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COLLEGE OF PHARMACY
The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA HEALTH SCIENCES

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**NOW SERVING AS
14TH DEAN**

The University of Oklahoma announced in June the appointment of Melissa Medina, Ed.D., as dean of the OU College of Pharmacy. Medina, who has been serving as interim dean of the College of Pharmacy since last September, was selected after a national search. She began her new role on June 16.

"With her breadth of experience as a superb researcher, award-winning educator and collaborative leader, Dr. Melissa Medina is poised to provide the innovative leadership needed to ensure the College of Pharmacy's continued excellence," said OU President Joseph Harroz Jr. "Her deep understanding of the university's goals, state workforce needs and health outcomes make her the ideal candidate to step into this role. We look forward to the remarkable impact she will continue to have on the college and larger community."

She is active in the Faculty Leadership Program for OU Health Sciences, providing workshops and peer evaluations for her colleagues in all seven colleges on campus. She is also the director of the Preparing Future Faculty Program, which prepares senior-level graduate students for faculty careers in academia.

Dean Medina has been active as a researcher, serving as an author or co-author for nearly 100 peer-reviewed journal publications, mostly focusing on pharmacy student learning and health professional education. She recently worked to secure a \$1.5 million grant from the Inasmuch Foundation to focus on student success and workforce development. She is also associate editor for the *American Journal of Pharmacy Education* and serves as a journal article reviewer for several other pharmacy publications. Dean Medina is a member of multiple professional organizations, including the NCPA, APhA, ASHP, and AACP.

Over the past two decades, Medina has won two of the four highest honors in pharmacy education: the 2023 American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy Lyman Award for Publication of the Year in the *American Journal of Pharmacy Education*, and the Robert K. Chalmers National Distinguished Pharmacy Educator of the Year Award from the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. She has received eight other national pharmacy education awards and 12 OU teaching awards, including a David Ross Boyd Professorship, a Presidential Professorship, an OU Health Sciences Regents' Award for Superior Teaching and the OU College of Pharmacy Teacher of the Year Award.

"Over the past 24 years, Dr. Medina has provided exceptional leadership in the OU College of Pharmacy, and her dedication to excellence in pharmacy education is invaluable," said Gary Raskob, Ph.D., senior vice president and provost of OU Health Sciences. "We are pleased that she will be serving as the 14th dean of the College of Pharmacy and know that she will continue elevating the college and the discipline of pharmacy in the years to come."

Dean Medina is married to Dr. Patrick Medina, for 28 years and they lived in Edmond, OK. He is an Oncologist Pharmacist, a former COP faculty member and Director of Stephenson Cancer Center Pharmacy for over 20 years. He is now a Medical Science Liaison for a small biotech company. They have 2 children, Maddie, who is a first-year medical student at the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine and Drew who is a Sophomore at the University of Nebraska Lincoln Raikes School of Computer Science Engineering and Business.

TOGETHER, WE GO FAR

College of Pharmacy Deans

Edwin C. "Daddy" DeBarr
1899-1904

Homer C. Washburn
1904-1912

Charles H. Stocking
1912-1917

Howard S. Browne
1917-1919

D.B.R. Johnson
1919-1949

Ralph William Clark
1949-1963

E. Blanche Sommers,
Interim Dean
1963

Loyd Ervin Harris
1963-1970

Charles W. Blissett
1970-1975

John R. Sokatch,
Interim Dean
1975-1976

Rodney D. Ice
1976-1983

H. Richard Shough,
Interim Dean
1982-1984 & 1996-1997

Victor A. Yanchick
1985-1996

Carl K. Buckner
1997-2002

Douglas W. Voth
2002-2007

JoLaine R. Draugalis
2007-2023

Melissa Medina
2023-Present

Dear Pharmacy Family,

It is with great excitement and honor that I have accepted the opportunity as OU College of Pharmacy's 14th dean! As most of you know, I have been at the college for 25 years now and have served under the leadership of several impactful deans, such as Dr. JoLaine Draugalis. I know I have an important legacy to carry on and I am very humbled to serve in this new role and recognize the responsibilities and opportunities that lie ahead of us!

The OU College of Pharmacy is the flagship pharmacy program in the state and is one of the four oldest degree-granting programs at the University of Oklahoma (established in 1893), with the first two graduates from any degree program at the university hailing from our pharmacy program in 1896. In fact, the majority of graduates from OU's early years were from our pharmacy program. This history is a very significant piece of our college's past that I know you are very proud of; I am too! I am dedicated to preserving this rich legacy as well as helping grow the college and the profession well into the future. I know that the collaborative work of our pharmacy family is at the heart of our path for continued success moving forward. I can't wait to see what we are going to accomplish together!

While serving as the interim dean in 2023-2024, I gathered significant feedback from faculty, staff, students, alumni, service units on campus, and



other college and health care partners on campus, in the state and nationally. These meetings helped me explore the strengths, challenges and needs of the OU College of Pharmacy, which have served as the foundation for setting our goals and priorities for the college now that I am the permanent dean. I believe that steering the college forward is best achieved by including the perspectives and efforts of all the people who love pharmacy and this college.

One of my goals is to increase the number of pharmacists graduating from the University of Oklahoma. We are working on some new and exciting cutting-edge pipeline programs in the College of Pharmacy through admissions and recruitment in the Office of Student Affairs and the OUHSC Admissions and Recruitment

Office to increase visibility of the College and profession and reduce barriers to admission. A related goal is to increase support for students once they are enrolled so we can help them achieve their dreams of becoming a pharmacist. Efforts such as mentoring, student success programs and outreach are key priorities that are vital to helping students graduate from our college of pharmacy.

Another goal I have is to expand our research efforts through new collaborations and team science.

OU College of Pharmacy is fortunate to be one of only a few comprehensive academic health centers in the nation with seven health professional colleges: Allied Health, Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Public Health, and Graduate Studies. In addition, we have also been fostering partnerships with University of Oklahoma Norman campus programs such as the College of Engineering, among others. It is very exciting to consider possibilities for extramural research funding, which aligns with the university's strategic plan. Every year our faculty are recognized for their innovative research through numerous grants and patents they have received.

Conducting quality research is an onerous endeavor, as research experiments never take a holiday. I am so proud of our dedicated faculty who devote their time to advancing science through their research and to educating students about the science that is the foundation to pharmacy. They are outstanding scientists who have been working hard to achieve the teaching, research and service missions of the university.

A third goal I have is to elevate our pharmacy service units by increasing their visibility and expanding the services they provide. I am not sure if you know this, but in addition to our amazing Doctor of Pharmacy program, dual-degree Pharm.D/MBA program, and master's and doctoral graduate programs in pharmaceutical sciences and social and administrative sciences, the college leads four service units. These include our unique nuclear pharmacy programs in both Oklahoma City and Tulsa, which provide nuclear products for patient care (e.g., imaging and theranostics), the setting for pharmaceutical sciences and clinical research, and an area of emphasis for our Pharm.D. students involved in the

nuclear pharmacy track. We are one of five colleges of pharmacy in the U.S. that has a nuclear pharmacy affiliated with their college, which provides a unique opportunity for students to be certified nuclear pharmacists upon graduation.

We also have the state's only poison and drug information center that provides invaluable education to patients as well as our students, since many of our students work there as well as complete their IPPE and APPE rotations there. Our Pharmacy Management Consultants is another one of our service units that manages pharmacy benefits for the state in conjunction with the Oklahoma Health Care Authority. PMC is an important training ground for our Social and Administrative Sciences graduate students along with one of our college's post-graduate year 1 managed-care residents, and our Pharm.D. students who complete experiential rotations there. The college's 1893 Pharmacy is our fourth service unit, which is a licensed retail pharmacy on campus whose primary emphasis is on state contracts, such as the J.D. McCarty Center in Norman and the HIV and HDAP programs in connection with the State

Umaer Syed, Christopher Nguyen, Brooke Dunning, Bea Espago, Rachel Vu, Ann Pham, Aimee Wright, Melissa Medina



Department of Health. Many of our alumni work in these four service units and we are grateful that our students are exposed to such caring mentors and innovative services and practice areas.

Another goal is to increase partnerships with OU Health as well as across the state, especially since OUH and Stephenson Cancer Center are being expanded to new locations throughout Oklahoma. Many of our clinical faculty have their practice sites in OUH hospitals and clinics, where they deliver exceptional care to patients as well as experiential teaching to Pharm.D. students, our PGY 1 and PGY 2 residents, and other OU health care providers and trainees from other colleges in campus. In fact, many of our faculty serve as Residency Program Directors for our programs in internal medicine, pediatrics, ambulatory care, oncology, critical care and

infectious diseases and we offer the most PGY 1 and PGY 2 residencies in the state. Caring for patients in Oklahoma and teaching the next generation of pharmacists is no easy task but our nationally recognized faculty are dedicated to the teaching, research and service missions of the university and I am so proud of what they accomplish.

I was recently at the City Rescue Mission in Oklahoma City, where our pharmacy students and faculty organize an interprofessional health fair for underserved individuals in the area. Our college has organized this event for over 16 years, and every year they enhance and expand the services they provide, such as diabetic foot exams, substance use prevention and medication education. One of the students commented as I took photos that I was like a proud mom with all her children. I can't think of a bigger compliment

because that is exactly how I feel, except the family expands well beyond the walls of that event and includes all of you, the alumni and friends of our pharmacy family. I am so grateful to be a part of such a wonderful legacy and family that extends back over 130 years, where we all work together to contribute our unique strengths to make a significant impact on the state and the profession. I have loved watching the college grow and am thrilled to be a part of what we will accomplish next. I know it is going to be amazing.

Melissa Medina

Melissa S. Medina, Ed.D.
Dean and Professor; Phil C. and Ferne Ashby Endowed Dean's Chair
David Ross Boyd Professor and President's Associates
Presidential Professor

THE BEGINNING OF SOMETHING NEW

A quote from Fred Rogers goes, "Often when you think you're at the end of something, you're at the beginning of something else." Retirement is inevitable, and it has been experienced by several people who have invested many years at OU College of Pharmacy.

Here is a summary of those retirees:

R. Chris Rathbun, Pharm.D., BCPS, FCCP



R. Chris Rathbun retired from OU College of Pharmacy this past April. He served as professor, Department of Clinical and Administrative Sciences, OU College of Pharmacy and adjunct professor of medicine in the Infectious Diseases Section for the OU College of Medicine. For over 20 years of his 33-year

career, he was a clinical pharmacy specialist and program director for the HIV Pharmacotherapy Service at the Infectious Diseases Institute for the OU Health Sciences Center. For the past 12 years, Dr. Rathbun has served as chair of the Department of Clinical and Administrative Sciences at the University of Oklahoma College of Pharmacy.

He earned his undergraduate degree in chemistry from the University of Minnesota, Duluth, and his doctor of pharmacy from the University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy in Minneapolis. After receiving his doctorate, Rathbun accepted a fellowship in clinical pharmacy sciences in

infectious diseases at the University of Texas at Austin College of Pharmacy. His main research interests were in the safety and efficacy of antiretroviral agents for the treatment of persons with HIV.

"His mentorship and leadership were formative to me as an early career faculty member. I joined the college in 2020 during the pandemic when students, faculty, and staff were working remotely. Not only was he available to us in-person, but he also mentored me to cultivate academic, research, and clinical efforts. He facilitated introductions with campus stakeholders and student leaders to enable my successes in the college and build rapport across OU Health. I cannot have asked for a more supportive and engaged department chair to help me navigate the promotion process from assistant to associate professor. His paternal spirit was omnipresent during my rough times like couriering me when car troubles struck or when I needed his parental wisdom. And of course, I would be remiss if not to mention our mutual reverence for Caribou Coffee! I will strive to embody his exemplar throughout my professional career."

– Paul Boylan

"Transitioning from graduate school to a faculty role was daunting, but as I reflect on that journey, I do so with fondness and gratitude. I owe much

of this positive experience to him. His support has been invaluable. I am confident that I am not alone in expressing how much we will miss him, and I wish him countless sunny days on the golf course and catching waves. Acknowledging our role in adding a few more grey hairs to his head, it's somewhat comforting to know that he'll carry a bit of us with him wherever he goes."
– Motolani Adedipe (Ogunsanya)

"He has been a supportive and empathic department chair. He has served as a mentor, while simultaneously recognizing that our lives do not revolve solely around work. Through challenges and unexpected detours, he was there to help me make meaningful contributions to the department and college while not sacrificing family responsibilities. His compassion and understanding for his faculty make us all want to work harder for the department and the college." – Lourdes Planas

"We served on various committees over the years at the college and campus level, including graduate affairs, strategic planning and campus tenure. Dr. Rathbun always came across as being very honest with his opinions and could be counted as a very valued team member in anything he was part of. It was always a pleasure to have him on your team."
– Nathan Shankar

He received the Regents' Award for Superior Teaching at the OU Health Sciences Center and numerous Teaching Excellence Awards from OU College of Pharmacy. He has

served as a preceptor and residency and fellowship director for the OU College of Pharmacy.

In retirement, he is relocating to Minnesota to be with his fiancé, Brenda, and plans to travel and pursue his hobbies in music. "I want to enjoy this next season in my life." OU College of Pharmacy wishes him the best.

Keith Swanson, Pharm.D.

Dr. Keith Swanson joined the faculty at OU College of Pharmacy in September 1995 as an associate professor. He was part of the leadership team that was tasked to phase out the Bachelor's of Science in Pharmacy Program and establish the entry-level Doctor of Pharmacy Program in 1999, including offering a part-time option leading to the Pharm.D. degree for over 125 practicing Oklahoma pharmacists, and eventually establishing the satellite campus for the pharmacy program in Tulsa.

Since 2005 he has provided interdisciplinary geriatric long-term care services with Dr. Peter Winn and other faculty from the OU College of Medicine Department of Family and Preventive Medicine, and more recently with Dr. Seki Balogun from the Section of Geriatrics and Palliative Care. His academic activities have focused on geriatric topics and nonprescription/self-care products, receiving several teaching awards over the years. He has also served as the college's American Heart Association CPR trainer for over 15 years.

Swanson served on the Oklahoma State Board of Examiners for Long Term Care Administrators from 2018 to 2024 (Board Chairman 2021-24). He has served on several state-level interdisciplinary committees working on issues related to transitions in care and geriatric long-term care. He is a current board member for the Oklahoma Chapter of the American Medical Directors Association. He has served the Oklahoma Chapter of the American Society of Consultant Pharmacists as chapter president, vice-president and secretary/treasurer, as well as on several national committees for ASCP. He has also served as a committee member and chair of the Certified Geriatric Pharmacist (CGP) Exam Development Committee for the Certification Council for Geriatric Pharmacy and as invited faculty for ASCP's Geriatric Pharmacist Bootcamp. He is a past-chair of the Geriatrics Special Interest Group of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy.



Keith Swanson

His outside interests have included serving the Boy Scouts of America as an adult leader for over 40 years, mentoring over 100 Scouts who have earned the Eagle Scout Rank. He has served as an Elder and in other leadership positions at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Edmond over the past 29 years. He and his



Alice Kirkpatrick

**“Celebrate endings – for they precede new beginnings.”
— Jonathan Lockwood Huie**

wife, Debbie, have two children, Andrew (and Dawn) Swanson of Oregon, Wisconsin and Rebecca (and Dylan) Crawford of Edmond, Oklahoma. They have four grandchildren.

Alice Kirkpatrick, Pharm.D., M.S.

Being a member of the experiential team means working closely with college preceptors. For Alice Kirkpatrick, Pharm.D., M.S., it was especially rewarding to work with former graduates who are now serving as preceptors. “It’s been such a pleasure to keep up with the great things they’re doing in their careers,” she said. Many preceptors were former graduates of OU College of Pharmacy. “In addition, there are countless preceptors that I didn’t know when they were students. I am grateful for all the preceptors who have given their time to mentor our students.”

As part of their IPPE rotations, students need to complete journals that record what they have learned during their assignments. “It’s rewarding to read insights and understandings students gain related to the pharmacist’s role in the health care system. Students often record some event that demonstrated how a pharmacist can make a positive effect on the care of a patient, from preventing drug interactions to solving cost and insurance problems,” she said. “Again, I see where our preceptors have helped our students take pride in their current and future roles in the profession.”

Kirkpatrick taught in or coordinated many of the pharmacy practice course series labs or classes when the didactic program was in Tulsa. After the Tulsa program closed, she coordinated the IPPE hours and associated assessments; the immunization training; the sterile product training and lab; and coordinated the APPE training for northeast Oklahoma.

After serving at OU College of Pharmacy for 17 years, Kirkpatrick retired on Sept. 1, 2024.

Together with her husband, Greg, they have three daughters and five grandchildren. “I suspect our grandchildren will fill a lot of time in our lives after I retire,” she said.

Glenda Jenkins

From staff hot dog days in the summer, to students asking her for high fives and good vibes before tests, Glenda Jenkins has enjoyed every minute of her 16 years at OU College of Pharmacy.

She began her journey on campus at the College of Dentistry in 1984. She started working in the periodontal student clinic as a technical supply clerk and, after several changes, was appointed to clinic operations coordinator and supervised a total of 17 people. Making the transfer to another college in 2008 after 24 years at the College of Dentistry was a big decision, but she has found her time at the College of Pharmacy to be both satisfying and rewarding.



Glenda Jenkins

“I get to see students come into pharmacy school so young and ambitious, and then I see them leave here becoming true professionals! Our team in student affairs help each other meet deadlines, and organize events such as orientation and white coat ceremony. We give each other the grace to be real people and we take pride in the fact that this office is one of the best on campus,” said Jenkins.

Jenkins retired on May 31, 2024. She and her husband plan to travel to see their kids and grandchildren located in Cleveland, Ohio, and Indianapolis.





RESEARCHER DEVELOPS DRUG DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR CHEMO-INDUCED HEARING LOSS

The chemotherapy drug cisplatin is a lifesaver for many adults and children diagnosed with cancer, but it often causes hearing loss, a side effect that can diminish quality of life following treatment. To prevent hearing damage during cancer treatment, an OU College of Pharmacy researcher created a novel drug delivery system that transports medications to the inner ear; her studies about the promising innovation are published in the *Journal of Controlled Release* and the *Journal of Nanobiotechnology*.

When a patient receives cisplatin, the drug quickly finds its way to the cochlea, the snail-shaped organ in the inner ear. The drug is retained for months in the cochlea, where it damages the tiny hair cells that play a critical role in the brain's ability to interpret sound. Once the hair cells are damaged, they never regenerate, and hearing begins to wane. The effect is especially pronounced in children.

That reality spurred Vibhuti Agrahari, Ph.D., an assistant professor at the University of Oklahoma College of

Pharmacy, to create a method of placing drugs in the ear, where they essentially stand guard as cisplatin approaches.

"To treat this type of hearing loss, we really wanted to focus on a prophylactic cure – giving the medications before the chemotherapy begins. We wanted to create a targeted drug delivery approach that can be given directly into the inner ear, rather than an oral drug that must travel throughout the body," Agrahari said. *"Hearing aids and cochlear implants are options, and doctors sometimes prescribe off-label drugs, but that is not solving the bigger problem of preventing the hearing loss. The problem is especially significant in young children being treated for cancer because they are undergoing so much learning and cognitive development."*

To create the drug delivery system, Dr. Agrahari and her research team carefully considered the route it would take to the inner ear and the obstacles it would encounter along the way. As a drug transporter, the delivery system is like a sophisticated vehicle with an excellent GPS: stable for the journey but nimble and crafty to make it past

Agrahari research lab (Left Photo): Kate Montreuil, Brooke Robbins, Neeraj S. Thakur, Vibhuti Agrahari, Iulia Rus, and Brototi Chakrabary.

Vibhuti Agrahari



barriers. And it must carry drugs that can specifically address how cisplatin damages the process of hearing.

The “vehicle” portion of the system is composed of hydrogels, which are water-based substances that can change structure based on their environment. The hydrogel begins as a liquid so that it can be given via an injection, but once it encounters the body’s temperature, it turns into a gel. The hydrogel is also compatible with the human body so the immune system won’t view it as an invader.

Within the hydrogel are nanoparticles, minute materials that actually carry the drugs. Each nanoparticle is about 100 nanometers wide; for perspective, a human hair is approximately 100,000 nanometers wide. The small size enables the nanoparticles to cross a membrane they encounter on the way to the cochlea. Once they reach their destination, the environment of the cochlea prompts the release of the drugs, and because the nanoparticles are within the hydrogel, they discharge slowly, like an extended-release drug. The gel also prevents the

nanoparticles from sliding into the eustachian tube, the pipe-like structure near the cochlea.

Dr. Agrahari has studied several drugs in the delivery system. Some block calcium, which is known to damage the inner ear hair cells, and others are antioxidants, which protect the hair cells and maintain the delicate homeostasis of the inner ear. Using mathematical modeling software, Agrahari and her team chose several configurations of drug amounts and formulation sizes.

Dr. Agrahari tested the drug delivery system in her laboratory using inner ear cell lines. The approach is now being tested in animal models with her collaborators at Hough Ear Institute in Oklahoma City. Although the research is in its early stages, it has already shown positive results, both for the delivery system and the drugs’ ability to prevent the damage that leads to hearing loss. Patents have been filed to document the novelty and promise of Dr. Agrahari’s innovations.

“This is a small area of study that has a lot of potential,” Dr. Agrahari

said. “Cisplatin is an important, lifesaving drug that we need for the treatment of cancer, but hearing loss affects quality of life, as well as the developmental process for children, up to 90% of whom face hearing loss after receiving this type of chemotherapy. It is important that we devise a solution that prevents the damage from ever occurring.”

About the project

The two studies are titled “Cross-linked hybrid nanoparticle embedded in thermogel for sustained co-delivery to inner ear” and “Dual stimuli-responsive and sustained drug delivery NanoSensoGel formulation for prevention of cisplatin-induced ototoxicity.” The studies were supported by awards from the Presbyterian Health Foundation, Capita Foundation Auditory Research Grant and the OU College of Pharmacy.

– April Wilkerson,
Media Specialist, OU Marketing
& Communications

APP CREATED TO SUPPORT BLACK PROSTATE CANCER PATIENTS POST-DIAGNOSIS

A OU College of Pharmacy researcher received a grant from the U.S. Department of Defense to test a newly created mobile app designed to address health disparities among black men diagnosed with prostate cancer.

The disparities are significant. In the United States, black men are not only diagnosed with prostate cancer at a 60% higher rate than white men, but their cancer is often more aggressive and advanced. Because of those inequities, black men often face more challenges to their quality of life, even after successful treatment.

"The new app, tailored for the culture and experiences of black men, holds great promise for improving their long-term health and well-being," said Motolani (Ogunsanya) Adedipe, D.Ph., Ph.D., a researcher in the TSET Health Promotion Center, a University of Oklahoma program at OU Health Stephenson Cancer Center. She is also an assistant professor in the OU College of Pharmacy and leads the college's Multidisciplinary Health Outcomes Research and Economics Lab.

"The survivorship odds for prostate cancer in black men are good: At the five-year point after treatment, 96% of men are alive, compared to 98% for



Motolani (Ogunsanya) Adedipe, D.Ph., Ph.D.

white men. But black men face a difficult transition from diagnosis to survivorship," Adedipe said. *"I remember having a conversation with a woman whose husband was successfully treated for prostate cancer. She said, 'He survived the cancer, but he doesn't feel like he's surviving. He feels like he would have been better off dead.'*

"We can talk about survivorship, but what does quality of life mean for those who are still here? There are unmet needs, especially for black men who are coping with long-term complications," Adedipe said.

In her research that laid the groundwork for development of the app, Adedipe interviewed three groups of black men in the United

States who had been treated for prostate cancer: those who were born in Africa, those born in the Caribbean and those born in the United States. She chose those ethnic groups because immigration to America, particularly from Africa and the Caribbean, has reshaped the demographics of black communities in recent decades. Each group had differing experiences with cancer and the health care system, influenced by factors such as their culture, where they live and their previous encounters with health care providers.

"African-born black men, for example, are accustomed to a paternalistic health care system where it is considered rude to ask the physician questions or to consider second opinions. That leads some men to experience regret over the type of therapy they received," Adedipe said. "Other black men may live in areas with few options for treatment. And many black men struggle to find the social support that is so important for healing. In some cases, they have hidden their cancer diagnoses from their families and friends who could support them, and they struggle to cope with side effects."

"Imagine immigrant men who have moved to this country, trying to put food on the table and navigating immigration pathways, then life throws a cancer diagnosis at them," Adedipe said. "It can be quite lonely. They want to talk about it but are hesitant because it's deeply personal. It can be a threat to their masculinity and how they perceive themselves. We see a lot of dynamics at play."

Adedipe's app is designed to support men through this unfamiliar territory.

The app has been tested in an initial pilot study, with favorable results, and the new Department of Defense funding will allow Adedipe to create a larger clinical trial. Participants will be black men from the three ethnic groups who have been diagnosed with prostate cancer. Most will be navigating post-care issues; half will use the app, while a control group will not. Because many people have smartphones, an app is an ideal vehicle for providing easy-to-digest information to an ethnically diverse group of black prostate cancer survivors.

The app will prompt men to assess their physical and mental symptoms, then it will provide information based on their feedback, such as recommendations for reducing pain or improving sleep. Men who have received androgen deprivation therapy, a type of hormone therapy, often lose muscle mass, so they will be encouraged to lift weights and improve their nutrition. If men score high on a pain scale, they will be connected to an oncology nurse for help managing the pain or instruction to see a doctor.

"Our main objective is to test the effectiveness of this app on quality of life," Adedipe said. "Our hypothesis is that it will be effective, not because the app is magical, but because we're assessing symptoms, providing psychological and social support, and tailoring information to their needs." Another major component of Adedipe's research is a Community Advisory Board composed of seven black men who have survived prostate cancer, a black physician and a black public health scientist. Their insight has helped Adedipe shape her research questions, design the app's content and recruit clinical trial participants. Board members have also helped her organize virtual town halls, where experts speak and black men connect with each other by telling their stories of a cancer diagnosis.

Perry Cole, a Community Advisory Board member from Texas, was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2021 and has since become an advocate for early detection and for men leaning on one another for support.

"One of our biggest accomplishments has been opening up and talking about what we're going through, as well as welcoming others to join us," he said. "We talk about what might be considered taboo topics. It helps you know that you are not alone in your struggles. We've also talked about how the mental health component of a cancer diagnosis is often overlooked. We have come to the conclusion that when you select an oncologist or surgeon, you also need to consider a mental health professional to help you overcome some of the stigma and natural reactions that come with cancer."

"We want to bring that message to younger generations of men as well," Cole said. "Not waiting until they are affected by cancer, but doing some education so that, if they find themselves on this route, they have choices, and here are some ways to make the best choices possible."

About the project

Adedipe's research has also been funded by the National Institutes of Health. The TSET Health Promotion Research Center is named for support from TSET, the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust. Created by voters in 2000, TSET is an endowment trust established with a percentage of payments from the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement between 46 states and the tobacco industry.

– April J. Wilkerson,
OU Health Sciences Marketing
& Communications

CURRENT GRANTS AT OU COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

Motolani E. Adedipe (Ogunsanya), Ph.D.

"Development of a theory-based framework and measures of acculturation for African immigrants." Georgia College & State University; 08/12/2022–07/31/2025.

Vibhuti Agrahari, Ph.D.

"In vitro and In vivo assessments of bio-responsive formulations for prevention of cisplatin-induced ototoxicity and associated hearing loss." Presbyterian Health Foundation, 07/03/2023–07/02/2025.

Vibhudutta Awasthi, Ph.D.

"Mechanism of F-18-fluorodeoxyglucuronate accrual in myocardial injury." NIH/National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, 04/01/2024–03/31/2025

Anthony W. Burgett, Ph.D.

"Cellular mechanism of oxysterol-binding protein (OSBP) in Viral Proliferation: A chemical biology approach." NIH/National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases, 04/08/2021–03/31/2025.

"Cellular mechanism of oxysterol-binding Protein (OSBP) in viral proliferation: A chemical biology approach (supplement)." NIH/National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases, 12/22/2022–03/31/2025.

"Taking ovarian cancer maintenance therapy to the next level." Army Medical Research Acquisition Activity, 04/01/2023–03/31/2027.

"Medicinal chemistry and drug development of broad spectrum antiviral compounds targeting OSBP." OK Ctr for the Adv of Sci & Tech, 02/01/2023–01/31/2026

"Drug targeting oxysterol-binding protein (OSBP) for SARS-CoV-2 and other RNA viral infections." Presbyterian Health Foundation, 07/01/2024–06/30/2025– year 3

Kristie Edelen, Ph.D.

"Assist with research-based surveillance system studying." Denver Health and Hospital Authority, 01/02/2022–12/24/2024.

"Oklahoma Poison and Drug Information Center support and enhancement program." Health Resources & Services Administration, 09/01/2023–08/31/2024.

"Acute poisoning management and educational activities for Oklahoma FY24." Oklahoma State Department of Health, 07/01/2024–06/30/2025.

Venkateswararao Eeda, Ph.D.

"Cardiotropic atorvastatin liposomes for myocardial reperfusion injury." Nexakit, LLC/National Science Foundation, 05/15/2023–04/30/2025.

Lucila Garcia-Contreras, Ph.D.

"Preclinical assessment of exosomal drug delivery system using innovative tumor mouse model." Stephenson Cancer Center – CPC Seed Grant, 08/01/2024–04/30/2025.

Aditya Joshi, Ph.D.

"Aryl hydrocarbon receptor-mediated differential gene regulation – Mechanism of stanniocalcin 2 mediated protection against NAFLD." National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, 05/01/2024–04/30/2028.

"Role of hepatic aryl hydrocarbon receptor nuclear translocator 2 (Arnt2) in metabolic disorders." Harold Hamm Foundation, 07/01/2024–06/30/2025.

Anne Kasus-Jacobi, Ph.D.

"Multitarget peptide: A drug to remember." Alzarrok Bio, LLC, 12/11/2023–12/31/2024.

"The Midwest Biomedical Accelerator Consortium (MBArc) – Multi-target peptide: A drug to remember." University of Missouri, 09/01/23–08/31/24.

"Multi-target peptide drug for Alzheimer's Disease", Alzarrok Bio, LLC, 10/01/2024–08/31/2025

Dongin Kim, Ph.D.

"MIPEP133, a new tumor suppressor for ovarian cancer." Yale University/ American Cancer Society, 01/01/2024–12/31/2027.

"Extracellular vesicle-based intraocular therapy combined." University of South California/NIH R01, 02/01/2024–01/31/2029.

"Intracellular GSH delivery by exosome for overcoming P-Gp as MDR cancer therapy." Stephenson Cancer Center – CPC Seed Grant, 08/01/2024–04/30/2025.

Amanda Sharpe, Ph.D.

"The role of melanocortin-4 receptors on astrocytes in the hypothalamus on inflammaging, adiposity, and weight regulation." Harold Hamm Foundation, 07/01/2024–06/30/2025.

"Role of estrogen receptor- α in aging and sex-specific responses to 17 α -estradiol." Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation, 09/01/2021–06/30/2026.

"Major histocompatibility complex I regulation of microglial function in aging and Alzheimer's Disease." Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation, 09/01/2024–08/31/2027.

Kelly Standifer, Ph.D.

"NOP receptor modulator treatment optimizes cognitive, locomotor and sensory outcomes of mild concussive TBI with and without PTSD." Army Medical Research Acquisition Activity, 04/15/2023–04/14/2026.

"Neuropeptide modulation of cerebral blood flow to improve neurological and psychological outcomes following TBI in the presence and absence of traumatic stress." Army Medical Research Acquisition Activity, 07/01/2023–06/30/2027.

"Evaluation of PPL-138, a NOP/ μ partial agonist, for treatment of alcohol abuse in the context of PTSD." Florida State University, 01/01/2023–12/31/2024.

"Sal-PC efficacy for modTBI," J&D Pharmaceuticals, 06/06/2024–12/31/2024.

Wei Yue, Ph.D.

"Regulation of OATP1B1 and OATP1B3 by lysine acetylation and lysine deacetylase inhibitors." NIH/NIGMS R01; 09/01/2022–06/30/2026.

"Regulation of OATP1B1 and OATP1B3 by lysine acetylation and lysine deacetylase inhibitors." Equipment Supplement, 07/01/2024–06/30/2025

FACULTY AND STAFF HIGHLIGHTS



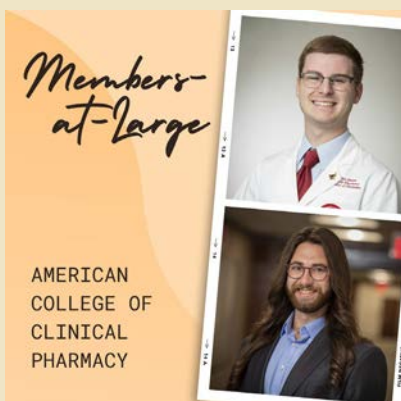
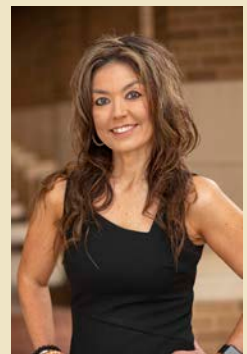
Congratulations to Dr. Alice Kirkpatrick, OU Pharmacy faculty and coordinator of experiential education, on receiving the OSHP Oklahoma Society of Health-System Pharmacists' "Pharmacist of the Year" award. This is OSHP's highest and most prestigious recognition. Recipients are selected based on their contribution to pharmacy programs, cooperation with the health care team, and service to the profession and community. Kirkpatrick retired Sept. 1, 2024.

Dr. Wei Yue, associate professor, Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences, recently received an equipment supplement to her current R01 research, "Regulation of OATP1B1 and OATP1B3 by lysine acetylation and lysine deacetylase inhibitors." The R01 is funded through the National Institute of General Medical Sciences of the National Institutes of Health under Award Number R01GM146956.



Eric J. Johnson, senior associate dean of administration and finance, received the Marcia Bennett OUHSC Leadership and Mentoring Award this past spring. This prestigious award was established by the Health Sciences Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost and is based on how the applicant invests in people at all levels, leads in service, and demonstrates themselves as a problem-solver. It recognizes a Health Sciences staff member who emulates the leadership and mentorship of the former vice provost for health sciences, Dr. Marcia M. Bennett, who served the university for more than 40 years.

Katherine O'Neal, Pharm.D. professor, Dept. of Pharmacy: Clinical and Administrative Sciences, has been chosen as the 2025 president-elect of the Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists. O'Neal has served in various volunteer and leadership roles within ADCES, including serving on the ADCES Board of Directors from 2020-2022 and as ADCES treasurer in 2023. She will serve as ADCES president in 2026. Her clinical practice is with Internal Medicine primary care focusing on chronic disease states, especially diabetes, hypertension, dyslipidemia, and asthma. Her research interests include patient empowerment and health literacy.



Congratulations to P4 student Braydon Moore and former PGY-1 Pharmacy Practice resident David Foote on being appointed to prestigious Member-at-Large positions within the American College of Clinical Pharmacy.

In their new positions, Braydon and David will enhance their leadership skills, expand their national networks, and develop impactful programming and services for trainees passionate about clinical pharmacy.

Oct. 26 was National Take Back Day. Four OU College of Pharmacy students and the Oklahoma Poison Center joined forces with the Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office Deputy Christy Yokley and a Wal-Mart pharmacist to provide a safe, convenient, and responsible means of disposing prescription drugs for the community. Eleven boxes of medication were collected for safe disposal.



OU College of Pharmacy recently joined forces with City Rescue Mission in Oklahoma City, alongside many dedicated organizations, to serve our community and make a positive impact together.



Three OU College of Pharmacy faculty members were recognized at the 2024 Faculty Awards Ceremony.

- Grant Skrepnek, Ph.D., R.Ph., professor, Pharmacy Clinical & Administrative Sciences, received the President's Associates Presidential Professorship.
- Wei Yue, Ph.D., associate professor, Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences, received the Regents' Award for Superior Teaching.
- Dr. Anne Pereira, Dr. Hari Gali and Dr. Anne Kasus-Jacobi (far right), Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences, all received patent awards.



Dean Medina hosted a fantastic faculty and staff retreat in August. It was an inspiring day filled with insightful discussions, team-building activities, and shared goals for the future. Here's to continuing our efforts with renewed energy and collaboration!

ON FRIDAYS WE



WEAR CRIMSON



Sooner Spirit is in full display every Friday as you walk down the hallways of OU College of Pharmacy.

It's not mandatory to wear OU gear, but you can still see students, faculty and staff with either University of Oklahoma, OU College of Pharmacy shirts, or red shirts.

As part of these special Fridays, group photos are arranged and then sent to Dean Medina by 5 p.m. Groups can include P1 to P4 students, graduate students, residents, staff and faculty.



In October, We Wore Pink!

Additionally, OU College of Pharmacy honored Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October with a range of activities, from a photo booth and scavenger hunt to writing letters to cancer patients, and ending with pink snacks. Thank you to everyone who participated and helped spread awareness and support for this important cause!





WELCOME, CLASS OF 2028



GPA

3.64

Prerequisite

3.50

Overall

3.35

Science/
Math

3.27

Biology/
Chemistry

3.49

Last 60
Hours

23

Average Age



Oklahoma Residents: 93%

Non-Residents: 7%

66

Class Size



The White Coat ceremony for the Class of 2028 was Aug. 15, 2024, at the Nicholson Tower Auditorium on the OKC campus.

MEET OU COLLEGE OF PHARMACY RESIDENTS FOR 2024-2025



Angie Giglione, Pharm.D. – PGY1 Pharmacy Resident

From: Kansas City, Missouri

Pharmacy School: University of Missouri–Kansas City

Hobbies: Hanging out with Jackie (my cat)

Why OU?: I enjoyed talking with OUCOP at ASHP Midyear! This college offers great opportunities for teaching and precepting, as well as a wide variety of pediatric rotations.

PGY2 Interest: Pediatrics

Advice: Remember to take breaks!

Mackenzie Luke, Pharm.D. – PGY1 Pharmacy Resident

From: Nederland, Texas

Pharmacy School: University of Houston College of Pharmacy

Hobbies: Staying active, reading, and going to concerts.

Why OU?: I loved the wide variety of rotations and longitudinal experiences offered! After talking with the previous residents at ASHP Midyear, I knew this program would provide a well-rounded experience with pediatric and adult rotations, as well as many teaching opportunities!

PGY2 Interest: Pediatrics

Advice: Don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone!



Ellie Malehorn, Pharm.D. – PGY1 Pharmacy Resident

From: Columbus, Ohio

Pharmacy School: Purdue University

Hobbies: Staying active, reading, and photography.

Why OU?: I loved the versatility of rotations and experiences offered. The unique combination of clinical and academia experiences provides a cohesive education while allowing many connections to be made with students, faculty, and other health care providers. Most importantly, the people here are some of the most kind and genuine people I've ever met!

PGY2 Interest: Pediatrics

Advice: Enjoy time with your friends and embrace whatever and wherever life takes you!

Chinemerem Opara, Pharm.D. – PGY1 Managed Care Resident

From: Houston

Pharmacy School: University of North Texas College of Pharmacy

Hobbies: Reading mystery novels, online shopping, and watching foreign shows.

Why OU?: I have a strong rapport with my RPD, Ashley, whom I met at AMCP conferences. Additionally, I believe my diverse experiences are crucial for my development as a managed care pharmacist, setting me apart from other candidates.

Future job interests: Health plan, consulting pharmacy agency, or a pharmaceutical company.

Advice: It's important to ask questions and be teachable!





Monica Le, Pharm.D. – PGY2 Critical Care Resident

From: Edmond, Oklahoma

PGY1: University of Oklahoma College of Pharmacy

Hobbies: Trying new food places with friends.

Why OU?: Being at a Level 1 trauma center, you get a very comprehensive learning experience. We also have a great preceptor group.

Future Job Interest: Critical care position.

Advice: Find hobbies and activities that make you happy outside of school!

Mike Brown Jr., Pharm.D. – PGY2 Ambulatory Care Resident

From: Moore, Oklahoma

PGY1: Oklahoma City VA Healthcare System

Hobbies: Gaming, dancing, tabletop roleplaying games, and listening to epic fantasy audiobooks.

Why OU?: Sooner-born, Sooner-bred, and when I die, I'll be Sooner-dead!

Future Job Interest: Ambulatory care pharmacist in the Oklahoma City metro area.

Advice: Life before death, strength before weakness, journey before destination.



Natalie Nix, Pharm.D. – PGY2 Pediatrics Resident

From: Hampton, South Carolina

PGY1: Mercy Hospital, Northwest Arkansas

Hobbies: Sports

Why OU?: I loved the fact that their PGY2 Pediatric Residency was a Critical Care Specialty!

Future Job Interest: PICU pharmacist.

Advice: Take every day as an opportunity to learn something!

Savannah Poole, Pharm.D. – PGY2 Internal Medicine

From: Oakboro, North Carolina

PGY1: University of Kentucky – Good Samaritan Hospital

Hobbies: Petting dogs, volleyball, eating, watching movies, reading, and spending time with friends.

Why OU?: The community! Everyone is so kind and uplifting, while pushing you to be the best version of yourself both personally and professionally.

Future job interests: Internal Medicine position.

Advice: Never take self-care for granted!



Thomas Rosandich, Pharm.D. – PGY2 Infectious Diseases

From: Mobile, Alabama

PGY1: Stormont Vail Health, Topeka, Kansas

Hobbies: Computer games, trying new foods and drinks.

Why OU?: They had everything I was looking for in a program and my meeting with the RPD at midyear made an impact on me.

Future Job Interest: Infectious diseases pharmacist.

Advice: Get involved with student and national organizations. It isn't that much work, and the payoff is huge.

Alumni Association Officers 2024-25



Chelsea Price, Megan King and Alex Walker

**WELCOME NEW
OU COLLEGE OF
PHARMACY ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION
OFFICERS**

President: Megan King, Class of 2013

King began her pharmacy career as a Walgreens technician in 2007 in her hometown of Norman. She continued as an intern while attending OU Pharmacy from 2009–13. After graduation, she worked as a staff pharmacist, and shortly after was promoted to pharmacy manager. During this time, she was involved in the creation of a pharmacy manager mentor/mentee program and collaboration with local organizations to promote health, well-being, and immunizations in the community. In February 2020, she transitioned to a registered store manager at a Walgreens community-based specialty location. She also served as a preceptor to the SWOSU-Walgreens Co. PGY-1 Community-Based Pharmacy Residency program.

King is currently the area health care supervisor for Walgreens locations in Oklahoma. As a passionate pharmacist, she is committed to advancing the profession of pharmacy, providing service in underserved communities, and building meaningful relationships. King currently resides in Norman with her husband, Kyle, and their two boys, Everett and Crosby. During her free time, she enjoys spending time with her family at the lake, going to the gym, and cheering for the Oklahoma Sooners, Miami Dolphins, and OKC Thunder.

President-Elect: Chelsea Price, Class of 2016

Price's pharmacy career began as a delivery driver for a local independent community pharmacy while attending high school in 2006. This experience made her realize the importance of strong patient relationships and ignited her passion for pharmacy. She continued serving and caring for those customers throughout her academic career and as she pursued her doctorate of pharmacy at OU. Post-graduation, she transitioned into managed care at a local pharmacy benefits manager, MaxCare, and worked closely with their parent company, PPOk, on various projects.

In November 2019, Price seized an opportunity to join CVS/Caremark as a clinical benefits pharmacist. Within two years, her performance led to a promotion to senior manager, where she oversees a team of pharmacists. Chelsea Price resides in Edmond with her husband, Brad, and their son, Owen. She enjoys watching Owen learn every day, traveling and soaking up new cultures and their histories, getting lost in a good book, and relaxing on the couch with her dog, Ozzy, while indulging in a TV series or documentary.

Secretary/Treasurer: Alex McNeely Walker, Class of 2014

Walker is currently a clinical operations advisor for CVS/Caremark. She graduated from OU Pharmacy in 2014 and went to work in independent community pharmacy for almost a decade before her current role. She is an avid Sooner fan and goes to as many OU sporting events as possible.

She enjoys giving back to the college and serving on the alumni board and especially enjoys encouraging soon-to-be alumni of the college. Alex Walker lives in OKC with her husband, Mark, and their dog Watson.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALUMNI AWARD RECIPIENTS FOR 2024

On June 27, the OU College of Pharmacy Alumni Association hosted an annual reception highlighting award winners for the past year. These recipients were nominated by their peers and approved through the alumni association council. A short bio on each award recipient follows:

Mary Shreffler, Pharm.D., BCPS ***Outstanding Young Alumni Award***



Mary Rose Shreffler, Pharm.D., BCPS, graduated from the OU College of Pharmacy in 2016 and completed a two-year pharmacotherapy residency at Texas Tech University School of Pharmacy. Shreffler joined the clinical pharmacy group at OU Health in 2018, supporting the family medicine team. She now splits her time between inpatient rounding and outpatient clinic by supporting residents, attendees and mid-level practitioners in delivering optimal patient care. Shreffler currently precepts learners from OU College of Pharmacy, taking both students and residents for inpatient and outpatient rotations as well as offering a pharmacotherapy elective for family medicine residents.

In her spare time, Shreffler enjoys experiencing different food, drink and live music scenes in the city and through other travel destinations alongside her husband and daughter.

Montana Rickey, Pharm.D. ***E. Blanche Sommers Alumni Award***

U.S. Air Force Capt. Montana Rickey, Pharm.D., graduated from OU College of Pharmacy in 2020. Her interest in health care began in high school when she worked as a pharmacy clerk. This role sparked her passion for helping people and ultimately led her to be commissioned into the U.S. Air Force.

Rickey is currently the hospital executive officer at Travis Air Force Base in Fairfield, California. She maintains responsibility for the day-to-day management of administrative, maintenance and logistical operations for 2,400 hospital personnel. Since commissioning into the Air Force after pharmacy school, she has been the officer-in-charge of the inpatient and satellite pharmacies, as well as the sole anticoagulation and metabolic clinical pharmacist.



In her free time, Rickey enjoys snow-boarding in Lake Tahoe, wine-tasting in Napa Valley and exploring the city of San Francisco.

Kelly Murray, Pharm.D., BCACP **Ralph D. Biefang Outstanding Practitioner Award**



Kelly Murray, Pharm.D., BCACP, received her doctorate of pharmacy from OU College of Pharmacy in 2007. She completed a PGY1 community pharmacy residency with USA Drug and then started her career on OU's Tulsa campus. In 2008 Her passion for ambulatory care pharmacy and medical education led her to OSU Center for Health Sciences, where she is currently the clinical associate professor in the emergency medicine department.

Murray teaches in the OSU College of Osteopathic Medicine and physician assistant programs and hosts OU pharmacy students at her practice site. Additionally, she is the pharmacist hub member of three OSU Project ECHO lines: adult psychiatry, pediatric obesity, and pediatric emotional and behavioral health. She was promoted to resident research director and is the only non-physician core faculty member for the center's emergency medicine residency program. She is the current president of the Oklahoma Society of Health-System Pharmacists.

Carmen Clelland, Pharm.D., M.P.A., M.P.H., M.S. **Distinguished Alumni Award**

USPHS Capt. Carmen Clelland, Pharm.D., an enrolled member of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, is the chief of staff for the Indian Health Service. In this position, he oversees the coordination of key agency activities and supports the Office of the Director in a broad range of duties. He earned his pharmacy degree from OU College of Pharmacy and also earned three master's degrees: public health in corporate compliance, pharmacogenomics and public administration in homeland security policy and coordination.



He most recently served as the senior health officer and director of tribal affairs in the office of Intergovernmental and external affairs at the Health Resources and Services Administration. His role at HRSA was to drive the agency's efforts to fully engage tribal nations to support advancing their healthcare workforce, resources, and services.


R. Chris Rathbun, Pharm.D., BCPS, AAHIVP, FCCP **Special Service Citation**



R. Chris Rathbun, Pharm.D., served as chair of the Department of Clinical and Administrative Sciences at OU College of Pharmacy and an adjunct professor of medicine in the Infectious Diseases Section for OU College of Medicine. For over 20 years, he was a clinical pharmacy specialist and program director for the HIV Pharmacotherapy Service at the OU Health Sciences Infectious Diseases Institute.

Rathbun earned his undergraduate degree in chemistry from the University of Minnesota and his doctorate in pharmacy from the University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy. He received the Regents' Award for Superior Teaching at OU Health Sciences and numerous teaching excellence awards at OU College of Pharmacy.

He retired this past year and moved to Minnesota, where he plans to travel and pursue his hobbies in music. He received his award in April 2024 during his retirement reception.



Anthony Burgett and
Jorge Luis Berrios-Rivera

SPOTLIGHT ON GRADUATE STUDENT *JORGE LUIS BERRIOS-RIVERA*

"As far as advice to students planning to obtain their Ph.D., I highly recommend that they use all the resources that the school offers."

Throughout the first two years in my graduate school career, I was involved in an organic synthesis project where the goal was to produce new, scalable scaffolds with improved drug-like properties as part of our drug development program of Oxysterol-Binding Protein (OSBP)- and OSBP Related Protein (ORP)-targeting antiviral and anticancer compounds. Toward this goal, I was trained primarily as an organic chemist.

Near the end of my second year as a graduate student, the Burgett Research Group relocated to the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the College of Pharmacy on the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center campus. With this transition, I had an expanded opportunity to gain a more fundamental understanding in

molecular pharmacology and drug development through additional coursework in the department of Pharmaceutical Sciences. These combined experiences from chemistry and biochemistry at OU Norman and pharmaceutical sciences at OUHSC have contributed toward my development as an interdisciplinary medicinal chemistry/biomedical researcher.

I started working on a project where the goal is to isolate and directly derivatize the OSBP/ORP4-targeting natural product OSW-1 and related compounds. In this project, I implemented an improved isolation/purification protocol to isolate OSW-1 and related compounds from the *Ornithogalum saundersiae* flower bulbs. The isolated OSW-1 material is then going to be used as a starting point to produce

several novel OSW-1-derivatized compounds for biological evaluation. These new OSW-1 analogs will be useful for studying OSBP/ORP cellular function, defining the structure-activity relationship (SAR) of OSBP/ORP binding, and as potential compounds for antiviral and anticancer drug development.

Along with giving me both conceptual and technical training, Burgett has also encouraged me to participate in multiple career development activities and workshops – e.g., public speaking at both local and out-of-state conferences, literature analysis outside of coursework, etc. One of the main advantages that I have obtained in my time of being part of Burgett's research group is having a more hands-on experience with the equipment that our lab currently has,

including High-Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC), Liquid Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry (LCMS), and Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR), all of which are considered highly desirable skills to have as part of your training.

Advice to incoming graduate students

As far as advice to students planning to obtain their Ph.D., I highly recommend that they use all the resources that the school

offers. For example, I have been going to the Student Counseling Services, which have been of great help in my academic journey. Obtaining a Ph.D. is not easy, and sometimes you may need some extra help. Counseling Services was the extra help that I needed.

It's always good to have a support system in place, both on a personal and professional level. When searching for a research group to join, make sure that you have a good compatibility with both the principal investigator and

the current lab members since they can also be a part of your support system. I have been blessed to have that support throughout my graduate school years.

Editor's Note: On July 26, Berrios-Rivera defended his dissertation, "Structure-activity relationships of oxysterol-binding protein-targeting compounds for anticancer and antiviral drug development." He is on staff at ARL Bio Pharma in Oklahoma City.

YOUR PLANNED GIVING CAN MAKE A LASTING IMPACT

For over 20 years, I have had the great pleasure of working with many families and friends to advance the OU College of Pharmacy. I currently serve the University of Oklahoma Foundation as the executive director of planned giving. Recently, I have also added the title of interim director of development for the College of Pharmacy.

The support of alumni and friends has made an everlasting impact on the College of Pharmacy. There are many ways to further the impact of your giving and to continue your legacy at OU through a planned gift. Through your will or trust planning, you are offered flexibility to support OU's future success while simultaneously taking care of your loved ones.

I hope you will consider giving back to your alma mater so we can sustain the tradition of excellence at the OU College of Pharmacy. Your support is vital to the college as we continue our important work in the future. The practice of pharmacy has grown substantially in the past 20 years and continues to influence our daily lives and have a tremendous impact on today's society.

If you are interested in more information on how you can make an immediate contribution or establish a planned gift to benefit OU College of Pharmacy, please contact Rex Urice at (405) 202-7708 or rex-urice@ouhsc.edu.





Loyd V. Allen

Faculty and staff at OU College of Pharmacy extended its deepest condolences to the Allen family this past spring. Dr. Loyd V. Allen, Jr., Ph.D., RPh., a distinguished figure in the field of pharmacy, passed away April 23. His legacy as a trailblazer, educator, and mentor will forever make an impact on pharmaceutical compounding and academia.

He earned his undergraduate and master's degree in pharmacy from the University of Oklahoma College of Pharmacy before completing his doctorate in pharmaceuticals at the University of Texas at Austin. Throughout his career, Allen held various positions, including professor emeritus at the OU College of Pharmacy, editor-in-chief of the *International Journal of Pharmaceutical Compounding*, and CEO of the Midwest Institute of Research and Technology.

His contributions extended beyond the classroom, as he served as a consultant to

CONDOLENCES EXTENDED TO THE ALLEN AND HORN BROOK FAMILIES

compounding pharmacists and the pharmaceutical industry. His scholarly output included 30 books, chapters and monographs, and the award-winning editor-in chief of the 22nd edition of Remington: *The Science and Practice of Pharmacy*. He served as Fellow of esteemed organizations such as AFPE, ACA, APhA-APRS and IACP, earning accolades such as the J. Leon Lascoff Memorial Award and the Stimulation of Research Award for his outstanding service of the profession of pharmacy.

Thomas Kupiec, Ph.D., and a member of the National Advisory Board for OU College of Pharmacy, commented about Dr. Allen. "Dr. Allen's impact on pharmaceutical sciences and the compounding industry has been invaluable for me. He was not just a man with incredible knowledge but demonstrated true wisdom by teaching and advocating for the compounding industry, promoting quality and safety for the patient. He was my major advisor

in graduate school. He was solid scientifically; firm but also fair in class and education. After he retired, he continued to collaborate with our companies to advance personalized medicine in compounding."

"We recently announced the establishment of the "United States Pharmacopeia Loyd Allen Education Grant and Fellowship" to enhance and advocate for quality and education for the pharmacy professional in compounding," said Kupiec. "His volunteerism and longstanding commitment to USP and serving as an expert committee member exemplified his servant leadership."

Additionally, faculty and staff at the college were deeply saddened to share the passing of Dr. Roger K. Hornbrook, professor emeritus of the college. Dean Medina said, "one of my favorite memories of him was during my first year on faculty. Every November the college would host a Thanksgiving lunch for the faculty, staff, and students. Dr. Shough would dress up as Santa and Hornbrook would dress up as an elf, long before the movie was filmed. He had a full elf ensemble with a green tunic, red and white striped stockings, and green pointed elf shoes. His costume was a funny juxtaposition to his personality. Every time I think of him in his costume it brings a smile to my face."

"In 2008, we asked Dr. Hornbrook to serve as chair of the Assessment Committee and, as the associate dean for Assessment and Evaluation, I oversaw this committee. I fondly remember several meetings where he would offer many of his euphemisms, such as "throw it up on the wall and see it sticks" and "no one gives a rat about that." He actually served an extended term for the assessment committee which lasted through one of our Pharm.D. program accreditations, even though he was technically retired! It was such a gift to work with him on this committee. He was always thought-



Roger K. Hornbrook

ful, always engaged, always helpful, always a servant leader, always kind and caring, and always ready to address tense situations with his dry sense of humor. I am a better administrator, faculty member, and person for having known and worked with him and for that I am grateful, although I will miss him terribly."

He was a dedicated educator and researcher who made a lasting impact on our community. Our thoughts are with the Hornbrook family and all who were touched by his life and work.

A YEAR OF MILESTONES AT THE OKLAHOMA POISON CENTER

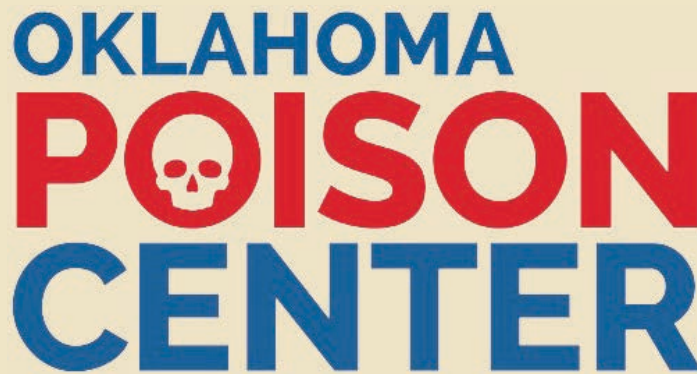
As the new managing director of the Oklahoma Poison Center, I am both honored and excited to lead such an exceptional team of professionals.

My journey in pharmacy began early, with my first experience working at a small independent pharmacy in

Seagoville, Texas, at the age of 16. This early exposure to the field ignited my passion for pharmacy, which I pursued with determination. My career took a significant turn during my time at the

Oklahoma Poison Center while I was a pharmacy student. This experience solidified my commitment to the field, and after completing my PGY-1 residency program in Tulsa, I chose to dedicate my career to becoming an expert in poison information and clinical toxicology. I earned my clinical toxicology board certification in 2018, and I am thrilled to now manage one of the best teams I have ever had the pleasure of working with. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to lead such a dedicated team and look forward to achieving great things together.

This past year has been marked by outstanding achievements among our poison specialists. Three of our poison specialists successfully passed their Certified Specialist in Poison Information re-certification exams. Every CSPI is responsible for taking the certification exam every seven



years. Their dedication and hard work are truly commendable. Our newest specialist, Aarti Narotam, joined our team in August of 2023, and passed the CSPI exam for the first time. Another specialist, Justin Carter, passed the exam for the second time. Our third specialist, Randy Badillo, who has been with the Oklahoma Poison Center for 23 years, passed the exam for the third time. The success of all three exemplifies the enduring expertise and dedication we strive for at our center. Each of these accomplishments underscores the high standards and professionalism that define our team.

This August, we celebrated a significant milestone: Roger Blackwood, one of our pharmacists, achieved 25 years of dedicated service to the poison center. Roger's extensive knowledge and experience have been invaluable, witnessing and adapting to countless changes in

the field of toxicology over the years. His commitment and expertise have greatly contributed to our center's success, and we are grateful for his many years of hard work and service.

We were delighted to welcome two new pharmacists to our team this year, both of whom have been part of our poison center community throughout their pharmacy student careers. Aarti Narotam graduated from OU College of Pharmacy in 2023 and worked at the poison center throughout her pharmacy student career. When it came time to graduate, we knew that we couldn't let her go. Aarti has been such an asset to our team and brings joy in the door with her every day. Dian Sultzbach graduated in 2020 and worked at the poison center during her time as a pharmacy student. Dian completed a PGY-1 pharmacy

practice residency at Integris Baptist Hospital and worked in their emergency department for three years before returning to the poison center. We are thrilled to have her as one of our night shift poison specialists. Her familiarity with our work and her impressive background makes her an excellent addition to our team. We are excited about the fresh perspectives and enthusiasm both Aarti and Dian bring to our center.

Our team also welcomed a new administrative assistant, Kelsey Dawson, who has seamlessly integrated into our operations. From day one, she has demonstrated a remarkable ability to manage tasks efficiently and support our center's needs. She is eager to assist with any poison prevention material requests and has already proven to be a valuable asset to our team.

This year, we bid a heartfelt farewell to Charles Bond, one of our dedicated pharmacists who retired after 15 years of service. Charles was a steadfast member of our night shift team, known for his unwavering reliability and positive demeanor, regardless of the weather conditions. His dedication, especially during challenging times, was truly inspiring. Charles, on behalf of the entire poison center, I want to extend our deepest gratitude for



Kristie Edelen

your remarkable service. We wish you all the best in your retirement, filled with joy and plenty of time to enjoy your favorite pastime—golf.

The poison center continues to be a vital training ground for future health care professionals. Over the past year, we have trained numerous clinical rotators, including pharmacy students, PGY-1 and PGY-2 pharmacy residents, emergency medicine residents, pediatric emergency fellows, and other healthcare students such as paramedics, nurses, and physician assistants. This diverse range of training opportunities allows us to share

our expertise and prepare the next generation of professionals for careers in toxicology and emergency care.

As we reflect on these accomplishments and look forward to the future, I am filled with pride and gratitude for the exceptional team we have at our poison center. Together, we will continue to achieve great things and make a positive impact in the field of toxicology.

— Kristie Edelen, Pharm.D., DABAT,
Managing Director, Oklahoma
Poison Center



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13TH ANNUAL ADRENALINE RUN SLATED FOR MARCH 8



Thank you to all our volunteers at the 12th annual Adrenaline Run!

The tradition of an annual run continues with sponsorship from the OU College of Pharmacy Alumni Association. The 13th annual Adrenaline Run 5K/10K on the Oklahoma City campus is slated for March 8. There will be an awards ceremony following the race. This event is timed by EnMotive and sanctioned by USA Track & Field.

Last year marked the 12th anniversary of the run. There were 247 registrants in total and over 70 volunteers. Additionally, we raised a record high of \$19,250 from 19 sponsors!

Proceeds from the run will benefit the college through future alumni association activities and expansion of contemporary education, research and service.

Not a fan of running or walking? Let us know if you're willing to serve as a race day volunteer to help cheer on the participants. For more information, please email cassidy-roberts@ouhsc.edu.

We encourage you to follow the Adrenaline Run Facebook event page for further updates.



Please respond to a short survey through this QR code. Thank you for your participation.

