Trick-or-Treat

From Austin Powers to Pocahontas and Tinker Bell, 13 costumed University of Colorado School of Pharmacy students brought hours of ghoulish fun to hospitalized children and their families at The Children’s Hospital.

Providing lessons in face painting, as well as bat, cat and pumpkin making crafts, student members of the Colorado Student Society of Health-System Pharmacists (CSSHP) hosted an evening of arts and crafts, Oct. 20, for sick kids and their siblings.

One of several community events that students organize and participate in, the Halloween event is an annual tradition where ghouls, goblins and Martha Stewart wannabes get a chance to escape the hospital setting by crafting to their heart’s content.

Second-year pharmacy student Melissa Erin helps Ashley Padilla make a picture frame.

NAPLEX Results  Congratulations to 105 out of 117 PharmD graduates from the Class of 2010 who took the NAPLEX exam from May through August. All passed the exam with a rate of 100 percent (versus the national average of 95 percent). In addition, SOP graduates scored greater than the national average in all three areas of the NAPLEX, and their overall scores were also better than the national average (108 vs. 103). Congratulations to all on a job well done.
Message from the Dean

Every year I am amazed at the projects and the number of hours of service – both professional and voluntary – that our students, faculty, alumni and preceptors willingly give. The variety and breadth of activity is astounding.

From cheering up hospital-bound children and conducting food drives, to reviewing NIH grants, coordinating and hosting conferences, providing relief to earthquake victims and supervising flu shot clinics, our students, faculty, alumni and preceptors provide thousands of hours of service annually.

This edition of Pharmacy Perspectives is devoted to highlighting activities that are making a difference to our communities at home and around the world, the profession and the school.

In this issue, you’ll discover what it’s like to help rebuild a health care system after civil war, be transported to Peru where students spent their summers assisting a local pharmacist and teaching natives the signs and symptoms of disease, and journey with an alumnus to Haiti to aid earthquake victims. You’ll also get a taste of what it’s like to serve on a Medicaid review panel, an NIH study section and editorial review boards.

I hope you will find these stories as motivating and inspiring as I do.

Ralph Altiere, PhD
Dean
University of Colorado, School of Pharmacy

School hosts first drug disposal day

Four hours. Seven pharmacy students. Four faculty members. One staff member. Six police officers. Numerous drums of over-the-counter medications, syringes, ointments and prescription medications. The school’s first-ever prescription drug disposal day collected and disposed of more than 756 lbs of medicines.

“To put it into perspective, similar events in the metro area have collected one-fourth the amount in double the time,” says Dean Altiere who assisted at the event.

With the help of 9NEWS, the University of Colorado Hospital, Environmental Health and Safety, AMC police and Aurora police, the SOP hosted its first-ever medicine round up June 5. The event garnered several news stories including interviews with 9NEWS’ Dr. John Torres, Fox 31’s Deborah Takahara, KOA’s Robbyn Hart, Colorado Public Radio and a call-in on 9NEWS.

“We’re pleased to do our part in disposing of unused and expired medications as part of our commitment to health care,” says Altiere.

Thanks to Dean Altiere, Drs. Sarah Anderson, Catherine Jarvis, Gina Moore, Peter Rice, Joseph Saseen, Nancy Stolpman, and Joseph Vandegriend; students Mary Alger, Diane Banet, Monica Evans, Chutima Julie Harichaikul, Brittany Schock, Angela Stephan, Ella Thompson, Nicole Vettese; police officers Doug Abraham, Doug Haynes and Lynn Whitten and university personnel Dana Brandorff, Jerman Lopez, Erika Matich and Jacque Montgomery for their help before, during and after the event.
The Rwanda experience –
A step back in time

Health care in Rwanda today is much like health care was in America 40 or 50 years ago. “In some ways it’s like taking a step back in time,” says Doug Fish, PharmD, chair of the Department of Clinical Pharmacy, of his recent teaching experience in Central Africa.

As part of the University of Colorado’s Global Health Initiative, Fish spent two weeks conducting morning rounds, lectures and discussing cases with medical students and doctors at the country’s two teaching hospitals.

“It opened my eyes. The practice of medicine is both simpler and also more complicated than in the United States,” says Fish.

Rwanda’s history is important to understanding its current situation. Pre-1994, Rwanda was a relatively stable country with a progressive health care system based upon the European model. Then, civil war broke out, wiping out the entire medical infrastructure and an estimated 800,000 people in 100 days. “Doctors, students, professors – mostly gone,” says Fish. Essentially the country had to start over again.

Rwanda and its health care system are in the throes of rebuilding itself. Because of the lack of resources, medical practitioners rely on good clinical exams and are not as reliant on laboratory or other diagnostic data as in the United States. In fact, there is one CT scanner in the entire country – serving nearly 11 million people. By comparison, there is one CT scanner for every 58,000 people in America. “What you might use here, they often don’t have access to, so you have to rethink how you practice.”

“They are using drugs in first-line therapies that we haven’t commonly used in many years,” says Fish. The reason – they’re cheap and accessible. Working primarily off of the World Health Organization’s list of essential medications, the government negotiates the best prices on the drugs they want, purchasing mostly from India and China. If the government can’t negotiate a good price or the drug is not available, patients will do without.

Without access to newer medications or advanced technology to make diagnoses and therapeutic decisions, Fish had to think differently. The entire experience kept him on his toes. “The situation in Rwanda is not good or bad. It’s just how it is,” says Fish.

Today, 87 percent of the population has access to health care, but with only two doctors and two paramedics per 100,000 people, there is a long way to go. And experts like Doug Fish are helping Rwanda recover and rebuild much-needed knowledge and infrastructure.

“The goal of the professional exchange is to help Rwanda advance one step further and try to make improvements in how medicines are utilized and how people are treated. It’s not to bring Rwanda to the same level as the U.S. is today.”

The Rwanda exchange was made possible by Calvin Wilson, MD, and paid for by the Center for Global Health.

“It opened my eyes. The practice of medicine is both simpler and also more complicated than in the United States.”

Doug Fish, PharmD
Hundreds of hours Devoted to Professional Service

Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences (DOPS) faculty members spend numerous hours every year loaning their expertise to scientific journals and reviewing National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant applications.

For Drs. Vasilis Vasiliou, Manisha Patel and Peter Anderson, there are plenty of benefits associated with serving on an NIH study section reviewing grant applications.

First, they get to review cutting edge science. Second, they learn how to present their own ideas better and improve their grant writing skills. Third, they network with the top minds in their respective fields.

“It’s exciting,” says Vasiliou, PhD, about serving on the AA-1 study section and his four years on the Anetrio Eye Disease study section. “It is a lot of work. However, it is a learning experience. And that excites me.”

Anderson, PharmD, who currently serves on the AIDS Clinical Epidemiologic (ACE) study section says, “Even though it’s a big commitment, it’s a way to give back to the research community.”

Patel, PhD, who just completed a four-year term on the Clinical Neurotransmitters and Neuroplasticity study section where she spent a minimum of 240 hours reviewing approximately 30 proposals a year, says “It was both an honor and well worth the time.”

Comprised of approximately 20 experts with a variety of skill sets, study sections meet three times a year to evaluate applications using five review criteria – significance, approach, innovation, investigator and environment. The grants are scored on a scale of 1-9, with 1 being the best. Each criterion is evaluated and a separate overall score is also provided. The applications and discussion at meetings are confidential. Once the application is scored it is sent to one of 24 institutes and centers who make the final funding decision.

In addition to serving on a study section, Patel currently serves on the Free Radicals in Biology and Medicine editorial board where she reviews manuscripts prior to publication. “I enjoy the professional service component and the ability to regulate the quality of research articles in my professional journal.”

According to Patel, being a part of an editorial board is an edifying experience. Yes it consumes quite a bit of time. But the rewards more than make up for the time. “Serving on an editorial board keeps me on top of new discoveries that are happening in the field.”

“It is a learning experience. And that excites me.”

Vasilis Vasilou pictured in the front row accompanied by his laboratory staff

Investigating drugs that prevent HIV transmission

Faculty member Peter Anderson, PharmD, is part of an expanding worldwide effort to fight HIV on a new front – preventing its transmission in people not yet infected by the virus. His work explores the possibility that using a daily, oral combination of two antiretroviral drugs – tenofovir and emtricitabine – prior to exposure to the virus would protect people from the virus, and in turn could greatly slow the spread of AIDS. Visit http://www.ucdenver.edu/pharmacy for more information about Dr. Anderson’s work.
Ever wonder why some medications are covered by the Medicaid outpatient pharmacy benefit plan and others are not?

Pharmacy students got a glimpse into how drugs make it onto the state’s Preferred Drug List (PDL) when the Medicaid Pharmacy and Therapeutics Review Panel recently met on the Anschutz Medical Campus (AMC).

“I now have an answer for a Medicaid patient who wonders why their medication is not covered,” says third-year pharmacy student Eric Johnson. “This simple explanation may be the difference between a patient continuing with their therapy or stopping out of frustration.”

The panel, comprised of seven physicians, two client representatives and four pharmacists (including two SOP faculty members), reviewed research conducted by the students, listened to public testimony regarding the medications, discussed side effects and interactions, and then made recommendations as to which drugs should be paid for by Medicaid. Drugs for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, depression, nausea, ulcers and hypertension were under review.

“This is one of the first steps in determining which drugs make it onto the PDL,” says Joseph Vande Griend, PharmD, faculty member and panelist. An evidence-based PDL is a formal published list of preferred drugs selected for their efficacy, safety and cost-effectiveness, based on documented scientific evidence. “We really want to show students how this works, and how the safety and efficacy of the drugs are among the most important considerations – not cost.”

So Johnson, along with 159 of his fellow PharmD students, became a participant in the process.

As an assignment for their pharmacoconomics class, students were required to research the medications, comparing effectiveness and what treatments worked best for a variety of populations. That information was then supplied to the panel.

“The students were exposed to the concept of comparative effectiveness research to help provide an objective assessment of the medications,” says Anne Libby, PhD, associate professor and course director for pharmacoconomics.

“By compiling the data and listening to the professional exchange, they got to see the depth and thoroughness involved in the process and secondarily helped the panel maximize its time.”

In addition to the research reviewed, the public had opportunity to testify. Both drug makers and physicians who have first-hand experience with the medications presented. The panel discussed the pros and cons of each medication and posed follow-up questions to the drug representatives and physicians. “The numbers are extremely important, but listening to the clinically-relevant opinions of the panelists and the extensive debate that ensued was insightful,” says Johnson.

For Johnson knowing how PDLs are formulated is important. “Whether you work in a hospital or community pharmacy, if you are unable to educate a patient to the process, that person may assume that it is strictly a cost issue and believe they are receiving suboptimal care.”

In the end, understanding the process and being able to explain it may help create a better, more compliant patient.
A tale of two students...
And their volunteer experience in Peru

Instead of sunning themselves by a pool during summer break, bilingual third and second year pharmacy students – Brooke Henry and Shelby Kemper – volunteered their time in Peru. While Henry worked in a Peruvian pharmacy in a metropolitan area, Kemper educated indigenous peoples of the Amazon on the signs and symptoms of disease. Even though the experiences were very different, the outcomes were similar – both were infused with a passion to help others in developing nations.

Pharmacy or Clinic?
For two weeks, Henry put her Spanish and pharmacy skills to the test by working alongside a local pharmacist in Cusco dispensing pills, injecting antibiotics and learning the inner workings of a South American pharmacy.

“The first day I met the pharmacist, he was cleaning an abscess and redressing it for a patient,” says Henry. “From that moment on I knew it was going to be different.”

While in Cusco, she discovered that pharmacists play a unique role in Peruvian culture. Prescriptions are not required for most medications. “The pharmacy is more like a drop-in clinic. Pharmacists diagnose then choose medications and doses for all manner of illness based on symptoms presented,” says Henry.

After determining that Henry could speak Spanish, her pharmacist encouraged her to assist all of the patients coming into the pharmacy. “The pharmacist I worked with even took the time to go through the different antibiotics he had in stock and talk with me about when they should be used. I really appreciated this because I hadn’t studied antibiotics in pharmacy school yet and it was nice to learn new things and be able to immediately put them into action.” One thing, though, that Peruvian pharmacists are not allowed to give is immunizations. Only physicians may do so.

“You don’t so much fill prescriptions as dispense two or three pills at a time, depending upon what the consumer can afford,” says Henry. Then the pharmacist, after instructing patients on how to take the medication, hopes that customers return for the full course. Because of this scenario, antibiotic resistance is high in Peru and injectable medications are becoming more common.

During her time in the pharmacy, Henry got used to seeing patients step behind the counter, drop their pants, and receive antibiotic injections.

“The first time I remember saying to myself, ‘Okay, that’s different.’ But by the time I left, I was used to it.”

What made Henry decide to volunteer? “I always wanted to teach abroad, but never had the opportunity. This was my 30th birthday gift to myself,” she says. Because Henry is fluent in Spanish, she specifically selected a Spanish speaking country. However, she quickly discovered that just because she spoke the language did not mean she understood everything the locals said. “They would alternate between Spanish and a local language that I didn’t understand, so there were times when I was a little confused,” Henry says.

One of the biggest obstacles for Henry occurred prior to her trip. “Finding a volunteer posting that involved health care was challenging,” she says. After locating a credible organization, International Volunteer Headquarters, that matches volunteers with countries and opportunities, Henry was disappointed to discover that only pre-med and medicine students are allowed health care postings. However, because of her persistence, the organization created a placement with an independent pharmacy specifically for her.

“I would do it again in a heartbeat,” says Henry, who would like to set up a P4 rotation in Ecuador next year.
Making a Sustainable Impact

Second-year student Shelby Kemper's eight-week experience in Peru was much different than Henry's, but no less rewarding.

As part of a student-run program, Kemper accompanied six medical students to Iquitos, a town known as the gateway to the Amazon. From Iquitos they traveled several hours by boat to remote villages along the Amazon and Napo rivers where they taught villagers how to recognize signs and symptoms of illness and when to seek help.

"By the time they realize that a person is seriously ill it's often too late. Consequently they have a tendency to stockpile antibiotics, contributing to drug resistance," says Kemper.

Understanding the culture and associated obstacles to health care are essential to making a difference. CU medical students have been traveling to Iquitos for two years and have become more culturally conscious and competent. "Descending for a week or couple of weeks once a year, triaging patients and doling out antibiotics with preceptor oversight might make us feel better, but it fosters dependency and, unfortunately, really makes no impact on the people you're trying to help," says Kemper. "It's a temporary solution."

Clean water, as well as proximity and access to health care are the biggest determinants of illness and mortality. Diarrhea and pneumonia are the top killers.

Because of the remoteness of the area and the fact that it is one of the poorest regions in the country, there is limited access to health care. The one hospital is hours away by boat. There are three health outposts staffed by physicians (most of the time) and six health outposts staffed by tecnicos whose role is similar to EMTs. Then each village elects a health care promoter to be in charge of the health of their fellow villagers. So, equipping the promoters with the knowledge to triage on their own is crucial.

"Direct outreach builds faith in the promoter in the community," says Kemper.

In order to make sure that they were providing the right kinds of materials to the promoters, the students contacted the World Health Organization prior to their trip. They were supplied with 25 rotolios, a bound laminated cartoon-like booklet, developed specifically for Peruvians.

Armed with the rotolios the group organized and taught three day-long courses to 85 promoters in two villages located along the Amazon. The students paid for all transportation, food and course materials for the villagers. They even copied and bound 65 additional rotolios for the promoters. Then they conducted individual village visits for in home demonstrations.

“Our goal was not to clinic and triage because that’s not sustainable. It was to help villagers recognize signs and symptoms of serious illness and get help before it's too late,” says Kemper.

Kemper and the other students have their eye on 2011 and beyond. Currently recruiting students for a trip next summer, the group has plans to start their own nonprofit to help pay for their outreach efforts. Always with an eye to ensuring that their methods are having a positive impact, they are developing a pre- and post test for promoters to measure the effectiveness of their approach.

“I loved every minute of the experience. It was a total joy to work with the people of Peru. It was challenging, but I left with a sense of accomplishment... like we were laying the foundation to really change lives,” says Kemper. And her volunteer experience in Peru has crystallized what she wants to pursue in the future. Concurrent with obtaining her PharmD, she is pursuing a certificate in Global Public Health and was recently elected co-president of Students for Global Health, one of the largest interdisciplinary clubs on the Anschutz Medical Campus. She is the first-ever pharmacy student elected to office in the organization.

For more information on this student-run program, contact Kemper at Shelby.Kemper@ucdenver.edu.
Students Paying it Forward

1. Nine members of ASCP joined together to walk in the Sept. 18 Alzheimer’s Association Memory Walk. Participants raised $530 and included back row (left to right): Alex Paine, Kevin Bailey, Laura Waechter, Amy Amerine, Wendy Lantaff, Alyse Kilijanczyk; front row (left to right): Verity McArthur, Mary Hensler, Stephanie Kling.

2. On Sept. 28, three Rho Chi members volunteered at the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society’s “Light the Night Walk” at Washington Park in Denver. Light the Night Walk is a fundraising event to pay tribute and bring hope to people battling cancer. In an effort to support this foundation and its life saving research, Kristin Braschler, Aleks Kolodziej, and Melissa Meyer served food to participants, cancer survivors, and a supportive, caring community. Next year, Rho Chi hopes to expand volunteer participation and make this an annual community service event.

3. Oct. 19 and 21, 29 pharmacy students showed off their immunization skills during two flu shot clinics at Anschutz Medical Campus. Pharmacy and nursing students immunized approximately 500 patients.
Up in Smoke
Research by faculty shows that smoking ban improves fetal outcomes

Robert Page, PharmD, together with pharmaceutical outcomes research faculty member Anne Libby, PhD, and graduate student Julia Slejko, collected and analyzed data from mothers in two Colorado locations before and after a citywide cigarette smoking ban in bars, restaurants and workplaces went into effect. The data underscore that citywide smoking bans contribute to a significant decrease in maternal smoking and pre-term births.

The study compared maternal smoking prevalence in Pueblo, where a smoking ban was implemented in 2003, to that of El Paso County where there is no such ordinance.

According to the new data, strong smoke-free policies can improve fetal outcomes by significantly reducing the prevalence of maternal smoking. “We saw a statistically significant reduction in the odds of pre-term birth, while the odds of maternal smoking dropped by almost 40 percent,” says Dr. Page.

In fact, data from Pueblo following the ban show a 23 percent decrease in the odds of pre-term births and a 37 percent decrease in the odds of maternal smoking. Birth outcomes in El Paso County, however, showed no such drop during the same time period. Findings in this first-ever study in the United States reflect similar findings from a study conducted in Dublin, Ireland, which is the only other study to survey this population.

With placements in the Los Angeles Times, CBS Radio and the Osgood Files, the study suggests that smoking bans have a significant and immediate positive impact on the health of infants and mothers. Pre-term babies stand a greater likelihood of experiencing cardiovascular issues later in life. “The good news is that implementing a strong tobacco control policy can protect even the most vulnerable from the deadly consequences of smoking.”

4. In October, the APHA student chapter publicized American Pharmacists Month by selling “Know Your Medicine Know Your Pharmacist” T-shirts. The organization sold 100 T-shirts and encouraged those who purchased them to wear them on Media Day Oct. 7.

P-2 David Vo is pictured here showing off the T-shirt.

5. SOP students, together with students from dental medicine, physical therapy and medicine, gave back to the community by providing free health education, screenings and flu vaccines through the Paris Elementary Health Fair, Saturday Oct. 23. Thanks to funding from TARGET, the students vaccinated 100 people with the influenza vaccine, screened 99 people and provided health education to 120 participants. Pharmacy students Kris O’Malley, P-1, and P-3 Allison Berch captured the health fair on video as part of Make a Difference Day with USA WEEKEND. Berch edited and posted the video onto the Make A Difference Day YOUTUBE channel. The video was made possible through Cisco, a sponsor of the event, who awarded 100 Flip video cameras to select project leaders, including Berch, who submitted proposals.

Residency Panel Draws Nearly 200 Students

Approximately 200 pharmacy students seeking information on residencies attended the CSSHP and PLS Residency Panel on Oct. 27, where they met face-to-face with residency directors and current residents in Colorado programs. Faculty members Drs. Linnebur, Page and Saseen highlighted the benefits of post graduation residencies including enhanced job opportunities. In addition, they provided tips on how to find a residency program, an opportunity to network with decision makers and potential employers, and first-hand information on what to expect from a residency. P-4s Candido Chacon and Anh TuThan attended the event.

Bone Marrow Drive

As part of the National Community Pharmacists Association Foundation’s Bone Marrow Drive week, the student chapter contacted independent pharmacies to determine interest in hosting a bone marrow drive. Three community pharmacies – Beattie’s in Brighton, Windsor Gardens in Denver and Dale’s Pharmacy in Fort Lupton – signed up to participate. Students Michaela Hasan, Stephanie Kling, Wendy Lantaff, Clarissa Manzi and Erin Marten staffed the bone marrow drives at the pharmacies, registered 37 people, took cheek swabs, and educated the community about the donation process.

Holiday Food Drive

With more than 18,000 food and personal care items collected, this year’s holiday food drive was a certified success! Organized and spearheaded by third-year pharmacy student Caleb Oh, the holiday drive nearly tripled the amount collected from the previous year. Congratulations to the P-3 class for collecting the most items. The items will be donated to the Collax Community Network, a nonprofit that advocates for and works on behalf of children and families residing in low-income, transient housing (primarily residential motels) along Colfax Avenue by providing information, services and programs to strengthen and improve family and community life.
Wilson, one of 50 medical professionals the U.S. Navy sent as part of Operation Unified Response, spent 10 days south of Port-au-Prince in Les Cayes setting up a pharmacy and helping dispense medications to the locals.

“The first couple of days were rough,” discloses Wilson. “The conditions were austere at best with limited access to telephones, no running water or refrigeration.” With lines at the pharmacy extending for blocks, he quickly learned what works under normal circumstances in the United States does not work in a public health emergency.

As the lone pharmacy officer and pharmacy department head, Wilson came up with a unique solution. He stocked several easily accessible locations throughout the clinic with the most commonly prescribed meds. Then physicians pulled what they needed from those locations and dispensed them directly to the patients. This virtually eliminated the lines. “If a physician needed a consult about dosing or the optimal medication to prescribe, a runner would be sent to the pharmacy and I’d make an on-the-spot recommendation,” says Wilson. During his time in Haiti, he and two pharmacy technicians were responsible for dispensing 500 medicines a day.

In addition to the three physicians that the Navy deployed, many civilian physicians volunteered their time. Because some of these physicians were specialists (many in oncology or pulmonary critical care) with limited knowledge of emergency medicine, they began to rely upon Wilson for his expertise in medications and dosing. According to Wilson, “It was exciting and helped hone my clinical skills…fast.”

The entire experience was very different from his community pharmacy position at home. “I don’t normally have this type of interaction with physicians in my day job. Every couple of minutes I’d have several runners waiting in line to ask questions. I felt my knowledge was being tapped and that I was making a difference,” says Wilson.

Wilson joined the U.S. Navy Reserve in 2003 as a response to the September 11 attacks, but contemplated a military career even before 9/11. “I have the best of both worlds. It’s a little like being Clark Kent. I get to shuck my everyday persona, fight disease, help those in need and experience new and different sights. I know what I do makes a difference,” says Wilson, “and I would definitely do it again.”

Editor's Note: As a consequence of his deployment in Haiti, Wilson was recognized by the U.S. Navy and was awarded the Navy Reserve Pharmacist Special Recognition Award 2010 at the Joint Forces Pharmacy Seminar in October.

Looking for a tax break this holiday season? The University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus has one for you! To encourage job creation, AMC has been designated as an Enterprise Zone by the state and as such is qualified for Enterprise Zone Tax Credits. From now until December 31, 2010, donors who make cash gifts to selected programs of the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus are eligible for a 25 percent state income tax credit (which is over and above the normal tax benefits for making a donation to a charitable organization). A tax credit may be used to directly offset any state income tax that you may owe. Contributions of securities qualify for a 12.5 percent state tax credit. Be sure to consult your tax advisor about this opportunity. For more information about the Enterprise Zone Tax Credit, contact Cheryl Kisling at 303.315.3608 or Cheryl.kisling@cufund.org.
Homecoming Game Brings Alumni Together

Despite CU’s 24-27 loss to Texas Tech, alumni who attended the game and meet-and-greet hosted by the school’s newly formed Alumni Association, had a fun time Oct. 23 at Folsom Field.

“Good food. Good company. Can’t ask for more,” says David Valdez (BS ’00) who traveled from La Jara, Colo. with his father and fellow SOP alumnus, Joe (BS ’76).

A total of 47 attendees (26 SOP graduates and their guests) checked in at the alumni area prior to the game for a quick meal, a couple of cold beverages, entertainment, and the opportunity to mingle with fellow alums of the school. “The day started out a little drizzly, but soon the clouds parted and the sun came out. It turned out to be perfect weather for a football game,” says faculty member and SOP alumna Sarah Anderson (PharmD ’07). The Alumni Association arranged a set of block seats for the game, and covered the cost of the food and drink prior to the event. Marketed through e-mail and the school’s e-newsletter, both season ticket and block ticket holders were encouraged to attend.

“Expect more of these types of events where alumni and students can mingle and get to know each other,” says board President Carl Pansini (BS ’80).

“The association just got up and running at the end of last year, so we’ve been consumed with putting our house in order.”

So far, the association has convened a board, established by-laws, created and printed a survival kit/messenger bag for first year PharmD and PhD students, and hosted the Oct. 23 football game.

Look for more opportunities to get involved and get together with alumni by visiting our website at www.ucdenver.edu/pharmacy and sign up for e-SOPS fables, the school’s bi-monthly electronic newsletter. The e-newsletter, a brief at-a-glance publication, provides information on events, people and programs of interest to alumni, students and faculty. Sign up today!

“Good food. Good company. Can’t ask for more.”

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Join the Alumni Association

Complete the following form and send with payment to:
University of Colorado/School of Pharmacy Alumni Association
UC/SOP AA, Mail Stop C238-L15, 12631 E. 17th Ave., Aurora, CO 80045
or fax to 303.724.2637

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Membership (please check one)
☐ Student – Free
☐ New Professionals – Free (within first three years post graduation)
☐ Professional – $100 annual fee (4th year post graduation and beyond)
☐ Lifetime – $300 ($250 if purchased within the first year after graduation; $300 for anyone who pays after the first year post graduation)
☐ Check enclosed (Make checks payable to CU SOP Alumni Association)
☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express ☐ Discover

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Signature:________________________
Government Agency Lauds SOP program

The School of Pharmacy’s Apothecary/Wardenburg Health Center recently received an award from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for its work with Clinica Family Health Services (CFH) to improve patient safety and health outcomes.

Sue Mead, PharmD and director of The Apothecary, approached the safety net clinic in Boulder to implement an anticoagulation management program for its patients. Currently, the school partners with CFH and splits the cost of a full-time pharmacist at the clinic.

“When we first approached them only 38 percent of their patients on anticoagulation therapy were under control. Our goal was to achieve 80 percent compliance – and we succeeded!”

Anticoagulation therapy monitors medications that inhibit the formation of blood clots. Such medications like warfarin and Coumadin are used to prevent heart attack, stroke and a variety of conditions including pulmonary embolism.

“Because these drugs are very sensitive, they need to be monitored very closely. Just a little too much or too little can seriously alter the effectiveness of the medication,” says Mead. In addition to monitoring the drug levels, patients need to be educated about the many different variables that can influence the anticoagulation level in the blood such as foods high in Vitamin K, antibiotics, steroids, antacids, aspirin and alcohol.

“Patient education and monitoring of their levels is extremely important to achieve the best possible outcome,” says Mead.

With that in mind, Mead with the help of SOP faculty and students, implemented an anticoagulation clinic at CFH and witnessed measurable results that are having a positive benefit for patients and students alike. According to Mead, the program will be rolled out into the CFHs other locations in Lafayette, Westminster and Thornton soon.

Want to determine the next generation of pharmacists?

If you’re a current pharmacist, now’s your chance! You’re invited to participate in one-on-one interviews with applicants for the PharmD Class of 2015. Paired with an SOP faculty member, you will be assigned to conduct 30-minute interviews with each applicant. The total time commitment for each interview day is two hours for an SOP faculty member, you can choose as many or as few as you would like. Contact Beverly Brunson at Beverly.Brunson@ucdenver.edu for more information and to sign up.