



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND  
SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

# From the Chair's Desk

News from Paul Shapiro, PhD  
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Dear alumni and colleagues,

I hope this edition of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences (PSC) newsletter finds you doing well and enjoying your summer. PSC faculty continue to be recognized for their research expertise through grants and contracts. As a recent example, several faculty-led projects were awarded more than \$2 million in funding from the National Institute for Pharmaceutical Technology and Education.



We were very happy to have our first ever Masters of Science in Regulatory Science Program Convocation Ceremony on May 19. More than 40 graduates from around the world were in attendance with their families. The ceremony featured keynote speaker Carol Linden, PhD, director of the Office of Regulatory Science and Innovation at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Wishing you all the best,

[Paul Shapiro, PhD](#)  
Professor and Chair  
Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences

## UMSOP Named One of *U.S. News & World Report's* Top Schools of Pharmacy



In rankings released for its 2017 Best Graduate Schools, *U.S. News & World Report* positions the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy ninth among the nation's more than 130 schools of pharmacy. Released in March, this ranking marks an improvement for the School of

Pharmacy, which was previously ranked 17th among schools of pharmacy in the United States. *U.S. News & World Report* has published education rankings to help students and their families find the best school to meet their unique needs since 1983. Last updated in 2012, rankings for pharmacy schools are based exclusively on ratings from academic experts at colleges and schools of pharmacy across the United States. Deans, program directors, department chairs, and faculty members from more than 130 colleges and schools of pharmacy were surveyed for the most recent results. [Read more...](#)

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## Symposium Showcases Latest Advances in Computer-Aided Drug Design

The School of Pharmacy welcomed researchers from academia, government, and industry to its Computer-Aided Drug Design (CADD) Symposium on May 25. Held at the BioPark Life Sciences Conference Center, the symposium presented recent developments in the fields of computer-aided drug design and discovery, and offered opportunities for researchers across the University System of Maryland and beyond to network and discuss potential collaborations. The symposium was hosted by [Alexander MacKerell, PhD](#), the Grollman-Glick Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences and director of the School's [CADD Center](#). [Read more here...](#)

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## MS in Regulatory Science Program Celebrates Inaugural Convocation

To help address the national need for scientists trained in the field of regulatory science, the School of Pharmacy launched the [MS in Regulatory Science](#) program at the School of Pharmacy in 2013. A part-time, online program, the MS in Regulatory Science is designed to provide working professionals with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to drug and biologics regulation and pharmaceutical product lifestyles. By January 2014, the program had enrolled its first students. Now, two years later, it was an honor to watch those students receive their hoods during the program's inaugural convocation ceremony held at the School on May 19. [Read more here...](#)

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## Grollman Lecture Spotlights New Developments in Nanomedicine

The School of Pharmacy welcomed Justin Hanes, PhD, the Lewis J. Ort Professor of Ophthalmology and director of the Center for Nanomedicine at the Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, and Francis C. Szoka, PhD, professor of bioengineering, therapeutic sciences, and pharmaceutical chemistry at the University of California, San Francisco, to Pharmacy Hall in April to deliver the annual Ellis S. Grollman Lecture in the Pharmaceutical Sciences. [Read more here...](#)

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## Students Awarded Prestigious MedImmune Fellowships

Abdulafeez Oluyadi and Andong Nkobena, Doctor of Pharmacy graduates from the Class of 2016, have been awarded fellowships at MedImmune - the global biologics research and development arm of AstraZeneca based in Gaithersburg, Md. The exclusive fellowships will provide Dr. Oluyadi and Dr. Nkobena with the hands-on experience and

leadership skills necessary to pursue careers in clinical drug development. Dr. Oluyadi and Dr. Nkobena first made their interest in research known in their second year at the School when they applied and were accepted into the School's research pathway for student pharmacists. The research pathway allowed them to complete a number of research-intensive elective courses and conduct research in the laboratory of [Sarah Michel, PhD](#), professor in PSC. [Read more here...](#)

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## PSC Students Bring Pharmaceutical Sciences to Life for Virginia Schoolchildren

In March, the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (AAPS) student chapter at the School of Pharmacy participated in the Career Choice S.T.E.M. Bonanza held at DeVry University in Arlington, Va. Participating in youth outreach events is an integral part of the chapter's mission to introduce children of all ages to careers in pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences. [Read more here...](#)

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## Undergraduate Students "Spring Into Science" at the School of Pharmacy

In March, [Sarah Michel, PhD](#), professor in PSC, hosted her annual "Spring into Maryland Science" (SIMSI) event, which brings chemistry and biology majors from the Undergraduate Women's College at Notre Dame of Maryland University to the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the School of Pharmacy for a first-hand look at graduate-level science research. This year marked the ninth year that she has hosted this program - which began as part of a National Science Foundation CAREER Award that she received in 2007 - to provide undergraduate students with an opportunity to "taste" graduate research, as well as introduce them to career opportunities, teach them skills to strengthen their academic performance, and provide mentors and roles models in the program's current graduate students. [Read more here...](#)

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## 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.

- **Imran Ansari, PhD**, postdoctoral fellow, received a travel award to attend the Behavior, Biology, and Chemistry: Translational Research in Addiction conference in March in San Antonio, Texas.
- [Andrew Coop, PhD](#), professor and associate dean for academic affairs, has been named chair-elect of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy's Chemistry Section.
- **Tanvi Deshpande**, graduate student, won first place in the ExcipientFest Americas' Poster Contest at its annual meeting in Baltimore in April.
- **Brandon Drennen**, graduate student, received travel awards to

attend the American Chemical Society's National Meeting in March in San Diego.

- **Bowen Jiang**, graduate student, won second place in the ExcipientFest America's Poster Contest at its annual meeting in Baltimore in April.
- **William Hedrich**, graduate student, received the Outstanding Presentation Award at UMB's Graduate Research Conference.

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## Grants and Fellowships

- **Brandon Drennen**, graduate student, has received a one-year \$10,000 fellowship from the American Foundation for Pharmaceutical Education for "Towards a New Therapeutic Modality for the Treatment of Alzheimers: Interception of Transient Helical States of beta-Amyloid with Small-Molecule Proteomimetics."
- **Steven Fletcher, PhD**, associate professor, received an eleven-month \$52,240 contract from Washington University for "Pre-clinical and Clinical Imaging and Treatment of Multiple Myeloma with cMyc-Max Nanoparticles."
- **Stephen Hoag, PhD**, professor, received a two-year \$598,935 subcontract from the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Technology and Education for "Patient Acceptance of Drugs."
- **Alex MacKerell, Jr., PhD**, the Grollman/Glick Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences, received a three-year \$727,678 contract from the Joan & Sanford I. Weill Medical College of Cornell University for "Design and Synthesis of Inhibitors of the BTB Domain of BCL6."
- **James Polli, PhD**, the Shangraw/Noxell Endowed Chair in Industrial Pharmacy and Pharmaceutics, has received a one-year \$173,467 grant from the National Institute for Pharmaceutical Technology and Education for "Exploring Performance Variability in Dissolution Testing Using Biorelevant Media and the Impact of Potential Key Factors on Biorelevant Dissolution Testing Results."
- **Paul Shapiro, PhD**, professor and chair, has received a one-year \$45,645 contract from Biomed Valley Discoveries for "BVD-523 Interactions and Regulation of ERK2 Containing E322 Mutations."
- **Yan Shu, PhD**, associate professor, received a one-year \$12,219 grant from Optivia Biotechnology for "Effect of OCT inhibition on Platinum Nephrotoxicity."
- **Audra Stinchcomb, PhD**, professor, received a one-year \$528,811 grant from the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Technology and Education for "Effects of Chemical Penetration Enhancers in Drug-in Adhesive Transdermal Drug Delivery Systems on In-Vitro Skin Permeation Studies."