



# The Dean's Newsletter



From  
College of Pharmacy Dean  
Gary Pollack, Ph.D.

February 2016

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Dear Friends and Colleagues:

As is true of many programs in academic medicine and pharmacy, our college has adopted a bimodal mission: excellence in professional education and provision of care coupled with excellence in graduate education and research. I have had the pleasure to comment on a number of exciting developments associated with the first mode, which include establishing a comprehensive competency-based approach to educating our students, expansion of enrollment, establishing a second campus in Yakima to focus on underserved populations, and most recently adoption of an active- and collaborative-learning format for our core curriculum.

In addition, our faculty are leading the development of new models of progressive care. I am particularly impressed with the activities of some of our junior faculty in this regard, which range from Julie Akers' work on [increasing access to point-of-care screening for hepatitis C in community pharmacies](#) to Shannon Panther's efforts to [improve access to intranasal naloxone for treatment of drug overdose](#). Their contributions will truly change health care in Washington state and beyond.

Our faculty also are experiencing significant (and growing) success in the second mode of our mission. Over the last three years, an increasing amount of the grant proposals submitted by our faculty to the National Institutes of Health have been funded. This is a truly phenomenal accomplishment and I am particularly gratified to see the success of our junior faculty in securing NIH funding.

During the last quarter of 2015 alone, several of our junior colleagues received notices of award for NIH funding including Zhenjia Wang (Neutrophil-mediated drug delivery) and Hui Zhang (Immunotherapy to mitigate the negative effects of alcohol on cancer progression). This brings the number of faculty in our college who are currently funded by NIH to ten, which is remarkable for a program of our size. Their success is a testament not only to the quality of the faculty we have been able to recruit, but also to the effectiveness of the mentoring they have received and to the strength of the research environment in our college, on our health sciences

campus, and at Washington State University. I am looking forward to highlighting a number of such “success stories” during the coming year, as we begin to bring the two modes of our mission into balance.

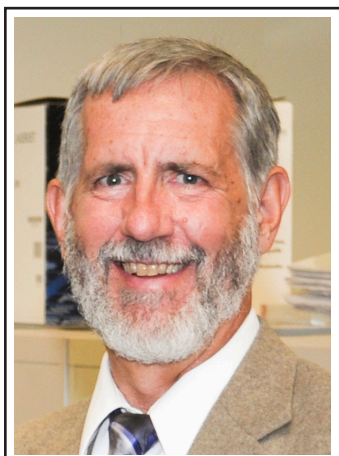
Best wishes for the new year,



Gary M. Pollack  
Dean  
Washington State University College of Pharmacy

## Dr. Danial Baker

### *WSU professor serves on national drug committees*



Dr. Danial Baker

Earlier this year, Washington State University’s Danial Baker, Pharm.D., was appointed to the U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention’s (USP) Healthcare Quality Expert Committee. Now Baker has received two additional appointments through this organization that sets standards for drug regulations enforced by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

Baker has been appointed to the subcommittee Medicare Model Guidelines, and to the expert panel Model Guidelines for All Marketed Products. Baker has more than 25 years of experience as a member of various types of formulary committees, including a Medicaid program, a pharmacy benefit management company, and other healthcare plans.

His original appointment to the Healthcare Quality Expert Committee is for five years (2015-2020). Baker’s service on the Medicare Model Guidelines subcommittee is for the current revision cycle for 2015-17 and his term on the expert panel will also be for five years.

The subcommittee was established in 2003 in response to the Medicare Prescription Drug Improvement and Modernization Act, which names the USP as the organization to develop and maintain the list of drugs and their therapeutic uses that health plans may cover under Medicare Part D.

“Updating of the Model Guidelines for the USP that is used by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services will influence the drug benefit that will be provided to millions of people in the United States covered by Medicare,” said Baker.

According to Baker, the expert panel is a new group charged with the development of a Draft USP General Chapter to accompany the current classification system, which includes standards for formulary classifications systems and recommendations of additional categories previously not indexed in the USP Medicare Model Guidelines.

“While the Model Guidelines for All Marketed Products is a new initiative, I will be helping to develop it from the ground up and it has the potential to impact the drug benefit programs offered to all Americans,” he said.

Most of the work of this committee will be done by conference calls and email correspondence, with occasional meetings at the USP headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Baker’s service to the USP is an example of how the College of Pharmacy is contributing to Washington State University’s land-grant mission to provide service to society and to apply knowledge through engagement that will improve quality of life and enhance the economy of the nation.

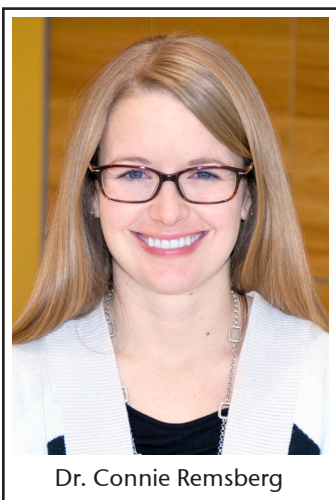
“The work of this subcommittee and the expert panel can only be accomplished through the application of clinical and scientific knowledge to form policies used to assess drug benefit programs,” said Baker. “Faculty engagement in these types of activities also helps to illustrate to our students that any member of their profession can be involved in these types of leadership roles and how an individual can influence policies that effect patient care, the health care industry, and the health of the nation.”



## Dr. Connie Remsberg

### *Pharmacy clinical assistant professor named Provost’s Featured Faculty Member*

By Todd Mordhorst, WSU Office of the Provost



Dr. Connie Remsberg

Interim Co-Provosts Erica Austin and Ron Mittelhammer are honoring faculty throughout the year by featuring a faculty member at each home football and basketball game. The Featured Faculty Members receive two tickets to the game, and are publicly recognized during the game.

Connie Remsberg, a clinical assistant professor of pharmaceutical sciences in the College of Pharmacy, is the Provost’s Featured Faculty Member for Jan. 9. She was honored during the Cougars’ men’s basketball game against Washington.

Remsberg draws satisfaction from advancing the pharmacy profession and seeing students make discoveries in the classroom.

“The most worthwhile aspect about teaching at WSU has been the connection with the students,” she says. “It is gratifying to feel that I am contributing to the next generation of pharmacists and being part of advancing the pharmacy profession. It is particularly rewarding to watch the light bulb moment for a student who just had the concept click. The students are the reason I enjoy teaching at WSU every day.”

Dr. Gary Pollack appreciates Remsberg’s dedication to excellence and innovation.

“Dr. Remsberg is leading the effort to establish the WSU College of Pharmacy as the most progressive pharmacy education program in the nation,” Pollack says. “She is committed to assisting her faculty colleagues in adopting and evaluating new teaching and learning models. She also is an outstanding example of a student-centric educator who demands, and receives, the best from her students. Dr. Remsberg is quickly establishing a national reputation as an educator-scholar, and we are indeed fortunate to have her as a member of our faculty.”



## Stephanie Lind

### *Spokane’s Student Pharmacist of the Year*



Stephanie Lind and Chris Greer

Stephanie Lind, class of 2016, was selected as the Spokane Pharmacy Association’s (SPA) 2015 Student Pharmacist of the Year.

“I was, and still am, completely honored to have been nominated and selected for the SPA Student Pharmacist of the Year award. To be recognized by those who have inspired me is just an amazing feeling,” said Lind.

Lind was nominated by Spokane Pharmacist Chris Greer from St. Luke’s Rehabilitation Institute, and was selected for her demonstrated leadership and ability to communicate effectively to alleviate patient concerns regarding their prescribed drug therapy. She received the award at the SPA’s annual awards banquet just before Christmas, held at the Davenport Grand Hotel downtown.

The SPA is a Spokane-based professional organization for pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and student pharmacists. The organization coordinates annual awards to members of the Inland Northwest pharmacy community in recognition of excellence in the field of pharmacy.

Lind is from Normand Park, Washington, and completed her undergraduate coursework at WSU in Pullman. As a pharmacist she plans to work in an intensive care unit and then eventually work in academia.

“I always thought that I would want to return to the Seattle area, but after three years in Spokane I have fallen in love with the community here,” said Lind.



# Other College News

## FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP

### Publications

- Pharmacotherapy Clinical Associate Professor **Brenda Bray** and two co-authors published, “Implementation and use of the Pharmacy Curriculum Outcomes Assessment at US schools of pharmacy,” in the American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education (AJPE) in November 2015. AJPE is the open-access scholarly publication of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP). [read abstract](#)
- Pharmaceutical Sciences Postdoctoral Research Associate **Jin Gao**, Pharmaceutical Sciences Postdoctoral Research Associate **Dafeng Chu**, and Pharmaceutical Sciences Assistant Professor **Zhenjia Wang** published, “Cell membrane-formed nanovesicles for disease-targeted delivery,” online in the Journal of Controlled Release, a peer-reviewed journal from the Controlled Release Society. [read abstract](#)
- Pharmaceutical Sciences Associate Professor **Grant D. Trobridge** was co-author on the poster, “A novel mutagenesis screen identifies SHARPIN as a breast cancer metastasis gene that predicts survival of breast cancer patients,” presented at the 2015 San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium (SABCS) in San Antonio, Texas, on December 10, 2015.
- Pharmaceutical Sciences Professor and Associate Dean for Graduate Education **Kathryn E. Meier** and one co-author published, “Omega-3 fatty acids and their impact on prostate cancer risk,” in the journal Current Nutrition Reports in January 2016.
- **Kathryn Meier** and three co-authors published, “Eicosapentanoic acid and other free fatty acid receptor agonists inhibit lysophosphatidic acid- and epidermal growth factor-induced proliferation of human breast cancer cells,” in the Journal of Clinical Medicine in January 2016.
- Pharmacotherapy Professor and Chair **John R. White, Jr.** with six co-authors published, “Cytochrome P-450 gene and drug interaction analysis,” in the American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy, a publication of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, on January 15, 2016. DOI 10.2146/ajhp150273
- Pharmacotherapy Associate Professor **Joshua J. Neumiller** and one co-author published, “Alogliptin + metformin combination for the treatment of Type 2 diabetes mellitus,” in the journal Expert Review of Endocrinology & Metabolism. DOI: 10.1586/17446651.2016.11110484
- Pharmacotherapy Professor and Associate Dean for External Professional and Continuing Education **Danial E. Baker** and one co-author published, “Cangrelor,” in the journal Hospital Pharmacy [2015;50(10):922-929].
- **Danial Baker** published, “Approvals, submission, and important labeling changes for U.S. marketed pharmaceuticals,” in the journal Hospital Pharmacy [2015;50(10):933-940].
- Pharmacotherapy Research Associate and Specialty Resident in Drug Information **Anne P. Kim** published, “Biosimilars: what’s in the name?” in the journal Hospital Pharmacy [2015;50(10):847-848].
- **Danial Baker** published, “Pharmacy and the ‘Zombie Apocalypse’,” in the journal Hospital Pharmacy [2015;50(11):957-958].
- **Danial Baker** and one co-author published, “U.S. Food and Drug Administration website: a primer for pharmacists,” in the journal Hospital Pharmacy [2015;50(11):985-993].
- **Danial Baker** and one co-author published, “Sacubitril/valsartan,” in the journal Hospital Pharmacy [2015;50(11):1025-1036].
- **Danial Baker** published, “Approvals, submission, and important labeling changes for U.S. marketed pharmaceuticals,” in the journal Hospital Pharmacy [2015;50(11):1040-1050].

## Presentations

- U.S. Transuranium & Uranium Registries Associate Research Professor **Sergei Tolmachev** presented the invited lecture, “Uranium content, distribution, and biokinetics in human body,” at the International Workshop on U, Th, and Pu Sciences in Kyushu, Japan, on December 10, 2015.
- **Joshua Neumiller** presented, “Diabetes update: new agents and new safety considerations,” for the Spokane Pharmacy Association (SPA) at Kootenai Health in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, on December 15, 2015.
- **Joshua Neumiller** presented, “Diabetes update: new agents and new safety considerations,” at the Hospitalist Grand Rounds at Sacred Heart Medical Center in Spokane, Washington, on December 17, 2015.

## Service

- Pharmacotherapy Clinical Assistant Professor **Kimberly McKeirnan** was interviewed for the article, “A day in the life of a pharmacy educator,” published in the fall 2015 Careers in Pharmacy Student Guidebook, a publication from Drug Store News. [read article](#)
- Pharmacotherapy Professor **Tracy L. Skaer** with two WSU Health Sciences colleagues were panel members on the episode, “Stress Management,” of the KSPS TV show Health Matters on December 17, 2015.

## Grants

- **Zhenjia Wang**, as a PI, received an RO1 grant of \$1,698,750 over five years from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences for the project titled, “Neutrophil-mediated drug delivery.” The project is focused on understanding how to utilize immune cells to effectively deliver therapeutics to diseased sites and, using this approach, improve therapies of vascular diseases.

# STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

## Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) students

- **Victor M. Bii**, pharmaceutical sciences (Trobridge lab), presented the poster titled, “A novel mutagenesis screen identifies SHARPIN as a breast cancer metastasis gene that predicts survival of breast cancer patients,” at the 2015 SABCS in San Antonio, Texas, on December 10, 2015. Poster co-authors: **Grant Trobridge** and **Dustin T. Rae**.
- **Victor Bii** received a \$500 travel award through the College of Pharmacy’s Sue Harriet Monroe Mullen Graduate Fellowship to attend and present at the 2015 SABCS.
- **Dunxin Shen**, pharmaceutical sciences (Denton lab), presented, “Synthesis of new, cell permeable, esterase hydrolyzable analogues of alpha-ketoglutarate, alpha-ketoglutaminate and succinyl phosphonate: tools for the study of cellular function,” as part of the Graduate Research Seminar Series on January 15, 2016.
- **Amity Platt**, pharmaceutical sciences (Lazarus lab), presented, “In vitro metabolism of exemestane by hepatic phase I enzymes,” as part of the Graduate Research Seminar Series on January 22, 2016.
- **Sihan Wang**, pharmaceutical sciences (Zhenjia Wang lab), presented, “Bacterium-membrane derived nanoparticles as a vaccine for prevention of Pseudomonas aeruginosa infection,” as part of the Graduate Research Seminar Series on January 29, 2016.
- **Kari Gaither**, pharmaceutical sciences (Liu lab), has been selected by the American Association of Cancer Research (AACR) to attend the AACR Early-career Hill Day in Washington DC, Feb 23-24, 2016. Gaither



will meet with legislators and their staff to discuss her research and the need for continued and increased funding for cancer research.

### Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) students

- **Erin McCarthy** was featured by APhA online for her internship in Washington, D.C., last summer focusing on pharmacy advocacy. [read article](#)
- **James Leonard** and faculty co-author **Danial Baker** published, “US Food and Drug Administration website: a primer for pharmacists,” in the journal Hospital Pharmacy [2015;50(11):985-993].
- **James Leonard** and faculty co-author **Danial Baker** published, “Sacubitril/valsartan,” in the journal Hospital Pharmacy [2015;50(11):1025-1036].
- **Juliet Nguyen** was appointed to serve a five-year term on the USP Health Literacy Expert Panel.

## Coming Events

- **Kari Gaither** will present, “Regulation of ATF5 expression by MicroRNA,” at 12:10 p.m. on Friday, February 5, 2016, in SAC 147 as part of the Graduate Research Seminar Series.



College of Pharmacy

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