

# Maryland Mentor

A Newsletter for the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy's Academy of Preceptors

Spring 2025

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**Produced by:**



## From the Assistant Dean for Experiential Learning

Dear Preceptors,

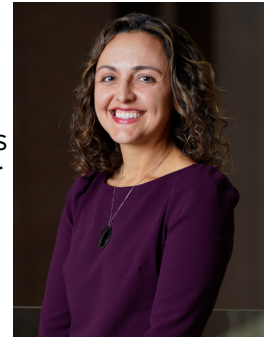
I am pleased to share the Spring 2025 issue of the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy's *Maryland Mentor* newsletter. The Office of Experiential Learning has several important updates and resources to enhance your experience and support your role as preceptors.

First, we have posted a new **ELP Policies and Procedures Manual on the Experiential Learning Program (ELP)** website, which will serve as a shared

resource for both students and preceptors. This manual includes comprehensive information on our experiential curriculum, now covering both the current legacy curriculum and the upcoming M-Pact curriculum set to launch in Fall 2026. We have streamlined the manual by combining smaller sections from the previous version into larger, more accessible segments, such as the Rotation Scheduling Policy which includes information on ELP timelines, initial rotation scheduling processes, and how changes are managed. Overall, our goal is to ensure a thorough review of policies on a recurring basis, involving not only the ELP office but also the School's Experiential Learning Committee (ELC). This collaborative approach allows us to gather valuable input from faculty, preceptors, and students. This past year, ELC efforts focused on reviewing and updating the ELP Attendance Policy and the preceptor promotion process. The Attendance Policy has been finalized and the chair of the ELC, Dr. Mandeel Booth, has summarized the changes in this newsletter. Please also be sure to review the full policy in the updated manual before you begin taking students on rotations and contact our office with any questions. The preceptor promotion process has also been reviewed and revised by the ELC. It is under review through the UMSOP faculty governance process. Once approved, we will add it to the ELP Policies and Procedures Manual and provide additional guidance for interested preceptors.

Additionally, you will find an increasing number of Tips and Tricks guidance documents for preceptors. These practical resources, previously part of the manual, will now be housed separately in CORE ELMS and routinely updated as operational processes evolve. We have begun to utilize step-by-step instructions and screenshots to make your navigation of ELP requirements as seamless as possible. We have also begun to review preceptor educational modules currently posted on our ELP website. We will update this resource with newly recorded modules, such as a recording of the continuing education presentation from the 21st Annual Academy of Preceptors in April. If you have suggestions for future educational areas to cover in these modules, please let us know.

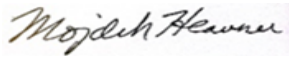
In this newsletter, we also cover several important topics such as highlights from the Academy of Preceptors event, expansion of clinical services in



community pharmacies, a new digital badge for age-friendly pharmacists, highlights from UMB's Interprofessional Education Day, and reflections on global rotation experiences.

Thank you for your continued dedication and support.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Mojdeh Heavner", written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Mojdeh Heavner, PharmD, BCCCP, FCCM, FCCP  
Assistant Dean for Experiential Learning  
Associate Professor of Practice, Sciences, and Health Outcomes Research  
[mheavner@rx.umaryland.edu](mailto:mheavner@rx.umaryland.edu)

## What the ELP Office Needs from Preceptors

Please help us be 100 percent compliant with preceptor requirements by doing the following:

- Submitting all required midterm and final evaluations by their due dates
- Entering your site requirements in CORE ELMS by clicking "My Requirements"
- Reading all emails that come from the School via CORE ELMS
- Completing two hours of preceptor development each year
- Providing a brief description in your preceptor profile in CORE ELMS by clicking "Profile Information," then "Description"

## Library Access

One of the many benefits of being a School of Pharmacy preceptor is having offsite access to eFacts and Comparisons Online and Micromedex only through the University's Health Sciences and Human Services Library (HS/HSL). Access is limited to School of Pharmacy preceptors who are scheduled to take a student for at least one block in the current academic year. Please note you will only get access during the blocks/rotations that you have students scheduled. If you would like to take advantage of this benefit, please contact LaTia Few at [Lfew@rx.umaryland.edu](mailto:Lfew@rx.umaryland.edu) for more details.

## We welcome the following newly appointed preceptors:

- |                      |                      |                         |
|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| • Andrew Chayasiwong | • Inna Shyshynova    | • Megan Cook            |
| • Camille Hines      | • JC Emmanuel Mbimba | • Michelle Azar         |
| • Connor Floyd       | • Joanna Shaju       | • Nakiya Whitfield      |
| • Christina Escobar  | • Joshua Bittner     | • Nick Caprio           |
| • Eric Afriyie       | • Julio Cho          | • Rachel Sit            |
| • Esperanza Ortiz    | • Katherine Owens    | • Sarah Atsebha         |
| • Frank Tillman      | • Katherine Rogers   | • Susan Shern           |
| • Gionna Knauss      | • Laura Sondo Pefok  | • Sydney Hajimirsadeghi |
| • Hailey Burns       | • Lauren Cheyne      | • Thara Kottoor         |
|                      |                      | • Thomas Adriaens       |

## Focus on ELP Policy Revised ELP Attendance Policy

In *Outliers: The Story of Success*, author Malcolm Gladwell explains that to be a phenom in your field, it takes 10,000 hours of practice. We do not require 10,000 experiential hours for students to graduate. However, everyone would agree that quality rotation time practicing as a student pharmacist is pivotal to becoming an excellent pharmacist. Yet, things come up and students must occasionally have absences during rotations. This past winter, the Experiential Learning Committee reviewed and updated the ELP Attendance Policy to support both preceptors and pharmacy students. This policy aligns with the ACPE Standards 2025 and aims to ensure that students fulfill their required rotation hours while accommodating any extenuating circumstances that may arise. Key highlights of the policy are included below, with a focus on standardizing absence requests to align with the UMSOP **Policy for Excused Absences for Classes, Assessments, and Exams**. The full ELP Attendance Policy can be found in the **2025 ELP Manual**.

### *Excused Absence Requests and Approvals*

Students will now submit excused absence requests through CORE ELMS, which will go to the preceptor for approval. Detailed guidance on how to process these requests can be found in the CORE ELMS Document Library. Supporting documentation, such as a physician's note, is only required if requested by the preceptor. Professional development activities (e.g., presentation at a pharmacy conference) may be considered to fulfill rotation hours if deemed appropriate by the preceptor. For absences of three or more continuous days, the assistant dean for experiential learning will also review the request and intervene if needed. Additionally, since excused absences during rotations will be documented in this transparent manner, the ELP office will be able to monitor the frequency of excused absence requests and address patterns of excessive absences across rotations.

### *Missed Rotation Hours*

Collaboration between students and preceptors to develop a plan for making up missed rotation hours is encouraged. Additional activities outside regular rotation hours (e.g., development of a newsletter or special project) may be assigned or the rotation end date may be extended if appropriate. Students are not permitted to take time off from future rotations to complete missed hours from a prior rotation but may be able to return at a time when rotations are not scheduled (e.g., off-block or winter break).

### *Unexcused Absences*

Failure to notify the preceptor within the specified timeline or leaving the rotation without notice can be deemed an unexcused absence. One or more unexcused absences may be considered unprofessional behavior, potentially leading to rotation failure. Preceptors must notify the assistant dean for experiential learning immediately of any unexcused absences.

We hope this policy provides clear guidance and support for managing attendance during rotations. Thank you for your continued dedication to our students' professional development. Please reach out to the ELP office if you have any questions or concerns.

Mandee Booth, PharmD, BCIDP  
Assistant Professor  
Chair, Experiential Learning Committee

Mojdeh Heavner, PharmD, BCCCP, FCCM, FCCP  
Associate Professor  
Assistant Dean, Experiential Learning Program

## **School News**

### **Celebrating Excellence in Experiential Education: Highlights from the 21st Annual Academy of Preceptors**

**By: Tuan Huynh, PharmD, AAHIVP, HIVPCP**

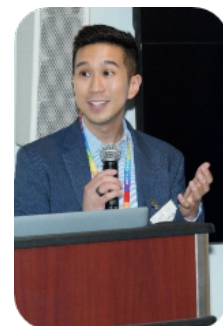
On April 3, the Experiential Learning Program (ELP) at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy proudly hosted its 21st Annual Academy of Preceptors event—an evening dedicated to celebrating the incredible impact of our preceptors, fostering community, and supporting the continuous advancement of experiential learning.



Established in 2004, the Academy has been a cornerstone of our School's commitment to enhance preceptor development, recognize outstanding mentorship, and support excellence in pharmacy education. This year's event brought together faculty, staff, preceptors, and students for a program filled with recognition, reflection, and exciting updates from ELP.

The evening kicked off with networking, dinner, and welcoming remarks by Mojdeh Heavner, PharmD, assistant dean for experiential learning. She highlighted the invaluable role preceptors play, noting that "more than a third of our PharmD curriculum is delivered through experiential learning," underscoring the impact preceptors have in supporting students' clinical readiness and confidence. "What we teach in the classroom and in our labs, you bring to life in

real-world settings, ensuring our students gain the clinical foundation they need to become exceptional practitioners,” she shared. I was thrilled to lead the awards ceremony and commended both students and preceptors for their outstanding work on rotations and contributions to enhancing real-world learning experiences. New this year to the Academy were the Student Spotlight Awards, an initiative designed to recognize students for their professionalism and commitment to excellence in pharmacy practice. From a pool of 12 nominations, the following students were selected for awards:



### **Gabriel Henderson (Class of 2025)**

Nominated by Paul Solinsky, PharmD, who noted Gabriel’s passion for patient care, particularly in ensuring medication access and adherence. “Over five weeks, he learned the intricacies of various niche and complicated disease states and emerged from the rotation excelling in understanding all its complexities.”

### **Nakayalla Langley (Class of 2025)**

Described by Kristin Watson, PharmD, as someone who “immediately fit into the culture at the VA Medical Center, Nakayalla showed a great deal of empathy when working with our veterans.” In terms of patient care, she built “rapport and trust” and “took the time to understand the factors impacting therapy selection and how best to educate each individual.”

### **Edgardo Gonzalez Munoz (Class of 2025)**

“Edgardo is every preceptor’s ideal student—enthusiastic and compassionate,” shared Kimberly Couch, PharmD. He took the initiative on a special project to revise a COPD patient care booklet for the multidisciplinary team and represented pharmacy at a community health expo, where he effectively engaged the community on health issues such as diabetes, smoking cessation, thyroid disorders, and more.

### **Ali Khan (Class of 2026)**

Nominated by Fausat Sulaiman, PharmD, who noted Ali’s ability to “quickly become an integral part of our team and who received excellent feedback from other pharmacists who mentored him.” Described as a “fast learner,” he was able to master the EMR system and help guide other students on rotation. His resilience, adaptability, and initiative reflect his readiness for any career path in pharmacy.



**Gabriel Henderson**



**Nakayalla Langley**



**Edgardo Gonzalez Munoz**



**Ali Khan**

In addition, the Preceptor of the Year award recipients were announced, honoring those who demonstrated an exceptional commitment to supporting student learning and professional



development. From 21 nominations, the following preceptors were selected for their contributions to pharmacy education:

### **New Preceptor of the Year: Kenneth Saunders, PharmD, BCTXP, University of Maryland Medical Center**

His students remarked on Dr. Saunders' "deep knowledge of kidney transplant" and his ability to "simplify complex topics" into digestible information that are applicable to real-world situations. His "passion for patient care" and dedication to student growth created a nurturing and supportive learning environment.

### **IPPE Preceptor of the Year: Gladimir Elysee, PharmD, Kaiser Permanente**

"A tailored...rotation experience aligning with professional interests," shared by his learner, "offering valuable insights and connection with resources and individuals to help achieve long-term goals." By involving students in various discussions and activities, Dr. Elysee fostered a welcoming, student-centered culture that encouraged exploration, collaboration, and success.

### **APPE Preceptor of the Year: Eun Jin Park, PharmD, BCPS, BCIDP, Johns Hopkins Howard County Medical Center**

Dr. Park was described as having a contagious "enthusiasm for working with students, creating an engaging and educational experience" tailored to the specific needs of her students. She "consistently provided constructive feedback and encouragement" to help her students build confidence and clinical competence throughout their rotations. Her dedication, mentorship, and influence extended well beyond the rotation itself.

### **Faculty Preceptor of the Year: Nicole Brandt, PharmD, MBA, BCGP, FASCP, University of Maryland School of Pharmacy**

Recognized by one of her students for her adaptability, Dr. Brandt personalized rotations based on individual's "learning style" and provided "constructive feedback to support professional growth." Her impact as a preceptor helped students bridge the gap between classroom knowledge and practical clinical application, deepening the appreciation for geriatric care while boosting the confidence of her learners.



**Kenneth Saunders,  
PharmD, BCTXP**



**Gladimir Elysee, PharmD**



**Eun Jin Park, PharmD,  
BCPS, BCIDP**



**Nicole J. Brandt, PharmD,  
MBA, BCGP, FASCP**

The evening also included a continuing education session titled Prescription for Excellence: ACPE Standards 2025, presented by Drs. Kristine Parbuoni and Mojdeh Heavner. Their presentation explored



the evolving accreditation standards and provided guidance on how preceptors can best prepare to align their practice settings with these upcoming changes. Additionally, special acknowledgments were given to former leaders of the Experiential Learning Program in the audience—Mr. Mark Brueckl, Dr. Agnes Ann Feemster, Dr. Cherokee Layson-Wolf, and Dr. Cynthia Boyle—whose vision, dedication, and contribution laid the foundation for the program's continued success.





## Preceptor News

### Expanding Clinical Services in Community Pharmacies: Enhancing Patient Care and Driving Business Growth

By Vicki Bulkin, PharmD

Tiffany Taliaferro-Roberts, PharmD, AAHIVP, HIVPCP

Paula Smith, PharmD

Tuan Huynh, PharmD, AAHIVP, HIVPCP

In today's evolving health care landscape, community pharmacies have become essential hubs of clinical services, extending far beyond their traditional dispensing roles. This shift not only improves patient access to essential health services but also advances the pharmacy profession by broadening the scope of pharmacy practice.<sup>1</sup> Patients visit their community pharmacists approximately 1.5 to 2 times as often as they visit their physician or other qualified health care professionals.<sup>2</sup> According to the CDC, nearly 90 percent of Americans live within five miles of a community pharmacy.<sup>2</sup> Among the most accessible health care professionals, pharmacists are uniquely positioned to deliver diverse clinical services that address both preventive health and acute care needs.



### The Expanding Scope of Community Pharmacy Practice

Modern community pharmacies are increasingly embracing expanded clinical responsibilities, broadening the scope of pharmacists' practice. Services such as travel health consultations, medication therapy management (MTM), point-of-care testing (e.g., A1c, glucose, cholesterol, etc.), and immunizations have become routine offerings. For instance, between 2009 and 2010, the Connecticut Medicaid Program conducted a pilot initiative aimed at enhancing care for Medicaid beneficiaries with multiple chronic conditions, which included a pharmacist-led Medication Therapy Management (MTM) component. This program resulted in an estimated annual savings of \$1,595 per beneficiary in total health care costs.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, pharmacists in many states are now authorized to administer long-acting injectable medications, such as Vivitrol, Sublocade, Brixadi, Aristada, Invega, and many more, significantly improving treatment adherence and patient convenience.

Recent legislative changes continue to broaden prescriptive authority for pharmacists. In several states, pharmacists can prescribe HIV pre- and post-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP and PEP), initiate tobacco cessation therapies, and provide hormonal contraceptives. Expansions in pharmacist prescription authority have been proven to significantly impact patient access to care. In 2019, pharmacist-prescribed contraception in Oregon was estimated to prevent 51 unintended pregnancies and saved \$1.6 million dollars at only 24 months post-implementation.<sup>4</sup> These expanded roles allow pharmacists to address critical public health needs, underscoring their vital role as frontline health care providers.

### Driving Financial Sustainability and Business Growth

Beyond their public health impact, clinical services contribute to a sustainable business model for community pharmacies. By leveraging MTM platforms, pharmacies can receive reimbursement for delivering consultation services and Comprehensive Medication Reviews. These clinical services enhance medication adherence, optimize therapies, and improve clinical outcomes, while also



positively influencing performance quality metrics tied to Medicare five-star ratings—factors that directly impact patient retention and financial return.

As highly trusted and accessible health care providers, pharmacists are uniquely positioned to diversify income streams by expanding clinical offerings. This strategic expansion enhances business sustainability and financial resilience, positioning community pharmacies for long-term success.

## Impact on Pharmacy Education and Student Development

Community pharmacy rotations that offer a wide range of clinical services provide student pharmacists with valuable experiential learning opportunities. Exposure to activities such as point-of-care testing, patient counseling, immunizations, prescriptive authority, and medication therapy management deepens student understanding of the breadth of their profession. These hands-on experiences foster innovation, build confidence, and inspire future pharmacists by immersing them in impactful patient care roles. Highlighting pharmacists' meaningful contributions to public health enriches experiential education and reinforces the vital role pharmacists play in health care delivery. As community pharmacies continue to expand clinical services, they not only elevate patient care and enhance public health but also position themselves for robust business growth and sustainability. While initial implementation of expanded services can be challenging, resources such as certification programs and partnerships with public health providers and third-party payers can mitigate these barriers. Supporting the development of clinical pharmacy services is an investment in the future of patient-centered care, enriching the profession and positively impacting communities nationwide.

Disclosure: The views expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of Albertsons/Safeway.

### About the Authors

Vicki Bulkin, PharmD, serves as the experiential coordinator for Safeway Eastern Division, residency program director, and pharmacy manager. Tiffany Taliaferro-Roberts, PharmD, AAHIVP, is the specialty/HIV patient care pharmacist, residency program coordinator and regional community outreach coordinator. Paula Smith, PharmD, serves as the patient care services manager for Safeway Eastern Division. Tuan Huynh, PharmD, AAHIVP, HIVPCP, is assistant director of experiential learning at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy.

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## CONGRATULATIONS: FADY SADEK - FEBRUARY GREAT CATCH WINNER



Congratulations to Fady Sadek, PharmD, clinical staff pharmacist and pharmacy operations manager at Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital, on receiving Mt. Washington's Great Catch Award for February. Sadek noticed a documentation error in a physician's progress note. His attention to reviewing the medications and reading the physician's notes helped ensure accuracy in the hospital's records.

## New Digital Badge Recognizes Age-Friendly Pharmacists Committed to Improving Care for Older Adults and Lives of Caregivers

*Offered by the American Society of Consultant Pharmacists in partnership with the Peter Lamy Center on Drug Therapy and Aging at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy*

The American Society of Consultant Pharmacists (ASCP) and the Peter Lamy Center on Drug Therapy and Aging (Lamy Center) at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy now offer a digital badge to pharmacists who have demonstrated an understanding and application of the elements of the Age-Friendly Health Systems movement. The Age-Friendly Pharmacist digital badge recognizes pharmacists who have completed training modules on the Age-Friendly 4Ms Framework (What Matters, Medication, Mentation, and Mobility) and made a commitment to improving the health and well-being of older adults.

"Pharmacists are one of the most accessible health care practitioners, and they are perfectly positioned to help older adults gain the most benefit from Age-Friendly care," said Nicole Brandt, PharmD, MBA, executive director of the Lamy Center and the School of Pharmacy's Parke-Davis Chair in Geriatric Pharmacotherapy. "We believe the Age-Friendly Pharmacist digital badge will validate the skills and elevate the profile of pharmacists practicing the 4Ms of age-friendly care," said Chad Worz, PharmD, chief executive of ASCP. To be awarded a digital badge, pharmacists must complete three steps consisting of education and training on becoming age-friendly pharmacists, understanding/ implementing the 4Ms Framework, and advancing age-friendly care. After completing a final survey, eligible pharmacists will earn a digital badge and can showcase their skills and achievement with the digital badge through social media pages and online profiles.

The badge is verified through the Credly digital credentialing platform and offered through the Leveraging Pharmacists as Age-Friendly 4Ms Champions program funded by The John A. Hartford Foundation. To earn your badge and learn more about the Age-Friendly Pharmacist digital badge and this pharmacist-led initiative, visit Age-Friendly Pharmacists ([www.ascp.com/page/agefriendly](http://www.ascp.com/page/agefriendly), #Pharmacist4Ms).



## Age-Friendly Pharmacist Badge Program

Released: 03/17/2025

7.5 BCGP | 8.25 CPE

0 of 4 Completed

Free for all



Age-Friendly

Free for All

BCGP

CPE

Add to Cart

This initiative empowers pharmacists and long-term care pharmacies to enhance their expertise in Age-Friendly care through the 4M's Framework, enabling them to earn recognition as Age-Friendly Pharmacists and gain visibility in the Age-Friendly Health Systems movement. Learn more at [ascp.com/agefriendly](https://ascp.com/agefriendly). Follow the steps below to earn a digital badge and join others on this journey. All steps must be completed to earn the digital badge. Steps 1 through 3 can be completed in any order, but Step 4, the questionnaire, should be completed last.



The  
John A. Hartford  
Foundation

## Student News

### Uniting Professions, Transforming Care: UMB Hosts IPE Day 2025

By: Carise Baldwin, MBA, and Heather Congdon, PharmD, BCPS, CDE, FNAP





On April 2, the University of Maryland, Baltimore's (UMB) Center for Interprofessional Education (IPE) brought together more than 500 professional students from across the university for its 13th Annual IPE Day. This event is designed to strengthen foundational skills of team-based learning and apply them in realistic situations. The goal is for students to leave with a deeper understanding of other health professions and gain a stronger grasp of their own roles in collaborative patient care.



Students from dentistry, nursing, medicine, social work, physical therapy, law, pharmacy, and medical and research technology participated in the event. They were welcomed by Heather Congdon, PharmD, CDCES, FNAP, director of the Center for IPE and professor of practice, sciences, and health outcomes research at the School of Pharmacy, and received opening remarks from Bruce E. Jarrell, MD, FACS, president of UMB. Dr. Jarrell emphasized the importance of every team member in the patient care process. He shared how interprofessional education enhances patient outcomes, increases efficiency, and boosts providers' confidence in the care they deliver.

A moving highlight of the day featured Elsie Stines, DNP, CRNP, UMB's assistant vice president for special projects and a provider in the President's Clinic. She introduced Isabelle (Izzy), a 10-year-old patient living with multiple rare and chronic conditions. Izzy, who is nonverbal and uses assistive technology to communicate, was joined on stage by her mother and a panel of professionals from her care team.

The panel discussion showcased the power of interprofessional collaboration in real life. Speakers included:

- Amy Kruger Howard, PharmD, MS, Pediatric Clinical Pharmacist and Clinical Assistant Professor, School of Pharmacy
- Everett Smith, MSW, Clinical Instructor and Director of Tele-Behavioral Health Education, School of Social Work
- Margaret Martin, RN, BSN, Pediatric Gastroenterology Nurse

Together, they walked the audience through the complexities of Izzy's care — from coordinating therapy appointments and hospital stays to managing feeding tubes and accessing medications. It was a powerful demonstration of how shared knowledge, communication, and compassion across disciplines can help families like Izzy's navigate the health care system more effectively.

After the panel discussion, students divided into small interprofessional groups. Each group participated in simulated patient interviews, was presented with a complex case, and challenged to collaborate using their individual expertise to create a cohesive, patient-centered care plan.

Feedback from students was overwhelmingly positive. One medical student said, "Hearing everyone's approach helped me think more broadly about patient care." A nursing student added, "We all come at things from different angles. It made me realize how much I can learn from pharmacy, social work, and others."

The energy, empathy, and teamwork displayed throughout the day served as a powerful reminder of what is possible when future professionals learn and grow together. IPE Day 2025 was not just an event — it was a meaningful step toward a more collaborative, compassionate, and effective health care system.



## Exploring Pharmacy Practice Across Borders: Reflections on Global Rotation Experiences

By: Nathaniel Thomas, MBA

As part of the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy's commitment to developing globally minded health professionals, students can participate in international rotations that offer them the opportunity to expand their clinical knowledge, cultural competency, and gain broader insights into diverse health care systems and practices. Two of our pharmacy students, Andrea Gonzalez and Eurelis Perez, recently completed global rotation experiences that contributed to their personal and professional growth, enhancing their skill sets and broadening their perspectives.

### A Journey to Thailand



Left to right: Duanghatai Sinsumran, Phitchpha Singkaew, Sumet Preechawuttidej, MD, Nutha Khuntupat, PharmD, Andrea Gonzalez, Usasiri Srisakul, PharmD, Supaporn Pattanasan, APN, and Nichaphat Sri-in

Andrea Gonzalez traveled across the globe to participate in her rotation at Siam University in Thailand. Andrea's decision to pursue an international rotation was driven by a desire to broaden her understanding of global health systems and experience pharmacy practice from a different cultural viewpoint. "Choosing an international rotation in Thailand was one of the most enriching decisions I've made in pharmacy school," she shared. "I was eager to step outside of my comfort zone and explore how pharmacy is delivered in a different cultural and health care setting."

While in Thailand, Andrea observed the vital role pharmacists have in providing direct, patient-facing care in hospitals. With patient information primarily housed in paper charts at nursing stations, pharmacists were essential in facilitating interprofessional communication and ensuring continuity of care. She noted that the experience gave her an appreciation for the resilience and adaptability

demonstrated by the pharmacists she worked with during her rotation.

Andrea also emphasized the importance of cultural sensitivity, especially when educating patients about medications and supporting adherence—skills she was able to practice firsthand. One of the most memorable aspects of her rotation was engaging with pharmacy students from various academic years at Siam University. "We had a great time sharing our academic journeys and learning from each other," she said.

### Experiential Experiences Back Home in Puerto Rico

Closer to home, Eurelis Perez completed her global rotation at the University of Puerto Rico, gaining hands-on experience at Walgreens Santa Maria in Guaynabo with the mentorship of Dr. Esperanza Ortiz.

"As a Puerto Rican student studying in Baltimore, this rotation was a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between my academic training in the U.S. and the realities of pharmacy practice on the island,"

Eurelis reflected. “It gave me a deeper understanding of the workflow, regulations, and challenges specific to Puerto Rico, ensuring I am well-prepared to transition back home.”

During her rotation, Eurelis was immersed in new experiences, including administering vaccines, processing telemedicine prescriptions, preparing medication deliveries, and managing inventory. But beyond the technical skills, she appreciated the supportive environment and collaborative culture. “Everyone in the pharmacy—pharmacists, technicians, and even the general Walgreens staff—treated me with kindness and respect, not just as a student but as a future pharmacist,” she shared.

With the support of her preceptors, Drs. Ortiz and Acevedo, Eurelis highlighted the opportunity to connect with pharmacy students from the University of Michigan and to meet Dr. Wanda T. Maldonado Dávila, dean of the University of Puerto Rico School of Pharmacy who is also a University of Maryland School of Pharmacy alumnus. “This experience reinforced my decision to return home after graduation, where I know I will be part of a supportive and welcoming pharmacy community,” she added.



Left to right: Leia (University of Michigan), Wanda Maldonado Dávila, PharmD, (Dean of the University of Puerto Rico School of Pharmacy), Eurelis Perez, and Dianna (University of Michigan)

## Broadening Perspectives and Strengthening Purpose

With the support of the Office of Experiential Learning—through application processes, pre-departure orientations, and access to resources while abroad—these students were well-prepared for their experiences abroad. Their rotations reflect the positive impact of global experiential learning, which offers a wider appreciation for diverse health systems, broader clinical perspectives, and promotes connections and mentorship. By stepping beyond the classroom to experience pharmacy on a global scale, students grow both personally and professionally.

## Career, Leadership, and Professional Corner

Interested in learning about and deepening your understanding of health literacy? Want to discover ways to incorporate health literacy into your existing coursework? This online course, Learning and Teaching Health Literacy from an Interprofessional Education and Equity Lens, is designed specifically for you!

**Sign in to access**

Boost your **impact** as an educator with **practical tools** to enhance patient understanding and health outcomes.

UMD Center for Health Literacy and UMB offer faculty **online health literacy modules**.

- Earn a **certificate**
- Learn new ways to incorporate health literacy in teaching

Questions?  
healthliteracy@umaryland.edu

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
HOROWITZ CENTER FOR HEALTH LITERACY

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND BALTIMORE

The course consists of a welcome module and four training modules. Your progress will be tracked so you can complete the course at your own pace, but completing the full series to receive a digital certificate takes only 2.5 hours total. To access the course, visit [https://cfapps.umaryland.edu/health\\_literacy](https://cfapps.umaryland.edu/health_literacy).

You will need to login with your UMID. If you have any questions or require additional help navigating the coursework, please contact healthliteracy@umaryland.edu. If you do not have a UMID, you may access the external training for \$10 by visiting <https://umd-sph-train.catalog.instructure.com/courses/learning-and-teaching-health-literacy>.