HOMECOMING TAILGATE 2018

On November 3, College of Pharmacy alumni, students, staff, faculty, and well-wishers gathered during a temperate but blustery Saturday afternoon during the annual Homecoming Tailgate. This year featured a change of venue from the Pharmacy Building to the official tailgate area around the Darrell K Royal – Texas Memorial Stadium. The College of Pharmacy’s spot was a large tent in the plaza in front of the LBJ Library. Guests ate brisket and sausage, enjoyed refreshments, and prepared for the Texas Longhorns’ brawl with the West Virginia Mountaineers. Special recognition went to alumni from the Classes of 1968, 1978, 1988, 1998, and 2008. The lively event was at capacity and made possible with generous sponsorship from H-E-B.

The College of Pharmacy Alumni Association met before the start of the event to pass the torch for Alumni Association President. Andrew Hwang (Pharm.D. ’15) assumed the new role as president, and the association honored outgoing president Steven Knight (Pharm.D. ’09) for his tireless service.

DIGIOVANNI EARNS RESEARCH AWARD

On October 30, the University Co-operative Society and The University of Texas at Austin Office of the Vice President for Research honored the winners of the Robert W. Hamilton Book Awards and the University Co-operative Society’s Research Excellence Awards. One of the top winners of the evening was College of Pharmacy professor and researcher Dr. John DiGiovanni, who earned 2018’s Career Research Excellence Award. John DiGiovanni, Ph.D. is Professor in the College of Pharmacy’s Pharmacology and Toxicology Division, holder of the Coulter R. Sublett Chair in Pharmacy, Professor of Pediatrics in the Dell Medical School, Director of the Center for Molecular Carcinogenesis and Toxicology (CMCT), and Associate Director for Basic Research in the Livestrong Cancer Institutes.

Dr. DiGiovanni has been continuously funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for 37 years for his innovative research on mechanisms of producing and preventing cancer, and has over 350 publications to his credit.

TXCORE HIRES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The University of Texas at Austin College of Pharmacy’s Texas Center for Health Outcomes Research and Education (TxCORE) will assume new leadership to support its and the university’s mission to transform healthcare. On September 17, Michael Johnsrud, Ph.D. became TxCORE’s executive director, bringing his professional experience working across multiple stakeholders within the healthcare marketplace to provide leadership and execute goals focused on building partnerships and developing funding to support the center’s work in innovation focused on health outcomes research and education.

Dr. Johnsrud comes to TxCORE with nine years of experience at Avalere Health, a leading research and policy advisory services firm known for its integrated approach to providing healthcare solutions and impacting national and international policy.
ALUMNI AWARDED COLLEGE HONORS

On September 29, College of Pharmacy alumni, faculty, students, staff, and well-wishers met at Dover’s Dining Room at the DoubleTree Austin to honor accomplished alumni at the annual Alumni Reception and Awards Ceremony. Formerly part of the college’s homecoming festivities, the Alumni Reception and Award Ceremony was presented this year in conjunction with the 66th Annual Pharmacy Practice Seminar (PPS).

Outgoing Alumni Association President Steven Knight (Pharm.D. ’09) was awarded the Distinguished Young Alumnus Award. Connie Gelineau (Pharm.D. ’07), 2017’s recipient, presented the award to Knight.

Dennis Wiesner (B.S. ’70) presented the Legend of Pharmacy Award to College of Pharmacy Professor Salomon Stavchansky, Ph.D., who gave a rousing speech in the presence of his supportive family.

The Sheffield Outstanding Alumnus Award went to two outstanding alumnae: Sandra Guckian (B.S. ’89, M.S. ’97) and Donna Montemayor (B.S. ’88). Jeanne Waggener (B.S. ’72) presented the award.

P3 STUDENTS HOST MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING

On October 21, 2018, one of the Division of Pharmacotherapy’s IPPE Community Project teams hosted a Mental Health First Aid training at the McDermott Building at UT Health San Antonio. During this lengthy training, students and other trainees learned about how to navigate and help with mental health crisis situations in the adult population that involve depressive, manic, and psychotic events.

The community project is targeted toward providing students at the UT Health San Antonio and UT Austin campuses with additional resources for mental health. In the future, the project team hopes to see a majority of incoming P1 students trained in mental health first aid to gain relevant, clinical skills they can utilize early on and throughout the rest of their professional careers.

BEN LIU EARNS ACS AWARD

Division of Chemical Biology and Medicinal Chemistry Professor Hung-wen (Ben) Liu, Ph.D. was recently awarded the American Chemical Society’s Claude S. Hudson Award for outstanding contributions to carbohydrate chemistry. The Claude S. Hudson Award was established by the Division in 1946 to recognize outstanding contributions to carbohydrate chemistry in education, research, or applications. The award presentation will be held at the 2019 Spring ACS National Meeting.

PHARMACOTHERAPY FACULTY EARN KLEBERG GRANT

Division of Pharmacotherapy professors Dr. Kirk Evoy and Dr. Rebecca Moote are faculty mentors for a $23,000 grant to provide Stop the Bleed trainings and conduct bleeding response knowledge and self-efficacy research in South Texas.

The principal investigator, Katie Kazen, is a medical student at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. The project will also feature two pharmacy students serving as co-investigators on the project and several other pharmacy students will participate in this project as one of the P3 IPE projects.
STUDENT PHARMACIST PLACES AT NCPA ANNUAL MEETING

Student pharmacist Sarah Nguyen was awarded the Neil Pruitt Sr. Memorial Scholarship for Entrepreneurism at the annual conference for the National Community Pharmacists Association in Boston October 6-9, 2018.

PROFESSOR LUCAS HILL ON NPR

Operation Naloxone director and College of Pharmacy professor Lucas Hill recently appeared on NPR’s All Things Considered to talk about the effectiveness of placing naloxone on and off campus.

PHARMACY STAFF MEMBER HONORED

Congratulations to College of Pharmacy Senior Grants and Contracts Specialist Dr. Cory Davis (left), who was named Outstanding Research Administrator by the Association of Research Administrators (ARA) at UT Austin.

WHITE COAT CEREMONY 2018

Incoming first year student pharmacists gathered in the LBJ Auditorium on August 25 for the annual College of Pharmacy White Coat Ceremony. P1s were cloaked by faculty and, where appropriate, pharmacist family members. This year marked a change in venue and day for the event. A larger venue and Saturday morning reschedule allowed more well-wishers and family members to attend the hallowed event. The Class of 2022 gathered on the steps near the fountain for a group photo.

STUDENT PHARMACISTS ELECTED TO SNPHA LEADERSHIP

Three College of Pharmacy students were elected to important national leadership positions in the Student National Pharmaceutical Association (SNPhA).

Robyn James will serve as Legislative/Membership Benefits National Initiative (LMBI) Secretary.

Teresa Nguyen will serve as Legislative/Membership Benefits National Initiative Advocacy Chair.

David Giang will serve as Mental Health Chair.
TEXAS HEALTH CATALYST PROVIDES GRANT SUPPORT

College of Pharmacy students and faculty will receive grant support and legal consultation from the Texas Health Catalyst program to support the development of their intellectual property.

Texas Health Catalyst supports researchers, innovators, and entrepreneurs in accelerating the translation of innovations to health products, and is a collaborative initiative of the Cockrell School of Engineering, College of Natural Sciences, College of Pharmacy and Office of Technology Commercialization at The University of Texas at Austin.


Assistant Professor Tyler Gums, Pharm.D., student Valerie Yuenger, and Dell Medical School collaborators Bill Tierney and Rick Peters will receive grant funding for their project: Predictive Model & Clinical Decision Support for Medication Non-Adherence.

PHARMACY STUDENTS VOLUNTEER AT SUMMIT

Numerous College of Pharmacy students volunteered for the second annual Healthier Texas Summit, held at the AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center at The University of Texas at Austin on October 25-26, 2018.

The Healthier Texas Summit worked to empower leaders from diverse sectors across the state with the latest science and proven approaches to improve health where Texans live, learn, and work.