Interactions

2022 ALUMNI MAGAZINE

Celebrating the tradition of in-person graduation ceremonies

UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC

Thomas J. Long
School of Pharmacy
In 1955, the same year the School was established, the first polio vaccine was administered in the United States. In the decades since, health care has been impacted by countless innovations. The same can be said for Pacific. This year has been marked by our faculty, staff and students finding innovative solutions to compelling problems.

Prediabetes and diabetes are urgent health care issues in San Joaquin County, impacting nearly 60 percent of the population. In response, the Diabetes Care Clinics team partnered with the Abbott Fund’s Future Well™ Communities program to develop a targeted approach to reach individuals in the communities where they live. Further, doctor of pharmacy students have the opportunity to hone their counseling and communication skills through a new elective course.

For many individuals in underserved communities, transportation is a barrier to receiving essential health care services. Alumni Andrea Wamsley ’08, PhD and See-Yan Lam ’76, ’84, PharmD, PhD embraced the vision to mobilize student-led health care services with the purchase and retrofit of a mobile clinic van. Pacificans also have a unique opportunity to learn from pharmaceutical industry experts through the Jie Du Center for Innovation and Excellence for Drug Development. While many students and professionals aspire to become entrepreneurs, the process of taking an idea from concept to reality can be daunting. One of the courses the Center offers is focused on entrepreneurship and demystifies the process of launching a new product.

Research conducted at the School has real-world applications to patient care. Pain medications that are effective in managing severe or chronic pain often have side effects that greatly impact a patient’s quality of life. A research team led by Professor Mamoun M. Alhamadsheh, PhD published their research on a pharmacological probe that could lead to the development of pain medications with reduced side effects.

As you peruse these pages, I hope you will be inspired by how the members of the Pacific pharmacy family continue to be creative, strategic and innovative leaders.

Sincerely,

Berit Gundersen ’84, PharmD
Interim Dean
The School’s inaugural Annual Report includes updates on current students, recent graduates and scholarships. Also, learn about the professional and academic accomplishments of our students, faculty and staff.

In May, the School hosted its first in-person Diploma and Hooding Ceremony since 2019. The School’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee initiated the revision of the national Oath of a Pharmacist to include more inclusive language. The revised oath was recited by Class of 2022 doctor of pharmacy graduates at Pacific and across the country.

The two-week inaugural Pacific Summer High School Institute - Future Pharmacists Program enrolled 30 rising ninth- through 12th-grade high school students, where they gained skills in administering vaccines, compounding medications and more.

Two pharmacy alumni have partnered to fund a new mobile clinic van that will offer health services from blood pressure screenings to immunizations.

Pacific’s Diabetes Care Clinics have served more than 450 patients at nine outreach events targeted at underserved and underrepresented communities in Stockton. They have expanded their services to include a new Diabetes Prevention Program.

A research team at University of the Pacific led by Mamoun M. Alhamadsheh, PhD published its research on a novel pharmacological probe that could lead to the development of pain medications with reduced side effects.

Diabetes Care Clinics serve as a gateway to comprehensive care

Mobile clinic van to enhance patient care and student experience

Patient care at the center of Pride Health Alliance’s mission

The lasting bond of brotherhood

Groundbreaking research could reduce side effects of opioids

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU
Tell us what you think of Interactions magazine by completing a four-minute survey.

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TAKE A SHORT SURVEY

bit.ly/2022-interactions-survey
Since October 2021, Rajul A. Patel ’01 have prediabetes. and an additional nearly 96 million adults are unaware they estimates one in five adults are unaware they have diabetes. The CDC to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an,

Nareeta Sharma ’18 professor of pharmacy practice,

PharmD, MS, assistant clinical professor of pharmacy practice,

Suzanne A. Uchizono, clinic coordinator, and their team have Fa County Community Health Needs Assessment. According

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estimates one in five adults are unaware they have diabetes

and an additional nearly 96 million adults are unaware they have prediabetes.

Since October 2021, Rajul A. Patel ’01, ’06, PharmD, PhD, professor of pharmacy practice, Nareeta Sharma ’18, ’21, PharmD, MS, assistant clinical professor of pharmacy practice, Susanne A. Uchisone, clinic coordinator, and their team have served more than 450 patients at nine outreach events through the Diabetes Care Clinics.

The clinics target underserved and underrepresented communities in Stockton where diabetes is a prevalent issue. Each clinic offers a variety of health services including diabetes screening, cholesterol testing, blood pressure testing, vaccinations and a comprehensive medication review. In addition, patients receive free fresh produce and dried foods from a local food bank. Unique to these clinics, patients also can receive free blood glucose monitors and diabetes testing supplies; and personalized education on each device.

Stockton native Rebecca Favila attended a clinic in partnership with Little Manila Rising, where she learned she was at risk of prediabetes.

“I have to make sure I limit my carbohydrates,” said Favila. “I will also need to incorporate at least 30 minutes of exercise a day.”

The CDC reports people with prediabetes who take part in a structured lifestyle change program focused on healthy eating and physical activity can reduce their risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 58 percent.

“Currently, the only provider of in-person classes of the CDC’s Diabetes Prevention Program in San Joaquin County is Community Medical Centers,” Dr. Patel said. “Our program will be available to anyone, regardless of insurance status, where they receive care or their ability to pay.”

Patients such as Favila will be invited to participate in the Diabetes Prevention Program, offered through the Diabetes Care Clinics, where they can engage in interactive discussions to learn strategies for optimizing behavioral and sustainable lifestyle modifications including healthy eating and active living.

Applying her passion for chronic disease management, Dr. Sharma has spearheaded the launch of a new elective course. This past semester, doctor of pharmacy students had the unique opportunity to learn about evidence-based lifestyle changes, motivational interviewing strategies and ways to help patients navigate a prediabetes diagnosis.

“These students will have the opportunity to co-lead program classes with patients and facilitate group discussions,” said Dr. Sharma. “The elective course will help students with their communication and problem-solving skills because patients will face barriers meeting their lifestyle change goals and we as facilitators will need to help guide them through these challenges.”

First-year pharmacy student Pharanya Oum ’24 has benefited from practicing her communication skills through in-person patient consultations.

“Being able to gain experience with patient interactions through volunteering at these clinics has made me more confident in my ability to help people when they need it,” Oum said.

Pre-pharmacy student Nicholas Ha ’25 was selected as one of the undergraduate student clinic volunteers. Ha chose to volunteer because of his family history of diabetes.

“Seeing first-hand how diabetes impacts their daily life made me realize the importance of having resources to help them manage their condition,” Ha said. “Being able to participate in a clinic that not only helps patients the day of the clinic, but also in the future is extremely rewarding and enriching as a future health care professional.”

University of the Pacific, in partnership with the Abbott Fund, created the Diabetes Care Clinics to address the diabetes epidemic in underserved communities in Stockton. This is part of Abbott’s Future Well™ Communities program, which is working to address health disparities in Stockton by removing the barriers that prevent people with diabetes from living healthy.
Mobile clinic van to enhance patient care and student experience

By Dua Her ’09

Next year, the School will be expanding its delivery of community health care services to include a mobile clinic van.

Building on existing pharmacy care services, the mobile clinic van will enable doctor of pharmacy (PharmD) students and faculty to enhance patient care in communities where it is needed most.

“Health care is a precious commodity and there is a gap between underserved populations and access to care,” said See-Yan Lam ’76, ’84, PharmD, PhD. “I hope the mobile clinic van can close that gap and provide the necessary education and services.”

Dr. Lam earned both his PharmD and doctor of philosophy at Pacific and has been a strong supporter of the programs since graduating. He credits his father for instilling in him the importance of giving back to the profession and community. He offered his support when he learned of the idea to expand the impact of Pacific’s health care outreach through a mobile clinic van.

Andrea Wamsley ’03, PhD has volunteered her time at every Pacific COVID-19 vaccination clinic since the first one was held on the Stockton campus in January 2021. She has been inspired by the overwhelming support from the Pacific community and alumni who represent a dynamic group of health care practitioners. It was her interactions with students and patients that moved her to help fund the mobile clinic van.

“One of the best teaching tools for students is community outreach, and the mobile clinic will help students understand the scope of what pharmacists can do.”

See-Yan Lam ’76, ’84, PharmD, PhD

“While it is great to have the clinics at Pacific, in order to do meaningful work, we need to get into the communities where people are disenfranchised and underserved,” said Dr. Wamsley.

“With the mobile clinic van, you can help pharmacists understand about equity and health care across all levels and what it means to serve those communities.”

Drs. Lam and Wamsley value Pacific’s student-centered teaching environment and the hands-on experience they gained while in the program.

“One of the best teaching tools for students is community outreach, and the mobile clinic will help students understand the scope of what pharmacists can do,” said Dr. Lam.

“Students who participated in the COVID-19 vaccine clinics had such invaluable experiences,” Dr. Wamsley added. “You cannot recreate that in any clinical setting.”

The mobile clinic van will have clinical space with a sink, counter space, shelving and a private exam space that includes an exam table. The van also will be outfitted for use at immunization clinics.
Inspired by what they observed or experienced first-hand, pharmacy students are passionate about serving a vulnerable community through the Pride Health Alliance (PHA).

“The idea of establishing an LGBTQIA+ student organization stemmed from this elective, as it made me realize that the uncomfortable feeling I get whenever I seek different forms of health care should not be normalized,” said Dr. McClain. “Rather, health care professionals should be taught how to create an inclusive and accepting environment for all.”

Hearing stories of LGBTQIA+ individuals who faced negative biases within the health care system has inspired Madeline Son ‘23, PHA 2021-22 president, to be a force for change.

“I myself identify as LGBTQIA+;” Son said. “I wanted to join PHA to help educate my peers on why things like gender identity and sexual orientation are so integral to one’s health.”

According to the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, at least 20 million adults in the United States could be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

“Whether or not you are aware of it, you will work with patients and co-workers who identify as LGBTQIA+;” Son said. “Understanding issues affecting the LGBTQIA+ community will allow you to start seeing the gaps in care that these patients face so you can start to address their health disparities. Many studies have established that LGBTQIA+ individuals are at higher risk for various behavioral and physical health disorders. These disparities are due to a variety of reasons, some of which are due to systemic discrimination.”

RECOGNIZING CHAMPIONS OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Jasmine Patel, administrative assistant III, received Pacific’s Office of Diversity, Equity (DEI) and Inclusion 2021 Champion of DEI Award in the staff category.

Athena Hagan ‘23 received the 2022 Champion of DEI Award in the student category.

Erica Barr, PharmD, assistant clinical professor of pharmacy practice, received the 2022 Champion of DEI Award in the faculty category.

Marisella Guerrero ‘98, PharmD, assistant clinical professor of pharmacy practice, received the 2022 Champion of DEI Award in the faculty category.
1970s
Bertram L. Lum ’76, PharmD continues to serve as a member of the Finance Committee for the American Society of Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics, a position he has held since 2014.

1 | Robert Chan ’77, PharmD was recognized by the California State Board of Pharmacy for maintaining his California pharmacy license on active status for 40 years.

2 | Douglas “Doug” B. Hillblom ’78, PharmD and Katherine Hillblom ’77, ’82, PharmD, BCACP received the 2022 Patrocinium Award at the California Pharmacists Association (CPA) Western Pharmacy Exchange, April 22-24, 2022 in Las Vegas. The award was presented by Tony J. Park ’76, PharmD, JD and Elizabeth Akhparyan Park, PharmD on behalf of California Pharmacy Lawyers.

3 | Nicholas “Nick” Karpachinski ’79, PharmD joined the U.S. Navy as a pharmacist after a brief stint in private sector work and later transferred to the United States Public Health Service. Dr. Karpachinski retired in 2009 and lives in San Diego.

1990s
4 | Jeanne Gopac Brady ’93, PharmD accepted a position as director of pharmacy at Cardinal Health in April 2022.

5 | Juliana Burton ’99, PharmD accepted a position as director of ambulatory care pharmacy programs at University of California, Office of the President in April 2022.

2000s
6 | Lisa Faast ’01, PharmD received the 50 Most Influential Leaders in Pharmacy Award from the Pharmacy Podcast Network in December 2021. Dr. Faast is the founder and CEO of DiversityRx, Pharmacy Badass University and the Pharmacy Profit Summit, all of which are dedicated to helping independent pharmacies grow profitably.

7 | Nasibbo (Abuhmadan) Makarem ’01, PharmD is department chair and program director of the pharmacy technology program at Cerritos College.

8 | Liso Kipper ’02, PharmD is the director of experiential education at Marshall B. Katuch University, College of Pharmacy in Fullerton. Dr. Kipper serves as a board member and secretary of the Orange County Pharmacists Association and on several committees and councils for CSHP. She also serves on the American Society of Colleges of Pharmacy experimental education committee.

9 | Kevin Komoto ’08, ’09, PharmD, MBA served as a 2021-22 trustee for the California Pharmacists Association.

10 | Johanna Lu ’09, PharmD, MBA, FCPhA became president and CEO of the San Francisco Community Clinic Consortium in May 2022. The consortium includes 12 member clinics with 27 sites serving more than 112,000 low-income, uninsured and medically underserved people per year in San Francisco’s most vulnerable neighborhoods.

11 | Natalie Hajian ’14, PharmD, MBA, BCPS accepted a position as clinical manager and PDTO pharmacy residency program director at Providence Cedars-Sinai Tarzana Medical Center.

12 | Yuntao Zhang ’14, ’21, PhD accepted a position as a mass spectrometry and data analysis scientist at Bristol Myers Squibb in October 2021.

2010s
13 | Alex C. Kong ’11, PharmD, MBA, APH, BCPS, BCACP presented on the California Right Meds Collaborative at the 2022 CPA-WA Western Pharmacy Exchange.

14 | Jeremy L. Lim ’12, PharmD started a new position as director of clinical pharmacy at Terasu Pharmaceuticals, Inc. in April 2022. Dr. Lim co-authored “Fenebrutinib in H1 antihistamine-refractory chronic spontaneous urticaria: a randomized phase 2 trial” in Nature Medicine, Nov. 8, 2021 and “A phase 2 randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial of the monoclonal antibody MHA2454 in patients with acute uncomplicated influenza A infection” in Open Forum Infectious Diseases, Dec. 10, 2021.

15 | David Corronza ’14, ’19, PharmD accepted a position as an epidemic intelligence service officer at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in July 2021. He serves in this role as a lieutenant in the United States Public Health Service.
Michael Conner is president-elect of the California Pharmacists Association

Michael Conner ’12, PharmD, Global MBA is president-elect of the California Pharmacists Association (CPhA). As president, Dr. Conner will be the 17th Pacifican to serve in this role.

Dr. Conner has been an engaged member of CPhA since he joined as a Pacific student. In 2014, he received the CPhA New Practitioner of the Year award and was an active member of the Central Valley Pharmacists Association, where he has served as the chapter’s president.

His experience encompasses systems and retail pharmacy settings. Dr. Conner has served as a CPhA systems and retail pharmacy settings. His experience encompasses systems and retail pharmacy settings. His experience encompasses systems and retail pharmacy settings. He is passionate about empowering future pharmacists by supporting opportunities for leader development. Dr. Conner has served the Pharmacy Leadership Education Institute as a facilitator and the Pacific Pharmacy Alumni Association as a board member. A proud member of the Alpha Psi chapter of Phi Delta Chi, he has served on the board of directors for the Alpha Psi Education, Scholarship and Leadership Foundation.

His experience encompasses independent, outpatient/inpatient systems and retail pharmacy settings. In addition, he has served as a CPA staff member and an adjunct faculty member at several universities. Dr. Conner is currently a regional pharmacy services manager for California Correctional Health Care Services and owner of Conner Consulting.

Correctional Health Care Services and Conner is currently a regional pharmacy member at several universities. Dr. Conner is an active faculty member and an adjunct faculty member of the Alpha Psi Education, Scholarship and Leadership Foundation.

Sigma Tau Gamma, Delta Chi, he has served the chapter’s Board of Directors for a second term. In December 2021, she was promoted to senior manager of regulatory affairs at Biogenerics.


April Nguyen ’16, PharmD, RAC was recognized as the 2022 American Pharmacists Association Distinguished New Practitioner of the Year. She was also named the 2022 Sacramento Valley Pharmacists Association Pharmacist of the Year and was elected to serve on the chapter’s Board of Directors for a second term. In December 2021, she was promoted to senior manager of regulatory affairs at Biogenerics.

Andy Szeto ’18, PharmD was promoted to associate director of clinical science at Biogenerics in San Mateo in March 2022.

Nigina Ali ’19, PharmD received the Department of Veterans Affairs North Star Award in September 2021. Dr. Ali is currently a clinical hematology/oncology pharmacist for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in Martinez.

Cody Luallen ’19, PharmD, BCPS earned his Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist certification in 2021. Dr. Luallen is a clinical pharmacist in the intensive care and infectious diseases unit at Marshall Medical Center in Placerville.

Allison Mac ’19, PharmD, BCPS earned her Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist certification in November 2021. Dr. Mac is currently a fellow of University of the Pacific’s Pharmacy Practice Fellowship.

Diane “Diane” Hwang ’20, MS, PharmD, BCPS earned her Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist certification in November 2021. Dr. Hwang is a clinical pharmacist at Sutter Medical Center in Sacramento.

Andrea Zhao ’20, PharmD, BCPS completed a PGY1 pharmacy residency at Community Regional Medical Center in Fresno and accepted a position as a clinical pharmacist at the medical center in July 2021. Dr. Zhao earned her Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist certification in November 2021.

Lisa R. Chao ’21, PharmD completed a PGY1 residency at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System and will pursue a PGY2 infectious disease residency at LAC + USC Medical Center.

Sehyun Jeong ’21, PharmD completed a PGY1 residency at Scripps Mercy Hospital - San Diego.

Ashley Gwanzon ’21, PharmD completed a PGY1 residency at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System and will pursue a PGY2 infectious disease residency at the LAC + USC Medical Center.

Anh Nguyen ’21, PharmD completed a PGY1 residency at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System and will pursue a PGY2 infectious disease residency at the LAC + USC Medical Center.

Michelle She ’21, PharmD completed a PGY1 acute care residency at County of Santa Clara Health System.

Emilia Wolf ’21, PharmD completed a PGY1 acute care residency at County of Santa Clara Health System.

Do you know a member of the Pacific “pharmily” who deserves to be recognized? Nominate students, faculty, staff or alumni by briefly sharing their professional or academic accomplishments.

Submit a Kudos

bit.ly/kudos-form

SHINE THE SPOTLIGHT ON YOUR PEERS
Acetylcholine-Induced Relaxation of Mesenteric Arteries in Ovariectomized UC Davis Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus Rats in Prediabetic State” in Frontiers in Physiology, June 17, 2022.

Ranjani Akther ’19, PhD, Bhabanik Rahimon, PharmD, MSc, PhD, professor and chair of the Department of Physiology and Pharmacology, et al. published “17-Estradiol Treatment Improves Acetylcholine-Induced Relaxation of...
KAPPA PSI, GAMMA NU CHAPTER
EST 1960
Adrian Chen ‘22, PharmD joined Kappa Psi as a freshman pre-pharmacy student at Pacific and went on to serve as regent, the chapter’s top leadership position.

“From attending retreats to hanging out after chapter meetings, from taking spontaneous trips to attending rush dinner, the best memories I have had during my college experience can be attributed to the fraternity,” said Dr. Chen.

Kappa Psi prides itself on providing a close-knit environment that fosters the academic, social and professional growth of all of its brothers.

“There are countless opportunities to develop your professionalism from our numerous leadership positions, volunteer opportunities and extensive alumni network,” he said.

One of Dr. Chen’s APPE rotations was at an inpatient psychiatric facility. It was a formative experience.

“Learning about psychiatric conditions from lectures is very different from interacting with patients in real life,” he said.

LAMBDA KAPPA SIGMA, ALPHA XI CHAPTER
EST 1959
Elisabeth “Elisa” Nguyen ‘22, PharmD joined Lambda Kappa Sigma (LKS) as a freshman pre-pharmacy student and went on to serve as the chapter’s vice president.

“I wanted to be a part of Greek life because I was craving a sense of community where I could befriend others with similar interests, as well as have opportunities for growth both as a leader and a pharmacist in training,” said Dr. Nguyen. “I decided to join LKS because I felt an instant connection with them at rush events. Also, LKS is focused on expanding women’s health and supporting women in pharmacy, which are things I am very passionate about.”

Two individuals – Randell Miyahara, PharmD and Yvonne Mai ‘13, ’15, PharmD, M5, BCACP, BCACP, associate professor of pharmacy practice and regional coordinator for Stockton – left lasting impressions on Dr. Nguyen.

“With Dr. Miyahara, I was able to focus on population health initiatives and make inpatient assessments with patients,” she said. “With Dr. Mai, I was able to interact with patients with diabetes and patients from the geriatric population at San Joaquin General Hospital. During this clinic, I worked alongside physicians, medical students and medical assistants. I was able to make interventions and give recommendations to improve the patient’s medication regimen as well as counsel the patient on their medications. It was rewarding to see the impact of my recommendations first-hand, especially when I would see repeat patients in follow-up visits.”

For decades, the School’s four professional pharmacy fraternities have served as anchors — engaging students socially while spurring on their leadership and professional development.

By Anne Marie H. Bergthold

The lasting bond of BROTHERHOOD

For decades, the School’s four professional pharmacy fraternities have served as anchors — engaging students socially while spurring on their leadership and professional development.

The fraternities also provide a vital connection between undergraduate and doctor of pharmacy (PharmD) students. For many members, fraternities act as a bridge, carrying them from their freshman year in Pacific’s Pre-Pharmacy Advantage Program through their final year in the PharmD program.

Recent graduates reflect on their time with their fraternity and share which Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience (APPE) rotation impacted them the most as future pharmacists.
Andy Ly ’22, PharmD joined the Phi Delta Chi brotherhood as a freshman pre-pharmacy student at Pacific and went on to lead the chapter in the role of worthy chief counselor.

Alpha Psi’s motto is “leaders in pharmacy, brothers for life,” and its goal is to find the balance between the professional and social aspects of college life.

“The leadership positions are a testament to Phi Delta Chi’s core values of professionalism and leadership,” said Dr. Ly. “The unforgettable memories, strong relationships and invaluable guidance I’ve received throughout the years would not be possible without Phi Delta Chi.”

While on an APPE rotation in San Diego, Dr. Ly interacted with patients from around the world, including many from Mexico, Vietnam, and Cambodia.

“La Maestra Community Pharmacy is unique as it serves a community that is primarily uninsured individuals or low-income immigrants,” he said. “The experience gave me a new perspective as a health care provider.”

Tiffany Vu ’22, PharmD joined Rho Pi Phi during her sophomore year as a Pacific pre-pharmacy student.

“I specifically chose to join Rho Pi Phi because, from the moment I stepped into a room of brothers, I immediately felt at home and found a place where I could become a leader in my own right,” said Dr. Vu. “Since its founding, Rho Pi Phi has exemplified inclusivity and service, and the brothers continue to create new projects and events that contribute to the community and allow them to grow as future health care professionals.”

Knowing she was in a supportive environment gave Dr. Vu confidence when stepping into the chancellor position, the chapter’s lead role.

“Rho Pi Phi was a place where I had no fear of making mistakes or failing because I always knew that there would be someone there to help me or give me advice,” she said. “It also opened unique opportunities for me to be creative with promotional materials and web design, and to present findings of a research project at a pharmacy regional meeting.”

The APPE rotation that was most impactful for Dr. Vu was the ambulatory care rotation at Kaiser Permanente South San Francisco, specifically in the kidney stone prevention and anticoagulation clinics.

“The kidney stone prevention program is the first of its kind,” she said. “Being a part of the pilot phase has been an unforgettable experience as I gained knowledge of the considerations made when creating protocols and an efficient workflow to provide the best patient care, while being cost-effective. Each day, my preceptors challenged and mentored me to think of myself as a pharmacist and not a student. The supportive feedback I received from my preceptors and the staff at the clinics continues to inspire me as I start my journey as a pharmacist.”

Irene Chia ’22, PharmD served as the 2020-21 president of the Professional Pharmacy Fraternity Council. The council has a unique and critical role as an umbrella organization. Its primary aim is to promote collaboration between Pacific’s four professional pharmacy fraternities.

“As president, it was her goal to encourage positive relationships between fraternities, reduce the stress of competition and provide opportunities for students to meet and network with other aspiring pharmacists.”

“Joining a fraternity was one of the best decisions I made as a pre-pharmacy student as it allowed me to make connections with students and alumni who have inspired me to tackle any obstacles that come my way and encouraged me to do something I’ve never done before.”

Tiffany Vu ’22, PharmD
Pharmacological probes are similar to drugs but investigate rather than treat. Probes investigate the site action of the drug, allowing researchers to better understand what causes side effects.

“Opioids are effective in the management of severe acute and chronic pain,” said Dr. Alhamadsheh. “However, they are often associated with dose-limiting side effects, such as sedation, nausea, vomiting, constipation and respiratory depression. Opioid induced constipation (OIC) is the most common side effect of opioid usage affecting 80 percent of patients who receive opioids for chronic or cancer-related pain. OIC can be difficult to manage and can be severe enough to require opioid discontinuation, exposing patients to unnecessary pain.”

Several peripherally acting mu-opioid receptor antagonists (PAMORAs) have been developed to lessen side effects such as OIC, but they are not very effective and often reverse the intended action of the opioid. Dr. Alhamadsheh’s research team has developed a new class of PAMORAs that does not cross the blood-brain barrier and as a result is effective in reducing side effects without lessening the efficacy of the opioid.

“The immediate application of this research is a more effective therapy for OIC and potentially lowering the brain toxicity of some drug molecules,” he said.

Further, the research shows opioid receptors in the brain are linked to the cause of OIC, contrary to existing literature, which suggests OIC is caused primarily by opioid receptors in the gastrointestinal tract.

Groundbreaking research could reduce side effects of opioids

By Anne Marie H. Bergthold

A research team led by Mamoun M. Alhamadsheh, PhD, professor of pharmaceutics and medicinal chemistry, published its research on a novel pharmacological probe that could lead to the development of pain medications with reduced side effects.
Like many in the pharmacy profession, this year’s Pacific Pharmacy Alumni Association Alumna of the Year Margaret Peers Frederickson ’66, RPh did not slow down during the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, after more than 50 years as a pharmacist, Frederickson only ramped up her efforts working as a full-time relief pharmacist for CVS Pharmacy.

“It has been my privilege to travel throughout much of Northern California, providing pharmacy services in the battle against COVID-19,” said Frederickson. “In addition to filling thousands of prescriptions and counseling patients, I vaccinated hundreds of those who were eligible, helping to ensure their safety during this dreadful pandemic. It has been a highly rewarding opportunity to serve.”

Frederickson knew in seventh grade that she wanted to be a pharmacist. She was drawn to Pacific because of its strong Methodist heritage, moderate-size and student-centric reputation. Among the first group of female pharmacy students at Pacific, she was instrumental in the creation of the Lambda Kappa Sigma fraternity chapter.

Frederickson and her husband, Dave, were married in Morris Chapel in 1963. Even when their professions took them across the country, Pacific was never far from their hearts. In the early 1990s, they co-founded a regional Pacific alumni club in the Washington, D.C. area.

While working at pharmacies in Washington, D.C. near the White House and CIA headquarters, she filled prescriptions for many government employees, including staff members to the president and members of the United States Foreign Service.

“Each week, dozens of prescriptions went into State Department diplomatic pouches, destined for the far corners of the globe,” she said.

Since their return to Stockton in 2005, Frederickson has served on several committees of the Pacific Alumni Association, including a term on the board of directors where she helped develop many key initiatives including the annual Faculty Mentor Award and the Pacifican Who Changed My Life honor. While serving as liaison for Pacific’s Jacoby Center for Public Service and Leadership, she helped found and endow the Jacoby Center Citizen Leader on Campus award in honor of her grandfather, Robert A. Peers, MD. She was a charter member of the Pacific Fund Advisory Board and served as a reunion class agent. She also played a critical role in developing the Beyond Our Gates community outreach initiative.

Frederickson is a member of Pacific’s Half Century Club and the Pacific Heritage Society.

“I’m very proud to be a graduate of University of the Pacific’s pharmacy school,” she said. “I am deeply grateful and humbled by this unexpected honor. The vast choices of our field seem almost endless today. Take heart, listen carefully, learn all you can, grab hold of that dream to shape your career and serve the human family.”

If you are interested in becoming a Pacific Pharmacy Alumni Association board member, please contact Becky Perry, alumni relations manager, at bperry@pacific.edu
One of the hallmarks of a doctor of pharmacy degree from the Thomas J. Long School of Pharmacy is the door it opens to a powerful alumni network. When alumni offer their time and talent as volunteers to the School it provides an invaluable experience to current students. There are many opportunities to engage. Several of our alumni shared their experiences as volunteers.

Elizabeth Johnson ’87, PharmD
Regent, Pacific Board of Regents
Member, Dean’s Leadership Council
Volunteer, COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics

Why is it important for you to stay engaged with the School? “I got a fabulous education at UOP. The faculty provided me with the foundation for a successful, rewarding career in the pharmacy profession. I feel it is my responsibility to stay engaged and give back, whether with time, talent or treasure. Selfishly, I get much more out of my engagement than I give!”

What makes it rewarding to give back? “I have especially enjoyed volunteering at the COVID-19 vaccine clinics. Not only is it an opportunity to have some patient care experience I wouldn’t ordinarily have, but it’s also fun to interact with current students and share my experiences. It has been incredibly impressive to meet the students involved in the leadership of Operation Immunization and to realize the clinics are student-run to a large degree.”

Jessica Mah ’16, PharmD
Preceptor, Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experience

Why is it important for you to stay engaged with the School? “Staying engaged gives me the opportunity to be an active participant in shaping the future of pharmacy. I benefited from having approachable and insightful preceptors and mentors during my years at UOP. I want to make sure future students continue to get that same level of support and guidance to grow into exceptional pharmacists.”

What makes it rewarding to give back? “Seeing my students’ progress throughout the semester, both in terms of developing their confidence and furthering their education, is the best part of being a preceptor. Knowing I had a positive impact in shaping their pharmacy career and giving them the tools to help their future patients makes precepting so worthwhile.”

Jeremy Kang Matsumoto ’18, PharmD
Preceptor, Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience
Preceptor, Health Care Outreach Events

Why is it important for you to stay engaged with the School? “Some of my best mentors were my preceptors. Also, University of the Pacific gave me the opportunity to get some very nice rotations, so I want to continue the tradition of providing great mentorship outside of the traditional classroom.”

What makes it rewarding to give back? “I’ve enjoyed mentoring future pharmacists. It also helps me to stay up to date with the most current clinical practice.”

How do you hope to help shape students and the profession? “I hope to train the next generation of clinicians who are able to provide top-level care and are able to adjust to a changing health care world.”

Osagie Omoruyi ’15, ’19, PharmD
Board Member, Pacific Pharmacy Alumni Association
Member, Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity

What makes it rewarding to give back? “It is a chance to pay it forward like those who paid it forward for me; a chance to plant and/or water a seed in another individual’s personal and professional growth.”

How do you hope to shape students and the profession? “I hope the knowledge and understanding gained from my journey will be a guide to assist students with their journey and act as a reminder to share their lessons learned.”

Matthew Serna ’11, PharmD
Preceptor, Medicare Part D Outreach Clinics

What makes it rewarding to give back? “I was born and raised in Stockton, so it is nice to be able to give back to the community where I grew up. The bulk of what I volunteer for is the Medicare Part D outreach program, which helps Medicare beneficiaries choose the lowest cost plan for them. It’s very rewarding knowing that I can help save some of these patients hundreds or even thousands of dollars, which I know makes a real difference in their lives.”

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This past year, our students, faculty and staff distinguished themselves academically and professionally. Learn more by exploring the School’s inaugural Annual Report.