



College of Pharmacy
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

Report to the
Texas Pharmacy Congress
August 12-13, 2024

ASP Students Earn TPA Honors, Attend APhA Substance Use Disorder Institute

Members of the UHCOP Chapter of the American Pharmacists Association-Academy of Student Pharmacists had a busy summer, including attending the Texas Pharmacy Association Conference & Expo July 26-28 in Allen and the APhA Institute on Substance Use Disorders May 29-June 1 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Tyler Trinh, Pharm.D. candidate, and **Alyssa Glass**, third-year student, as Chair



Students Hunter Adam, Mai Le and Adina Zidermanis participated in the Patient Counseling Competition state finals, with Adam finishing in second.

and Chair-elect, respectively, of the TPA-ASP Board of Directors.

Kason Landman, third-year student, and **Dylan Subroto**, second-year student, transitioned into their positions as members of the Board of Directors and APhA-ASP Policy Vice President and Policy Junior Chair, respectively.

Hunter Adam, Pharm.D. candidate, finished second in the Patient Counseling Competition.

Pharm.D. candidate **Tammie Lam** and **Trinh** were awarded a Texas Pharmacy Foundation Scholarship and the Larry "Neal" McLaugherty Scholarship, respectively.

Seven UHCOP students – **Vishwa Bhakta**, **Christian Brown**, **Modi Dhvani**, **Kelsey Fisk**, **Maryam Nafea**, **Dewan**



Seven UHCOP Pharm.D. students were among the attendees of the 2024 APhA Institute on Substance Use Disorders.

Protiva and **Adina Zidermanis** – attended the APhA "Utah Experience." All students received travel support from The PREMIER Center at UHCOP, while Protiva and Zidermanis also were awarded TPF Professional Recovery Network Student Scholarships. The students will offer reflections on their experiences during a college Pharm.D. Convocation in the fall.

Houston Program Honors Varkey with Anderson Award

The Houston Program (THP) in Pharmacy Administration & Leadership honored UHCOP alumnus **Alex C. Varkey**, Pharm.D. ('05), M.S., FAPhA, with its Roger W. Anderson Leadership Award at the program's 6th annual RWA Leadership Celebration June 20 in Houston.



Alex Varkey, second from right, accepts the Anderson Leadership Award from THP alumni Linda Haines and Alfred Awuah, and THP academic director and wife, Divya Varkey.

First presented in 2019 and named in honor of the trailblazing health-system leader, the award is bestowed on pharmacy practitioners who have distinguished themselves in leadership and service to the profession and THP.

Varkey is director of pharmacy services

at Houston Methodist Hospital, where he has implemented innovative technologies to enhance efficiency and safety in medication-use processes, and developed thriving learner programs, including an award-winning two-year Health-System Pharmacy Administration

and Leadership residency.

A longtime advocate for practitioner well-being with several publications on the topic, Varkey recently started his term as 2024-25 National President of APhA, bringing him full circle after serving as APhA-ASP President in 2004-05.

RGV Outreach Gets NACDS Support

Thanks to a \$15,000 Diversity Scholarship Award grant from the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) Foundation, UHCOP is enhancing its pharmacy student recruitment and community education outreach efforts among the underrepresented and underserved populations of the Rio Grande Valley.

The funding will allow the college's RGV Satellite Program to host two pharmacy career exploration camps for high school students from the region in October 2024, as well as a community health fair slated for January 2025. Both activities will be in collaboration with RGV program partner, DHR Health in Edinburg.

Student News

Nine UHCOP Pharm.D. students -- **Dayla Badr, Rim Barakat, Gabriela Gaytan, Rachana Inteti, Chad Johnson, Khaled Khan, Tammie Lam, Dylan Subroto** and **Tyler Trinh** -- attended the inaugural Texas Pharmacy Association Student Leadership Institute April 20 in Austin.

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Bilqees Fatima, Ph.D. candidate, has been appointed to the 2024-25 ISPOR Student Network Publication Committee.

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Tammie Lam, Pharm.D. candidate, has been appointed to the American Pharmacists Association-Academy of Student Pharmacists 2024-25 National Communications Standing Committee.

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Annie Man, Pharm.D. candidate, and **Adam Siddique**, Pharm.D. ('24), first-year resident/student in The Houston Program, were awarded the 2024 James T. Doluisio Scholarship and 2024 Sandra Evans Web Scholarship, respectively, from TSHP Research & Education Foundation.

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Dewan Protiva, third-year Pharm.D. student, was one of 40

students from 27 colleges selected to participate in the NCPA Foundation-UAMS Pharmacy Ownership and Leadership Academy June 26-28 at the UAMS campus in Little Rock, Ark.

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Rxperience Exploration Day



Nearly 100 high school and college students participated in the college's Rxperience Pharmacy Exploration Day events in June and July. Sponsored by Walgreens, the events featured hands-on lab activities, Q&A panels with practitioners, and admissions advice to educate participants on the opportunities within the profession.

Research & Faculty News

Annual PPS Symposium Sees Over 50 Poster, Podium Presentations

The Department of Pharmacological and Pharmaceutical Sciences hosted its 2024 PPS Research Symposium Aug. 7-8, which featured 19 podium and 46 poster presentations among postdoctoral fellows and undergraduate and graduate students.

The first-place presentation award winners were:

Graduate Student Oral — Fatima Dagher for “Effect of Combination of Calciprotiol with Paclitaxel on Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinoma Mouse Model”

Graduate Student Poster — Josef Fowler, for “Proton pump inhibitors alter mac-

rophages and neutrophil function through H/K ATPase-dependent and independent effects: a systematic literature review”

Postdoctoral Fellow Oral Presentation — Luqi Zhao for “Numb Family Proteins regulate ventricular compaction by modu-

lating the autophagic flux”

Undergraduate Poster Presentation — Tamima Tahsin for “Immunogenic Neopeptides from Novel Chimeric RNA EGFR-CDK6 as Vaccine Candidates for Brain Cancer Treatment”

Serving as the 2024 Scholar-in-Residence was the University of Florida College of Pharmacy's Christopher R. McCurdy, Ph.D., FAAPS, who presented a scientific lecture, “Translational Development of a Tool to Visualize Pain in Humans,” and a career development talk, “From Pharmacist to Medicinal Chemist and Beyond.”



Miao, Wu Awarded \$600K in AHA Grants for Epicardial, HLHS Research

UHCOP's **Lianjie Miao**, Ph.D., research assistant professor, and **Mingfu Wu**, Ph.D., associate professor, have received three-year, \$300,000 grants from the American Heart Association.

Through the Second Century Early Faculty Independence Award, Miao will be researching the transformational capabilities of specific precursor cells involved in cardiac regeneration following a heart attack. Miao's research focuses on epicardial cells, a special-

ized group of cardiac progenitor cells that transform into different cell types and help with the repair process.

The Transformational Project Award will support Wu's research on Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome (HLHS), a life-threatening congenital heart disease in which the left side of the organ is underdeveloped. By understanding the gene's role in cardiac development, Wu hopes to find ways to treat or prevent HLHS in babies.

UHCOP Welcomes NIH, AHA-funded Cardiovascular Disease Researcher Guizhen Zhao



UHCOP recently welcomed National Institutes of Health and American Heart Association-funded researcher **Guizhen Zhao**, Ph.D., as an assistant professor in the Department of Pharmacological and Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Zhao earned her B.A. in basic medicine and Ph.D. in human physiology from Peking University. She joins UHCOP from the University of Michigan

Medical School, where she worked as postdoctoral fellow and most recently a research investigator in the Division of Cardiovascular Medicine.

Zhao's research aims to explain the metabolic and epigenetic characteristics of vascular cells in cardiovascular diseases (CVD) and identify potential drug targets. She seeks to understand the

complex interactions of cells within their local environment, elucidating the metaboloepigenetic factors that contribute to CVD progression. Additionally, Zhao aims to foster cross-disciplinary collaborations in the broader cardiometabolic field.

Zhao is the recent recipient of a five-year, \$2.8 million grant from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute for her project, "Metaboloeigenetics and Atherosclerosis," and a three-year, \$231,000 Early Career Development Award grant from the American Heart Association (AHA) for her project, "The Role of BAF60c in Atherosclerosis."

She is a past recipient of an AHA postdoctoral fellowship grant and an NHLBI "Transition to Independence" postdoctoral grant. Zhao has authored/coauthored more than 30 publications in such journals as *JCI Insight*, *Circulation*, **Cell Research**, and *Science Translational Medicine*. She currently serves as a reviewer for eight journals and as a review editor for *Frontiers in Immunology* and *Frontiers in Cardiovascular Medicine*.

Radbod Darabi, Ph.D., M.D., associate professor, serves as co-investigator on a five-year, \$399,255 National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases grant, "Nuclear skeletal muscle alpha-actin and intranuclear rod myopathy," being led by Callie S. Kwartler, Ph.D., of UTHHealth Houston.

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Tahmid Faisal, MPharm, M.S., Ph.D. candidate, has been awarded a ASN Kidney STARS travel award to present his research project, "Immuno-modulation and T Cell Infiltration in

AKI Caused by Ischemia/Reperfusion (IR): Role of Sex Difference and Angiotensin II Type 2 Receptor (AT2R)", and participate in additional programming at ASN's annual meeting Kidney Week 2024 in Oct. 24-27 in San Diego, Calif.

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Bin Guo, Ph.D., associate professor, is part of a five-year, \$2.398 million, multi-principal investigator National Cancer Institute grant project, "Mechanism and approach to inactivate mutant KRAS of lung metastatic colon cancer by RNA-ligand-displaying exosome to co-deliver dCas9--gRNA ribonucleoprotein complex and KRAS siRNA," being led by Peixuan Guo, Ph.D., of Ohio State University.

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Retired faculty members **Michael L. Johnson**, Ph.D., and **Brian J. Knoll**, Ph.D., were granted Professor Emeriti status by the University of Houston after 20 years and 18 years of service, respectively, to the University of Houston.

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Faculty members **Aditi Marwaha**, Ph.D., **Natalie Rosario**, Pharm.D., MPH, BCACP, and **Douglas Thornton**, Ph.D., Pharm.D., were recognized with the Rho Chi Society Beta Omicron Chapter Teaching Excellence Awards.

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Bradley McConnell, Ph.D., FAHA, FCVS, was invited to present the 2024 Nechay Memorial Lecture to graduate students of The University of Texas Medical Branch Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology. The lecture invitation is presented to a leader in the field of pharmacology who also has demonstrated excellence in mentorship.

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Kimberly Nguyen, Pharm.D., clinical associate professor and assistant dean for Student & Professional Affairs, has been selected for the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy Academic Leadership Fellows Cohort 21. **Elizabeth Coyle**, Pharm.D., FCCM, clinical professor and associate dean for Academic Affairs, will serve as Nguyen's dean mentor.

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Natalie Rosario (second from left), Pharm.D., MPH, BCACP, clinical assistant professor, was recognized with the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy's 2023-24 Health Disparities and Cultural Competency Outstanding Special Interest Group Member Award.

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Matthew A. Wanat, Pharm.D., BCCP, FCCM, clinical associate professor, was recognized with a 2024 Presidential Citation from the Society of Critical Care Medicine.

Recent Publications

- Interventions to improve oral endocrine therapy adherence in breast cancer patients. **Ganna S**, Rahimi S, Lu A, Laborde K, **Trivedi M**. *J Cancer Surviv*. 2024 Jan 17. doi: 10.1007/s11764-023-01513-y. Online ahead of print. PMID: 38233637
- Navigating power dynamics between pharmacy preceptors and learners. **Tolleson S**, **Truong M**, **Rosario N**. *Explor Res Clin Soc Pharm*. 2024 Jan 17;13:100408. doi: 10.1016/j.rcsop.2024.100408. eCollection 2024 Mar. PMID: 38317645
- Developing and Validating the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Antiracism Faculty Perceptions of College Climate (DEIA FPCC) Scale in Pharmacy Faculty. **Wollen J**, El-Desoky R, Stroud A, Abdelhakiem AK. *Am J Pharm Educ*. 2024 Jan 17;88(2):100647. doi: 10.1016/j.ajpe.2024.100647. Online ahead of print. PMID: 38237685
- Efficacy and Health-Related Quality of Life Impact of Fecal Microbiota, Live-jslm: A Post Hoc Analysis of PUNCH CD3 Patients at First Recurrence of Clostridioides difficile Infection. Feuerstadt P, Allegretti JR, Dubberke ER, Guo A, Harvey A, Yang M, Garcia-Horton V, Fillbrunn M, Tillotson G, Bancke LL, LaPlante K, **Garey KW**, Khanna S. *Infect Dis Ther*. 2024 Jan;13(1):221-236. doi: 10.1007/s40121-023-00907-w. Epub 2024 Jan 18. PMID: 38236515
- Group-Based Trajectory Modeling to Identify Patterns of Antipsychotic-Associated Weight Gain Among Children and Adolescents. **Lyu N**, **Abughosh S**, **Varisco TJ**, Lin Y, Rowan PJ, **Chen H**. *J Clin Psychopharmacol*. 2024 Jan 23. doi: 10.1097/JCP.0000000000001814. Online ahead of print. PMID: 38259102
- A review on the use of extracellular vesicles for the delivery of drugs and biological therapeutics. **Amina SJ**, Azam T, **Dagher F**, **Guo B**. *Expert Opin Drug Deliv*. 2024 Jan-Jun;21(1):45-70. doi: 10.1080/17425247.2024.2305115. Epub 2024 Jan 31. PMID: 38226932
- Pain-related hospitalization and emergency room visit following initial analgesic prescription after outpatient surgery. **Nair AA**, Placencia JL, Farber HJ, **Aparasu RR**, **Johnson M**, **Chen H**. *Pharmacoepidemiol Drug Saf*. 2024 Feb;33(2):e5759. doi: 10.1002/pds.5759. PMID: 38357824
- A Randomized, Double-Blind, Phase 3 Safety and Efficacy Study of Ridinilazole Versus Vancomycin for Treatment of Clostridioides difficile Infection: Clinical Outcomes With Microbiome and Metabolome Correlates of Response. Okhuysen PC, Ramesh MS, Louie T, Kiknadze N, Torre-Cisneros J, de Oliveira CM, Van Steenkiste C, Stychneuskaya A, **Garey KW**, Garcia-Diaz J, Li J, Duperchy E, Chang BY, Sukbuntherng J, Montoya JG, Styles L, Clow F, James D, Dubberke ER, Wilcox M. *Clin Infect Dis*. 2024 Feb 2;ciad792. doi: 10.1093/cid/ciad792. Online ahead of print. PMID: 38305378
- Opioid and Non-Opioid Pharmacotherapy Use for Pain Management Among Privately Insured Pediatric Patients With Cancer in the United States. Shen C, **Thornton JD**, Li N, Schaefer E, Zhou S, Kawasaki S, Pameijer C, Leslie D. *Oncologist*. 2024 Feb 2;29(2):176-184. doi: 10.1093/oncolo/oyad292. PMID: 37944042
- Microscopy methods for Clostridioides difficile. **Hu C**, **Garey KW**. *Anaerobe*. 2024 Feb 8;86:102822. doi: 10.1016/j.anaerobe.2024.102822. Online ahead of print. PMID: 38341023
- Antibacterial activity of ibezapolstat against antimicrobial-resistant clinical strains of Clostridioides difficile. **Bassères E**, **Eubank TA**, **Begum K**, **Alam MJ**, **Jo J**, **Le TM**, **Lancaster CK**, **Gonzales-Luna AJ**, **Garey KW**. *Antimicrob Agents Chemother*. 2024 Mar 6;68(3):e0162123. doi: 10.1128/aac.01621-23. Epub 2024 Feb 16. PMID: 38364016
- Leveraging prescription monitoring program data to evaluate the implementation of buprenorphine telehealth flexibilities: An interrupted time series analysis in Texas. **Chi W**, **Okeke C**, **Thornton D**, **Chen H**, **Sadeghi A**, **Varisco TJ**. *Drug Alcohol Depend Rep*. 2024 Feb 22;10:100222. doi: 10.1016/j.dadr.2024.100222. eCollection 2024 Mar. PMID: 38463634
- Optimized rat models better mimic patients with irinotecan-induced severe diarrhea. **Zheng Z**, Du T, Gao S, **Yin T**, **Li L**, **Zhu L**, **Singh R**, **Sun R**, **Hu M**. *Toxicol Mech Methods*. 2024 Feb 23:1-12. doi: 10.1080/15376516.2024.2316003. Online ahead of print. PMID: 38390772
- Trajectories and Predictors for the Development of Clinically Significant Weight Gain in Children and Adolescents Prescribed Second-Generation Antipsychotics. **Lyu N**, Rowan PJ, **Abughosh S**, **Varisco TJ**, Lin Y, **Chen H**. *J Child Adolesc Psychopharmacol*. 2024 Feb 26. doi: 10.1089/cap.2023.0071. Online ahead of print. PMID: 38407930
- Discovering New Substrates of a UDP-Glycosyltransferase with a High-Throughput Method. Lethe MCL, **Bui D**, **Hu M**, Wang X, **Singh R**, Chan CTY. *Int J Mol Sci*. 2024 Feb 27;25(5):2725. doi: 10.3390/ijms25052725. PMID: 38473791
- Development and validation of LC-MS/MS for quantifying omadacycline from stool for gut microbiome studies. **Hu C**, **Wang W**, **Jo J**, **Garey KW**. *J Chromatogr B Analyt Technol Biomed Life Sci*. 2024 Apr 1;1236:124057. doi: 10.1016/j.jchromb.2024.124057. Epub 2024 Feb 28. PMID: 38447241
- Patients' Willingness to Pay for Naloxone: A National Cross-Sectional Survey of Prescription Opioid Users with Chronic Pain in the US. Huang Y, **Coggins TM**, **Cirildo S**, Gandy C, **Aparasu RR**, **Thornton JD**. *J Am Pharm Assoc (2003)*. 2024 Mar 1:102062. doi: 10.1016/j.japh.2024.102062. Online ahead of print. PMID: 38432479
- Autoimmune and neuropsychiatric phenotypes in a Mecp2 transgenic mouse model on C57BL/6 background. Li Y, Zhang S, Tang C, Yang B, **Atrooz F**, Ren Z, Mohan C, **Salim S**, Wu T. *Front Immunol*. 2024 Mar 8;15:1370254. doi: 10.3389/fimmu.2024.1370254. eCollection 2024. PMID: 38524134
- Cumulative Anticholinergic Burden and its Predictors among Older Adults with Alzheimer's Disease Initiating Cholinesterase Inhibitors. **Talwar A**, Chatterjee S, **Sherer J**, **Abughosh S**, **Johnson M**, **Aparasu RR**. *Drugs Aging*. 2024 Apr;41(4):339-355. doi: 10.1007/s40266-024-01103-2. Epub 2024 Mar 11. PMID: 38467994
- Association of oral disease-modifying agents and their adherence trajectories with annual relapses in multiple sclerosis. **Earla JR**, **Li J**, Hutton GJ, Bentley JP, **Aparasu RR**. *Mult Scler Relat Disord*. 2024 Mar 12;85:105539. doi: 10.1016/j.msard.2024.105539. Online ahead of print. PMID: 38574721
- Mitigating stereotypes and bias in professional identity formation for those with marginalized identities. **Rosario N**, **Wollen J**. *Explor Res Clin Soc Pharm*. 2024 Mar 18;14:100434. doi: 10.1016/j.rcsop.2024.100434. eCollection 2024 Jun. PMID: 38550397
- ER stress and ERO1: Potential therapeutic targets for inherited myopathies. **Roy A**, **Joshi AS**, **Kumar A**. *Cell Rep Med*. 2024 Mar 19;5(3):101462. doi: 10.1016/j.xcrn.2024.101462. PMID: 38508147
- AKAP12 Upregulation Associates With PDE8A to Accelerate Cardiac Dysfunction. **Qasim H**, **Rajaei M**, **Xu Y**, **Reyes-Alcaraz A**, **Abdelnasser HY**, Stewart MD, Lahiri SK, Wehrens XHT, **McConnell BK**. *Circ Res*. 2024 Apr 12;134(8):1006-1022. doi: 10.1161/CIRCRESAHA.123.323655. Epub 2024 Mar 20. PMID: 38506047
- Comparing the effects of various β -blockers on cardiovascular mortality in breast cancer patients. **Tabassum M**, **Chikermane SG**, **Johnson C**, **Abdulkareem NM**, **Wang EM**, **Johnson ML**, **Trivedi MV**. *Cardiooncology*. 2024 Mar 26;10(1):17. doi: 10.1186/s40959-024-00217-1. PMID: 3853252
- Comparison of cefiderocol in-vitro susceptibility testing modalities. **Teran NS**, **Vuong L**, Phe K, Lasco TM, Miller WR, **Tam VH**. *J Glob Antimicrob Resist*. 2024 Mar 27;37:100-101. doi: 10.1016/j.jgar.2024.03.011. Online ahead of print. PMID: 38552875
- Patterns of immunotherapy utilization for non-small cell lung cancer in Texas pre- and post-regulatory approval. **Olateju OA**, **Zeng Z**, **Zakeri M**, **Sansgiry SS**. *Clin Transl Oncol*. 2024 Mar 30. doi: 10.1007/s12094-024-03412-9. Online ahead of print. PMID: 38554190
- Unconventional Activation of IRE1 Enhances TH17 Responses and Promotes Airway Neutrophilia. Wu D, Zhang X, Zimmerly KM, Wang R, Livingston A, Iwawaki T, **Kumar A**, Wu X, Campen M, Mandell MA, Liu M, Yang XO. *Am J Respir Cell Mol Biol*. 2024 Apr 9. doi: 10.1165/rcmb.2023-0424OC. Online ahead of print. PMID: 38593442