WesternU and Keck Graduate Institute to Offer Dual Degree

By Rodney Tanaka, Senior Communications Writer

Keck Graduate Institute of Applied Life Sciences (KGI) and Western University of Health Sciences College of Pharmacy are developing a dual degree program that will equip students with skills that are highly regarded by the pharmaceutical industry and specialty health-care organizations.

The dual degree program will build upon and complement WesternU’s Doctor of Pharmacy curriculum with KGI’s highly successful Master of Bioscience (MBS) degree. The objective is for pharmacy students to attain a common core of knowledge in bioscience with emphasis on their ability to integrate knowledge across disciplinary boundaries. The dual PharmD/MBS will be the first of its kind. The programs will utilize complementary courses and flexible scheduling to provide a five-year pathway to achieving both degrees.

“We expect that graduates will have exciting leadership opportunities in the pharmaceutical industry, in managed care and specialty health care organizations,” said WesternU College of Pharmacy Dean Daniel Robinson, PharmD, FASHP. “Combining business, bioscience and doctor of pharmacy training is a great formula for success in dealing with the rapid growth in bioengineered pharmaceutical products.”

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Within the MBS program, students will be able to select from the following tracks to personalize their educational experience:
• Business of bioscience
• Pharmaceutical discovery and development
• Bioprocessing
• Medical devices and diagnostics
• Clinical and regulatory affairs

On May 13, 2009, Daniel M. Bradbury, president and CEO of Amylin Pharmaceuticals, and a member of the KGI Board of Trustees gave a presentation to WesternU pharmacy students about the Dual Degree program.

“There is growing demand for pharmacists who have clinical, business, and bioscience skills necessary to succeed in industry, and this new graduate program will help produce the kinds of qualified individuals needed by companies.”

Student News

Vi is CPhA Student of the Year

Vi Le, Class of 2009, was named California Pharmacist Association (CPhA) Pharmacy Student of the Year. This prestigious award was given in recognition of her continuous involvement with local, state and national pharmacy organizations. Vi was instrumental in increasing the visibility and stature of the Academy of Student Pharmacists Chapter on campus, which led to a national recognition by the American Pharmacists Association.

Industry Clerkship at Bristol-Meyers Squibb

By Ajay Roberts, PharmD ’09

With the assistance of Dean Robinson and the faculty and staff at Western University of Health Sciences, I was able to experience an extensive industry rotation at Bristol-Myers Squibb. At BMS, I spent fifteen weeks working under three different departments: Patient Assistance Program/Foundation; Independent Medical Education; Entecavir (Baraclude) Marketing. Throughout the time that I spent there, I worked very closely with various departments that fall under either the “medical” or “commercial” branch of the company, allowing me to experience the various driving mechanisms behind these two branches. While the “medical” side of the company focuses on improving health outcomes without any regard to market share of the product, the “commercial” side, on the other hand, focuses mainly on driving market share of the product. Fortunately, under these realms of the company, there are many different positions a pharmacist can hold. By working with PharmDs under these two very different realms helped me realize that there is broader range of career possibilities for a pharmacist than I once thought.

Additionally, this experience helped me extensively build my network. Throughout the fifteen week internship, I met with numerous people within the company that hold different positions anywhere from an administrative assistant to Senior Vice Presidents. As a result of meeting these different people, I was able to build strong points of contact were I to pursue a career in industry.

Overall, this was an “eye opening” experience that turned me on to the industry side of pharmacy. Although I came into the company unsure of what I wanted to do in my career, I left confirmed that industry is my next step in life.
I spent the summer of 2007 in Tanzania, on the coast of East Africa. My trip was coordinated through a volunteer organization specializing in sending experienced clinicians to resource-poor settings to foster the growth of HIV treatment programs. I was involved in clinical, administrative and teaching activities such as twice weekly Infectious Diseases rounds with the medical team seeing patients primarily with HIV, tuberculosis, or malaria or any combination of these. However, we also took care of their other medical problems, including several cases of diabetic emergencies and acute renal failure. I also spent time in the outpatient HIV clinic and the pharmacy.

After my orientation in Dar es Salaam, the largest city in Tanzania, I went to Mbeya in the southwest corner of Tanzania. It has a population of about 400,000 in the city, without a single stoplight, and the surrounding region had an additional 400,000 people. I was partnered with another US volunteer who had experience working with HIV public policies and grants, while my specialty is clinical HIV pharmacology and general pharmacy practice. The US group we worked with was the Walter Reed HIV Research Program of the US Department of Defense. We stayed in their "project house" which was quite nice and similar to many US homes. My overall charge was basically to assess what level of pharmacy services were being offered, and what direction they should go in.

Administratively I worked closely with the chief pharmacist at the hospital. He was very personable, and had a BS in pharmacy, a Masters in Business and Policy and had previously been a clinical officer, similar to a physician assistant. While working together, I was able to get a really good picture of the pharmacy administrative structure and helped them identify key areas for improvements.

The hospital at Mbeya Referral Hospital also had 6 pharmacy interns, so I was able to get to know them and teach them at the bedside. I also toured the country-side with the chief pharmacist visiting various HIV centers and assessing the HIV knowledge of the personnel dispensing HIV medications. We prepared a 2-day training program for these people to fill the gaps in their knowledge.

Lastly, I provided a hospital-wide symposium to update them on recent developments.

Beyond all of these fulfilling activities, I was also able to dive headfirst into a different culture and different language, and expand my appreciation of their way of life, and my own. I only took one vacation day during the week, and that was to go on a safari with my volunteer partner.

In summary, it was an incredibly fulfilling experience for me, and I hope to return to do more work. If you would like to read (portions of) my blog, please feel free: http://jimscotttanzania.blogspot.com/
When the youngest of the baby boomers turn 65 in 2030, the population of older Americans will have doubled from 35 million to 70 million. Their medical needs will require massive restructuring of the health care system and a renewed commitment to geriatric training.

David B. Reuben, MD, Director, Multicampus Program in Geriatrics Medicine and Gerontology (MPGMG) and Chief, Division of Geriatrics at UCLA Center for Health Sciences, gave this message at the third annual Ray Symposium at Western University of Health Sciences on Thursday, April 9, 2009.

Reuben served on the Institute of Medicine (IOM) committee that produced the 2008 report “Retooling for an Aging America: Building The Health Care Workforce.” He talked about the committee’s findings and how health care educators, providers and students could help address the growing needs of an aging population.

Older persons make up about 12 percent of the population, but consume a disproportionate amount of health care services: 26 percent of physician office visits, 35 percent of hospital stays, 34 percent of prescriptions and 38 percent of emergency medical services responses.

The baby boomers will look much different than older populations in the past – more diverse, highly educated and with fewer children to assist them, Reuben said.

The health-care workforce is inadequate to address the aging population, with about 7,100 geriatricians – a total that is declining – and about 1,600 geriatric psychiatrists, Reuben said. Less than 1 percent of nurses and pharmacists and less than 4 percent of social workers specialize in geriatrics.

One factor in this shortfall is doctors in general earn less money specializing in geriatrics than they would in other areas such as endocrinology, infectious disease and rheumatology.

There is also poor retention of direct-care workers, with a 71 percent turnover of nurse aides. Forty to 60 percent of home health aides leave after one year. Eighty percent to 90 percent leave in the first two years. Assisted-living staff turnover ranges from 21 percent to 135 percent.

Direct-care workers earn little more than food counter attendants, he said. In Las Vegas, nurse aides often quit to clean ashtrays in casinos for the same amount of money.

A hair stylist in Los Angeles needs 1,500 hours of training for a work license, while direct-care workers are federally required to only have 75 hours of training, Reuben said.

“We’re on a collision course heading for disaster,” Reuben said. “We need to change the way we do business.”

The IOM committee recommended enhancing geriatric competence of the general workforce, increasing recruitment and retention of geriatric specialists and caregivers, and implementing innovative models of care.
All health care professionals – doctors, nurses, pharmacists, dentists, and others – should be required to demonstrate minimum competence in the care of older adults prior to graduation. All board examinations should be infiltrated with geriatrics, Reuben said, and public and private payers should provide financial incentives to increase the number of geriatric specialists in all health professions.

“You should never have to take a (financial) hit for specializing in geriatrics,” Reuben said.

The Ray Symposium, now in its third year, brings speakers to WesternU who can address national health care issues that would appeal to the broadest possible audience, said Daniel Robinson, PharmD, FASHP, Dean of the College of Pharmacy. The symposium was supported by an unrestricted educational grant from Watson Pharmaceuticals. Dr. David Reuben was invited because he is nationally recognized for his work in improving the quality of care provided to older persons.

WesternU’s College of Pharmacy organizes the annual Ray Symposium in honor of Max Ray, MS, PharmD, Dean Emeritus of the College of Pharmacy. He joined WesternU as Professor of Pharmacy Practice and Director of the Center for Pharmacy Practice and Development in 1996 and served as Dean of the College of Pharmacy from 1999 to 2006.

We welcome Paul Stover as the new development director for the College of Pharmacy. After teaching for many years, he moved into fundraising by establishing a full-service development program at a private school and then served as a development director for five years at Claremont Graduate University. Paul came to WesternU in January after serving as the Interim Executive Director of the CHOC Foundation in Orange. He is delighted to be part of the tradition of excellence at WesternU.

Anthony Perez and the Walgreens team deliver a check for $50,000.

Guy DiPasqua and the Target team present Dean Robinson with a check for $50,000.

Trustee, Mike Quick from AmerisourceBergen delivers a gift-in-kind donation of a BMD Ultrasound Bone Density Densitometer and Hard Travel Case valued at $13,000.
Western States Conference for Pharmacy Residents, Fellows and Preceptors: May 19-22, 2009

For the 29th straight year, residents, fellows and preceptors gathered for the Western States Conference for Pharmacy Residents, Fellows and Preceptors at the Asilomar Conference Center in Pacific Grove, California. WesternU faculty members in attendance were Jim Scott, Roger Klotz and Sam Shimomura. The WesternU residents, fellows and alumni who presented at the conference are listed below:

Kathleen Cardosa, PharmD – Evaluation of a Process Improvement Initiative to Reduce Preventable Errors in Anticoagulation Therapy. Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center, Chula Vista CA

Rose Casado, PharmD – Evaluating Outcomes of Relative Dose Intensity in Optimizing Delivery of Chemotherapy. Arrowhead Regional Medical Center, Colton CA

Trinh Chau, PharmD – Evaluation of Pharmacy Managed Heparin Infusion Protocol with Scheduled Three Time Daily PTT Lab Collections. VA Loma Linda Healthcare System, Loma Linda CA

Chih-Wei Dai, PharmD – Patient Acceptance Rates of Pre Travel Recommendations at a Pharmacist Run Travel Health Clinic. Western University of Health Science, College of Pharmacy, Pomona CA

Lan Ding, PharmD – Developing and implementing a Predialysis Aminoglycoside Administration Guideline in Patients with Hemodialysis. Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center, Chula Vista CA

Emmeline Garcia, PharmD – Use of the VA computer Database to Detect Undiagnosed Primary Hyperaldosteronism. VA Northern California Health Care System, Martinez CA


Do Le, PharmD – Enteral vs Parenteral Nutrition: Infectious Complications in Critically Ill Adult Patients with Aggressive Glycemic Control. University of California Irvine Medical Center, Orange CA

Kasey Le, PharmD – A Retrospective Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Outpatient Diabetes Management in a Safety-Net Hospital. Arrowhead Regional Medical Center, Colton CA

Courtney Lee, PharmD – A Retrospective Comparative Analysis Comparing Clinical Services for an Employer-Based Disease Management Program. American Health Care, Rocklin CA

Daniel Liou, PharmD – Drug Use Evaluation of Long-Acting Risperidone Injection within a Healthcare Network. VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, Los Angeles CA

Tina Liu, PharmD – A Prospective Randomized, Open-Label, Crossover on the Effects of Psyllium on Niacin Tolerability. Western University of Health Science, College of Pharmacy, Pomona CA

Gene Nguyen, PharmD – A Retrospective Analysis of Inpatient use of Epoetin Alfa. Hoag Memorial Hospital Presbyterian, Newport Beach CA

Brian Phan, PharmD – Adherence Barriers to the Anti-Epileptic Regimen in Patients with Epilepsy. Kaiser Permanente – Union City, Union City CA

Logan Saito, PharmD – Clear as Mississippi Mud? Vancomycin Induced Nephrotoxicity. VA Long Beach Healthcare System, Long Beach CA
Faculty Recognized at Honor’s Day

Teacher of the Year Award

The Teacher of the Year Award is given to the College of Pharmacy faculty member who exhibits excellence in teaching within the professional pharmacy curriculum.

Dr. Huan (Mark) Nguyen, Assistant Professor of Pharmacy Practice and Administration is the winner of this year’s award:

“The students at WesternU, have given me the support, guidance, and inspiration to always strive to be a better teacher! For that, I will always be grateful.”

Faculty Service Awards

The Faculty Service Awards are awarded to paid faculty who have provided outstanding service to the College of Pharmacy. This year’s recipients are Dr. Cynthia Jackevicius, Associate Professor of Pharmacy Practice and Administration and Dr. Jennifer Le, Associate Professor of Pharmacy Practice and Administration.

Preceptor of the Year Awards

Dr. Siu-Fun Wong, Associate Professor of Pharmacy Practice and Dr. Charles Lee, Clinical Coordinator at Monterey Park Hospital were named Preceptors of the Year. This honor is awarded to recognize paid and volunteer College of Pharmacy Preceptors for their excellence in teaching students during their clerkships.

International Post-Baccalaureate PharmD

We take great pride in the accomplishments of our graduates. Two graduates from our International Post-Baccalaureate PharmD program (Class of 2006; formerly the MCPP program) have recently accepted academic positions in schools of pharmacy.

Dr. Young Ran Lee has accepted the position of Assistant Professor in Internal Medicine/ Critical Care at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Pharmacy in Abilene. Dr. Jae Yang has accepted a tenure track Assistant Professor position at the University of Kansas, School of Pharmacy starting July 1, 2009. Dr. Yang most recently worked with Dr. David Min as his Fellow.
YOUR ALUMNI NETWORK

Did you know that with the recent addition of the Class of 2009, the total number of graduates from the College of Pharmacy and WesternU have surpassed 1,000 and 7,000 alumni, respectively? This growing network of alumni is your support system to help you succeed in your careers, and its strength and value can be directly attributed to the active participation of members like you. Here’s how you can participate:

1. Be Connected – Keep us up to date on your whereabouts, your life, and your career so that we may celebrate your accomplishments, help you maintain the bonds you established with friends and classmates at WesternU, and share with you valuable alumni benefits like discounted fitness club memberships. Send your address updates, class notes, and questions to alumni@westernu.edu, or call us at (909) 469-5274.

2. Be Informed – Read this Alumni Newsletter, WesternU View magazine, and The Alumni Connection e-newsletter, attend alumni events, and come back to campus, so that you can stay informed and make yourself a better ambassador for and representative of the College and University within your profession and to prospective students.

3. Be Involved – Whether it’s service on a campus board or committee, a couple hours talking with current students about your professional experience, or financial support for a scholarship, you can join the thousands of alumni who came before you in providing assistance to current students and working to continually improve our College and University.