



From the Chair's Desk

News from Paul Shapiro, PhD
Chair, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences

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Winter 2020

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Dear alumni and colleagues,

In the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, our mission is to advance basic, translational, and clinical research across the spectrum of drug discovery and development. While much of that work takes place within our labs and classrooms, we also seek to further our mission through the creation of collaborations with the many experts at the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) through its newly established [Drug Discovery and Development Core](#) at the [Institute for Clinical & Translational Research](#), at other higher education institutions in the state, and around the country and the world.

Recently, we put this focus into action by hosting two events that brought experts to the School of Pharmacy for education, collaboration, and information sharing. The Metals in Medicine Symposium, hosted by our Metallotherapeutics Research Center had attendance from 100 researchers, students, and postdocs from across the Mid-Atlantic. The UMB-Johns Hopkins University Joint Symposium on Drug Discovery saw 200 researchers in Pharmacy Hall for a day of scientific exchange.

As department chair, I am proud of the work our faculty do to build bridges with colleagues at other institutions and the value they place in collaborating as we all seek to understand disease mechanisms and develop new treatments.

Sincerely,

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

School of Pharmacy Mourns Passing of Retired Professor

Ralph Blomster, PhD, professor emeritus of pharmaceutical sciences, passed away on Jan. 27. After receiving his doctorate in pharmacognosy - the study of plants and other natural resources as a potential source for medicinal drugs - Dr. Blomster joined the faculty of the School's former Department of Pharmacognosy, serving as professor and chair of the department from 1968 to 1979. He continued to serve as chair of the renamed Department of Medicinal Chemistry/Pharmacognosy until 1989. During his tenure, Dr. Blomster diligently worked to increase the number of faculty members in the department, which grew from 15 in 1968 to 50 in 1996, as well as enhance research, graduate education, and funding within the department. [Read more here...](#)



SOP Hosts First Mid-Atlantic Metals in Medicine Symposium



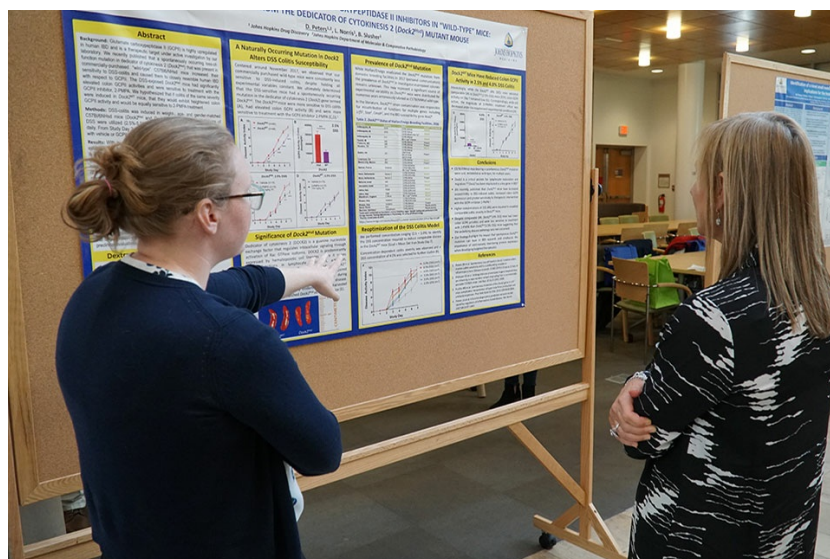
Nearly 100 researchers, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows from across the Mid-Atlantic region gathered in Pharmacy Hall on Nov. 15 for the inaugural Frontiers in Metals and Medicine symposium. Hosted by the [Metallotherapeutics Research Center](#) at the School of Pharmacy, the symposium aimed to bring together current and aspiring researchers with an interest in metal systems to help stimulate interaction and collaboration in the field. [Read more here...](#)

Grad Gathering Offers Students Opportunity to Network, Learn from Alumni



Nearly 200 alumni, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty came together for the third biennial Pharmaceutical Sciences and Regulatory Science Grad Gathering held at the School of Pharmacy in September. Hosted by the [PhD in Pharmaceutical Sciences \(PSC\)](#), [MS in PSC](#), and [MS in Regulatory Science](#) programs, the day-long event featured a wide range of activities designed to foster networking and professional development among all attendees. [Read more here...](#)

Symposium Brings Together Drug Discovery Experts from School of Pharmacy, Johns Hopkins



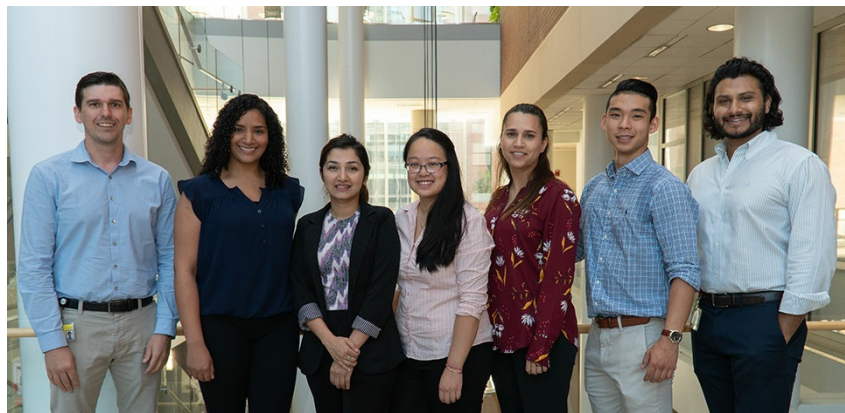
The School of Pharmacy welcomed nearly 200 researchers from across the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) and Johns Hopkins University (JHU) to the second UMB-JHU Joint Symposium on Drug Discovery on Dec. 3. Organized by [Paul Shapiro, PhD](#), professor and chair of the [Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences \(PSC\)](#), at the School of Pharmacy, and Barbara Slusher, MAS, PhD, professor of neurology at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and director of Johns Hopkins Drug Discovery, the symposium provided an open forum for scientific exchange and interactive communication among students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty from two of Baltimore's preeminent academic institutions. [Read more here...](#)

M-CERSI Conference Examines Recent Advances in Topical Drug Development



The School of Pharmacy welcomed researchers from across academia, government, and industry to Pharmacy Hall in July for "Topical Drug Development - Evolution of Science and Regulatory Policy." Sponsored by the [University of Maryland Center of Excellence in Regulatory Science and Innovation \(M-CERSI\)](#), the two-day event was attended in-person and online via a livestream webinar by more than 600 participants, and featured a series of presentations and panel discussions that explored the underpinnings of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Maximal Usage Trial (MUsT) program, the successful incorporation of MUsT in drug development, and the use of in vitro methods in product development. [Read more here...](#)

AAPS Student Chapter Achieves National Recognition for a Second Time



Every year, the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (AAPS) selects student chapters to receive its Student Chapter of the Year Award based on the service and outreach they provided to their local communities. The [AAPS student chapter](#) at the School of Pharmacy won this award in 2016, and - much to our excitement - earned it again this year. There are more than 100 AAPS student chapters worldwide, and we are among only a few to win this award more than once. [Read more here...](#)

M-CERSI Workshop Explores Advances, Challenges in Pediatric Drug Development



The School of Pharmacy welcomed more than 100 researchers from across academia, government, and industry to Pharmacy Hall this past summer for "Pediatric Formulation Development: Challenges of Today and Strategies for Tomorrow." Sponsored by the [University of Maryland Center of Excellence in Regulatory Science and Innovation \(M-CERSI\)](#), and in collaboration with IQ Consortium, this two-day workshop explored the formulation, analytical, and clinical elements of pediatric drug development, and featured perspectives from both regulatory agencies and industry. [Read more here...](#)

MS in Regulatory Science Program Celebrates Class of 2019



Faculty and staff in the [Master of Science and Graduate Certificate in Regulatory Science](#) programs at the School of Pharmacy were delighted to celebrate the recent graduation of the 29 working professionals enrolled in the programs' Class of 2019. Graduates included 26 individuals who received the MS in Regulatory Science, and three who completed the post-baccalaureate certificate in regulatory science. The programs are offered exclusively online, but many graduates traveled to Pharmacy Hall from near and far to attend the in-person convocation celebration on May 16, including the program's first graduate from China. [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.

- [Andrew Coop, PhD](#), professor and associate dean of academic affairs, has been appointed to two American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy committees: the Council of Sections Strategic Planning Committee and the Volwiller Research Achievement Award Committee. He was also named the 2019 Maryland Chemist of the Year by the Maryland Section of the American Chemical Society.
- **Sharmila Das**, a PhD student, received the 2019 Graduate Student Award from the American Association of Indian Pharmaceutical Sciences.
- **Amy Defnet**, a PhD student, received a Best Poster Award at the International Union of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Focused Meeting in September in Warsaw, Poland.
- [Daniel Deredge, PhD](#), research assistant professor, won the Best Poster Award at the 2nd International Conference on Hydrogen Deuterium Exchange Mass Spectrometry in Banff, Canada in May.
- [Sarah Michel, PhD](#), professor, has been named the School of Pharmacy's associate dean for graduate programs.
- **Kristina San Juan**, associate director of student services, has been accepted into the University of Maryland, Baltimore's Emerging Leaders Program.
- [Jana Shen, PhD](#), has been promoted from associate professor of pharmaceutical sciences with tenure to professor with tenure.
- [Angela Wilks, PhD](#), the Isaac E. Emerson Chair in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, has been named chair of the National Institutes of Health's Prokaryotic Cell and Molecular Biology Study Section for a two-year term.

Grants and Fellowships

- [Steven Fletcher, PhD](#), associate professor, received a \$68,253 one-year contract from Maryland Industrial Partnerships for "Enhancers of Reverse Cholesterol Transport."
- [Stephen Hoag, PhD](#), professor and director of the [Applied Pharmaceutics Lab](#) received a two-year \$227,001 contract from the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Technology and Education for "Assessment of Smoking and Vaping Risk of Opioids and Commercial Products and Standardization of Methods to Assess these Properties."
- [Maureen Kane, PhD](#), associate professor and director of the [Mass Spectrometry Center](#), received a one-year \$60,000 contract from Johns Hopkins University for "Retinoic Acid Synthesis Induced by Noncoding dsRNA Controls Regeneration" and a \$180,083 Food and Drug Administration-funded University of Maryland Center of Excellence in Regulatory Science and Innovation grant for "Development of Diagnostic Biomarkers for Determination of Traumatic Brain Injury."
- [Sarah Michel, PhD](#), professor and associate dean for graduate programs, received a one-year \$82,281 grant from the Food and Drug Administration-funded Maryland Center of Excellence in Regulatory Science for "Trace Metals and their Impact on Protein Quality, Safety, and Efficacy."
- **Jordan Pritts, a PhD student**, received a \$10,000 one-year contract from the American Foundation for Pharmaceutical Education for "Characterizing the CPSF30/NS1A Interaction: A Novel Influenza Drug Target."
- **C.S. Raman, PhD**, associate professor, received a \$600,000 three-year grant from the U.S. Department of Energy for "Redox Biochemistry of Energy Conservation in Methanogens and Their

Syntrophic Partners."

- **Stephanie Shiffka**, a PhD student, received a \$10,000 one-year grant from the American Foundation for Pharmaceutical Education for "Investigating the Co-evolution of SLC10A2 and Bile Salts."
- **Angela Wilks, PhD**, the Isaac E. Emerson Professor in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, received a five-year \$945,637 contract from the National Institutes of Health for "Iron-based Vaccine Development Against Bacterial Pathogens."
- **Bruce Yu, PhD**, professor and director of the **Bio- and Nano-technology Center**, received a three-year \$669,950 contract from the US Food and Drug Administration for "Nondestructive Analytics for Vaccines and Complex Drugs."