Dear Fellows & Alumni,

Welcome to our new fellows and congratulations to our continuing fellows on completing their first year in the program. We are excited to kick-off this upcoming year, which is promising to be filled with fun activities as well as some challenging aspirations.

We hope the year ahead of us will: i) increase interactions among fellows & alumni, ii) provide fellows with an opportunity to maintain activities throughout the year, and iii) give back to our community. Through the creation of two new committees, Community Development and Newsletter, we hope to strive towards a successful year in accomplishing these goals. The Community Development Committee headed up by Angela Stevenson was established to build relationships between fellows, alumni, and our community. This committee is challenged to not only provide fellows with the opportunity to collaborate with alumni, but also serve as a philanthropic resource to our community.

Furthermore, the Newsletter Committee under the leadership of Maricel DeJesus and Jennifer Kim will better connect our stakeholders together and provide top-line information of fellow’s accomplishments and program milestones. Overall, these committees will provide fellows with an increased scope of opportunities to stay involved throughout the year. For the success of our committees and program, the fellows are encouraged to be involved and enthusiastic in our mission.

As the year processes, we welcome new ideas to improve and enhance the program. Should you have any questions or concerns, please let us know. Your involvement and commitment to the program is appreciated.

Anish Patel & Na Young Goh
A Year To Remember

Congratulations to the Graduating Fellows

We wish you the best of luck!

Bristol Myers Squibb:
- Angie Bakshi
- Matthew Bunn
- Carol Davis
- Jaclyn Forish
- Aneta Fornal
- Jaime Linton
- Ursula Marek
- Amy Padalia
- Christine Pang
- Susan Yi
- Won Hee Yi

Bimark:
- Mary Habib
- Richard Tyska
- Ahmad Alrawi
- Jessica Cairns
- Kavita Johal
- Tiffany Lin
- Antonella Lozito
- Arpita Shah
- Jenny Tsang
- Windy Wang

Novartis:
- Ira Do
- Aaron Huang
- Michelle Libner
- Erika Massenburg
- Felice Pang
- Emily Scalise
- Bijal Sheth
- Lucio Volino
- Mazen Baisa
- Lorraine Shui

Ortho McNeil Janssen:
- Shelly Dhir
- Ashwini Phatak
- Sagar Shah
- Shraddha Shah

Sanofi-aventis:
- Peter Mar
- Bryan McCreery
- Jennifer Nugent
- Simone Rakhit

Sankyo:
- Theresa Kporha
- Nana Wiafe-Ababio

Tibotec:
- Vinod Kalathiveetil

TKL:
- Staci Lymperopoulos
- Sarang Rastogi
Bardia Akbari, PharmD

By Bhu Chung, PharmD

Dr. Akbari was introduced to the pharmaceutical industry early on in his career. While at the University of Colorado, he completed summer internship at Glaxo (now known as GlaxoSmithKline). At Glaxo, he had the opportunity to rotate in various departments, and became most intrigued with clinical research. This inspired him to earn his PharmD degree and pursue a career in pharmaceutical industry. Bardia believes: “If you do what you love to do, then you’ll be really good at it.”

Bardia participated in a two-year clinical research fellowship at Hoffmann La-Roche through the Rutgers Pharmaceutical Industry Fellowship Program. Upon completion, Bardia decided to stay with Hoffmann La-Roche as a Clinical Science Specialist. He later assumed other internal positions prior to being promoted to his current position as Operations Project Leader, Clinical Team Leader.

Bardia’s most memorable fellowship experience was during his second year. He and his team were working on a pediatric compound in development for a pediatric indication. Upon administration to 10-year old patient, he saw the immediate impact that the drug had on the child. “Making a difference in others’ lives is not always visible but that’s what we, as a pharmaceutical industry, are trying to do.”

Key Advices:
- Establish relationships
- Learn to align scientific and business visions
- Seek out a mentor
- Rotate with FDA
- Success in Clinical dept involves organization, detail-orientation, and understanding the work instead of
- Develop skills to market yourself for a position

Bardia aspires to have a perfect clinical trial, where there’s no extra patient enrolled in the study and not an extra dollar is spent unnecessarily—everything is done perfectly. “My career goal is to be in a position where I can influence a much more efficient and effective way of conducting clinical trial switch projects and participated in the Zantac 75 switch. From there, she moved to Parke-Davis. Here Irene was involved with the Lipitor launch by leading one of Lipitor’s largest primary care trials. Afterwards, she transferred back to Warner-Lambert to head the Rx-to-OTC switch clinical efforts.

Throughout her successful career, Irene has been involved with managing many clinical trials mostly involving Rx to OTC switches. She loves what she does. She thinks “clinical research is a nice mix of clinical medicine, research, understanding and interpreting regulations, medical writing, and supporting marketing efforts. It is a very goal-oriented field.”

Irene’s future goals are to be more involved with strategic business and decision making that will impact the company in a significant way.

Irene’s advice to the fellows is to “gain your own experience.” You have to experience things for yourself before you really know what something entails. Despite her busy career and precepting fellows, Irene balances her personal life. She and her husband, Nick have two lovely children, Christopher and Nicholas. She is very involved in her children’s activities.

Irene Laurora, PharmD

By Maricel DeJesus, PharmD

Upon receiving her B.S. degree from St. John’s University and her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the Medical College of Virginia, Irene Laurora knew she wanted to pursue a career in clinical research. Though the fellowship at Sandoz, she was able to pave the way to many opportunities.

Through her fellowship in clinical research, Irene was involved with monitoring sites, writing study protocols, and interacting with people in various departments. She was able to develop her skills in presenting as well as persuasive writing. Most importantly, she was able to further develop her critical thinking skills and apply her acquired knowledge to her job.

After her fellowship, Irene took a job at Warner-Lambert. There she was involved with the Rx-to-OTC switch projects and participated in the Zantac 75 switch. From there, she moved to Parke-Davis. Here Irene was involved with the Lipitor launch by leading one of Lipitor’s largest primary care trials. Afterwards, she transferred back to Warner-Lambert to head the Rx-to-OTC switch clinical efforts.

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Welcome to the New Incoming Fellows

Berlex:
John McBride, Tammy Dang

Bimark:
Lisa Varghese, Nissa Pisano

Bristol Myers Squibb:

Hoffman La Roche:
Neelam Patel, Salah El-Saheb, Scott Adamczk, Ami Patel, Mohammed Issa, Natanya Jennings, Jay Paul Singh

Novartis:
Suzanne Maahs, Stephanie Whalen, Leslie Servidio, Dale Butterfoss, Vanessa Kan, Chris Sung, Melina Cioffi, Kathy Dong, Melody Magliano

OBI:
Nimit Upadyaya

Ortho McNeil Janssen:
Mary Cheriyen, Tony Lan, Robert James, Victoria Hui

Pfizer:
Ramona Derkits, Eunice Chung

Sankyo:
Chhaya Shah, Jessica Ford

Sanofi-aventis:
Drilon Saliu, Melissa Gallo, Manita Singh, Nikul Shukla

Schering Plough:
Robert Adamczk, Elizabeth Lucini, Bhavini Patel

Tibotec:
Elizabeth Fung

TKL:
Doha Aboubakr

Scientific Advantage Award Recipients

Congratulations to Anish Patel, Pharm.D. and Jessica Winnie, Pharm.D. on winning the PharmD Fellowship Award from Scientific Advantage.

Scientific Advantage is an integrated company that helps build, model, train and refine Medical Science Liaison teams. They work with pharmaceutical, biotech and medical device companies to expand and dramatically improve their medical marketing impact. Recently, Scientific Advantage invited all of the Rutgers Fellows who were interested in pursuing a career as an MSL to apply for the PharmD Fellowship Award. The recipients were able to attend the Annual Scientific Advantage Medical Science Liaison Seminar on April 25-26.

According to Jessica Winnie, “Attending the meeting was a great experience. I learned a great deal about the regulations governing the role of an MSL, the opportunities for career development in the MSL role, and I had a chance to network with and meet many past, current and future MSLs. I would recommend this meeting for all those interested in pursuing a career as an MSL, and I look forward to the future collaboration of Scientific Advantage and the Rutgers Fellowship.”

Mark Your Calendars!

ROPES Course

First Professional Development Day