Dear alumni and colleagues,

It’s been over a year since my last newsletter arrived in your inbox. During that year, the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy – like all of you – has adapted to a new way of working and learning in an effort to keep us safe and healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the Department of Pharmaceutical Health Services Research, we pivoted our PhD and MS programs to a fully online format, reconfigured our Doctor of Pharmacy courses and instruction to virtual, created new ways to engage with our communities and West Baltimore neighbors, and undertook COVID-19 research projects.

I am proud of our faculty, staff, and students for being flexible, adaptable, and committed to their work and academics. I also recognize the tremendous hardships the past 16 months have placed on all of us in a myriad of ways and am proud of how we have supported each other through this difficult time.

The University of Maryland, Baltimore and the School of Pharmacy are fully reopening for in-person activities for the fall 2021 semester. Many of us transitioned back to our offices this summer. It’s wonderful to walk down our hallways and see students and colleagues back in action - collaborating, working, and learning together. I also hope to reconnect with many of you in the coming months as the world slowly and safely reopens.

All the best,

C. Daniel Mullins, PhD
Professor and Chair

Translating Data Into Action

More than 1,000 registrants logged in to “Data Science to Power Implementation with Social Determinants of Health” in
June, a virtual conference that attracted attendees from 13 countries, drawing from a wide spectrum of fields, including academia, patients and patient advocacy organizations, government, health systems, industry, and nonprofit. “This program is intended to bring data to action and to inform mostly those who use data in their day-to-day to help them make decisions about treatment, prevention, and policy. And this includes all of us,” said Fadia T. Shaya, PhD, MPH, professor in PHSR, executive director of the Behavioral Health Resources and Technical Assistance (BHRT) Program, and director of implementation and dissemination in informatics at the University of Maryland, Baltimore’s (UMB) Institute for Clinical and Translational Research (ICTR), as she welcomed attendees.

Abree Johnson Receives UMB Presidential Core Values Award for Knowledge

Abree Johnson, MS, MBA, director of the School of Pharmacy’s Pharmaceutical Research Computing center, was selected in April as a UMB Core Values Award winner in the category of Knowledge. UMB gives out Presidential Core Values Awards to students, faculty, and staff who embody the seven values at the heart of UMB’s mission: accountability, civility, collaboration, diversity, excellence, knowledge, and leadership. UMB’s core values guide its academic programs, operating philosophy, and commitment to its constituents while supporting the University’s mission to improve the human condition and serve the public good of Maryland and society at-large. PRC’s executive director, Eberechukwu Onukwugha, MS, PhD, said Johnson’s knowledge and ability to multitask have been great assets to the center, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Medeiros Named UMB Employee of the Month

Michelle Medeiros, MS, MA, CCRP, director of research for the PATIENTS Program in PHSR, on her selection as UMB’s January Employee of the Month. Michelle was nominated by PHSR professor and chair C. Daniel Mullins, PhD, in recognition of her principal investigator role on a new capacity building award from the Patient-Centered Research Outcomes Institute. In the project, which began Jan. 1, the PATIENTS Program is collaborating with a local neighborhood-building nonprofit, the Southwest Partnership, to use its resources to broaden the program’s footprint in West Baltimore.

Alumnus, Founding Pharmapreneur Receives Honorary Degree from UMB
The University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) has awarded School of Pharmacy alumnus Calvin Knowlton, BScPharm, MDiv, PhD '93, founder and chief executive officer (CEO) of Tabula Rasa HealthCare, Inc., an honorary Doctor of Sciences in recognition of his more than 30 years of leadership in the fields of pharmacy, business, and philanthropy. Knowlton has founded 10 companies, including Tabula Rasa HealthCare, Inc., and its subsidiary, CareKinesis, Inc. Tabula Rasa develops technology-enabled products and services for medication risk management and organizational performance optimization. CareKinesis provides medication therapy management to individuals with complex medication needs. Knowlton also founded excelleRX/Hospice Pharmacia in 1995, the first national pharmacy company devoted to hospice care. During his 12-year tenure as CEO, the company served 40 percent of all hospice patients in the United States. Read more here...

Study Examines Projected Health and Economic Burden of COPD in the U.S.

A study led by Zafar Zafari, MSc, PhD, assistant professor, offers projected estimates of the health and economic burden associated with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) in the U.S. over the next 20 years. Published in CHEST, the study titled “Projecting Long-Term Health and Economic Burden of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease in the United States,” provides critical data that policymakers can use to inform key decisions that may help mitigate these costs over time. Read more here...

The PATIENTS Program Kicks-Off New Fundraising Campaign with Virtual Event

The PATIENTS Program at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy hosted a virtual event in November to help kick-off a new fundraising campaign. Titled “The PATIENTS Bridge: Connecting the Community and Research to Improve Health,” the event brought together faculty, staff, and key stakeholders from The PATIENTS Program to hear from some of the program’s West Baltimore partners and learn more about how the program serves as a bridge between the community and researchers at University of Maryland, Baltimore. The PATIENTS Program is an interdisciplinary research team at the School of Pharmacy that has changed the way research is conducted by creating a path for health equity in West Baltimore. It strives to engage underrepresented populations in research to improve the well-being of people and communities. Read more here...

Assistant Professor Selected for National Leadership
Danya Qato, PharmD, MPH, PhD, assistant professor and graduate program director in PHSR, has been selected to participate in one of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s leadership programs. These programs connect changemakers from every profession, sector, and field across the United States to learn from and work with one another in creating more just and thriving communities. Qato was chosen to participate in the organization’s Culture of Health Leaders. Designed for leaders from all fields – from technology and business to architecture and urban planning – Culture of Health Leaders fosters cross-sector collaboration and supports individuals in their continued growth and development as agents of change for equity and health. Read more here...

Guide Helps Clinicians Optimize Medication Management During COVID-19 Pandemic

The Peter Lamy Center on Drug Therapy and Aging at the School of Pharmacy and the US Deprescribing Research Network have published a new guide aimed at improving medication management for residents in post-acute and long-term care settings, including rehabilitation facilities and nursing homes, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Titled “Optimizing Medication Management During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Implementation Guide for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care,” the guide is available both in print and online. Read more here...

KUDOS

Our department’s faculty and students are regularly recognized at the local and national level for their expertise. Here is a short list of recent accomplishments.

Susan dosReis, PhD, professor, was named one of the Maryland Daily Record’s Top 100 Women in 2020.

Joey Mattingly, PharmD, MBA, PhD, associate professor, was appointed by the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute to its Advisory Panel on Clinical Effectiveness and Decision Science.

Joey Mattingly, PharmD, MBA, PhD, associate professor, Julia Slejko, PhD, associate professor, and Eleanor Perfetto, PhD, professor, received second place in the 2020 PhRMA Foundation Value Assessment Challenge Award.

Jannat Saini, PharmD, graduate student, received a scholarship to attend the virtual American Public Health Association’s Policy Action Institute.

Julia Slejko, PhD, received the following honors:

- promotion from assistant professor to associate professor with tenure
- named president-elect of the School of Pharmacy’s Faculty Assembly
- appointed to the COPD Foundation’s COPD360 Therapeutics and Digital Health Development Network Steering Committee
- named Co-Chair-Elect of the

Read more here...
Ebere Onukwugha, PhD, associate professor and executive director of Pharmaceutical Research Computing, was elected to the Board of Directors of ISPOR - the Professional Society for Health Economics and Outcomes Research.

Sarah Tanveer, graduate student, received the 2021 Outstanding Graduate Student Representative Award from the UMB Graduate Student Association.

**GRANTS**

**Laura Bozzi**, graduate student, received a one-year $43,070 grant from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality for "The Association of Antiretroviral Treatment and Early Menopause in Women Aging with HIV."

**Ryan Costantino**, graduate student, received a one-year $2,500 grant from the Society of Pain and Palliative Care Pharmacists for “Evaluation of Strategies to Enhance Hospice Patient and Informal Caregiver Knowledge and Confidence of Commonly Used Medications.”

**Susan dosReis, PhD**, professor, received the following contracts:

- a five-year $3.7 million contract from GlaxoSmithKline for “A Targeted Safety Study, EPI-ZOSTER-032 VS, to Evaluate the Safety of Shingrix in Adults ≥ 65 Years of Age in the United States”
- a one-year $87,580 contract from the Innovation and Value Initiative Institute for “Defining and Prioritizing Patient Preferences in Major Depressive Disorder”
- a one-year $99,991 contract from the Maryland Department of Health for “Maryland State Foster Care Psychotropic Monitoring”
- a 16-month $109,647 contract from Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America for “Impact of COVID-19 on Patient Values in Healthcare”
- a one-year $99,998 contract from the Social Services Administration for “Maryland State Foster Care Psychotropic Monitoring”

**Eleanor Perfetto, PhD**, professor, received a six-month $181,364 contract from Merck, Sharp, and Dohme for “Is There a Relationship Between Health Literacy and Patient Preferences? A Pilot Study Among Breast Cancer Patients” and a three-month $43,249 contract from Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America for “Evidence Quality in Economic Evaluations.”

**Danya Qato, PhD**, assistant professor, received the following grants:

- a three-year KL2 award from UMB’s Institute for Clinical & Translational Research for “Toward a Multidisciplinary Program to Improve Healthcare Provision and Outcomes for Pregnant and Post-partum Women with Complex Polysubstance Use”
- a two-year $797,513 grant from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for “Data-informed Models to Identify Optimal Opioid Use Disorder Treatment Trajectories”
- a three-year $95,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation as a Culture of Health Leader

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**Fadia Shaya, PhD**, professor, received the following contracts:

- an eight-month $215,000 contract from the Maryland Department of Health for “Technical Assistance and Evaluation of the Strategic Prevention Framework - Partnership for Success (SPF-PFS) Initiative”
- a one-year $269,057 contract from the Maryland Department of Health for “Evaluation of the SABG Block Grant”
- a $267,057 contract from the Maryland Department of Health for “Technical Assistance/Evaluation for the Maryland Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant Prevention Program”

**Kayleigh Majercak**, graduate student, received a 19-month $50,000 fellowship from the National Health Council for “Overcoming Evidence-Based Gaps: A Patient Survey Template to Inform Patient-Centered Value Assessment.”
Joey Mattingly, PharmD, MBA, PhD, associate professor, received the following contracts:

- a six-month $27,223 contract from Children’s Research Institute for “The Treatment of Pediatric Diaphyseal Femur Fractures: A Clinical Trial Planning Grant”
- a one-year $99,246 contract from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute for “#IDatHome: A Virtual Conference for Infectious Diseases-Focused Patient-Centered Outcomes Research”
- a one-year $34,567 contract from Johns Hopkins University for “Resolve to Save Lives”

Michelle Medeiros, MS, MA, CCRP, director of research for the PATIENTS Program, received a two-year $250,000 contract from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute for “COmmunity Based Development of CollaboRatIVE and Sustainable PartNerships in PCOR/CER-(CO-DRIVEN).”

C. Daniel Mullins, PhD, professor, chair, and executive director of the PATIENTS Program, received the following grants and contracts:

- a one-year $300,000 grant from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for “Communicating about COVID-19 Testing to Underrepresented Populations”
- a one-year $393,492 grant supplement from the National Institutes of Health for “Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias Supplement to ‘Building Trust to Enhance Diversity in Aging Research”
- a five-month $33,917 contract from the Institute for Clinical Research for “Telehealth Utilization Project”


- a one-year $180,000 contract from the Maryland Department of Health for “Strategic Targeting of Prescription Drug Misuse in Maryland Communities”
- an 18-month $487,669 contract from the Maryland Department of Health for “Maryland Overdose Data to Action Evaluation Services--Data Collection/Progress Monitoring and Data Dissemination/Outreach”
- a one-year $25,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health for “Data Science to Power Implementation with Social Determinants of Health - From Data to Action”

Ester Villalonga-Olives, PhD, assistant professor, received a one-year $25,000 grant from the University of Maryland, Baltimore’s Institute for Clinical and Translational Research for “Social Capital and Psychological Burden during the COVID-19 Outbreak: Why are Hispanics One of the Most Vulnerable Groups?” and a two-year $337,344 contract from Merck for “The Cultural Adaptation of Tools to Evaluate Health Literacy and Cancer Knowledge in Foreign-born and Native-born Hispanics.”

Linda Wastila, PhD, the Parke-Davis Chair of Geriatric Pharmacotherapy, received the following grants and contracts:

- an eight-month $150,000 contract from the Maryland Department of Health for “State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup”
- a two-year $218,840 contract from Novartis Pharmaceutical Corporation for “Novartis Outcomes Research Fellowship”
- a two-year $242,202 fellowship from Novartis for “Novartis Outcomes Research Fellowship Task Order No. 3”

Zafar Zafari, PhD, assistant professor, received an 18-month $230,801 grant from the Food and Drug Administration for “Evaluating the Utility of Negative Control Adjustments and Methods of Addressing Unmeasured Confounding in Using Real-world Data” and an 18-month $100,000 grant from the Maryland Department of Transportation for “Air Traffic Noise Study in the vicinity of Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport.”


Age-Friendly Universities and Age-Friendly Health Systems: New Partnerships to Support Healthy Aging By John G. Schumacher, PhD, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, and Nicole J. Brandt, PharmD, MBA, University of Maryland, Baltimore published at: Advancing Age Inclusivity online. Aims. doi: 10.1007/s40273-020-00933-3.


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Olopoenia, Abisola; Onukwugha, Eberechukwu; Simoni-Wastila, Linda; Camelo-Castillo, Wendy; Villalonga-Olives, Ester; Gandhi, Aakash Bipin; Slejko, Julia. Patterns of Prescription Opioid Utilization Among Adolescents and Adults with Co-morbid Chronic Pain and Mental Health Diagnosis, *PAIN*: May 22, 2020


Hong YD, Onukwugha E, Slejko JF. The Economic Burden of Comorbid Obstructive Sleep Apnea Among Patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. Accepted by the *Journal of Managed Care & Specialty Pharmacy*; June 2020.