



UNIVERSITY POINT OF CONTACT NEWSLETTER

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“Be still and the earth will speak to you.” submitted by Falisha Begay, PharmD Candidate, 2016. Preceptor: LT Shannon Saltclah

“Be still and the earth will speak to you.”

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Not long ago, I made a decision that pushed me beyond what I thought I could be capable of and guided me to a future I never imagined. Growing up in the small town of Gallup, NM, as a young Navajo girl, I knew that one day I would return and give back to my community and my people. My grandfather was a quadriplegic and my grandmother was diagnosed with diabetes, colon cancer, and ovarian cancer. They told me stories and taught me the traditional teachings of our Navajo culture. Most importantly, they taught me patient care. I developed nursing skills at a very young age. My family always encouraged education and I knew I wanted to pursue a career in the medical field, but was uncertain which profession. A majority of my childhood was spent traveling with my grandparents to their appointments at numerous hospitals (including an Indian Health Service facility). I remember listening to the counseling sessions from the Commissioned Corps pharmacists with my grandparents and became familiar with their medications; especially since I would help my mother care for them at home. As years passed, I realized I developed an interest in understanding medications in general: their mechanism of action, dosing, side effects, and indications. The more and more I watched and learned, I began to admire the knowledge and confidence of each pharmacist. I remember the amount of appreciation and respect my grandparents had for the pharmacists because each counseling session was specific to them. When my grandparents passed away, it changed my life for numerous reasons. The most important reason was because that was the moment I made the decision to become a



Tséhootsooi Medical Center (TMC) in Fort Defiance, AZ



The author with LT Saltclah

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The FDA Pharmacy Student Experiential Program (PSEP)
by CDR Ray Ford and LCDR Zachary Oleszczuk



Students present PSEP leaders with results on project. L-R: Sandy Li, PSEP Asst. Director LCDR Oleszczuk, Esther Song, PSEP Director CDR Ford, Galina Perel.

The FDA Pharmacy Student Experiential Program (PSEP), managed by the FDA’s Division of Drug Information, provides an opportunity for pharmacy students to learn about the FDA’s multidisciplinary processes. It is also an avenue by which FDA staff can observe and mentor the next generation of pharmacists and have some fun while doing it. The program receives overwhelming positive

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pharmacist. From that moment on, I pushed myself to one day be among those pharmacists I admired all those years ago.

Now, I am a fourth year pharmacy student about to finish my last rotation at Tséhootsooí Medical Center (TMC) in Fort Defiance, AZ and will soon begin another journey of becoming a PGY1 pharmacy resident at Gallup Indian Medical Center (GIMC). I could not have had a better ending to my final year. Compared to previous rotations, I felt that TMC offered a more cultural experience, which is what I needed. I needed that reconnection with who I am and where I am from. I believe that TMC gave that to me, especially since I stayed in the housing that TMC provided. It allowed me to experience the Navajo Nation to its full potential with intense windy days, clear night skies full of bright stars, long trail runs or hikes through the beautiful red rocks, and traditional foods at the flea market. It was so fulfilling to experience that again because I have been away at school, in the city, and I have LT Shannon Saltclah to thank for this cultural experience. She provided me opportunities to help with community projects that promote public health, such as: the Annie Dodge Wauneka Run and Walk series and Just Move It. I greatly enjoyed working with her because she challenged me to have more responsibility in many of the pharmacy-run clinics, including: Coumadin, Asthma, and Diabetes (with me taking the lead on the appointments). This was great because it allowed me to utilize my clinical knowledge and prepare for training as a Pharmacist Clinician in New Mexico. During the clinic appointments, she would often introduce me not just as a student, but as a pharmacist in a couple months. This was great because she treated me more like a colleague rather than a student. These simple actions and her charismatic character helped me become more confident in my recommendations and knowledge.

I am very fortunate to have worked with the staff at TMC. They were all very welcoming and always willing to help when I was lost or confused about locations or certain computerized systems. What I loved most was the interprofessional comradery among the staff. Everyone knew one another from the chiefs of each department to housekeeping and they were always in contact with one another. And of course, there was a great appreciation for pharmacists, as they utilize their knowledge and training to provide optimal patient care with the encouragement and cooperation of physicians. Because of this, I was able to participate in Hepatitis C and Chest (TB) Clinic with the physicians. It feels like I just got here not too long ago and now I am sad to be leaving, but that does not mean I will not return in the future, even if it is to visit. The staff and facility are amazing and I would highly recommend this experience to any healthcare professional.



Editor's Note:

Welcome to the Spring/Summer 2016 edition of the UPOC Newsletter! The UPOC newsletter has served as a gateway for pharmacy students to learn about the roles and activities of USPHS officers as well as for UPOC officers to share their recruitment activities. I work with a very talented group of officers who are striving to make this newsletter as relevant to pharmacy student issues as possible.

In this issue, we are proud to continue our new series called *Career Profiles*. This feature follows pharmacists working in different operational divisions such as the FDA, and lesser known agencies like ICE and CMS. In addition, we've kept the tried-and-true Q&As regarding *COSTEPs* and Residencies. After all, it's never too late to start thinking about future rotations or career opportunities. Keep this issue as a resource come rotation and residency time.

We hope you find this edition enjoyable and informative. As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions. *Enjoy your summer!*

Yours sincerely,

LCDR Honeylit Cuelo, PharmD, BCPS, CPH, NCPS



Check us out:

<http://www.usphs.gov/corpslinks/pharmacy>

Continued from page 1... The FDA Pharmacy Student Experiential Program (PSEP)



reviews from students and pharmacy schools. During the rotation, pharmacy students acquire knowledge, skills, and abilities that are beneficial to their professional careers.

Since the beginning of the program in 1998, PSEP has grown each year as more and more students apply to the FDA hoping to secure a rotation. Since 2002, we have increased the number of students that have been selected by more than eight fold. In 2015, the FDA considered more than 820 applications, and accepted 296 students, which is a new record for the PSEP.

A huge part of our success is due to preceptors and presenters from throughout the FDA. In 2015 we had over 40 active USPHS officers serve as preceptors to pharmacy students and 38 serve as presenters. Although FDA staff members are very busy with their regular duties, many still find time to mentor students. Program preceptors tell us they find it a rewarding, positive, and delightful way to interact with eager students who are inspired to assist the FDA.

The FDA benefits from the program by having students who can assist with a variety of projects. FDA staff members are also able to evaluate a student's performance and identify highly desirable candidates for possible employment. As a result, the Agency has hired more than 88 new employees who have come through the PSEP.

Students benefit by having a highly qualified mentor expose them to the FDA, PHS, and the overall regulatory experience. Although many schools at least mention the regulatory aspect of pharmacy, this FDA rotation is very often a student's first in depth exposure to how drugs are regulated at a Federal level. Additionally, many pharmacy students may be unfamiliar with PHS. With almost 1,000 PHS officers employed at the FDA, this rotation may be pharmacy students' first exposure to PHS.

Our rotation provides an ideal environment for students to participate in PHS focused activities, including the monthly PAC meetings, multiple PHS specific student lectures with topics on PHS Deployments, careers in PHS, and allows students to attend local PHS social functions when available. These experiences allow students to obtain a solid foundation in all the values that the PHS encompasses.

Other educational opportunities for students include FDA advisory committee hearings, congressional hearings, and a monthly PSEP lecture series. Through this series, pharmacy students interact with each other and learn about 34 different FDA offices and programs as well as other organizations such as the Bureau of Prisons and United States Pharmacopeia.

PHS officers also can benefit from participating in the FDA PSEP. Collateral duties of a preceptor and presenter help to strengthen officership and leadership. Many of our lecturers and preceptors are PHS officers - some of whom participated in the PSEP and later on joined the PHS because of the direct influence of their rotation.

Additionally, mentoring a student can help officers learn how to improve their communication skills, particularly when giving feedback. This experience is extremely valuable as it prepares officers for future supervisory positions. Pharmacy students are also uniquely skilled to be able to help PHS officers complete projects and tasks for which their schedules may not have allowed dedicated time. This can enable PHS officers to be more productive.

Application Process

PSEP students apply for the program before their last year of pharmacy school at an accredited U.S. pharmacy college or university. Rotations at FDA are offered only for those pharmacy students in the last year of pharmacy school. Applications usually open in the fall and third year students apply through their school's Experiential Coordinator. For any questions related to the FDA PSEP please contact us at Pharmacy.Student@fda.hhs.gov.

The FDA PSEP is a rich and rewarding experience for everyone involved. Success of the program is directly attributed to the highly motivated individuals who choose to serve as preceptors and presenters for the next generation of healthcare professionals. We encourage all those interested in mentoring pharmacy students to consider volunteering for our program. Although we accepted almost 300 students for this coming academic year (2016-2017), there are still over 500 wonderful pharmacy students whom we could not place. As always, it is our pleasure to serve you. If you any questions please contact us (CDR Ray Ford and LCDR Zach Oleszczuk) at Pharmacy.Student@fda.hhs.gov.

Indian Health Service (IHS) Pharmacy Residency Program submitted by CAPT JoAnn Hittie

CAPT Rebecca Reyes, PharmD, MAdmin, BCPS is the national coordinator of PGY-1 pharmacy residencies within IHS. We sat down with her to discuss IHS pharmacy residencies, including background, requirements, expectations, and benefits.

Background

The Public Health Service pharmacy residency program started decades ago with a couple of sites, but we have seen a great expansion of programs after 2000. Most of the USPHS pharmacy residency programs are in IHS; however, the Bureau of Prisons does have a Post-Graduate Year 1 (PGY-1) residency program at the Federal Medical Center in Butner, North Carolina. Nearly all of the programs are ASHP accredited.

Currently, there are 19 residency programs within IHS with 22 residents in the 2015–2016 class. For the upcoming cycle, they will be hiring 25 residents at 21 sites. Ambulatory care is the primary focus of many programs, but some also offer inpatient acute care experiences. During the past few years, there were over 120 applicants annually for these positions. Most IHS residencies are PGY-1, one year programs, with the Phoenix location offering a two-year non-traditional program. The residency cycle starts in July of each year and ends in June the following year.

What can an IHS Resident expect?

Though there are differences between each program, all residency sites offer various clinical rotations and advanced hands-on learning experiences. Most sites have anticoagulation, ambulatory care, and management rotations, as well as various other disease state specific learning experiences. Specialized training in HIV, latent TB, emergency medicine, infectious disease, and

critical care are available at many locations.

IHS Residency training provides unique opportunities to develop skills that the average pharmacist may not be afforded. IHS residents gain experience in leadership, management, clinical skills, informatics, and even precepting and teaching skills. Residents become certified in pharmacy-based clinics, participate in Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee activities, leadership meetings, formulary decision-making, advanced electronic health record training, and development of policies and procedures.

Residents usually attend the ASHP Midyear Meeting, if they meet the residency progress requirements prior to the meeting. Other trainings and meeting attendance may be provided by the residency sites. Additional opportunities vary by site.

What is expected of an IHS Resident?

All residents are required to conduct a major, independent research project that they present at the ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting professional poster session. At project completion, the residents are required to submit a manuscript that is suitable for publication consideration. Project topics vary by site location and each resident's interests.

ASHP accredited programs have very strict evaluation requirements; therefore, frequent feedback (both written and verbal) is provided to residents about performance. Rotation goals, objectives, and expectations are reviewed with the resident at the start of each rotation, so they are aware of how they will be evaluated. A summative evaluation is provided at the end of each learning experience, along with quarterly cumulative evaluations occurring throughout the year.

Salary and Benefits

IHS residency programs are highly competi-

tive in terms of salary and benefits. With a Pharm.D. degree, federal civil servants start as a GS-9, and Commissioned Corps Officers start at O-3. These pay scales can be found online. Some IHS sites are tribally operated, and have their own hiring and pay systems. Most selected residents are offered the opportunity to apply to the USPHS Commissioned Corps.

The amount of vacation time earned varies according to the federal or tribal personnel system into which the resident is hired. ASHP accreditation limits the amount of vacation time the resident can use during the training year, and most sites allow residents to use up to 10 vacation days during residency. As mentioned earlier, IHS residents are funded for ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting attendance.

Application Information

The IHS residency website contains a listing of the 21 locations and site descriptions, along with contact information for each location. Interested parties should contact the Residency Program Director (RPD) for each site directly for more information. All programs will be represented at the ASHP mid-year clinical meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada in December 2016. This is a great opportunity to meet Residents and Directors! All sites welcome on-site visits and interviews.

The current application cycle opens October 1st and will close December 30, 2016. IHS resident selections are made in February of each year, prior to the ASHP Match program. IHS Residency Programs do not participate in the ASHP Match system. All application materials can be found on the IHS Residency website at [HTTP://www.IHS.com/pharmacy/resident](http://www.IHS.com/pharmacy/resident)



COSTEP Corner: Frequently Asked Questions submitted by LCDR Stephanie Daniels

What exactly is a COSTEP?

COSTEP stands for **C**ommissioned **O**fficer **S**tudent **T**raining and **E**xtern **P**rogram. There are two kinds of COSTEPs, Junior (JR) and Senior (SR) COSTEPs.

JRCOSTEPs are 4-12 week paid internships working directly with USPHS officers at various duty stations and agencies across the country, and students are eligible any time after the 1st professional year. Most pharmacy students serve their internships within the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Indian Health Service (IHS), or Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP).

SRCOSTEPs are for students about to enter their final year of full-time study, and selected students can receive up to 12 months of full-time pay and benefits in exchange for agreeing to serve a USPHS agency following graduation and licensure. The service obligation is equal to twice the amount of time sponsored, e.g. a student who receives 10 months of pay while in school must complete 20 months of service to his/her sponsoring agency.

Why should I consider a COSTEP?

JRCOSTEPs are excellent opportunities to directly experience non-traditional pharmacy careers and life in uniform. They offer incredible networking prospects and chances to positively impact both underserved populations and the overall health of our nation.

SRCOSTEPs are one of the very few ways to be selected for a full-time active duty commission when the USPHS Commissioned Corps are not accepting general applications for pharmacists. They also ensure that students will have a guaranteed income and position beginning immediately after graduation, and help provide financial security during the high-stress clinical year.

What benefits are COSTEP participants eligible for?

COSTEP students are active duty officers. As such, they receive basic pay as an O-1 (Ensign), tax-free housing and subsistence allowances, and costs of travel between their home and duty station may be paid. You can view military pay scales at the following website: <http://militarypay.defense.gov/pay/calc/index.html>. SRCOSTEP students receive full health care benefits through TRICARE for themselves and their dependents, and JRCOSTEP officers are eligible for emergency health care coverage.



If they are selected for an active duty commission in any uniformed service following graduation, both JR- and SRCOSTEP students are also able to apply time served during an internship toward their "time in service", which can positively impact both pay rates and eligibility for promotion.

When should I apply for a COSTEP?

If you're considering a JRCOSTEP, the best time to apply is the fall before the year(s) you'd like to serve an internship in. For example, if you'd like

to complete your internship during the summer break between your 2nd and 3rd professional years, apply during the fall semester of your 2nd year. The application deadline is December 31st annually.

If you'd like to apply for a SRCOSTEP, you must apply during the fall semester of your 3rd professional year, so that applications can be reviewed and students can be selected prior to beginning their final year of school. The annual application deadline is December 31st.

Where can I find more information on the COSTEP program?

The USPHS Commissioned Corps website is always the best place to start: <http://www.usphs.gov>. More specific information on the JRCOSTEP is available at <http://www.usphs.gov/student/jrcostep.aspx>, and on the SRCOSTEP at <http://www.usphs.gov/student/srcostep.aspx>. The PharmPAC's UPOC newsletter often includes perspectives from recent JRCOSTEP participants (such as those on pages 5 and 6 of this issue).

You can also reach out to the USPHS pharmacy officer who has volunteered as your school's University Point of Contact, or UPOC. The list is located at: <http://www.usphs.gov/corpslinks/pharmacy/documents/UPOCMasterList.pdf>

How do I apply for a COSTEP?

Applications are available through each COSTEP's respective page on the USPHS website during the annual application period. You can find links to them from the general student page at <http://www.usphs.gov/student/default.aspx>.

Useful Info and Resource Links

Agency	Contact	Telephone	Website	Email
Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP)	CAPT Cassondra White	210-472-4510	https://www.bop.gov/jobs/positions/index.jsp?p=Pharmacist	c3white@bop.gov
Centers for Disease Control (CDC)	LCDR Jennifer N. Lind	404-498-4339	https://www.cdc.gov	vox2@cdc.gov
Food and Drug Administration (FDA)	CAPT Beth Fritsch	301-796-8451	https://www.fda.gov	beth.fritsch@fda.hhs.gov
Health Resources & Svcs Adm. (HRSA)	LT Jane McLaughlin	301- 443-1603	https://www.hrsa.gov	JMcLaughlin@HRSA.gov
Indian Health Service (IHS)	CDR Damion Killsback	301-443-2472	https://www.ihs.gov/pharmacy	damion.killsback@ihs.gov
ICE Health Services Corps (IHSC)	CAPT Jeff Haug	202-494-8081	http://www.ice.gov/ice-health-service-corps	jeff.e.haug@ice.dhs.gov
National Institutes of Health (NIH)	CDR Fortin Georges	301-496-9358	https://www.nih.gov	georgesf@cc.nih.gov
U.S. Coast Guard	CDR Aaron P. Middlekauff	202-475-5181	http://www.uscg.mil/health/cg1122/pharmacy.asp	Aaron.P.Middlekauff@uscg.mil
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)	CDR Jill Christ	410-786-5597	https://www.cms.gov	Jill.Christ@cms.hhs.gov
Instagram/Twitter			#usphspharmacy	
Facebook Page			https://www.facebook.com/USPHSPharmacists	
IHS Residency Information			http://www.ihs.gov/medicalprograms/pharmacy/resident/	
Uniform Help Desk Email			www.phsccuniform@hhs.gov	
Uniform Information			http://www.usphs.gov/aboutus/uniforms.aspx	
USPHS			http://usphs.gov	
USPHS PharmPAC Website			http://www.usphs.gov/corpslinks/pharmacy/	
USPHS Pharmacist Listservs			http://www.usphs.gov/corpslinks/pharmacy/listserv.aspx	
USPHS Student Opportunities			http://www.usphs.gov/student/	

Upcoming Meetings

May 16-19, 2016	PHS Commissioned Officers Foundation USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium (Oklahoma City, OK)
June 11 -15, 2016	ASHP Summer Meetings & Exhibition (Baltimore, MD)
July 28- August 1, 2016	Student National Pharmaceutical Association Annual Meeting (Atlanta, GA)
August 28 – Sept 1, 2016	76th FIP World Congress of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (Buenos Aires, Argentina)
October 23-26, 2016	American College of Clinical Pharmacy Global Conference on Clinical Pharmacy (Hollywood, FL)
October 30-Nov 2, 2016	Joint Federal Pharmacy Seminar (Washington, DC)