

The Impact of Industry-Based Training and Student Leadership Experiences of PharmD Graduates on Obtaining a Position with the Rutgers Pharmaceutical Industry Fellowship (RPIF) Program

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BACKGROUND

- Many PharmD students seeking careers in the pharmaceutical industry apply for industry focused post-graduate training programs
- Opportunities for pharmacists in the pharmaceutical industry include, but are not limited to clinical research, medical affairs, regulatory affairs, and marketing
- The Rutgers Pharmaceutical Industry Fellowship Program, founded in 1984, is the largest post-graduate training program designed to bridge the experience gap between recent PharmD graduates and the entry-level job requirements of the pharmaceutical industry
- An evaluation of RPIF Program applicants in 2009 was conducted to identify the impact of industry-based training experiences and leadership roles of PharmD graduates on the likelihood of successfully obtaining a position in the RPIF Program

OBJECTIVES

- To analyze data from applicants who completed industry-based rotations and/or internships to determine how these experiences relate to successfully obtaining a fellowship position
- To analyze the impact of student leadership and other experiences on successfully obtaining a fellowship position

METHODS

- A randomized, blinded analysis of the *curricula vitae* of July 2009 RPIF Program applicants (n=175) was completed to evaluate:
 - Industry-based rotations and/or internship experiences
 - Pharmacy organization memberships
 - Leadership experiences
 - Poster presentations and publications
 - Additional degrees and other experiences/accomplishments
- Data was collected and entered into the Zoomerang online survey tool for analysis
- Inclusion criteria:** Fellowship applicants starting July 2009 that were on the RPIF Program website portal
- Exclusion criteria:** Applicants with incomplete applications or who declined RPIF Program offers
- The relative likelihood of successfully obtaining a fellowship was determined for each factor evaluated

RESULTS

Table 1. Demographics*

	2009
Non-Accepted Applicants	120 (68.6%)
Accepted Applicants	55 (31.4%)

* Includes only completed applications

Figure 1. Experiential Industry Rotations for 2009 Applicants

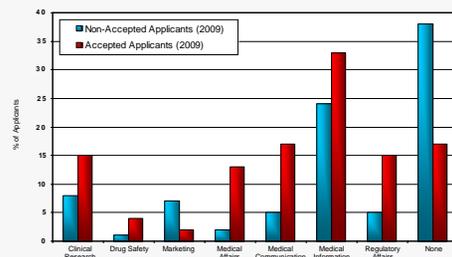


Figure 2. Industry Internship/Work Experience for 2009 Applicants

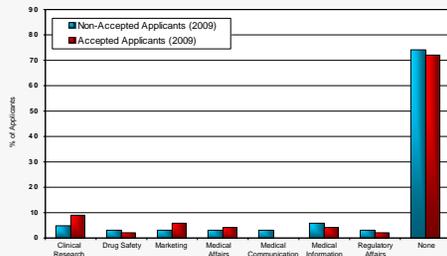
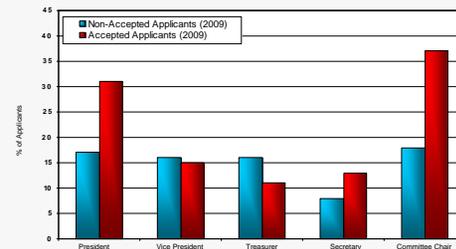


Table 2. Student Leadership

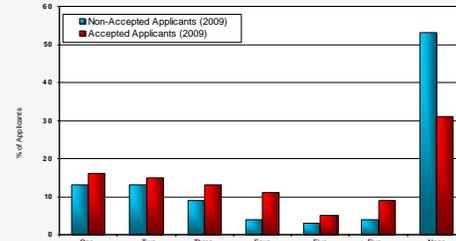
	2009	
	Yes	No
Non-Accepted Applicants	55 (47%)	63 (53%)
Accepted Applicants	37 (69%)	17 (31%)

Figure 3. Leadership Positions Held by 2009 Applicants†



† Accepted applicants were more likely to be members of Phi Lambda Sigma (National Pharmacy Leadership Society) than non-accepted applicants

Figure 4. Number of Leadership Positions Held by 2009 Applicants



DISCUSSION

- Prior pharmaceutical industry experience was correlated to a higher acceptance into the RPIF fellowship
 - In 2009, 81% of accepted applicants had an industry rotation compared with 65% of non-accepted applicants
 - Likewise, 17% of accepted applicants had an industry internship/work experience compared with 25% of non-accepted applicants
 - Results from 2008¹ were comparable to that in 2009
- A majority of the experiential industry rotations were in the medical information department, likely indicating that these rotations are most available for PharmD students
 - There were also high percentages in medical communication, regulatory affairs, and clinical research
- A higher percentage of accepted applicants held leadership positions than non-accepted applicants
 - The most common positions held include serving as a committee chair or organizational president
- There were multiple individuals who obtained an RPIF fellowship without previous industry and/or leadership experience
- Limitations in this study include:
 - Blinding during data collection was incomplete in some cases
 - Other factors that influenced successful candidacy for the RPIF Program were not evaluated, such as level of performance in the interviewing process, the strength of letters of recommendation, and/or presentation/writing abilities
 - A retrospective study design is not interventional; therefore, cause-effect relationships cannot be determined

CONCLUSIONS

- Overall, accepted RPIF Program applicants had more industry-based experiences as part of an experiential rotation and/or an internship/work experience
- Student leadership/involvement, regardless of position and number of positions held, appears to be a contributing factor to successfully obtaining an RPIF fellowship position
- Student pharmacists who are interested in pursuing industry fellowships should attempt to gain industry and leadership experiences to improve the likelihood of obtaining an RPIF fellowship position

REFERENCES

- Dabovic K., Patel L., Nashat M., Alexander J.G., Barone J.A. The Impact of Industry-Based Training Experiences and Achievements of PharmD Graduates on Obtaining a Position with the Rutgers Pharmaceutical Industry Fellowship (RPIF) Program. Poster session presented at: 2009 APhA Annual Meeting and Exposition; 2009 Apr 3-6; San Antonio, TX.

DISCLOSURES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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