American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy AACP

Pharmacists Help People Live Healthier, Better Lives.

2021 Annual Report

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Dear Colleagues:

To say that my presidential year has encompassed many unprecedented events is a classic understatement! In fact, "unprecedented" has been used so often during the year and a half since the first Coronavirus-19 infections were reported, that I hesitate to use it again—but it fits the circumstances that AACP and our members have confronted, as we come to grips with three simultaneous pandemics.

Three pandemics? Yes, three - and all the ripple effects that have accompanied these life-altering experiences. Pandemic Number One was unique and, sadly, has claimed the lives of more than 600,000 Americans and more than three million people worldwide. The COVID-19 pandemic shut down our personal lives in so many ways and altered everything about how we conduct the activities of pharmacy education and practice.

The second and third pandemics are, unfortunately, not isolated to 2020-2021. I speak of the issue of systemic racism that became so extremely evident, in part because of the disproportionate burden of morbidity and mortality from COVID infections and because of high-visibility incidents of racial violence, including murders of innocent citizens at the hands of police and racist individuals in too many places across America. As an Asian American of Chinese descent, I have felt the pain of these incidents quite personally.

The third pandemic is also not a new phenomenon; but the viral pandemic and its aftermath have exacerbated issues of mental illness, including cases of anxiety and substance use disorder. While our attention has been diverted to an extent by the trauma of COVID infections and deaths and by incidents of racial violence, the numbers of Americans whose lives have ended due to suicide and drug overdoses have grown in relation to pre-pandemic numbers.

Despite this perfect storm of these life-impacting forces, AACP and academic pharmacy have risen to the challenges in powerful ways, and I could not have been prouder to serve as your President during this past year. Throughout the pandemic, AACP has been more active in our strategic engagement efforts, working with our peer organizations to convince policy makers at the local, state and federal levels that pharmacists were ready and willing to contribute their knowledge, skills and accessibility to combat both the virus and the misinformation that spread almost as rapidly. Pharmacy faculty and students have administered millions of the vaccines that miraculously became available in late 2020. And AACP and our members have dramatically increased our work to address systemic racism as well as inequities in access to care, in the communities we serve. You will read brief summaries of these efforts and more in this annual report.

Our work is far from done, however. The new strategic plan our 2021 delegates will approve in July sets out an ambitious agenda to guide the work of our leaders, staff and members over the next several years. This is not a change of course; it is a recommitment to work to accomplish our goals of positioning our members and the graduates of our programs as active partners in addressing the current crises and those that will come. Thank you for all you do to create a world of healthier people.

Sincerely,

Anne Y. Lin, Pharm.D.
2020–2021 AACP President
Dean and Professor
Notre Dame of Maryland University
School of Pharmacy

Juggling Multiple Pandemics:
Investing the Talents of Academic Pharmacy

As noted by President Lin, we have confronted three different pandemics this year: One new—COVID-19—and two that are, unfortunately, not new but are more prominent now than ever—racism and mental health concerns. AACP and our members have been active across all three, as the material in the 2021 AACP Annual Report attests.

Since 2016, the AACP Strategic Plan has focused and enhanced our work in critically important areas. This has included:

- Work to increase the visibility of pharmacy as an academic pursuit and career with two national campaigns (Pharmacy is Right for Me and Pharmacists for Healthier Lives).
- Targeted activities to accelerate the transformation of pharmacy practice and education.
- Expanding research activities, including a new focus on expanding implementation science to support practice and education transformation.
- Ensuring that AACP's programs, projects and services are delivered on the best platforms and engage members at many levels of active participation.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic disruption, or perhaps because of it, these priorities have remained at the forefront of our work. We set our sights high in 2016 and recommitted to this work with a refreshed plan in 2018. So where do we go from this point forward?

The 2020–21 AACP Strategic Planning Committee was chaired by President-elect Stuart Haines. Working virtually and diligently, they developed a draft plan for consideration and approval by the 2021 AACP House of Delegates that is visionary and ambitious. It is not a departure from the areas of focus that were adopted five years ago, but an expansion and intensification of our work in key areas. Practice transformation, academic innovation, expanding diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, positively impacting well-being for all, and enhancing the financial well-being of AACP and our member institutions are the top priorities for the next several years.

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that pharmacists and students are ready and willing to respond in emergencies, to provide access and essential services to their communities. This is not a surprise to AACP leaders, but now, more than ever before, the public and public policymakers understand this more clearly than they did before the pandemic.

Part of the recognition among local, state and federal officials can be attributed to the intense level of collaboration demonstrated by more than a dozen national pharmacy associations whose senior leaders met at least weekly from March 2020 to this day. Our government affairs staff members met and crafted compelling messages to the Trump and now Biden Administrations articulating the case for the full deployment of pharmacists and student pharmacists to address public health crises. Emergency authorization for expanded patient care services was the result.

Collaboration is a core value of AACP and our members. This is expressed within the profession as described above. It is expressed as well in our continued leadership in the context of interprofessional education and team-based care and in our work in a wide variety of advocacy activities and coalitions. You will learn a great deal more about the details of our work this past year in the remainder of this 2021 Annual Report. On behalf of the leaders and staff members of AACP, we appreciate your interest and support of our work.

Strategic Priority #1

Enriching the Applicant Pipeline

AACP will partner with stakeholders to increase the Pharm.D. applicant pipeline to ensure there will be an appropriate number and quality of pharmacists to meet society's needs.

The goals of Priority 1 are to expand national pharmacy pipeline development programs, increase the Pharm.D. applicant pool, and appropriately measure and increase diversity (broadly defined) in the applicant pipeline. AACP primarily supports Priority 1 via the Pharmacy Is Right for Me (Pharm4Me) campaign, which is designed to educate and inspire high school and college students who are interested in pharmacy, STEM, or other health profession careers. Since 2017 AACP has partnered with Youth Marketing Agency (YMC) to create meaningful blog and social media content that resonates with younger audiences and highlights the diverse and contemporary role of pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists. AACP has also developed strategies and resources designed to attract and nurture applicants who apply to member schools via the Pharmacy College Application Service (PharmCAS) and the Pharmacy Graduate Application Service (PharmGrad).

FY21 Highlights

- Collaborated with the AACP Council of Deans (COD) Workforce Development Task Force to launch a new Novel Pharmacist Careers resource to showcase unique and emerging roles in the profession and inspire current and prospective student pharmacists.
- Highlighted in multiple media posts and presentations the pivotal role of pharmacists and student pharmacists as essential health care providers on the frontlines of the pandemic and patient care in a variety of settings.
- Launched new Pharm4Me resources including a series of videos during Pharmacy Week 2020 and a 100+ Pharmacy Careers handout and blog inspired by a recent resource published by the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP).
- Collaborated with the AACP Admissions Workshop Advisory Committee to offer the 2021 Admissions Workshop: Leadership in Enrollment Management, a series of free webinars focused on developing the leadership skills of administrators, faculty, and staff with enrollment management responsibilities.
- Entered into a new partnership agreement with Kira Talent to provide schools with new digital admission tools to promote holistic admissions, including timed video and written responses to school-specific questions, live virtual interviewing, and built-in scoring.
- Awarded five $8000 scholarships for the 2020 CVS Health Minority Scholarship for Pharmacy Students program and received more than 500 applications for the 2021 program.
- Created new recruitment and admission resources to support members, including a Virtual Pharmacy School Interview Do's and Don'ts handout, a list of undergraduate pharmaceutical science programs, and school-specific Google Analytics data for the PharmCAS School Directory.
- Launched the new PharmCAS and PharmGrad websites and directories during the 2020-2021 admissions cycle, which offered enhanced navigation, dynamic comparison reports, and a contemporary design.
- Renewed partnership agreement with Tallo, a digital student recruitment company with a database of 325,000 high school students across the country, to promote Pharm4Me.
- Captured new student recruitment questions on the 2020–2021 PharmCAS Applicant Survey regarding the factors influencing student decisions to pursue pharmacy and apply to particular pharmacy schools.

Strategic Priority #2

Creating a New Portrait of Pharmacists and Pharmacy Careers

AACP, in collaboration with stakeholders, will raise the profile of pharmacy as an essential healthcare profession. We will achieve recognition for pharmacists as trusted and highly accessible healthcare professionals in both traditional and new settings. And we will increase awareness of the quality and scientific rigor of pharmacy education and training.

Since 2018 the Pharmacists for Healthier Lives campaign has been the primary activity for Priority 2. AACP leads this campaign, which includes 11 other national organizations and eight state pharmacy organizations.

The campaign has utilized several media channels including paid social media, organic social media and earned media. In March 2020, as COVID-19 was spreading and media was increasing coverage of the pandemic, the campaign strategy pivoted to concentrate primarily on earned media and organic social media. This strategy has continued throughout FY2021.

Indeed, the campaign entered Year 3 with increased media coverage of pharmacists and their roles in delivering care. The campaign website was refreshed, to provide smoother navigation, easier access to stories and the most recent posts from the PfHL Twitter feed: www.pharmacistsforhealthierlives.org.

FY21 Media Highlights

- A segment on the NPR program Reset (WEBZ Chicago, January 26) as part of their series on issues pertaining to accessibility and distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine.
- A segment on the podcast, *The Debrief*, from Major Garrett, chief Washington correspondent for CBS News: https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-debrief-with-major-garrett/id1505853304?i=1000506585892
- Sponsorship of a vaccine awareness print supplement created by Mediaplanet USA, which ran in *USA Today* on December 22, with a national readership of approximately 600,000.
- A sponsor ad on Mediaplanet's *Future of Personal Health* website, which ran for two weeks in January, generating 4,203 impressions: https://www.futureofpersonalhealth.com/campaign/vaccine-awareness/#
- In addition, in early January Mediaplanet distributed a custom PfHL newsletter to 12,375 recipients, generating an 11% open rate. A brief summary of the newsletter metrics is available here: https://public.3.basecamp.com/p/BJSM8TUrYZgZhhwqhySUeLuJ

Vaccine Confidence Campaign

In February the American Pharmacists Association engaged APhA to support their CDC-funded vaccine confidence project: https://vaccineconfident.pharmacist.com, which will run through September.

Our role is to:

- Extend the reach of messages and materials developed within the larger project to schools and colleges of pharmacy.
- Leverage existing relationships and partnerships through PfHL, including NASPA, state pharmacy associations, and PfHL partnering organizations to extend the reach of messages and materials developed within the larger project and other materials developed by PfHL.
- Deploy communications vehicles (e.g., website; social media) to support constituent understanding of vaccine confidence and to distribute project messaging.

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- Engage with partners in communities with diverse populations and high rates of vaccine hesitancy to extend the reach of messages and materials.

AACP is engaging member institutions to provide vaccine information and, where possible, onsite vaccinations at events in five pilot markets. These programs can be scaled for additional communities.

Albuquerque, NM: The University of New Mexico College of Pharmacy
Bangor, ME: University of New England College of Pharmacy
Baton Rouge, LA: Xavier University of Louisiana College of Pharmacy
Camden, NJ: Thomas Jefferson University Jefferson College of Pharmacy
Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina College of Pharmacy

Strategic Priority #3

Transforming Pharmacy Practice and Education

AACP will lead and partner with members and other health professions in the transformation of innovative health professions education and practice. Identifying, communicating, assessing and networking regarding aspects pertaining to Interprofessional Education (IPE) and Interprofessional Practice (IPP) and the application of IPE and IPP will support and promote the academy on a local, national and international scale.

AACP Strategic Priority #3 recognizes that all the advocacy and public outreach efforts from our first two priorities will represent false promises without effective transformation of pharmacy education and practice. Each of the 2021 AACP Standing Committees provided recommendations for the AACP Center To Accelerate Pharmacy Practice Transformation and Academic Innovation (the Center), which will be formally established by fourth quarter 2021. The Center is being established as an organizational hub to activate and coordinate the implementation of many current and emerging activities relevant to accelerating change, improvements and enhancements in pharmacy education and practice through innovation and transformation in order to (1) advance the contributions of pharmacists toward the achievement of optimal health outcomes and health equity; and (2) sustain a viable, resilient pharmacy workforce.

One of the first initiatives of the Center will be the *Bridging Pharmacy Education to Practice Summit*, a meeting being planned for first quarter 2022 by seven national pharmacy associations. The summit will focus on re-envisioning contemporary pharmacy education and the continuous professional development of the existing workforce. The summit will also be instrumental in identifying timely and significant revisions for the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) accreditation standards, which will be in place from 2025 through the mid-2030's.

Colleges and schools of pharmacy have been involved in many aspects of patient care during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to providing continuity of patient care services, pharmacy faculty, staff, and student pharmacists have been integral in the administration of COVID-19 vaccines as well as COVID-19 testing and contact tracing efforts within and beyond the boundaries of their campuses. In addition to AACP participating in several national pharmacy organizations correspondence to the Biden Administration, the AACP Policy Advisory Task Force has sent two letters to the Administration introducing AACP and outlining Pharmacy Education's role and importance in COVID-19 vaccine roll-out (February 2021) and discussing the contributions and needs of academic pharmacy as society's moves through and past the pandemic (June 2021).

This past year has also produced the growth of the Academic-CPESN Transformation (ACT) Pharmacy Collaborative as it entered its second year to mobilize and amplify the activation of AACP member institutions and faculty in practice transformation. The ACT Pharmacy Collaborative supports the transformation of community-based pharmacy practice from a product-based model to a care delivery model and involves 91 colleges and schools of pharmacy working in collaboration with pharmacists in the expanding Community Pharmacy Enhanced Services Networks. The collaborative held a robust and engaged virtual workshop in October 2021 with over 160 participants.

Key highlights of other happenings of Strategic Priority #3 include:

- AACP will be awarding Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Grants for a fourth year in 2021 to fund AACP members who are engaging in educational research. The American Foundation for Pharmaceutical Education collaborates with AACP on this faculty development program;

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- The Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC), comprised of twenty-one health professions education associations, convened the 17th IPEC institute for faculty development;
- The AACP Academic Leadership Fellows Program (ALFP), designed to develop the nation's most promising pharmacy faculty for roles as future leaders in academic pharmacy and higher education, began virtually the second week of September 2020 with its seventeenth cohort. This brings the total number of participants to over 500 since the program's inception; and
- The Pharmacy Workforce Center (PWC), a non-profit corporation of national pharmacy organizations of which AACP is the secretariat, launched the Pharmacy Demand Report (PDR) in September 2020. The PDR was developed to provide an enhanced measurement of pharmacist demand in the United States.

Strategic Priority #4

Expanding Research & Graduate Education

AACP will enable innovation to sustain high impact research/scholarship and graduate education. The scope of AACP-supported programs, resources and funding for the research and graduate education community expands compared to 2016 baseline.

AACP Strategic Priority 4 is to enable innovation to sustain high impact research/scholarship and graduate education. The priority calls for the scope of AACP-supported programs, resources and funding for the research and graduate education community to expand compared to 2016 baseline. In the past five years, AACP has expanded the internal resources dedicated to existing programs for research support, sought external support for successful member programs, initiated new programming centered on research and graduate education at our annual and interim meetings, and developed resources and programs to help trainees and faculty in pharmacy schools develop research competencies. For the past two years the charges of the AACP Research and Graduate Affairs Committee have focused on increasing awareness of implementation science as an opportunity for practice advancement within pharmacy and developing programs to enhance capacity for implementation practice and research by pharmacy faculty and trainees.

Key highlights related to Strategic Priority 4 in the past year include:

- 14 AACP New Investigator Awards, which provide start-up support for early career faculty;
- Three scholarships awarded by the American Foundation for Pharmaceutical Education to participants in the AACP Social and Administrative Sciences (SAS) Section Summer Research Exchange Mentorship Program. The program promotes interest in SAS-related research and graduate education in sciences among student pharmacists through research experiences with host mentors. The 2021 program will be the largest yet, with a total of 23 students selected to engage in research projects with mentors at seven pharmacy schools;
- An ongoing open discussion series hosted by the AACP Graduate Education Special Interest Group on challenges and special considerations related to graduate education during the pandemic;
- A Pharmacy Networking Session hosted by AACP at the 2020 Annual Conference on the Science of Dissemination and Implementation in Health (virtual);
- Developing policies and procedures to create and sustain a culture of equity and inclusion in academic pharmacy, focused on implementing AACP's Policy on Honors, Awards and Leadership Positions. The policy holds that AACP, in its discretion, will not confer honors or positions on those determined to have engaged in unethical behavior, or about whom there are credible questions regarding unethical behavior. AACP additionally reserves the right to revoke or suspend existing honors and positions in cases of determined unethical behavior, at its discretion and in consideration of the best interests of the field. Initial implementation of the policy focuses on unethical behavior related to harassment and discrimination;
- Programming at the AACP annual and interim meetings dedicated to research and graduate education, including the 2021 Virtual Research Symposium, "Pharmaceutical Graduate Education: Preparing Clinical and Translational Scientists," the Research and Education Poster session, the Trainee Poster Competition, and the Trainee Abstracts Related to the AACP Opioid-Related Activities Database Competition at Virtual Pharmacy Education 2021;
- AACP participation in the Practice and Research Leadership Councils of the RAPID Alliance Research Consortium, a project in the National Science Foundation Center for Health Organization Transformation at the University of Louisville. The Alliance is organized around research to optimize medication therapies, and in 2021 it launched the Medications 360 Research Regatta;
- Creation and curation of a directory of undergraduate programs in pharmaceutical sciences and related fields, for use in pharmacy and graduate program recruitment.

Strategic Priorities #5–8

Moving Forward: Core Operations and Continuous Improvement

Strategic Priority 5:
Sustaining Member Services/Programs
AACP will consistently provide excellent member programs and services to support individual and institutional member success.

Strategic Priority 6:
Financial Sustainability
AACP will consistently maintain strong financial performance and internal controls.

Strategic Priority 7:
People
AACP is considered a priority organization for affiliation and leadership development by volunteers and staff.

Strategic Priority 8:
Infrastructure/Technology/Knowledge Management
Ensure staff and member confidence in AACP systems through maintenance of attractive, secure and efficient workplace and member support environments.

Strategic priorities #5–8 address core member services, finances, our people and the infrastructure for delivering programs and services. The development of the 2021–24 AACP strategic plan was built on the evidence of members' needs and satisfaction with the programs and services the Association provides. The results support the continued focus in key program areas but accentuate other areas, such as well-being and diversity, equity and inclusion programming, for more intense attention.

In terms of the Association's financial health, AACP has been fortunate to have maintained core operations despite the financial dislocation caused by the pandemic. All meetings became virtual and several were cancelled. While this decreased expenses for travel and associated meeting costs, registration and sponsorship revenues were also significantly lower. Astute financial planning resulted in the securing of a Payroll Protection Program loan in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021. As AACP met the provisions of the loan in terms of staff retention, the loan became a government grant and helped AACP to record a better than break even Fiscal 2021. In addition, the robust growth in the investment markets increased AACP's reserves and endowment funds to over $11 million dollars as of June 2021.

As just noted, AACP was able to maintain staff positions throughout the pandemic. As all employees were already remote enabled in March 2020, due to our remote work policies, the rapid pivot pursuant to the "stay at home" order from state and federal officials went smoothly, and staff continued to serve members virtually. All leadership meetings were also held virtually, including board meetings, committee meetings and the business meetings of our sections, special interest groups and councils. While effective, everyone preferred to meet in person and enjoy the networking that is a hallmark of AACP and our meetings.

We look forward to restoring in-person meetings in the year ahead. We look forward to returning to the AACP office over the fall and winter months. And we look forward to the adoption and subsequent implementation of the 2021–24 AACP strategic plan. It is not just a plan for what the AACP staff will do, though the staff and our elected leaders will certainly play key roles. Rather, it is a plan that requires the engagement of our members, our allies and our partners in realizing the power of collaboration to transform the work of our graduates to help people live healthier, better lives. In doing so we will contribute to reducing health disparities, achieving health equity and improving the well-being of all.

Summary of Key Recommendations for AACP:
2020–21 Standing Committee Reports

President Lin recognized that the COVID-19 pandemic has had and will continue to have an enormous impact on AACP and our members. While fully embracing the need for action as articulated in the reports of the 2019–2020 standing committees, she also asked the current committees to examine elements of the academy's needs through a COVID-19 lens. The reports from all six committees will be published in an upcoming issue of www.ajpe.org and were posted on the Connect Communities for the House of Delegates, Council of Deans and Council of Faculties. In keeping with the need for action on practice transformation, President Lin asked all six committees to make recommendations for the focus and priorities of the Center to Accelerate Pharmacy Practice Transformation and Academic Innovation (The Center).

Key highlights of this year's committee recommendations include the following:

- The Center should serve as a clearinghouse for the sharing of education resources and strategies that assist member institutions with meeting curricular and educational needs.
- AACP should lead efforts to make permanent important practice gains achieved through high-level collaboration with other national associations, including an emphasis on payment reform to support patient care.
- The Center should develop a methodology to collect, update and promote academic pharmacy's contributions to pharmacists' patient care services in all settings, including a strong emphasis on interprofessional education and team-based care.
- AACP and the Center should advance competencies in implementation science and support formation of interdisciplinary research teams that pursue practice transformation projects.
- Establishment of a strategic engagement champion at each member institution would advance state efforts to continue scope of practice expansion in law and regulation. The Center should develop a roadmap to guide this activity and utilize examples of how pharmacists' efforts during the pandemic increased access to care for patients and communities.
- Establishing a robust action plan that advances work on professional identity formation and involves stakeholders from across the profession should be a top priority of the Center and part of programming at future AACP meetings.

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American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy AACP

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