



A "postbac" reunion took place at the School of Pharmacy in May 2012. Postbaccalaureate Pharm.D. graduates received their degrees between 1978 and 1996.

## Postbaccalaureate Pharm.D. reunion a first

The first-ever (as far as anyone knows!) VCU School of Pharmacy postbaccalaureate Pharm.D. reunion took place last spring in the R. Blackwell Smith Jr. Building on the MCV Campus.

The event was the brainchild of postbac alumni Tony Coniglio (Pharm.D. '86) and Gene Cefali (Pharm.D./Ph.D. '87), who also are members of the School of Pharmacy's Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Advisory Board.

When Coniglio heard of Professor William Garnett's impending retirement, he suggested that the school host a postbaccalaureate Pharm.D. reunion the same day as the Graduate Advisory Board's spring meeting. That would set the reunion in motion, given that several of his fellow alumni were on the board. The weekend finale—and big surprise—would be a "roast and toast" dinner the following evening in honor of Garnett.

The first couple of queries basically went viral. Within days, about 30 alumni and former faculty had agreed to convene in Richmond the last weekend in May. They traveled from as far as California, Colorado, Florida, New Jersey and Illinois. Former faculty, some of whom are also alums, included Christina Israel, Ken Kolb (Pharm.D. '82), Charles Myers and Carol and Mark Pugh (both Pharm.D. '84). Alumni ranged from the Pharm.D. class of '81 (Jody Allen and Ellen Leitinger) to 1983 (Wendy Nash) to '89 (Jill Nash), '91 (Marijke Adams) and '92 (Patty Slattum, who currently is on faculty) and many more.

During the Friday evening reunion, Dean Victor Yanchick welcomed attendees, offered an update on the school and led a tour of Smith's recently

renovated labs and offices. The dean's arrival at the school in 1996 coincided with the last class to enter as postbac Pharm.D.s. (The first class graduated in 1978, shortly after Garnett arrived on the scene.)

Former classmates quickly found one another and began catching up; some hadn't seen each other since graduation. Garnett was on hand as "guest faculty" and knew he'd be dining with everyone the next night. What he didn't know was that as soon as the reunion was over, Coniglio, Cefali and fellow alumnus and GAB board member William Fitzsimmons (Pharm.D. '85) would issue a challenge asking attendees to support a scholarship in Garnett's name. Time was of the essence, as his school-sponsored retirement event was less than a month away.

Postbaccalaureate Pharm.D.s, faculty and friends rose to the challenge, and the William Garnett Scholarship Fund was established and announced June 22 at the MCV Alumni House. (For more on the scholarship, see page 3.)

As for the postbaccalaureate Pharm.D. crowd, indications appeared excellent that this would be the first of many reunions to come.

*If you would like to update your contact information with the School of Pharmacy, please send a current mailing address, e-mail address and phone number(s) to [pharmacyalum@vcu.edu](mailto:pharmacyalum@vcu.edu). To join the postbac group online, visit [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com), search VCU School of Pharmacy > Groups > Postbaccalaureate Pharm.D. Alumni.*

## Symposium, workshop cover current issues

**Therapeutic Equivalence workshop features regulatory and scientific issues in drug product development.** The April 18, 2012, Pharmaceutical Sciences Workshop was conceived by the Graduate Advisory Board. Faculty included Leon Shargel of Applied Biopharmaceutics on "Therapeutic Equivalence and Drug Product Performance" and Jennifer Sheng of Sandoz on "Assessment of Therapeutic Equivalence From a Generic Drug Development Perspective." Representing the U.S. Food and Drug Administration were Mehul Mehta on "Challenges in Ensuring Therapeutic Equivalence of Novel Modified Release Products"; Dale Conner on "FDA Approach to Bioequivalence of Nasal and Inhalation Products"; Barbara Davit on "Establishing Bioequivalence of Modified-Release Products: Office of Generic Drugs Perspective" and John Z. Duan on "Using In Vitro Methodology to Build Therapeutic Equivalence: Biowaiver Issues." Moderators were Angela Men and Chandra Chaurasia of the FDA, and a panel discussion with all six speakers concluded the workshop. The workshop is now available online for continuing education credit. Visit [www.pharmacy.vcu.edu/ce](http://www.pharmacy.vcu.edu/ce) and click on Web-Based Podcast: Therapeutic Equivalence.

**Lowenthal Symposium focuses on "New Drug Targets in Mental Health."** The School of Pharmacy's Edwin van den Oord and Shijun Zhang moderated the biennial daylong symposium May 24, 2012. Featured speakers were Pat Sullivan of University of North Carolina on "Generating New Targets in Psychiatry"; Xiaolan Hu of Bristol-Myers Squibb on "Translational Genetics in Drug Discovery and Development"; Christophe Antczak of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center on "High Throughput Screening for Cancer Center Drug Discovery and Beyond" and Raymond Booth of University of Florida on "Integrating Medicinal Chemistry, Pharmacology and Behavioral Research Toward Novel Serotonin 5-HT<sub>2</sub>-based Pharmacotherapy for Neuropsychiatric Disorders." VCU speakers were Medicinal Chemistry graduate student and Lowenthal Award winner Jeremy Chojnacki on "A Bivalent Strategy for Alzheimer's Disease" and Richard A. Glennon, chairman of the Department of Medicinal Chemistry, who provided "Updates in Lowenthal-Awarded Research." Hilda Meth, who established the Lowenthal Fund in honor and memory of her late husband, described the former professor of pharmacy and pharmaceuticals as having three passions: his family, his students and his photography. "Werner Lowenthal was the best student advocate ever," she said.



## From the dean

Greetings from the School of Pharmacy. I hope you find this issue of The Pipeline both interesting and informative. Our graduate program continues to attract exceptional students from around the world. We have a full enrollment of graduate students in all of the disciplines, and our students have increasing opportunities for interdisciplinary research collaboration with other schools, including the School of Medicine, the School of Allied Health Professions and the School of Engineering.

Our annual Research and Career Days in October continue to go well, attracting more and more participants. Awards are given each year for the best graduate student poster and the best Pharm.D. student poster. (See page 4 for details.)

I am pleased to report that several of our faculty—Philip Gerck, Glen Kellogg, Martin Safo, Patricia Slattum, Douglas Sweet, Jurgen Venitz and Shijun Zhang—have successfully competed for the university's Presidential Research Quest Fund (formerly known as the Presidential Research Incentive Program Awards). Their proposals are evaluated by the

school's internal review committee as well as the university's review committee.

Our Graduate Program Advisory Board has been instrumental in providing excellent input into our graduate program, and we are most appreciative of their willingness to serve in this capacity.

Please accept my sincere thanks for the support you have given our Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Programs. You'll want to visit the school's Web site at [www.pharmacy.vcu.edu](http://www.pharmacy.vcu.edu) to learn more about what is happening at the School of Pharmacy.

**Victor A. Yanchick, Ph.D.**  
Dean and Archie O. McCalley Chair



## From the director

There is a reason our alumni become innovative, creative leaders in their fields – it's because we have incredible students and faculty! This indisputable fact is reflected in our annual Research and Career Day. Last year, we had well over 100 participants, including 50 posters—our largest event ever. The quality of science and presentations and the energy in the room also were unsurpassed at this year's event.

We have some great new programs this year, too. Our Graduate Program Advisory Board (comprising, in large part, those talented alumni) has worked very hard to roll out the new Career Mentor Program for our graduate students. This is only the first piece in a larger development program being created for our students, and one in which we hope to involve more of our alumni. (On page 5, you'll find a report by board members.)

One of our students, Osama Shoair, proposed and designed the Student Ambassador Program, which supports outreach by students to universities close to their homes. Many other new initiatives are in the pipeline.

Thank you for all your support to our program and students. I'm looking forward to another great year!

**Susanna Wu-Pong, Ph.D.**  
Director, Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Programs

# Where in the world are our graduate alumni?

*Please send your news updates to [pharmacyalum@vcu.edu](mailto:pharmacyalum@vcu.edu). The School of Pharmacy and your former classmates and professors are interested in what you are doing! Here are a few class notes we have compiled for you.*

**Marie Smith** (Pharm.D. '80) received the 2011 American Society of Health-Systems Professionals Foundation Literature Award for Innovation in Pharmacy Practice at the 46th ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting and Exhibition in December in New Orleans. She was recognized for a Health Affairs article titled "Why Pharmacists Belong in the Medical Home." Smith is professor and assistant dean for practice and public policy partnerships at University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy.

**Heidi Marchand** (B.S. '82, Pharm.D. '85) is assistant commissioner for the Office of Special Health Issues, U.S. Food and Drug Administration. In October 2011, she spoke

on "FDA Drug Development and Post-Marketing Safety" for the School of Pharmacy's Department of Pharmaceutics and Department of Pharmacotherapy and Outcomes Science.

**Amy Hauck Newman** (Ph.D. '85) is chief of the Medicinal Chemistry Section, Intramural Research Program of the National Institute on Drug Abuse. She spoke on "Drug Design for Addiction" as part of the School of Pharmacy's Department of Medicinal Chemistry fall 2011 seminar program and visited the school's 14th annual Research and Career Day with her thesis advisor (and department chairman) Richard A. Glennon.

**Lama Kanawati** (B.S. '86, Pharm.D. '88) has been promoted to residency program director at Washington Hospital Center in Washington, D.C. She also is a critical care clinical specialist and continuing education coordinator. She is married and has one daughter.

**Chetan Lathia** (Ph.D. '89), formerly with Bayer Healthcare Pharmaceuticals, is executive director for clinical pharmacology at Alexion Pharmaceuticals. He and his wife Nita live in Woodbridge, Conn., with their children, Dhanan and Tanay.

**Martin Ohlinger** (B.S. '93, Pharm.D. '95) has been on faculty at University of Toledo College  
*(continued on page 3)*

## Professors Barr and Garnett leave long-lasting legacies

Any School of Pharmacy student who graduated in the last several decades will have had class with, been advised by or, at the very least, been well aware of professors William Barr and William Garnett. Of such educators and scientists are legends made.

Barr joined the VCU School of Pharmacy in 1972, and Garnett arrived four years later. Because of their contributions to the school and to the field, scholarship funds now have been endowed in the name of each.

Garnett's scholarship was announced at his retirement party in June. Referring to Garnett as a pioneer, Dean Victor Yanchick said, "He was involved in the transformation of pharmacy. He was one of the people who developed an outstanding postbaccalaureate program here... He was one of the most influential individuals in academia who really prepared the new breed of pharmacist. If it weren't for people like William, we wouldn't be where we are today in pharmacy education."

Barr's scholarship was announced at a reception following Research and Career Day in October. Don Brophy noted that Barr, too, was among the major architects of "one of the first, and most respected, postbaccalaureate Pharm.D. programs in the United States." Brophy, chairman of the Department of Pharmacotherapy and Outcomes Science, also referred to Barr as "a world-renowned researcher in the area of Phase I drug studies and pharmacokinetics."

At both events, anecdotes from alumni and faculty ranged far and wide, from Barr's 1970s White House call requesting a consultation on a blood clot residing in then-President Richard Nixon's leg to Brophy's memories of researching antiepileptic studies as a student himself...and discovering that all the papers had been authored by Garnett.



Professor William Barr (second from left) and his wife Deborah, daughter Debbie Wingfield (a 1982 SOP alumna) and brother and sister-in-law Chuck and Gillian Barr. Barr earned his B.S., Pharm.D. and Ph.D. from University of California at San Francisco.

Pradeep Sathe (Ph.D. '89) wrote about arriving from India in 1983. "I consider myself extremely fortunate to have met Professor Barr at that time. He gave me a sense of direction and purpose.

"Dr. Barr, who is a talented artist among other titles, made science a form of artistic experience... [He] shaped not only my career, but my life's trajectory into one I am very happy with."

Barr, by the way, is also noted for having hired many of the School of Pharmacy's other well-known faculty, including Jurgen Venitz, Tom Karnes, Ron Polk, Craig and Cindy Kirkwood, Tom Comstock, Harold Smith, Jim McKenney and, coincidentally... Garnett.

Congratulating Garnett, Tyler Stevens (Pharm.D. '06) spoke of the "Williamisms" of which he had grown fond in Garnett's historically oriented "today's date" e-mails. Detailing Garnett's accomplishments, Stevens concluded, "He is an educator, a mentor and most of all, a good friend. He provides students a wonderful role model."



Professor William Garnett (second from left) and his wife Mary Anne, granddaughter Susanna, daughter Jennifer and son-in-law Chris Carr. Garnett earned his B.S. degree at VCU School of Pharmacy and Pharm.D. at Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science.

During the separate events, both professors received a bit of ribbing. Personal reminiscences included Karnes' description of a particularly memorable road trip Barr had led to an American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists conference in Philadelphia. William Soine noted Garnett's famous fishing trips. "He made me organize those trips the first 10 years!"

Based on the recent outpouring of personal and professional tributes to Barr and Garnett, as well as donations to their respective endowment funds, the School of Pharmacy is all the poorer for having lost two professors who devoted a total of 76 years to education, research and service. Their legacies are evident in the school's Pharm.D. and graduate programs and, now, in pharmacy scholarships.

To make a donation to the William Barr Scholarship Fund or the William Garnett Scholarship Fund, please contact Ellen Leverich, School of Pharmacy director of development, at emleverich@vcu.edu or (804) 828-3016.

## Graduate Update

(continued from page 2)

of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences for 12 years. His clinical practice is with the Surgical Critical Care group at UT Medical Center, and he also serves as director of the Critical Care Pharmacy Residency Program. Actively involved with several professional organizations, he received a Presidential Citation for service to the Society of Critical Care Medicine. He lives in Toledo, Ohio, with his wife Lisa and their four daughters, Christy, Amy, Sarah and Megan.

**Thomas Priszano** (Ph.D. '00), recently promoted to professor of medicinal chemistry at the University of Kansas, received the 2012 David W. Robertson Award for Excellence in Medicinal Chemistry from the American Chemical Society.

**Gunnar T. Gunnarsson** (Ph.D. '03) has been on the move! He worked as a postdoctoral at NIH, in the HIV drug resistance program, till he returned home to Iceland in 2007. There he joined the Icelandic Medicines Agency, serving as team leader for quality assessment of new drug applications. He also is an expert with the European Medicines Agency, representing Iceland in the Quality Working Party and Biological Working Party. "It is similar to working for the FDA," he writes, "and being on the board for all things chemical and pharmaceutical." In addition, he is a chemical expert for EDQM—aka "the European directorate for the quality of medicines and health care"—which publishes the European Pharmacopoeia. Gunnarsson spent a year in New Zealand in a secondment role as senior scientific advisor with Medsafe.

**David Lee** (Pharm.D./Ph.D. '09) was named March 2012 Member of the Month by the

American Society for Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics. He is assistant professor at Oregon State University/Oregon Health and Science University College of Pharmacy.

**Dipen Patel** (Ph.D. '10) works for Pharmerit North America, a health economic and outcomes research consulting company in Bethesda, Md. "It's a great place to work for aspiring and motivated pharmacy administration graduates," he writes. "I will always be more than happy to guide my juniors during and/or after their graduation." Research on the high cost of treating food-induced allergic reactions, conducted as part of his dissertation, made nationwide news in May 2011.

**Mallika Lala** (Ph.D. '11) returned to India upon graduation. She is a research consultant for Piramal Healthcare Limited in Mumbai.

## Research and Career Days post record numbers



14th annual Research and Career Day keynote speaker Jogarao Gobburu spoke on "Pharmacometrics 2020."



Richard A. Glennon, chairman of the Department of Medicinal Chemistry, welcomed former student Amy Newman (Ph.D. '85), who was on campus as a speaker for the department's fall 2011 seminar program.



Susanna Wu-Pong introduced the 15th annual Research and Career Day keynote speaker, F. Ivy Carroll.

The Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Programs' 14th and 15th Research and Career Days attracted record numbers of participants and research posters.

The annual event affords postdoctoral fellows and graduate and Pharm.D. students opportunities to hone the skills they need to find jobs as scientists in academia, government and the pharmaceutical industry.

### R&C Day 2011

Keynote speaker for the 14th annual event was Jogarao Gobburu, coincidentally on his last day as director of the Division of Pharmacometrics Psychiatry Team in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Office of Clinical Pharmacology. Gobburu discussed "Pharmacometrics 2020." He now serves as professor with University of Maryland School of Pharmacy's Department of Pharmacy Practice and Science.

Podium presentations by students were new in 2011. Students chosen to present were Aditi Mulgaonkar, Department of Pharmaceutics, and Deanna Flora and Maryam Al-Owayesh, Department of Pharmacotherapy and Outcomes Science.

Mulgaonkar received the Joseph Schwartz Graduate Student Travel Fund Award, and the Department of Pharmaceutics' Xiang Li was honored with the Jyotsna and Mavji Thakker Award. This award was established in memory of the late parents of Kamlesh Thakker (Ph.D. '83).

Susanna Wu-Pong, director of the Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Programs, noted that having so many posters from which to choose made judging more difficult!

Maimuna Bruce, Department of Pharmaceutics, won best graduate student poster, with honorable mention going to Rami A. Al-Horani, Department of Medicinal Chemistry. Best Pharm.D. poster went to Tamoor Asif, with honorable mention to Bradford McDaniel.

Scientists available to students for mentoring, networking and/or recruiting were Eugenio Cefali (Pharm.D./Ph.D. '87) of EA Cefali Pharmaceutical Consulting LLC; Anthony Coniglio (Pharm.D. '86) of OPUS Pharma Consulting; Nikhil Parekh, Michael Peoples (Ph.D. '08), Peter Ramsey and Mark Vaughan (Pharm.D. '06) of Pfizer Consumer Healthcare; Mohamadi Sarkar (Ph.D. '90) of Altria Client Services; and Thakker of Abbott Laboratories.

Rounding out the day was a session on "Career Skills Beyond Your Graduate Education" with Cefali, Zachary Goodell of the VCU Center for Teaching Excellence, Sara Kohout of the University Career Center and Sherry Sandkam of the VCU Graduate School and Preparing Future Faculty Program.

An interviewing and CV workshop by Wu-Pong and Tom Reinders, the School of Pharmacy's associate dean for admissions and student services, took place two weeks earlier. The third edition of Reinders' book, "The Pharmacy Professional's Guide to Resumes, CVs and Interviewing," recently was published by the American Pharmacists Association.

### R&C Day 2012

Keynote speaker for the 15th R&C Day was F. Ivy Carroll, Distinguished Fellow for Medicinal Chemistry at Research Triangle Institute in Research Triangle Park, N.C. His topic was "Drug Discovery and Development at a Research Institute."

Christopher Arnatt made a student podium presentation. Arnatt's poster was named best graduate student poster, with honorable mention going to Akul Mehta. Both are in the Department of Medicinal Chemistry. Hibah Rehman was recognized for best Pharm.D. poster, and honorable mention went to Sarah Barden.

Xiaolei Pan received the Thakker Award, and Poonam Delvadia received the Schwartz Award. Both are with the Department of Pharmaceutics.

Participating scientists for 2012 were Cefali, Coniglio, Peoples and Ramsey, as well as Julie McKinney of Pfizer Consumer Healthcare and Jana McQuaid of VCU School of Business.

This year, prep sessions took place a week earlier, including "Finding a Postdoctoral or Fellowship Position With a Pharm.D. and/or Ph.D." by Richard A. Glennon, chairman of the Department of Medicinal Chemistry, and Mary Jayne Kennedy, assistant professor in the Department of Pharmacotherapy and Outcomes Science; "FDA Fellowship Opportunities" with Satjit Brar (Pharm.D./Ph.D. '08) of the FDA; "Looking Beyond the Traditional Pathways for Exciting Career Opportunities" with Sarkar; "Nontraditional Career Paths: Licensing and IP Management" with Rebecca Caffrey of Health Diagnostic Laboratory Inc.; and the interviewing and CV workshop by Reinders and Wu-Pong.

# Graduate Program Advisory Board reports on first two years

## AND SO IT BEGINS: 2010-11



Eugenio Cefali

Many thanks to Eugenio Cefali for providing the following report on the activities of the Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Advisory Board. The board experienced a busy first year:

The VCU Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Advisory Board had its inaugural meeting on Oct. 7, 2010. The board was proposed by the Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Program to:

1. advise program directors on the degree programs offered, program design and career expectations of employers in the pharmaceutical field
2. secure private financial contributions in support of the graduate program
3. engage graduate alumni through participation in the School of Pharmacy's annual Research and Career Day, mentoring programs, networking and other volunteer opportunities
4. create and implement a leadership development component of the graduate program.

The board comprises alumni from each of the pharmaceutical sciences program, consisting of key stakeholders, which include affiliate faculty and emeriti faculty, as well as faculty with leadership interests from outside the School of Pharmacy; and board "faculty" are David Holdford, Tom Karnes and Yan Zhang. The group meets biannually, the fall meeting taking place in October in conjunction with the School of Pharmacy Research and Career Day.

Inaugural alumni on the board included Eugenio A. Cefali, Pharm.D./Ph.D. '87, 2010-11 board chairman; Chandra Chaurasia, Ph.D. '90; Anthony Coniglio, Pharm.D. '86, 2011-12 board chair; William Fitzsimmons, Pharm.D. '85; Kavita Gajria, M.S. '04; Susan Learned, Pharm.D./Ph.D. '97; Seina Lee, Pharm.D./M.S. '06; Shanaz Tejani-Butt, Ph.D. '84; Patricia Slattum, Pharm.D./Ph.D. '92; and Kamlesh Thakker, Ph.D. '83. Liaisons to the board are Susanna Wu-Pong, Ph.D., director of Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Programs; and Ellen Leverich, director of development, School of Pharmacy. The board also includes extramural faculty Jana McQuaid, assistant dean for masters programs, School of Business; Sherry Sandkam, Ph.D., associate dean, Graduate School; and Sara Kohout, M.S., assistant director, University Career Center.

In its first year, the board successfully designed a Career Resource Network to assist graduate students in the latter part of their graduate programs, as well as to help postdoctoral fellows better prepare for careers in pharmaceutical academia, industry and regulatory bodies. While not a job placement service, the Career Resource Network is a resource that identifies courses to foster leadership building and access to alumni willing to act as career mentors. Access to the Career Resource Network is available through the School of Pharmacy, the Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Programs director and through this link online: <http://www.pharmacy.vcu.edu/sub/current/gab.aspx>.

The board's next major endeavor was the creation of a series of Pharmaceutical Sciences Workshops whose goal is to invite academic, industrial and regulatory leaders to present and discuss relevant pharmaceutical issues on a graduate/postdoctoral level. Our first workshop, "Therapeutic Equivalence: Legislative, Regulatory and Scientific Issues in Drug Product Development," took place April 18, 2012, at the Larrick Center on the MCV Campus. (See page 1 for a report on the workshop.)

In addition, the board planned to assist the School of Pharmacy in designing and implementing a personal and professional development program that will serve as a pilot for an eventual VCU-wide program.

## MAKING IT HAPPEN: 2011-12



Tony Coniglio

Many thanks to Gene Cefali's successor, 2011-12 Advisory Board chairman Tony Coniglio, as well! Here's his report on the board's continuing activities:

The GAB had a great second year, making advances in the leadership program, expanding involvement of alumni to provide graduate student support, a successful postbaccalaureate Pharm.D. alumni reunion, and creation of two endowments.

Led by Susanna Wu-Pong, the Personal and Professional Development Program pilot has been developed, funded and started. The goals of the program are to:

- Develop leadership and professional development opportunities for professional, graduate and post-doctoral students that will enable them to thrive in today's professional environment and empower them to make meaningful contributions to society as they realize their potential as future leaders.
- Build a network of internal and external partnerships and identify resources to support and guide leadership and professional development initiatives for professional, graduate and postdoctoral students.

The pilot will be taught over four semesters, one priority per semester (fall curriculum detailed below). The pilot is for pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences students who are within one to two years of graduation. Critical is a commitment to participate for the entire two years or until graduation, and to work between program sessions six to eight hours. This program has been funded by Altria.

GAB members try to participate "live" twice yearly in meetings, as well as take advantage of significant opportunities to interact with students. The fall meeting is linked to Research and Career day, where the GAB members participate in the excellent poster session, conduct roundtable meetings with students and even lead mock interviews to provide the students real-world experience for future career endeavors. A formal mentoring program has been established, and more information can be provided by Susanna Wu-Pong.

The GAB-led scholarship endowment funds recognize the efforts of two very special professors, William Garnett and William Barr. The generosity of the alumni and other donors was a testament to the impact these two great educators had on so many students over their decades of service to VCU. Garnett's endowment currently stands at \$29,000 and Barr's at \$38,900. These were significantly aided by the reunion in May for postbaccalaureate Pharm.D. alumni and pharmaceuticals Ph.D.'s, as well as great support from previous students as word got out. The GAB will continue to seek appropriate avenues to generate support for the school, both creative financial and mentoring.

Additional ideas beyond the reunion being assessed to harness alumni involvement/support include a graduate program-specific Facebook alumni page, making more use of the LinkedIn alumni group page, expanding GAB membership to include additional alumni and holding satellite gatherings at key external meetings (AAPS, ASCPT, etc). Stay tuned; more to come. (If you'd like to sign up for the school's Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Programs group, visit [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com), search VCU School of Pharmacy > Groups > Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Programs. To visit the school's alumni-faculty-students Facebook page, visit [www.facebook.com/VCUSchoolofPharmacy](http://www.facebook.com/VCUSchoolofPharmacy).)

The GAB welcomed two new members in 2012: Marijke Adams, Pharm.D./Ph.D. '91, and Aron Lichtman, a professor in the School of Medicine's Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology. We would like to thank William Fitzsimmons for his support, and Gene Cefali has agreed to extend his term as member through 2013. One goal this coming year is to further expand the membership, particularly external alumni who want to get back involved with the school and students.

*If you or someone you know is interested in and qualified for serving on the Graduate Program Advisory Board, please provide nomination information (letter of interest and CV) to Susanna Wu-Pong at [swupong@vcu.edu](mailto:swupong@vcu.edu). Active advisory board members are granted online VCU library privileges upon request.*

## Grad News

### INTRODUCING... THE LATEST ALUMNI

Congratulations to the School of Pharmacy's newest graduate alumni, who completed their degrees in 2011-12:

#### Ph.D. in pharmaceutical sciences

(name followed by dissertation title and advisor)

**Mera Abel-Karim Ababneh:** "Predictors of Carbapenem Resistant Gram-Negative Bacteria in a Consortium of Academic Medical Center Hospitals" (Ron Polk)

**Ali Mohammad Alhammad:** "Factors Influencing Pharmacists' Decisions to Report Adverse Events Related to Dietary Supplements" (Spencer Harpe)

**Maitham A. Al Hawaj:** "Therapeutic Drug Monitoring of Factor VIII Using Its Plasma Levels and Global Hemostasis Biomarkers: A Pharmacokinetic-Pharmacodynamic Pilot Study" (Donald Brophy)

**Rami A. Al-Horani:** "Designing Direct and Indirect Factor Xa Inhibitors as Anticoagulants" (Umesh Desai)

**Matthew Baker:** "Synthesis, Screening and Cocrystallization of Adenosine-Based Inhibitors With Methyltransferases ErmC and KsgA" (Jason Rife)

**Renishkumar Delvadia:** "In Vitro Tests to Predict Aerosol Drug Deposition in Normal Adults" (Peter Byron)

**Urviben Desai:** "Impact of Medicare Part D Coverage Gap on Beneficiaries' Adherence to Prescription Medications" (Norman Carroll)



Urviben Desai received the 2011 Victor A. Yanchick Award. Her advisor is Norman Carroll.

**Darren J. Desoi:** "A Cellular Automata Model of Enantiomer Interactions With Beta-Cyclodextrin" (Tom Karnes)

**Eric Edwards:** "Development of a Novel Model to Assess Qualitative and Quantitative Dynamics Associated With the Subcutaneous or Intramuscular Administration of Pharmaceuticals and Associated Parenteral Delivery Systems" (William Barr and William Garnett)

**Justin Elenewski:** "Fluctuations and Instantons in Protein Landscapes: From Ligand Unbinding to Proton Transfer" (John Hackett)

**Parinaz Ghaswalla:** "Medication-Related Problems in Older Adults: A Focus on Warfarin Underuse and Warfarin-Antibiotic Interactions" (Patty Slattum)

**Matthew Sean Halquist:** "Quantitative Analysis of Multiply Charged Large Molecules in Human and Rat Plasma Using Liquid Chromatography Tandem Mass Spectrometry" (Tom Karnes)

**Omar Ibrahim:** "Development and Comparison of Risk-Adjusted Models to Benchmark Antibiotic Use in the University Health System Consortium Hospitals" (Ron Polk)

**Priyanka Parshuran Karuna Kakad:** "Impact of Calendar Blister Packaging on Adherence With Antihypertensive Medications in Older Adults Treated for Dementia" (Patty Slattum)

**Timothy King:** "Analysis and Fingerprinting of Glycosaminoglycans" (Umesh Desai)

**Mallika Lala:** "Application of Pharmacometric Methods -- Modeling and Stimulation -- to Improve Pediatric Drug Development" (Douglas Boudinot/Jogarao Gobburu)

**Preeptpal Sidhu:** "Designing Allosteric Inhibitors of Thrombin" (Umesh Desai)

**Amit A. Somani:** "In Vitro-In Vivo Methods and Pharmacokinetic Models for Subcutaneously Administered Peptide Drug Products" (William Barr and William Garnett)

**Jay Thakker:** "Biochemical Evaluation of Lignin-Like Molecules" (Umesh Desai)



Swati Agrawal was hooded by her advisor, Michael Hindle, at the 2011 Hooding and Diploma Ceremony.

#### M.S. in pharmaceutical sciences

(name followed by thesis title and advisor)

**Mostafa Hassan Mohamed A. Ahmed:** "Water Molecules: A Closer Look at Their Behavior at Protein-Protein Interfaces and Their Contributions to the Docked Model of Pyridoxal Kinase – Serine Hydroxymethyltransferase Complex" (Martin Safo/Glen Kellogg)

**Sasha Fraser:** "Development of Dual-Pathway Inhibitors of Raf/MEK/ERK and PI3K/Akt Signaling Pathways" (Shijun Zhang)

**Ronak Gandhi:** "Clicked' Bivalent Multifunctional Ligands in Alzheimer's Disease" (Shijun Zhang)

**Shrenik Chetan Mehta:** "Synthesis of a Library of Sulfated Small Molecules" (Umesh Desai)

**Vidya Moorthy:** "Effect of Combined Oral Contraceptives on Insulin Clearance in Lean and Obese Premenopausal Women" (Kai "Annie" Cheang)

**Shilpa Singh:** "Synthesis and Biological Evaluation of Second Generation Anibanine Analogues as Novel Anti-Prostate Agents" (Yan Zhang)

**Jing Tao:** "Quantifying Polypharmacy in Diabetes Patients in the U.S." (David Holdford)

**Soundarya Vaithianathan:** "Synthesis and Biological Screening of a Series of Novel Chemokine Receptor CCR5 Antagonists" (Yan Zhang)

## Grad News

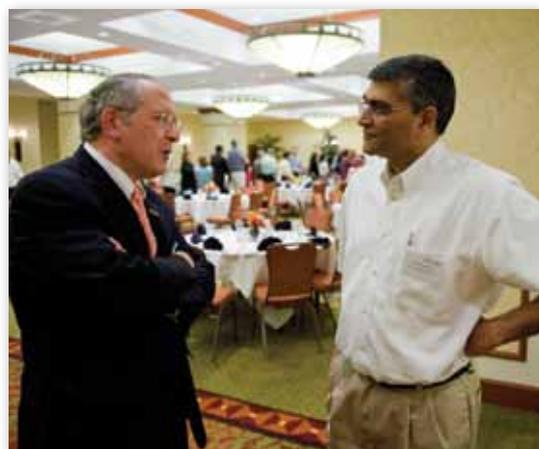
### Pharm.D. /M.B.A.

Reid Gadziala  
Noah Lee Greenburg

### Pharm.D./Certificate in Aging Studies

Sarah Kurtz  
Margaret Ellen LoPresti  
Suzanne Padgett Telfer

### KUDOS, AWARD WINNERS!



Guest speaker Francis Macrina (left) and Umesh Desai conversed at the 2011 Graduate Awards Luncheon.

Congratulations to graduate students who won awards, garnered other recognition or held office in 2010-11 and 2011-12, a few of whom are listed as follows:

**AAPS Student Chapter:** winner of the 2012 AAPS APQ Education Initiative Award

**Ali Al-Hammad, Toni Coe, Timothy Inocencio and Arpamas Seetasith:** winning team in International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcome Research's student research championship at 16th Annual International Meeting. Coe also was elected the 2013-15 APhA-APRS Postgraduate Officer.

**Poonam Delvadia:** first recipient of Altria Tobacco Products Regulatory Sciences Fellowship. Delvadia and **Li Wang** were inducted into the newly established Alpha Phi Chapter of Alpha Epsilon Lambda.

**Jeremy Chojnacki:** Lowenthal Award, established to support Ph.D. students participating in hands-on research in genetically based neurological diseases.

**Renishkumar Delvadia and Matthew Halquist:** John Wood Award, given to the student in the Department of Pharmaceutics who has achieved the greatest distinction in scholarship, research, teaching and service.



Dean Victor Yanchick presented Matthew Halquist his diploma at the 2012 Hooding and Diploma Ceremony.

**Urviben Desai and Amal Akour:** Victor A. Yanchick Award, given to the student in the Department of Pharmacotherapy and Outcomes Science who has achieved the greatest distinction in scholarship, research, teaching and service. Desai also served as 2010-11 chairwoman of the ISPOR Student Network.

**Eric Edwards and Rami Al-Horani:** Charles T. Rector and Thomas W. Rorrer Jr. Dean's Award, established by Jacqueline V. Rorrer in memory of her late husband, Charles Rector, and in honor of her current husband, Thomas Rorrer (B.S. '52), for a graduate student who best demonstrates excellence in scholarship, research, teaching and service.

**Deanna Flora and Omar Ibrahim:** inducted into the VCU Chapter of Phi Kappa Phi.

**Timothy King and Rami Al-Horani:** J. Doyle Smith Award, given to the student in the Department of Medicinal Chemistry who has achieved the greatest distinction in scholarship, research, teaching and service.

**Xiang Li:** Thakker Award, established in memory of the late parents of Kamlesh Thakker (Ph.D. '83), in recognition of graduate students in Pharmaceutics and to assist with educational needs.

**Aditi Mulgaonkar:** Joseph Schwartz Graduate Student Travel Fund Award, established to support full-time graduate students' travel to present research papers or posters at professional meetings in basic pharmaceutics or pharmaceutical technology.

**Dipen Patel:** finalist in ISPOR Best Poster Research Presentation Awards at 16th Annual International Meeting.

Department of Medicinal Chemistry postdoctoral fellow **Nadia German** presented "Discovering a New Potential Treatment for Alzheimer's" in February 2012 as a guest speaker for VCU Health System's Discovery Dialogue Series. She now is a postdoctoral chemist at RTI International.



Tom Karnes (center) and his award-winning advisees, Matthew Halquist and Poonam Delvadia, at the 2012 Graduate Awards Luncheon.



# The Pipeline

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MEDICAL COLLEGE OF VIRGINIA HEALTH SCIENCES DIVISION  
VOLUME 4 • FALL 2012

**A living legacy.** In their combined three-quarters of a century at the School of Pharmacy, professors William Barr (left) and William Garnett have made valuable contributions to the school and to the profession. Now their beneficiaries have come together to return the favor by endowing scholarships in their names. Page 3.



The Pipeline  
Virginia Commonwealth University  
School of Pharmacy  
Medical College of Virginia  
Health Sciences Division  
410 N. 12<sup>th</sup> St.  
P.O. Box 980581  
Richmond, VA 23298-0581  
An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action University

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**Victor A. Yanchick, Ph.D.**  
Dean and Archie O. McCalley Chair

**Susanna Wu-Pong, Ph.D.**  
Director, Pharmaceutical Sciences  
Graduate Programs

**Ellen M. Leverich**  
Director of Development

**Chnoic Adams Clarke**  
Assistant Director of Development

**Cynthia McMullen**  
Director of Public Relations  
and Communications

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**Got news?**  
Please e-mail any alumni updates to [pharmacyalum@vcu.edu](mailto:pharmacyalum@vcu.edu).

*Cover photo by Chnoic Adams Clarke.*