December 2017
The Fellowship Chronicles
Official Newsletter of the Rutgers Institute for Pharmaceutical Industry Fellowships

2018 RPIF Candidates FIND their way to MIDYEAR!
See page 2 for full article

Featured in this edition...

Your 2017-2018 Newsletter Committee:

Brian Ung
2nd-year fellow
Celgene

Jen Mannino
1st-year fellow
Bristol-Myers Squibb

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RPIF Committee Update: Fellowship Information Networking Day (FIND) 2017

The fellowship program continues to grow and evolve as we welcomed more candidates than ever at the annual Fellowship Information and Networking Day.

Thank you to everyone who attended this year’s FIND on Friday November 17th! FIND made its debut in the brand new Rutger’s Pharmacy Building. The event kicked off with warm welcomes from our leadership team including Dean Barone and Dr. Toscani, with a special guest appearance from esteemed alumni Carolyn Seyss (Senior Director at Acorda Therapeutics). This was followed by “a day of the life series” provided by fellows, highlighting the opportunities within the pharmaceutical industry, the RPIF curriculum, a brand new rollout of the Midyear process, and much more!

The networking portion provided candidates the unique opportunity to interact with Rutgers Fellows, company stakeholders, and preceptors before they interview at the ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting in December.

This year was all about innovation: debuting FIND in the new Rutger’s Pharmacy Building, evolving the didactic portion with lecture hall mirroring, introducing the new electronic registration system for Midyear, and welcoming a returning partner company to the event and our RPIF family —GlaxoSmithKline! We also recruited an impressive FIND subcommittee of Fellows, who were instrumental in the successful execution of the event.

We had record-breaking numbers this year! There were over 420 attendees, representing more than 70 different pharmacy schools from 38 states, whom were eager to immerse themselves into all FIND has to offer. This was a fantastic way to begin the 2017-18 RPIF recruitment cycle and get everyone ready for the ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting in Orlando, FL.

Thank you to the FIND Committee for such a largely successful event!

Laura Phillips
1st-year fellow
Merck

Julian Kam
2nd-year fellow
Merck

Sandhya Balachandar
1st-year fellow
Bristol-Myers Squibb
RPIF Committee Update: Meet the Alumni Relations Committee

The Alumni Relations Committee serves as the primary conduit between current fellows and our vast network of over 850 alumni. We strive to cultivate a strong relationship between fellows and alumni through the promotion of post-PDD networking events, meet-ups at various professional conferences throughout the year, a sophisticated alumni portal, and our mentorship program. With record numbers of matching 130 of our current fellows with alumni in the mentorship program and the new initiatives that we aim to implement this year, we are excited with our direction moving forward. We believe fellows’ connecting with alumni is a solid investment that will foster the production of high-performing industry professionals. A hyper-connected network between fellows and alumni will only further the RPIF program’s capabilities.

Ikechukwu (Ike) Oji
2nd-year fellow
Bayer

Abiola Ojo
1st-year fellow
Merck

RPIF Committee Update: Meet the Digital Platforms Committee

The purpose of the Digital Platforms Committee is to build, shape, and innovate the RPIF brand within the digital space while promoting the awareness of postdoctoral opportunities for pharmacists within the pharmaceutical industry. We have been working throughout the 2017-2018 Fellowship year to increase traffic to the RPIF website and strengthen the engagement of our viewers while they are navigating the site. We aim to achieve these goals through improvements in the RPIF mobile application as well as renovating the existing website.

We are excited to announce that so far we have been making significant progress with a number of initiatives, including updates to the mobile application, new functionalities and features on the RPIF website, and keeping our digital presence fresh! With the assistance of our app developer, new features to mobile application are underway to maximize the utilization of this platform. We have been focusing on understanding user experience and design elements to be able to collaborate with a number of other committees to continually improve our digital platforms and creating an engaging resource for our fellowship program. Stay tuned for future DPC updates!

Jessica Lewis
2nd-year fellow
Johnson&Johnson

Leo Pratt
1st-year fellow
Bayer

Naomi Kariuki
1st-year fellow
Novartis
Rutgers fellows and friends gathered early morning Sunday October 15th, 2017 for the AIDS Walk/Run Philly 5K to raise awareness for HIV/AIDS, which was organized by the Community Development Committee (CDC). AIDS Walk/Run Philly 5K is the region's largest HIV/AIDS fundraiser and awareness event of the year. This event raises funds for emergency financial assistance to people living with HIV disease and organizations providing HIV services in our communities.

The 5K Walk/Run started at the infamous Philadelphia Museum of Art Steps, where Rocky Balboa had his legendary run. It was a fun filled morning with everyone in the color of red to show support of the local Philadelphia HIV community. The RPIF team managed to raise over $700 to the cause with a large portion of the donations coming from Janssen Scientific Affairs, LLC. We hope to continue raising money and awareness for the communities we work for!

Sanofi’s Visit From Eric LeGrand

On October 24th, 2017, Sanofi hosted an event that focused on their initiative of Empowering Life, through Diversity and Inclusion (D&I). For Sanofi, D&I is an essential part of the company culture, and their value of respect, both in the way they interact with patients and costumers, and internally with each other. Eric LeGrand, was the very special guest keynote speaker and, during his talk, shared his inspirational story of courage and living with his disability. He shared his journey post injury and how having faith and courage kept him fighting the entire time. One of the questions asked by the audience was: what was his definition of success? According to Eric, his definition was “the peace of mind you get when you did everything you could, to be the best you can be”. It is easy to say, that the entire audience was inspired and motivated by hearing him speak. After the presentation, several of the Sanofi fellows stayed after to speak with him and were honored to meet him. We were all proud to be a part of the Rutgers family!

Pictured: Alina Kolomeyer, Dana Lee, Eric LeGrand, Paige Borden, and Danielle Lerch
Pfizer’s Head, Heart, & Guts: a Holistic Approach to Leadership

Vrunda Parikh, Pharm.D.

Pfizer is well known for its OWN IT! culture – something all colleagues can attest to. We are encouraged to take ownership of our careers and make a positive impact on the business. In order to further reinforce this concept, a new approach to successful leadership – Head, Heart and Guts (HHG) – has been implemented.

HHG is a holistic framework that is leveraged by leaders at all levels to reinforce our culture and optimize our performance. HHG incorporates six behaviors – Head (decisive and focused), Heart (connected and inspiring), and Guts (courageous and resilient). Using our head, we deliver innovative, strategic solutions. Using our heart, we engage, collaborate, and develop others. Using our guts, we ultimately do the right thing.

As a fellow at Pfizer, HHG has been an integral part of my daily functions. When working with teams, I have been decisive and focused by following up with co-workers on upcoming deadlines to ensure we carry out decisions in a timely manner. Since motivation is a key driver to advance our business, I strive to be connected and inspiring by taking initiative in all projects I take on. I remain well informed to answer questions that come up. For example, I provided responses to the Principal Investigator for a study based on additional research I did. As a fellow, I have been courageous and resilient when exposed to new challenges – from integrating SOPs into the daily workflow to being a lead clinician for a study. I welcome these encounters as they are great opportunities to learn and demonstrate accountability.

So, now I challenge YOU to identify where you are implementing HHG and what happens when there is an overuse in a specific area. As you go about your daily functions, think about your behaviors and what you can improve upon to better optimize your leadership style.

Alumni Spotlight: Justin Balint, Pharm.D., RPh

Justin Balint graduated from Wilkes University School of Pharmacy in 2012 and served as the 2012-2014 Bristol-Myers Squibb Policy and Advocacy fellow. In the three short years after his fellowship, Justin has served in four separate roles at Bristol-Myers Squibb. He spent his first year in Oncology Advocacy before transitioning into Immuno-Oncology marketing, leading network and point-of-care marketing initiatives within Launch Excellence and Innovation. Following this role, Justin was assigned to the Biomarkers and Diagnostics team where he had responsibility in companion diagnostic commercialization for the I-O portfolio. Recently, Justin was promoted to his current position as Associate Director of Strategic Payer Marketing supporting lung cancer and head/neck cancers. When asked how he was able to advance his career so quickly, Justin believes that “it’s important to maintain advocates who have worked with you in prior roles because they can bring unique opportunities to you”. Additionally, he feels that broadening your network outside of the people that you work with on a daily basis is a crucial component to mobility within the company. In the future, Justin is interested in exploring roles such as business development & licensing and other opportunities within the commercial realm. One of Justin’s major personal accomplishments includes having run 16 half-marathons in 2016 across 15 major cities and three countries. His goal is to run in all 50 states by 2025! Congrats, Justin, on all of your successes!
October is American Pharmacists Month, a national campaign that is sponsored by the American Pharmacists Association (APhA). This campaign celebrates the accomplishments of pharmacists and aims to educate both patients and other healthcare professionals of the expanding role of pharmacists’ on the healthcare team. On October 12, the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy at Rutgers University and Spectrum Pharmacy Institute joined together in the newly constructed pharmacy building to receive the official Proclamation from Mayor James Cahill. The Mayor officially declared October as American Pharmacists Month in New Brunswick within the Proclamation, which was received by Dean Barone on behalf of the pharmacy school. The Proclamation proudly sits in the dean’s administrative suite and reminds students that they are the future of pharmacy. With support from the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy Alumni Association, the Rutgers APhA Chapter was able to design and make buttons with the phrase, “Know your pharmacist, know your medicine.” These buttons were distributed to both students and faculty members to raise awareness for our profession on campus. This initiative was a huge success and even our very own Dr. T liked the button so much that he broke out his 20+ year-old white coat to join me in showing off the button!

Drug overdoses are the leading cause of death for Americans under 50, with majority of the drug overdose deaths (more than 6 out of 10) involving an opioid. Every day, more than 90 Americans die after overdosing on opioids. What is the government currently doing to stop this horrible epidemic?

To begin, President Trump directed the Department of HHS to declare the opioid crisis a “national public health emergency” under the Public Health Service Act. This allows for some grant money to be used to combat opioid abuse and permits the hiring of specialists to tackle the crisis. However, one question unanswered by the President’s announcement is whether the Department of HHS will use its authority under the public Health declaration to negotiate lower prices for naloxone. In addition, The Commissioner of the FDA, Scott Gottlieb, also made a testimony in regards to this epidemic on new strategies for addressing the crisis of opioid addiction through innovation in packaging, storage and disposal. The FDA established an Opioid Policy Steering Committee who is now further investigating what steps the agency can take with respect to packaging.

How does this opioid crisis affect patients, prescribers and pharmacists? Through diligent verification and proper counseling, pharmacists can do their part in combating the opioid crisis. As Scott Gottlieb stated, this crisis requires an “all-of-the-above” approach that requires the FDA, health care providers, pharmaceutical industries and policy makers to work together.
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Feyikemi D. Osundina, PharmD, MS, RPh

In the United States, where the fight for universal health care grows with increasing intensity, a fight for basic health care continues in many countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. Barriers facing healthcare in Africa include lack of access to primary/preventative care, shortage of trained health workers, decreasing funds for infrastructure and medication supplies and overall unsustainable health systems. The BMS Foundation initiatives and the programs I participated in during my residency strive to address barriers by promoting health equity to help improve health outcomes of populations disproportionately affected by serious diseases.

Since 1999, BMSF has joined the global effort to improve the state of health care in Africa by focusing on the fight against HIV/AIDS. Several factors have helped transform HIV and AIDS from an acute health crisis to a manageable chronic disease. As a result, patients with HIV/AIDS are living longer and are now faced with non-communicable diseases, tuberculosis and other cancers such as lung, cervical and breast, and pediatric cancers. Building on the Foundation’s previous work and infrastructure already developed in HIV/AIDS, BMSF is now implementing initiatives under The Secure the Future Cancer African Network for Care, Education and Research (CANCer) Program. Some of the projects I worked on included: conducting drug utilization reviews for breast cancer medication (trastuzumab), assisting in the planning and implementation of an antimicrobial stewardship program at a government hospital, developing research protocols and training health workers on research practices for the new cancer grants in South Africa, and providing medication counseling at a cervical & breast cancer, HTN and HIV screening campaign in the remote villages of Tanzania.

A key goal of mine throughout all the projects I worked on was continuity and sustainability. The BMSF platforms and initiatives have been impactful because they help link partners from all aspects of the health care continuum, including government departments, non-government/non-profit organizations, communities and healthcare facilities and professionals. A basis of awareness of disease among all partners results in increased implementation of preventative measures in order to decrease mortality from late-stage conditions.

My time in Africa has only solidified my passion for what I have always known to be true. That health should not be a privilege known to the elite few but a basic right owed to everyone. Public and global health programs need diverse team members from various professions to implement positive changes. I do not see myself as just a pharmacist but as a global health professional ready and willing to make the necessary steps to increase access to healthcare for patients across the world. For more information about the Public Health Residency, questions, or comments please contact Kemi at kemi.osundina@bms.com.
September 13, 2017 – Senator Bernie Sanders (Independent – VT) released his Medicare for All bill, which was co-sponsored by 15 democrats and supported by several grass-roots organizations. The goal of this bill is to provide comprehensive universal health care to all Americans, which would include inpatient, outpatient, preventive care, primary and specialty care, vision, hearing, oral health care, mental health and substance abuse services, prescription medications, medical equipment, and more. Supporters of this bill reason that an integrated health care system would enable the government to negotiate drug prices, prevent provider shortages, and ensure health care access to all communities, which are outstanding issues that all parties agree to be unresolved under the Affordable Care Act. The bill would incrementally expand universal health care to the entire population in a four-year plan. Many developed countries have already adopted this system and spend far less on health care than the United States. Given the overarching Republican landscape of today’s government, Sen. Sanders does not expect the bill to pass in the near future. Instead, he hopes the bill will spark a conversation that gets the public talking about health care in the U.S. regardless of their political views. Sanders insists that Americans should question why the United States is one of the only major countries that does not guarantee health care to all people, and why Americans are paying more but getting less. The announcement of this bill follows in a long line of recent propositions for health care reform; bipartisan efforts are currently underway, but residual partisan push means a long road before reaching an agreement on health care policy.

Halozyme recently expanded its partnership with Roche and signed a new deal with BMS for development of up to 11 new subcutaneous cancer drugs. Halozyme’s technology allows drugs that were restricted to intravenous delivery to be administered via subcutaneous injections of 10-15mL over roughly 5-10 minutes. This improvement helps to reduce healthcare resource utilization and saves valuable time for cancer patients and providers. It has also helped companies like Roche to differentiate their products and manage the lifecycle of drugs facing loss of exclusivity (see Rituxan Hycela).
Networking with a Purpose

Adam del Corral, Senior Hematology/Oncology Clinical Research & Development Director, Celgene

I prefer lunch at my desk by myself over the short walk to the cafeteria with colleagues. I would rather get my work done to get home to my family than go to happy hour. By conventional definitions I am an introvert. By Big Bang Theory characters, more Leonard than Penny.

When I read the September RPIF newsletter, deep inside my introverted self, I shuddered a bit. Networking was a key focus in this edition with both the Scholarly Activities Committee update and “Networking’s Hidden Gem” articles encouraging readers to schedule “meet and greets” and “make introductions to others regardless of their title or status”. I applaud the authors and believe their viewpoint on networking is common across various industries. But the “broad and frequent” networking approach is not a one-size-fits-all. Thinking back to my first few years after pharmacy school, I couldn’t imagine what I would say to a senior executive. The times I was forced into conversations with leaders in the organization, I kept the conversation strictly to my work- emphasizing my assignments and why I thought it was important.

As I reflected on how I have built my professional network, despite my natural tendencies, a recent NY Times article resonated with me. “It’s true that networking can help you accomplish great things. But this obscures the opposite truth: Accomplishing great things helps you develop a network.” While I never came around to schmoozing with the execs in the organization, I managed to build a strong network through my performance on mutual projects. I established myself as credible and knowledgeable, and earned a trusted connection. They knew they could rely on me, and in the future asked that I would again be assigned to their projects. An “it’s who you know” mentality only takes you so far, rather it’s who knows what value you bring that will make your networking meaningful.

This perspective doesn’t mean I am shy. I am vocal in meetings, express my viewpoints, challenge others, and have no problem presenting in public. I champion new ideas, drive projects forward, and advocate for my peers and my team. But these extroverted displays are predicated on the value that I can bring to the project and the person.

For Fellows, there is a balance. As a new learner, you should network for the sake of networking sometimes, even if it makes you a little uncomfortable. People will be eager to foster learning and help shape a future leader. You should also network with a purpose. Get to know a colleague and their role in the organization as a mutual project starts. Grab a coffee with a big wig at the break of a working meeting to ask their perspective on the topic. Use that time to show them who you are and what you bring to the team. “Let your insights and your outputs — not your business cards — do the talking.” -Good News for Young Strivers: Networking is Overrated; The New York Times: Adam Grant, August 24, 2017

Furry Friends Spotlight: Cooper

Hi my name is Cooper. My human, Steve Caproni, is a 1st-year fellow at Bristol-Myers Squibb. I’m a mutt (lab/hound mix) who gets the “zoomies” and enjoys sprinting around the house with toys. I can often be found sitting in Steve’s bathtub for no apparent reason!
Fellowship opportunities such as the ones offered by RPIF are the most common entry point for PharmD into the pharmaceutical industry. Unfortunately, there are not fellowship positions for every qualified candidate. Every year, fellowship applicants are left without a fellowship offer. Today, we’ll talk with two former RPIF candidates who moved past their initial disappointment and found an alternative way to land a position in the pharmaceutical industry.

Brian Ung (BU): Hello, thanks for speaking with me. Could you tell me a little bit about yourself?

Anjali Bharadwaj (AB): My name is Anjali Bharadwaj, I graduated Class of 2017 from MCPHS University-Boston. I'm currently a Medical Affairs Clinical Research Scientist at Celgene Corporation.

Steven Sligh (SS): My name is Steven Sligh, I graduated in 2016 from the University of Maryland. I am a Senior Business Analyst, Market Access Consulting at Evidera.

BU: If you could do it over as a P4, would you go through the Midyear process again?

AB: Yes, I would go through this Midyear interview process again. I learned a lot and built a strong network with pharmacists and PharmD candidates.

SS: Yes! I would still apply to fellowship programs if I had the chance to do it all over again.

BU: Was there anything that you took from your Midyear experience that helped you in your search for your current position?

AB: I am glad that I attended Midyear because I gained valuable insights from companies and my interviewers. It gave me a clearer vision of what the biopharmaceutical industry is searching for in a candidate. My Midyear experience motivated me to dig deeper and strengthen my knowledge of roles for industry pharmacists. I was determined to gain valuable skills with the rest of my rotations and strengthen myself as a candidate. I reflected on my extensive Midyear preparations and experience to help me prepare for my job search and interviews.

SS: While initially disappointed after I didn’t get the fellowship I was after, there was some valuable things that I took away from Midyear that helped with securing my current position. When can you honestly say you will have to do that many interviews in such a condensed timeframe? The sheer amount of practice you get in that setting, while stressful and exhausting, is probably one of the best opportunities I’ve had practicing my elevator pitch and really thinking about what the best way to communicate to someone in 30 minutes or less (x10) why they should hire me.
BU: How did you go about finding your current role and others you might have applied to?

**AB:** After Midyear, I reached out to several people, including current and past fellows that I had met at PDD, my APPE preceptors, and mentors. I applied to full-time positions as well as Fellowships that didn't recruit at Midyear. Several opportunities came my way, and in the end, I was the one to decide which was a best fit for my personal and professional success.

**SS:** I found out about my current position from a UM alumni. We were catching up one day and he asked about companies I had applied to. I listed off companies and he stopped and said, “Well, have you talked to Eric from Evidera yet?” I had never heard of Evidera, or Eric, but I took down Eric’s information and emailed him later in the week. We spoke and this interaction snowballed into a conversation with his manager, an application and ultimately, an onsite interview. Being friendly, open-minded and genuine in your intentions can go a long way in opening new doors when you are connecting with colleagues.

BU: What advice would you give to candidates who are afraid of not getting a fellowship?

**AB:** Never give up. Candidates should keep in mind that there are many opportunities outside the fellowship process, and this might work out better for them, like it did for me and several of my classmates!

I would advise candidates who are job searching to look at company websites and job portals such as LinkedIn, Indeed, and Monster. Networking is crucial, people will remember you and are willing to help if you reach out. Make connections throughout pharmacy school and at Midyear. Think about the connections you made at your rotations and internships. I ended up at the company where I did a 6-week rotation. It’s important to talk to people you know and be patient. Pharmacy is small world and you never know who you’ll bump into in the future.

For those still in school, start to explore different PharmD career paths early on and become involved with pharmacy organizations. Step outside of your comfort zone and hold leadership positions or become involved with a research project. Try to get exposure to strengthen your skills, which will help you make a great candidate. Your hard work and passion will show in the end. Don’t forget to network throughout your school and career path!

**SS:** Network, network, network. I’m sure it’s overstated sometimes, but I’m an example of what can happen if you keep your network warm. You never know who is going to be your next boss. Keep an open ear and listen to every opportunity that comes your way. Politely decline the ones that don’t match up with your interests, goals and beliefs but when you have that feeling in the pit of your stomach that says there might be something a little extra here, dive full on in with enthusiasm and confidence. There are a lot of job openings available for students straight out of school, however that doesn’t mean they will fall in your lap. Keep your head up and listen to what your teachers, mentors, friends, etc. are saying about different opportunities out there and you might be surprised about what comes your way.
Fellow life is a busy one, often involving much more than the day-to-day fellowship & company tasks. In addition to extra curricular activities such as teaching, volunteer work, and taking classes, some fellows even maintain their pharmacy practice knowledge by working part-time jobs. Today, we’ll get some perspective from Prity Avichal (PA) and Lilly Jiang (LJ), both Johnson&Johnson Fellows, who currently maintain part-time Pharmacist positions in the retail setting.

Which retail pharmacy do you work for?
PA: Rite Aid
LJ: Twin City Pharmacy

How often do you work?
PA: I usually work two weekends per month, but it may vary depending on the business need.
LJ: I work every other Saturday.

How did you get your job?
PA & LJ: We both worked at our respective pharmacies during pharmacy school. During rotations, we were offered full-time positions as pharmacists after graduation. After being accepted into the RPIF program, we each inquired if per diem opportunities were available.

How do you balance both jobs?
PA & LJ: Time management is very important in being able to manage both jobs. We utilize our time during the week to focus on fellowship obligations so that we have time to dedicate a couple of days per month for retail.

What do you enjoy about your community pharmacy job?
PA & LJ: Our favorite part of working retail is the patient interaction. While in industry we have the capability to make large impacts on health, in retail, we can have direct impacts on the health of individual patients and build lasting relationships.

What are the benefits of working retail while in working in the pharmaceutical industry?
PA & LJ: Working in retail allows us to keep up to date with new drugs being prescribed and continuously stay engaged in pharmaceutical knowledge. It also helps us to bring new perspectives into industry through our one-on-one interactions with patients. It’s also nice to get the extra bump in your paycheck for the finer things in life.
GOOD LUCK TO EVERYONE AT ASHP MIDYEAR 2017!!

A CONVERSATION WITH
FORMER FIRST LADY
MICHELLE OBAMA

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ORLANDO DECEMBER 3-7

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