI, Brea, J. Reelin influences the expression and function of dopamine D2 and serotonin 5-HT2A receptors: A comparative study. (2015) *Neuroscience*, 290 pp 165-174
- **Evans, C**, Zhu, F, Kingwell, E, Shirani, A, van der Kop, ML, Petkau, J, Gustafson, P, Zhao, Y, Oger, J, Tremlett, H. Association between beta-interferon exposure and hospital events in multiple sclerosis. (2014) *Pharmacoepidemiology and Drug Safety* 23 (11) pp 1213-1222
- Roba, AC, Gabriel-Micheal, K, **Zello, GA**, Jaffe, J, **Whiting, SJ**, **Henry, CJ**. A Low Pulse Food Intake May Contribute to the Poor Nutritional Status and Low Dietary Intakes of Adolescent Girls in Rural Southern Ethiopia. (2015) *Ecology of Food and Nutrition* 15 p
- Alzahrani, F, **Taylor, J**, **Perepelkin, J**, **Mansell, K**. A Qualitative Assessment of the Practice Experiences of Certified Diabetes Educator Pharmacists. (2014) *Canadian Journal of Diabetes* (in press)
- Hackett, MJ, Britz, CJ, **Paterson, PG**, Nichol, H, Pickering, IJ, George, GN. In situ biospectroscopic investigation of rapid ischemic and postmortem induced biochemical alterations in the rat brain. (2015) *ACS Chemical Neuroscience*, 6 (2), pp 226-238
- **Perepelkin, J**. Self-denigration in pharmacy. (2015) *Canadian Pharmacists Journal*, 148 (1), pp 10-12



RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES (cont'd)

THE LIFE AND HEALTH SCIENCES RESEARCH DAY

The Life and Health Sciences Research Day is an annual event designed to bring students studying in the life and health sciences together from across campus and provide them with the opportunity to present their research to a broad audience. This year, the keynote address "Sign Posts and Stepping Stones in Graduate Research" was given by the College's own Dr. Jane Alcorn.

College of Pharmacy and Nutrition graduate students were tremendously successful at this year's 22nd Annual Life & Health Science Research Day. We are very pleased to announce the following award winners:

- **Paul Pown Raj Iyyanar, Pharmacy PhD**
1st Place – Cell Biology
Hoxa2 regulates osteoblast differentiation during palate development
Paul Pown Raj Iyyanar, Adil Nazarali
- **Virginia Lane, Nutrition PhD**
1st Place – Community Health II
Unpacking the health and nutritional risks of newcomer children
Virginia Lane, Hassan Vatanparast
- **Getahun Ersino Lombamo, Nutrition PhD**
1st Place – Community Health I
Application of Health Belief Model (HBM) to understand nutrition related health behavior of mothers, with implication to child feeding practices, in pulse or cereal growing rural communities, Ethiopia
Getahun Ersino Lombamo, Carol Henry, Gordon Zello
- **Pedram Rafiei, Pharmacy PhD**
1st Place – Structural Chemistry, Biochemistry & Nano Structure
A fractional factorial design for the preparation and optimization of PLGA nanoparticles loaded with an anticancer agent
Pedram Rafiei, Azita Hadadi
- **Merlin Thangaraj, Pharmacy PhD**
1st Place – Genetics and Molecular Biology II
The RNA binding protein QKI regulates Sirt2 mRNA expression during oligodendrocyte development
Merlin Thangaraj, J. Ronald Doucette, Shaoping Ji, Adil Nazarali
- **Saniya Alwani, Pharmacy MSc**
2nd Place – Structural Chemistry, Biochemistry & Nano Structure
Amino acid functionalized nanodiamonds as potential gene delivery vectors
Saniya Alwani, Ildiko Badea
- **Hossein Rafiei, Nutrition PhD**
3rd Place – Cell Biology
Polyphenols improve mitochondrial biogenesis and function in oleic acid-induced hepatic steatosis in HepG2 cells
Hossein Rafiei, Brian Bandy



RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES (cont'd)

We'd also like to acknowledge the following students who presented posters:

- Mays Al-Dulaymi (Pharmacy PhD)
- Reem Alomari (Nutrition MSc)
- Dania Alrefai (Nutrition MSc)
- Sarah Fatani (Pharmacy MSc)
- Mona Hamada (Pharmacy PhD)
- Muath Helal (Pharmacy PhD)
- Zeinab Hosseini (Nutrition PhD)
- Kosar Omidian (Nutrition PhD)
- Shelby Reid (Pharmacy MSc)
- Waleed Mohammed Saeid (Pharmacy PhD)
- Noura Sheikhalzoor (Nutrition MSc)

The participation of 18 of our students allowed graduate research in the College to truly stand out this year—thank you to everyone who took part!

SPOTLIGHT ON RESEARCH

Our April Researcher of the Month is **Dr. El-Aneed's**. His research focuses on the use of different mass spectrometry platforms for the qualitative and quantitative analysis of small organic compounds, with recent emphasis on diagnostic urine metabolites for lung patients and novel anti-cancer drugs.

[Read more about his work on our website.](#)



Our February Researcher of the Month is **Dr. Carol Henry**. She is an internationally recognized scholar-practitioner in the areas of health promotion and food security.

[Read more about her work on our website.](#)



Our March Trainee Spotlight is Rahul Jain. His research project explores the experiences of Saskatchewan community pharmacists with prescriptive authority services regarding level 1 and minor ailment prescribing.

[Read more about his work on our website.](#)

