

# Gamecock Pharmacist

## NATIONAL CHAMPS

Student team  
brings home NCPA  
business plan title





**DEAN STEPHEN J. CUTLER**

## **DEAR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS,**

It always brings me immense pleasure to share with you the many successes happening in the College of Pharmacy. The Class of 2024 is now officially graduated and headed to the next chapter in their exciting careers. Faculty are being recognized for the tremendous work they are doing to enhance education in pharmacy and our alumni are accomplishing wonderful things in the profession.

I also want to share some exciting news regarding my continued commitment to the college and an additional responsibility that I am honored to undertake.

I have accepted a dual role at the University of South Carolina. In addition to my ongoing position as dean of the College of Pharmacy, I will also serve as vice president for Economic Development for the university. This new role aligns seamlessly with our college's commitment to community engagement and fostering partnerships. This commitment drives the success of our pharmacy students while also contributing to the economic development of our region.

I am committed to enhancing our educational offerings to better prepare our students for the dynamic landscape of health care and empower them to shape its future. We are launching an education track dedicated to the intricacies of owning and managing a pharmacy. This comprehensive overhaul of our curriculum will instill entrepreneurial skills in our students while also providing a truly integrated educational program. Students will gain a holistic understanding of pharmacy operations, fiscal management, regulatory compliance and innovative approaches to patient care. Our goal is to produce graduates who excel in traditional health care roles and are well-versed in the business aspects of pharmacy.

Furthermore, we are committed to advancing the practice of health care by fostering a culture of innovation where students are encouraged to think creatively about patient management. We will introduce initiatives and projects that challenge students to devise novel solutions, leverage technology and adopt a proactive approach to health care delivery.

I invite each of you to contribute your expertise and insights as we embark on this exciting journey. Your collaboration will be instrumental in shaping a curriculum that exceeds industry standards and positions our institution as a leader in entrepreneurial health care education.

Together, we can inspire the next generation of pharmacy professionals to embrace innovation, entrepreneurship and excellence in patient care.

*Forever to thee,*

**Stephen J. Cutler**  
Dean, College of Pharmacy

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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Winners of the 2023 NCPA Business Plan Competition are, from left, Jacob Jordan King, CharLeigh Steverson and Fay Hussain.

### Communications and Marketing

The University of South Carolina is an equal opportunity institution. 24-13580 05/24



USC's national championship team celebrates with NCPA CEO Douglas Hoey

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# Futuristic care is now reality

Anne Lord Bailey, '14, uses immersive technology to advance veteran care

A USC College of Pharmacy alumna is taking the immersive technology of virtual reality and incorporating it in ways for U.S. veterans to receive advanced care.

**Anne Lord Bailey**, 2014, is executive director of the Strategic Initiatives Lab within the Office of Healthcare Innovation and Learning for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. As a USC student, a rotation at the Wm. Jennings Bryan Dorn Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center spurred her interest in working with the VA.

She joined the Western North Carolina VA Healthcare System in Asheville, North Carolina, first as a resident, then as a clinical pharmacy practitioner. In 2020, she joined VHA's Office of

Healthcare Innovation and Learning to lead implementation of emerging technology. A year later, she and the team founded VA Immersive to lead the implementation of virtual and augmented reality across the VA.



“We have seen a real revolution,” Bailey says. “Not only in the technology, but because of the VA’s adoption of the technology, we have seen an absolute change in peoples’ receptivity to the concept.”

Application of immersive technology is impacting patients and VA employees and staff across more than 40 indications. Areas include supportive mental health care, pain management, training and education and physical rehabilitation.

“Many of the specialists in blind rehabilitation are using virtual reality to help teach patients things that they otherwise would have to do in a one-to-one setting,” Bailey says. “Also, physical therapists can augment therapy with VR, engaging patients in an entirely different, virtual environment that can be tailored to the patient’s needs while also providing objective feedback and data.”

## Success across environments

Results for patients can include an improved range of motion, increased engagement and the ability to be in an environment where they no longer anticipate pain.

In the most expansive adaptation of the technology, it is used as a positive distraction, much like how a parent might attract a child’s attention away from a scraped knee.

“For a patient who is in acute pain, suddenly they are sitting on a beach, in a relaxing environment, interacting with an engaging environment and, ultimately, not thinking about that pain. **ANNE LORD BAILEY**”

“Virtual reality works the same way,” Bailey says. “For a patient who is in acute pain, suddenly they are sitting on a beach, in a relaxing environment, interacting with an engaging environment and, ultimately, not thinking about that pain.”

The technology can also assist with chronic pain management.

“Immersive technology provides the ability to utilize evidence-based practice, like cognitive behavioral therapy, to support learning disciplines and skills that may otherwise be difficult to learn or retain,” Bailey says.

Bailey has also worked with VA’s Veterans Experience Office to help design VR experiences that provide empathy training for employees who are part of the inpatient discharge process. These VR training experiences allow staff to walk through the inpatient discharge process from the patient’s perspective.

“These experiences are based on real-life stories from our patients,” she says. “Through virtual reality, the employee is now in a hospital room where people come and go, give instructions, and it can be a frustrating process. This helps our employees build empathy to understand and appreciate the process and deliver better care.”

### Growing and helping

Bailey and her team had to overcome barriers to get buy-in for the technology.

“It is historically related to gaming,” Bailey says. “There are actually three decades of academic research supporting use of this technology in health care, and VA has had the opportunity to test and show that value. I am excited to see where we go next.”

At its inception, VA Immersive had a staff of 10 and saw only a few medical centers participating. It is now at more than 170 sites with 2,300 staff.

Collaboration and community building have been central to VA Immersive success, across VA, but also with industry, nonprofit organizations, academic institutions and government agencies.

“Our entire team has spent time serving veterans in VA medical centers,” Bailey says. “We understand the day-to-day challenges, but we also want to continue to lean in to better understand.”

Use of immersive technology has helped to impact opioid use and length of hospital stays, and it has helped decrease anxiety and pain.

“This is a win for everybody,” Bailey says. “Framing the potential of the technology, lowering barriers and encouraging collaboration have led to tremendous growth of the program, which means better care for so many more veterans.”



# NATIONAL CHAMPS!

## Pharmacy students bring home NCPA business competition title

There is something to the saying, 'The third time's the charm.'

**Jacob Jordan King** believes that after he and his teammates were named winners of the 2023 National Community Pharmacy Association's Business Plan Competition.

The journey began last spring when the team won the local competition sponsored by the Kennedy Pharmacy Innovation Center. It was King's third time competing, and he knew this time they could go all the way.

Joined by **Fay Hussain**, who had also competed since her first year in pharmacy school, and first-time presenter **Charleigh Steverson**, the team created "Blue Ridge Apothecary." Building off King's and Hussain's experience and Steverson's expertise in compounding and innovation, the team focused on ensuring the mission and vision of their pharmacy matched how they want to be viewed as practitioners.

In the next round of competition, held virtually, the team secured a spot among the top three in the nation, making it the second consecutive year for the College of Pharmacy to claim that distinction. Their success earned them a spot in the nationals at the NCPA Annual Convention in Orlando.

"It was so surreal when they announced us as the winners," King says. "We were up against two very strong teams in UGA and UT-Austin. Winning made all the effort and work we put into this so worth it."



**Patti Fabel**, executive director of KPIC, emphasizes that winning such a challenging competition not only reinforces the demanding work of the students, it provides invaluable benefits.

"It is a difficult competition," Fabel says. "The teams put together a 50-page plus document on a topic that they do not have much experience in, including marketing, location analysis, financial statements and staffing."

In addition to the experience of developing a comprehensive business plan, the students gain extensive networking opportunities and exposure to like-minded individuals.

Fabel notes that KPIC has unique resources to provide students, including coordinating assistance, templates and guidance throughout the competition.

"We have dedicated faculty and staff available to offer advice, as well as mentors who are experienced pharmacy owners," Fabel says. "The depth and breadth of resources we provide are unparalleled."

KPIC founders **Lou** and **Bill Kennedy** established the center to help prepare students to be entrepreneurs and innovators. Bill Kennedy, pharmacy alumnus from 1966, serves on the Advisory Board and provides input on the entrepreneurial needs within the pharmacy community.



“We are always happy to support the education and growth of any student,” Kennedy says. “The champions from the business plan competition are no exception. Congratulations to these entrepreneurs!”

Students who are intimidated by the idea of owning their own pharmacy can know that the resources provided by KPIC can help them achieve that goal.

“The business plan competition, the resources we provide, and the connections we give them help them realize that their dream is a little closer to reality than they first thought,” Fabel says.

Hussain feels the competition put her creativity and entrepreneurial skills to the test.

“We are seeing so much innovation and new technologies in pharmacy now,” she says. “By competing, you are better equipped and prepared for these changes.”

Hussain encourages students to put aside their hesitation about entering the competition.

“You will not learn the skills that you acquire anywhere else in the curriculum,” she says. “Even if it seems intimidating, just do it. You will not regret it.”

Steverson credits the entire team for their success, including their coaches and local judges who provided valuable insight,



The student winners celebrate on stage with coaches Fabel, Ballou and Hite at the NCPA Annual Convention.

including Fabel, mentor **Jordan Ballou** and KPIC Program Coordinator **Pamela Hite**.

“Everyone gave us great feedback that we were able to implement into our presentation at the national level, which helped set us apart from the other teams,” she says.

Steverson is considering the possibility of owning her own pharmacy, and the competition helped spur a deeper passion for independent pharmacy.

“I have always held a special place in my heart for independent pharmacy. As somebody who is passionate about advocacy, especially advocating for the profession, independent pharmacy is one of the areas of pharmacy that needs advocacy right now,” she says. “I already respected independent pharmacists a great deal, but this enriched that even more.”

King, Hussain and Steverson are not done yet. They will give it one more try, hoping to build on their success and bring home another championship in 2024.



# PROVIDING CARE ON THE ISLAND OF RURAL HEALTH



## Reagan Barfield finds creative way to increase access to care

The lack of health care in rural areas is problematic for both patients in need of care and health care providers. Pharmacists are often the only available provider in these communities, and resources for providing the most effective care can be limited as well.

“Pharmacists practicing in rural areas are somewhat on an island,” says **Reagan Barfield**, 2019. “I saw an opportunity to ensure they have a network of others working in similar areas where they can ask questions, collaborate on research and education and have communal support.”

Barfield, assistant professor and coordinator of the Tandem Health-USC PGY1 Pharmacy Residency Program, founded and directs the Southeastern Collaboration of Rural Health Research and Education (SCOR<sup>2</sup>E) Network.

Members meet monthly to discuss patient issues they face, such as finding

an affordable medication to treat a specific disease-state.

“Guideline-directed medical therapies are wonderful,” Barfield says, “but sometimes you have to go off script to find a medication that works for the patient and one that is affordable.”

SCOR<sup>2</sup>E members also benefit from the continuing education provided during the meetings.

“Our members help identify rural health topics for continuing education and have the opportunity to present patient cases, educating other members with the data that supports their care decisions,” Barfield says.

The network, which started with a handful of practitioners from Prisma Health Tuomey Hospital in Sumter and federally qualified health centers such as Tandem Health, continues to grow. Pharmacists,

residents and students take advantage of the opportunity to learn and share about helping patients in that landscape.

“The residents get to learn from pharmacists practicing in rural health, and they have the opportunity to teach,” Barfield says. “Our students get to network with some amazing pharmacists with unique backgrounds. Because they see the value that the College of Pharmacy is bringing to the Sumter area through the SCOR<sup>2</sup>E Network, they then want to apply for our residency program, helping to encourage more practitioners in rural areas.”

That interest has led to an increase in the number of pharmacy practitioners in the Sumter area as well, growing from one full-time pharmacy employee four years ago to eight full-time staff currently. And that means more care for those in need.



# Laughter really is the best medicine

**Cory Jenks authors book on using comedy in his pharmacy career**



The comedy bug bit **Cory Jenks** when he was in high school, that age when young people begin to see their personalities develop.

"I remember memorizing stand-up comedy specials and television comedies like *Seinfeld*, *The Simpsons* and *Saturday Night Live*," he says.

Little did he know that his love of comedy would have such an impact on his future career.

Jenks came to the University of South Carolina from Tucson, Arizona. A USC recruiter visited his high school, and Jenks was intrigued by the possibility of a career in pharmacy.

"My aunt and uncle lived in Hilton Head, and it was a good excuse to come for a visit," Jenks says. "And I fell in love with the campus."

Jenks completed his undergraduate work at USC then earned a Doctor of Pharmacy degree in 2011.

In 2013, he launched his journey as an improv comedian and began traveling the country, working with other health care professionals to share how he applies his improv skills to create a better health care experience for his patients.

But don't assume that a consultation with Jenks is all laughs, all the time.

"The underlying lesson that I have learned about using comedy when working with my patients is that I have become a better listener,"

Jenks says. "I can sit with them and hear what they have to share and try to help them into a healthier life. It is the broad application of the skills of improv to improve the health care experience."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Jenks found time to put his thoughts on paper. He published his first book, *Permission to Care: Building a Healthcare Culture that Thrives in Chaos*, available on Amazon.

"Health care can be sad and frustrating, so that was my inspiration," he says. "It was the perfect time to take all these ideas in my head and put them down on paper."

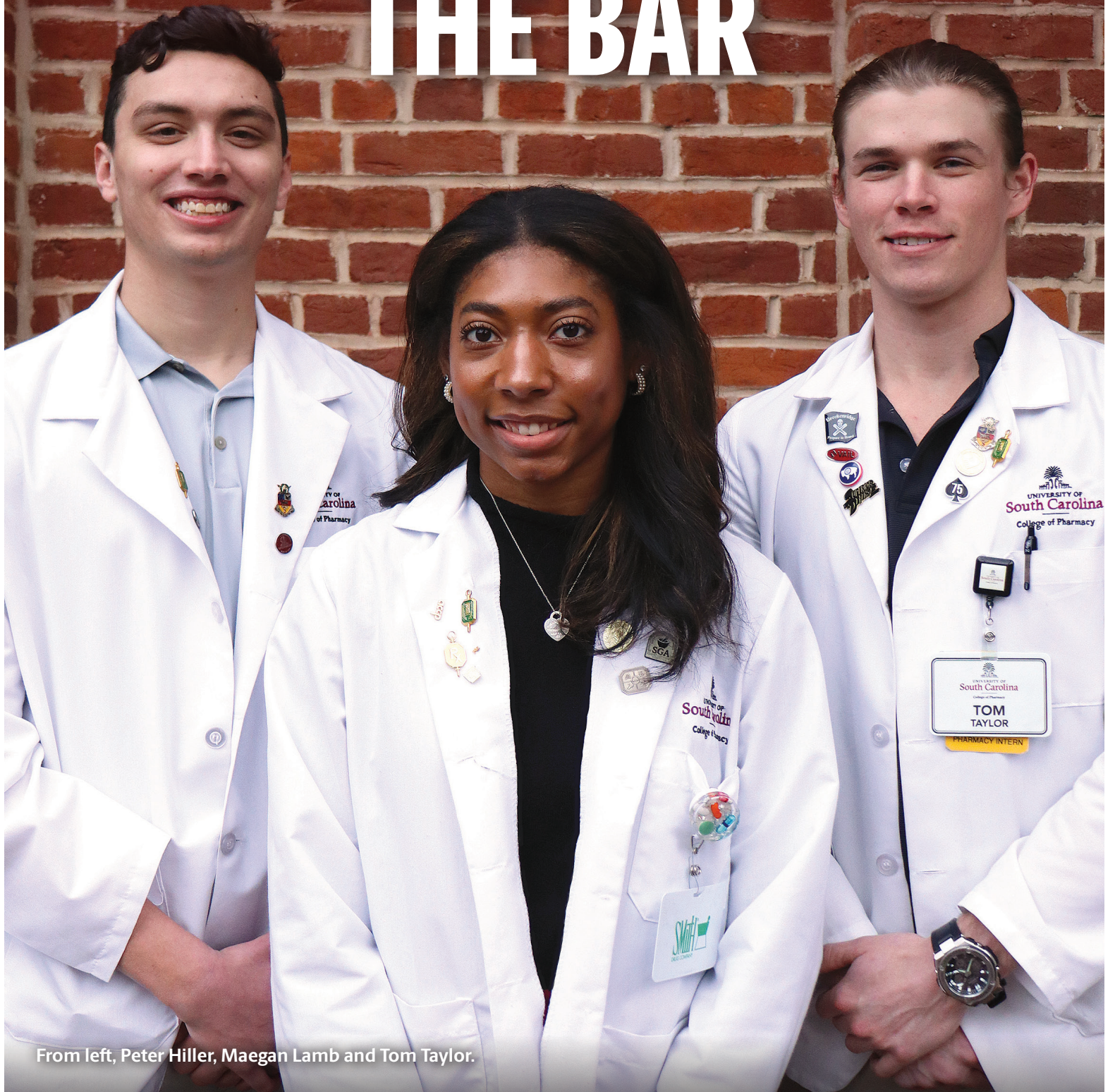
Jenks, who works as an ambulatory care pharmacist, hopes others in the health care field can take the lessons he has shared in his book and apply them to their organizations.

"I am not writing from a philosophical standpoint," he says. "I am writing from an application and tactical standpoint. This is something that I use every day."

"I would consider myself an unconventional pharmacist, and a lot of what I do, from comedy, writing, and even my approach with patients is to help break conventions in a way to help others live a fuller life."

Jenks recently authored another book about the trials and tribulations of fatherhood with a comedic lens, *I Guess I'm a Dad Now*, exploring the lessons he has learned raising his young kids.

# RAISING THE BAR



From left, Peter Hiller, Maegan Lamb and Tom Taylor.

## Pharmacy students are among first to join new leadership programs

Several College of Pharmacy students are making great strides in the pharmacy world. Peter Hiller, Maegan Lamb and Tom Taylor have been selected for prestigious positions and honors within the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. We wanted to share more about their journey in the College of Pharmacy and what propels them to take on these leadership roles.

### Peter Hiller, Class of 2025

Hiller has been accepted into the inaugural class of the Aspiring Academics program. He is one of 20 students nationwide to join the cohort.

#### What made you want to consider applying for this opportunity?

Hiller: After fostering a solid relationship with Dr. Jordan Ballou as my mentor, she encouraged me after I expressed my passion to go into pharmacy academia. I have had wonderful professors who have instilled in me a desire to further advance medicine and teach others about it. AACP has the resources and network to help me reach these goals.

#### What will be required of you as a participant in the program?

Hiller: This program is full of resources and developmental support for me. It includes working on a topic relevant to advancing pharmacy academia, meeting with other like-minded students, networking events, completing experiential activities such as joining AACP-sponsored committees and research, and attending the AACP national conference in Boston.

#### How do you think being part of the AACP Academic program will help your career?

Hiller: I hope it will allow me to grow and benefit from being part of a cohort of students and faculty who want to advance the profession. I am striving to have an open mind and learn about what it means to be a part of a staff of professionals who want to see their students succeed and have their patients heal. I want to gain insight into how I can achieve my dreams.

### Maegan Lamb, Class of 2025

Lamb is one of seven students nationally chosen as a recipient of the Walmart Health Equity Scholarship for Pharmacy Students. It recognizes her leadership, academic success and commitment to serving rural and medically underserved communities.

#### What sparked your interest in rural health care?

Lamb: As a student from rural Sampson County, North Carolina, I came to pharmacy school knowing that I wanted to serve rural and underserved patient populations by addressing access to quality health care and other health disparities.

#### How will this scholarship help you with your studies?

Lamb: I am doing some of my rotations at rural sites in South Carolina, and this scholarship will help me travel to those rural experiences that will make me a better pharmacist.

#### What are your plans after graduation?

Lamb: Through pharmacy school, I have seen how a clinical pharmacist and ambulatory care can impact patient care

and help with chronic care management that's prevalent in rural patient populations. I hope to bridge the gap between the lack of primary care providers and the lack of access to care.

### Tom Taylor, Class of 2025

Taylor has been named to the inaugural cohort of the ACT Pharmacy Collaborative Community Pharmacy Student Scholar Leaders program.

#### What interests you most about community pharmacy?

Taylor: The options are almost endless. I want to have strong patient relationships and pursue my business and innovative ideas. I want to be on the cutting edge and find new pathways, and this program is bringing like-minded people together to find those solutions.

#### How will this program support your future career?

Taylor: By working with peers, colleagues and mentors, I hope to develop more innovative ways on how we can implement our ideas. It is a wonderful opportunity to hear from people who have more wisdom than me and to nurture ideas to bring them to fruition.

#### What advice do you have for your fellow pharmacy students?

Taylor: Take every single opportunity that comes your way. Work at a job, talk to somebody – your professors, the dean. It is all about forging connections and meaningful relationships with people. If you don't think you have time, I promise you that you do. Just commit.



# BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Student launches her own nutrition business

As a full-time pharmacy student, there usually is not much time in the day for anything other than classes, studying and trying to figure out when to wash that ever-growing pile of laundry, much less sticking to a healthy diet. But for Alexandria Coleman, Class of 2025, who has a degree in kinesiology with a focus on nutrition, taking care of her body is such a priority that she turned her passion for nutrition into a successful business.

Coleman wandered into the business world initially by taking part in the Kennedy Pharmacy Innovation Center's business plan competition. While she did not win in the competition, her mentors encouraged her to enter the SC Innovates competition in 2023 where she placed as a semifinalist.

"Dr. Patti Fabel and Pamela Hite guided me to improve my business plan, to help me navigate what I should change," Coleman says. "I never thought I could put together a business plan, and now I have pitched to investors who have helped make this a reality."

In 2022, Coleman applied for a business license and opened the doors to her company, Beyond Pills, offering nutritional counseling, weight management consultation and grocery mentoring, along with juice cleanses and meal preparation services.

"This is the future of pharmacy, a new way of looking at food as medicine. I want to help patients make a plan and give them the tools to follow that plan," says Coleman. "If you uncover the root causes of preventable diseases like diabetes, hypertension and

cholesterol, you'll find that many of them are related to food and weight management."

Coleman and her team offer flexible options including both in-person and virtual appointments. She hopes to expand the business once she completes her pharmacy education.

"I believe that there is more that you can do as a pharmacist than traditional roles. I envision pharmacists going beyond to address the root causes of patients' diseases," Coleman says. "I aspire to be the pharmacist that patients turn to when facing new health challenges and to help them take control of their lives."



Alexandria Coleman is a PharmD student and owns and operates Beyond Pills.

# Rx for Success

## Early intervention helps students find success in the classroom



The first year of pharmacy school can be daunting. The transition from an undergraduate program into a professional program requires students to adapt to a higher level of learning.

**LaShaunda Rutledge** helps those students find ways to improve their learning ability – from time management and organization to connecting with others and understanding the importance of self-care.

Rutledge joined the College of Pharmacy a little more than a year ago as program coordinator for Academic Services and Assessment. In her role, she identifies students having trouble navigating their first year of classes and provides them with tools to ensure their success as pharmacy students.

“When a student is referred for early intervention, I provide an assessment to the student and help them to identify barriers that are causing them issues in the classroom,” Rutledge says. “We look at things like scheduling, study time, tutoring and outside work requirements, even their social time.”

While the program initially launched for first-year students, it is now available to second- through fourth-year students who request an appointment.

“I do not have a pharmacy background,” she says. “This is not academic coaching in the sense of teaching the material, but it is coaching to show them how to be successful in the classroom. And that inevitably become a life lesson.”

Rutledge calls herself a cheerleader for the students and an advocate for their mental health.

“Pharmacy school is not easy, and these students face a tremendous amount of pressure,” she says. “We want to celebrate all your successes, even the small ones. The students learn that they can lean on me and, more importantly, lean on each other.”

### Available services for students:

- Time management
- Study skills
- Test-taking anxiety
- Well-being and self-care
- Note taking
- Stress management



# Community-based Residency Program finds success, adds sites

As far back as 2010, the USC College of Pharmacy has benefited by partnering with community pharmacies to provide residency training.

The college and the Kennedy Pharmacy Innovation Center work collaboratively to support four postgraduate year one residency sites and two additional sites that provide PGY1/PGY2 administration and leadership residencies.

Beginning in 2024, the Community-Based Pharmacy Residency Program will launch a PGY1 site with HopeHealth, a federally qualified health center in Florence, South Carolina.

**Jordan Ballou** serves as program director for the community residency programs.

“Residency training is considered to be the equivalent of three to five years of work experience,” Ballou says. “It is an opportunity for pharmacy graduates to receive this additional training in one year’s time. Plus, the skills and network that you develop can be critical to your future success.”

Community pharmacy residencies also offer a tremendous benefit to patients.

“Residents are up-to-date on advanced clinical knowledge and are on the forefront of what is happening in the profession of pharmacy,” she says. “It is also an opportunity to enhance their communication skills and how they relate to patients.”

Ballou is eager to see the program expand further. Talks are underway to potentially add another community pharmacy residency site in 2025.

“Community residency programs allow graduates to differentiate themselves,” Ballou says.

“I was always told that a community residency allows you to create the job that you want in community pharmacy. If you are interested in clinical services, in managing a pharmacy or being a pharmacy owner, this is a great pathway to get you there.”



Ballou, with a resident and preceptor from the Premise Health site, at the ASHP Midyear Meeting.



Ballou, along with participants from the program, take part in a residency showcase at ASHP Midyear.



# Putting USC students on the map

As the number of applicants for residency positions increases, students seek to set themselves apart.

Nearly one half of USC College of Pharmacy students pursue a postgraduate training program following graduation. To ensure these students have the greatest chance to match with a program, the college provides a preresidency and fellowship track to assist them throughout the process of their applications and interviews.

The limited number of available residency positions makes the process extremely competitive.



“We want our students to have an advantage, to set themselves apart from other applicants,” says **Brandon Bookstaver**, 2004, director of Residency and Fellowship Training. “We launched the program formally in 2009 to help students learn how to showcase their skills.”

Students typically begin the optional track at the beginning of their second year of pharmacy school.

“I think one of the first things that students realize is the value of research in making them competitive,” he says. “They also realize how many choices are out there for a variety of career options.”

One way students explore options is through involvement with state associations such as the South Carolina Pharmacy Association and the South Carolina Society of Health-System Pharmacists.

Since the launch of the track, the number of students successfully matching to a postgraduate residency has climbed steadily. The college’s match rate continually exceeds the national average.

“I have noticed a trend that more of our students are being accepted into a wider array of opportunities, including industry fellowships and executive residency programs with pharmacy organizations,” Bookstaver says.

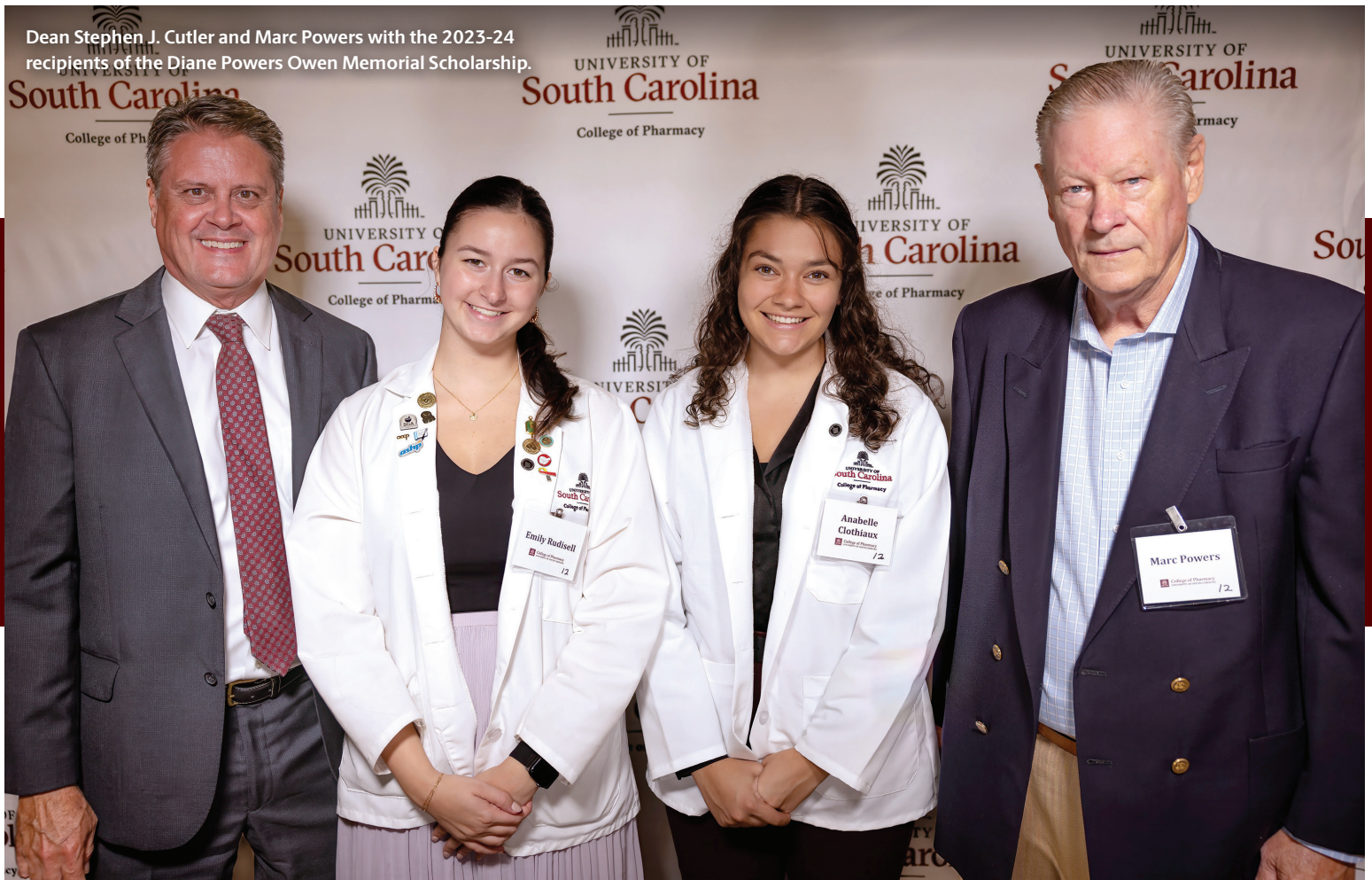


Clinical associate professor **Celeste Caulder** is a co-author with Bookstaver on *Roadmap to Postgraduate Training in Pharmacy*, a textbook for students and preceptors to prepare for residency and fellowship training. She serves as a mentor to students and can coach them for interviews with residency programs.

“We simulate what a real-life residency interview would look like,” she says. “That helps to alleviate some of the anxiety for what is, for all intents and purposes, a job interview.”

Caulder’s advice to those who have the slightest interest in pursuing residency? Start preparing immediately.

“Oftentimes, they may think they have four years, but those years fly by so quickly,” she says. “Start early with developing relationships with your colleagues in the classroom and with mentors, network with faculty and with pharmacists in the field. You can never start too early.”



Dean Stephen J. Cutler and Marc Powers with the 2023-24 recipients of the Diane Powers Owen Memorial Scholarship.

# Giving so others have a chance

## Supporting scholarships allows students to succeed

When his 26-year-old daughter passed away from Ewing's sarcoma, USC College of Pharmacy alumnus Raymond Jackson Powers established the Diane Powers Owen Memorial Scholarship.

Powers, who served as a pharmacist's mate in the U.S. Navy and as a medic in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II, earned his pharmacy degree in 1949. He opened his first pharmacy in California and later became an executive with E.R. Squibb.

After Diane's death, it was Raymond's wish that the scholarship continue to support the financial needs of future pharmacy students.

Powers' son, Marc, says his father took great pride in his alma mater and his profession.

"My father wanted to share what pharmacy had done for him, and he wanted others to have the same opportunities that he had and to be able to honor my sister's memory," **Marc Powers** says. "His words to me were to make sure that this scholarship is sustained."

Marc, who earned his degree in computer science from USC, attended his first scholarship donor appreciation dinner in September 2023. He met the current recipients of his family's scholarship: **Emily Rudisell**, Class of 2025, and **Anabelle Clothiaux**, Class of 2027.

"It meant so much to be able to meet Mr. Powers and tell him how much the scholarship has meant to me," Rudisell says. "We were able to learn about him and the history of the scholarship, share our goals and how the scholarship has helped us reach those goals."



**“When alumni give back, it serves as a point of motivation. It fuels me to give 110 percent and to aspire to the highest level that I can. Even the smallest amount makes a world of difference. ANABELLE CLOTHIAUX**

### Accomplishments and connections

Powers now lives near Aiken, South Carolina, where Clothiaux grew up. She discovered in her conversations with Powers that they shared a deeply personal connection.

“My father passed away from an aggressive form of cancer,” Clothiaux says, “and we talked about the impact that had on our lives. It was good to be able to talk with someone who has gone through an experience similar to mine, to know that we are not alone in the toll that cancer has taken on our families. He was able to give me advice on moving forward.”

It wasn't until after her father's diagnosis that Clothiaux considered pharmacy as a career.

“Following my dad's journey through chemotherapy, radiation and trial drugs, I started to look at pharmacy as a way that I might be able to help people,” she says. “There is so much potential in new drugs to fight cancer, and having a little bit of hope means so much.”

Still in her first year of pharmacy studies, Clothiaux is considering a career in oncology, research and drug development.

Rudisell and Clothiaux say that without the scholarship, it would be more difficult to focus on their studies without worrying about financial aspects of paying for their education.

“As pharmacy students, there are many extracurricular activities that we want to take part in, to further our leadership skills, and to enhance our education by attending professional development events,” Rudisell says. “Through Mr. Powers and the generosity of other College of Pharmacy alumni, we are able to seek out these opportunities.”

“When alumni give back, it serves as a point of motivation,” Clothiaux says. “It fuels me to give 110 percent and to aspire to the highest level that I can. Even the smallest amount makes a world of difference.”

Powers says it is important to give students a chance to get through college and life.

“These young women are so accomplished,” he says. “That is what was important to my dad and that is why I continue to support the college.”

# PHILANTHROPY BY THE NUMBERS

*"In years to come, when I find myself in a position to give back, I will remember this act of kindness and aim to pay it forward. I aspire to help pave the way for future scholars, just as you have done for me."* – Words of gratitude from a 2023-2024 College of Pharmacy scholarship recipient.

**316**

The number of donors who contributed to the College of Pharmacy in fiscal year 2023.



**12**

The number of College of Pharmacy donors who are members of the Carolina Guardian Society by providing for the College of Pharmacy through a documented will or estate plan. There is no minimum amount required for membership in the Carolina Guardian Society.

**\$1,000**

The minimum donation to join the College of Pharmacy's Dean's Circle. You may give directly to the Dean's Excellence Fund or to another College of Pharmacy fund of your choice.

**\$25,000** OR  
**\$5,000** per year for five years

Establishes a named, endowed partial scholarship which will provide scholarship support to students in the College of Pharmacy in perpetuity.

**\$100,000** OR  
**\$20,000** per year for five years

Establishes a named, endowed scholarship which will provide scholarship support to students in the College of Pharmacy in perpetuity.

Enjoy the benefits of joining our Dean's Circle, Horseshoe Society or Guardian Society while providing important support of our students and programs.

We would love to hear from you!

Contact Terry Dixon at 803-777-5426 or [tedixon@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:tedixon@mailbox.sc.edu) to learn more.

EVERY LITTLE PIECE  
**THANKS!**  
MAKES A BIG IMPACT

**\$98,769**

total raised by 175 donors to the College of Pharmacy  
during **Give 4 Garnet** this year.

Together, we made a **BIG** impact.



**College of Pharmacy**  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA



# DONALD A. GODWIN, Ph.D.

## Dean of the University of New Mexico College of Pharmacy

It was as simple as picking up an informational post card about the University of South Carolina College of Pharmacy.

**Donald Godwin** switched from conducting marine biology research at the University of Delaware to moving south.

"I filled out the card and sent it in and the college sent me a brochure about graduate education. That's how I became a Gamecock," Godwin says.

Godwin initially enrolled in the master's program, but a conversation with then-Associate Dean Farid Sadik helped convince him to enter the Ph.D. program. Godwin considers Sadik one of the greatest influences in his life.

"He brought me into his office and told me that he thought I had the right stuff to earn a Ph.D.," Godwin says. "I had a teaching assistantship, and I was assigned to the compounding lab."

Godwin demonstrated a penchant for sharing knowledge and moved on to teach pharmacy calculations, then pharmacokinetics, then assisting students in summer remediation classes.

"I really enjoyed helping students work through problems and realized that perhaps academia would be the right place for me," he says. "I discovered my love of teaching while I was at USC."

After earning his Ph.D. in pharmaceuticals in 1996, Godwin and his wife, Melissa, who he met at the USC College of Pharmacy, headed west. He joined the faculty at the University of New Mexico College of Pharmacy, rising through the ranks to become dean in 2018. He was recently reappointed to a second five-year term.

Even with his many administrative requirements, Godwin maintains a presence in the classroom.

"Leadership is one of the pillars in our professional development course series, and I am the champion of that pillar," he says. "I always tell students that if you are presented with an opportunity, just say yes. It may not work out, but accept the challenge.

"And then you can say yes to the next opportunity."

**Dan Bushardt | '70**

“ Even in retirement, I will always be a pharmacist and a USC College of Pharmacy graduate and will continue to be grateful to the profession of pharmacy for the fulfillment, joy and financial benefits it has provided for me. It has been an immense pleasure to mentor students, serve on boards, be involved in professional organizations and to strive to be the best pharmacist that I could be. I pray that I will always live up to the respect that pharmacy deserves. ”

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**Scott Sutton | '98**

“ Banana pudding! Thirty years ago, I started pharmacy school and attended a pharmacy social where I enjoyed eating banana pudding with Dr. Wayne Buff. Fast forward two and a half decades to the year of Dr. Buff's retirement, we ironically attended a pharmacy social and talked while eating banana pudding. The college is special because of the amazing people that have come before me and their sacrifices made. I am forever grateful for the legacy built by so many amazing people such as Drs. Buff, Reeder, Rowen, Schulz, Voris and many, many others. ”

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**Phyllis Perkins | '00, '05**

“ I am proud of the quality education I gained while there, as well as the lifelong friendships and connections that were made. I hope in some small way that I can help current students achieve what I was so blessed to receive. I want the next generation of pharmacists to have access to the same high-quality education I was afforded. It is my duty to help others pass through those same doors that were opened for me, as I stand on the shoulders of the giants and trailblazers who came before me. ”



# Looking back...

We asked alumni,  
'What was your most memorable moment in pharmacy school at USC?'

"First day at orientation, new to Columbia, new to USC, I meet my best friend in the lunch buffet line. The school had catered BBQ, rice, sides and hash. I saw the brown gravy of sorts and was in line next to Tara Whitaker (Beldner). Being a North Carolinian I was used to great BBQ but had never seen 'hash.'



I asked emphatically 'What in the world is that?!' ...and of course in her sweet southern accent she said, 'It's haaash!' I will never forget that moment. She became and still is one of my most treasured friends."

—JANET THAMES, '00



"Some of the best —and worst— times of pharmacy school at USC were the many late nights spent studying in the Thomas Cooper Library with my best pharmacy girls. We figured, if you've got to study, it's always better with friends. We laughed (probably more than we should've since we were technically in the library), we suffered the anxiety of waiting for test grades, and we celebrated our collective achievements. Teamwork is at the heart of pharmacy, and it all started with those treasured times in T.Coop."

—CRYSTAL WATTS, '09

"I think some of my most favorite moments were volunteering during the USC Service Saturdays with SNPhA!"

—AMANDA CAPINO, '14

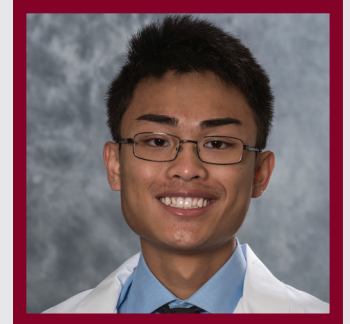


## OUR NEXT QUESTION

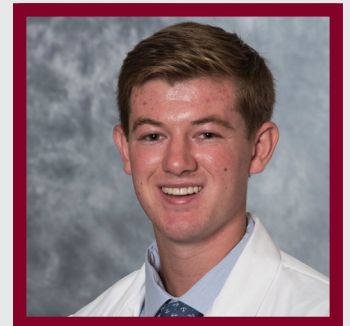
Which faculty member made the biggest impact on you as a student?  
Answer at [bit.ly/usc-gp](http://bit.ly/usc-gp) or email [alumni@cop.sc.edu](mailto:alumni@cop.sc.edu). Your response may be featured in the next edition of the Gamecock Pharmacist.

**Johnny Nguyen | '24**

“ The University of South Carolina has provided me with a myriad of benefits that have assisted me in pursuing my goals. The faculty and preceptors have played a crucial role, providing me with mentorship and invaluable insights. The didactic education has provided me with a strong foundation that will greatly assist me in pursuing my future endeavors. The resources and support I have received have prepared me well for my journey through the world of pharmacy. ”

**Dan Rose | '24**

“ As my graduation date approaches, I cannot help but reflect on how the USC College of Pharmacy has supported me and helped me to reach my goals. I am grateful to have had professors who truly cared about my success and education, and I would not be where I am without them. I am proud to be a future Gamecock Pharmacist! ”

**Maryam Hashem | '25**

“ I chose the USC College of Pharmacy due to the numerous opportunities available, such as research with faculty, pre-residency track, and the state-of-the-art sterile compounding facility. Additionally, the professors at the college truly care about the success of the students and go above and beyond to help them when needed. ”

**Emily Vitkus | '25**

“ I chose the University of South Carolina College of Pharmacy because of the world class facilities and opportunities they provide for their students. However, I have been most impacted by the amazing mentorship that our faculty and staff provide. All our professors and administration are true mentors and professionals that care for each student deeply and propel us into developing both as people and future pharmacists. I am so grateful for all the wonderful people I have gotten to know and engage with here! ”



# NEWS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

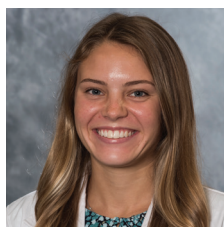
## STUDENTS



**Kristina Benbow**, Class of 2024, earned the Best Poster Award from the South Carolina Society of Health-System Pharmacists.



**Nikki Chen**, Class of 2024, accepted a postdoctoral fellowship with Eli Lilly as a visiting scientist fellow in Regulatory Affairs U.S. and International Policy and Intelligence.



**Lucy Evans**, Class of 2024, accepted a postdoctoral fellowship position in Late-Stage Clinical Development—Primary Care at Merck in partnership with the Rutgers Pharmaceutical Industry Fellowship Program.



**Brianna Potestio**, Class of 2024, accepted a postdoctoral fellowship in U.S. Medical Affairs at LEO Pharma as part of the Rutgers Pharmaceutical Industry Fellowship Program.



**CharLeigh Steverson**, Class of 2024, received the APhA-ASP 2024 Good Government Student Pharmacist of the Year. Steverson has also accepted an executive residency in Board of Pharmacy Specialties with APhA.



**Kendall Kerr**, Class of 2025, was selected to represent the College of Pharmacy for the APhA-ASP Policy Standing Committee.



**Bethany Maegan Lamb**, Class of 2025, earned the Walmart Health Equity Scholarship through AACP.



**Alex McWalters**, Class of 2025, was selected to represent the College of Pharmacy for the APhA-ASP Communications Standing Committee.



**Tom Taylor**, Class of 2025, was elected to the inaugural cohort of the ACT Pharmacy Collaborative Student Scholar Leaders Program.

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**Nicholas Shannon, Hyojung Choi and America Perez**, Class of 2026, advanced to Round II of the ACCP Clinical Research Challenge after placing in the Top 40 teams nationwide.

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## ALUMNI



**Jennifer Bair**, 1999, vice president of Pharmacy Services and chief pharmacy officer at Prisma Health, has been named to Becker's "75 Hospital and Health System Chief Pharmacy Officers to Know" list.



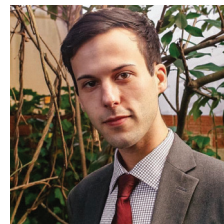
**Jarrod Tippins**, 2009, was named to the Class of 2025 Liberty Fellowship.



**Bri Murray**, 2016, has been appointed to the Maryland Department of Health-Maryland Medicaid Administration Drug Use Review Board for a three-year term.



**Colin Hungerpillar**, 2021, was elected to serve on the Hartsville City Council.



**Trent Bridge**, 2021, joined Nephron Pharmaceuticals as a quality systems investigator.

**Steve Fiorentino**, 1983, was elected to a fourth term as a school board member at Community Unit School District 300 in Algonquin, Illinois. He was also elected to a second term with the Northwestern Illinois Association.

**Scott Asbill**, 2000, joined The Ritedose Corporation as Associate Director of Formulation Development.

**Jamie Mathis**, 2004, celebrated 10 years of owning Brunson's Pharmacy in Manning, South Carolina.

**Bryan Mayer**, 2005, has been promoted to executive director of Pharmacy Operations, overseeing home infusion pharmacies across the United States with Coram CVS Specialty Infusion.

**Adriana Murray**, 2016, is a specialty pharmacist with Avita Pharmacy in Lexington, South Carolina, and obtained her AAHIVP certificate.

**Emily Moose Kostelic**, 2017, has been named PGY2 residency program director of the Internal Medicine program at Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Health.

**Madeline Belk**, 2019, is serving as social media chair with ACCP ID PRN and as lead of the social media committee with MAD-ID.

**Sarah Corpening**, 2020, has been named residency site director for Campbell University and Walgreens Community Based Residency Program.

**Kinsey McClure**, 2022, earned her board certification as a pharmacotherapy specialist, BCPS.

► Do you have news to share with your fellow alumni? Send us your updates at [bit.ly/usccop-alumni](https://bit.ly/usccop-alumni).

FACULTY



**Jordan Ballou** has been selected to the AACP Community Pharmacy Practice Transformation Educators' Badge program.



**Reagan Barfield**, 2019, was named Young Pharmacist of the Year by the South Carolina Society of Health-System Pharmacists.



**Betsy Blake** received the MedEdPORTAL Outstanding Reviewer Award for the teaching and learning journal for the Association of American Medical Colleges.



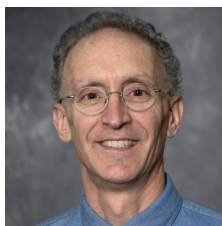
**Brandon Bookstaver**, 2004, received the inaugural award for Pharmacist of the Year from the South Carolina Society of Infectious Diseases. He also earned the Kenneth Flinchum Distinguished Service Award from the South Carolina Society of Health-System Pharmacists.



**Christina Cox**, 2006, was named a Fellow of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy.



**Tessa Hastings** is the recipient of the Clinical Research Paper Award from the American Pharmacists Association.



**Michael Wyatt** was named Teacher of the Year for the College of Pharmacy and was also named Best Professor by students in the Best of Carolina awards presented by Garnet Media.



**Ismaeel Yunusa** received the 2023 Drug Therapy Research Award from the ASHP Foundation.



## Professor of the year *Michael Wyatt, Ph.D.*

Michael Wyatt's passion for research began as an undergraduate at Furman University, where he also earned a master's degree in chemistry. He then earned his Ph.D. in Molecular Pharmacology at University College London and completed his postdoctoral fellowship at the Harvard School of Public Health. He joined the USC College of Pharmacy in 1999.

Wyatt, who serves as chair for the Drug Discovery and Biomedical Sciences department, has become a favorite professor among first-year students. Named Teacher of the Year three times, he was awarded the Extra Mile Award from the College of Pharmacy and the Distinguished Research Service Award from the university.

"I love watching people learn," Wyatt says with a smile.

Now, Wyatt is the recipient of two top teaching awards.

He was named as the inaugural recipient of the College of Pharmacy's Professor of the Year award, an honor that recognizes a professor who has demonstrated excellence in teaching pharmacy and graduate students. He also was named Best Professor for the College of Pharmacy by Best of Carolina, an award selected by voting members of the university community.

Wyatt, who teaches biochemistry and biotechnology, relishes the opportunity to share his knowledge with both undergraduate students and doctoral candidates.

"It's not a fun lecture for me if I am the one doing all the talking, and it is much better when it is interactive," he says. "One of the reasons that I have become a better teacher is because I have learned from students' questions."

As the field has advanced, so has Wyatt's love of teaching.

"When I started teaching about biotechnology and biotherapeutics, you could literally count on one hand the number of FDA-approved drugs that were protein-based," he recalls. "For so many years we talked about gene therapy as experimental. Now the field has exploded, and it is fun to teach the cutting-edge stuff."

Wyatt gives his fellow teachers in the College of Pharmacy much of the credit for his teaching abilities.

"We do a lot of team teaching here, and we are extremely collaborative," Wyatt says. "I advise students all the time to surround yourself with people who are smarter than you. And I feel successful in having done that with my colleagues here."



Wyatt mentors undergraduate student Merissa Smith and Pharm.D. candidate Lana Sukkar in his research lab.



THE COLLEGE OF PHARMACY HAS A  
NEW PODCAST

EPISODES MONTHLY



FIND US ONLINE AT  
[youtube.com/@uofscpharm](https://youtube.com/@uofscpharm)



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Do you know a student who would be a perfect fit for our pharmacy program?  
Scan the QR code or visit [go.sc.edu/futurepharmd](https://go.sc.edu/futurepharmd) to let us know.



SCAN ME

# STEP INTO THE DEAN'S CIRCLE



## *An Opportunity to Empower Excellence*

Help sustain and strengthen our college from year to year as a member of the USC College of Pharmacy Dean's Circle.

The Dean's Circle recognizes donors who give \$1,000+ annually to the Dean's Excellence Fund or, if preferred, another College of Pharmacy fund of their choice.

Dean's Circle members receive special invitations during the year to engage with college leadership and student pharmacists.

The College of Pharmacy Dean's Excellence Fund provides vital unrestricted financial support to fund needs that are sometimes immediate and critical. Substantial unrestricted funding also has the ability to be transformative.

These unrestricted funds may help expand opportunities for students, enrich professional development, enhance technological assets and support alumni events. Funds are allocated to the greatest area of need by the dean.



**College of Pharmacy**  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

**To learn more, please contact:**

Sabrina Rivera, Assistant Director of Development  
(803) 576-7829 · [snrivera@sc.edu](mailto:snrivera@sc.edu)

# PHARMACY CELEBRATIONS

## PFIZER WORKSHOP

Pre-pharmacy, Pharm.D. and graduate students took part in a Drug Development and Discovery workshop hosted by the IPhO and led by Pfizer medical affairs representatives.



SGA President Rachel Smith leads the incoming Class of 2027 in the Oath of Professionalism during the 2023 White Coat Ceremony.

## WHITE COAT CEREMONY

Presenting the College of Pharmacy Class of 2027 following their White Coat Ceremony.





**LEGISLATIVE DAY**

*College of Pharmacy students, faculty and alumni advocate for their profession with the South Carolina Pharmacy Association during Legislative Day at the South Carolina State House.*

**ASHP MIDYEAR**

*Students Sophia Knudsen, Katelyn Davis, Krista Drozdowski, Julianne Anderson and Madeline Zediker attend the 2023 ASHP Midyear Conference in Anaheim, California.*



**2023-24 ALUMNI AWARDS LUNCHEON**

*Dean Stephen Cutler recognizes Debbie Tapley as Outstanding Friend of the College, J. Addison Livingston as the Outstanding Alumni and Jarrod Tippins as the Outstanding Young Alumnus.*



**College of Pharmacy**  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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# We

**STAY CONNECTED.**

Connection has always been a part of **Cheryl Anderson's** journey as a community pharmacist and advocate. The 1981 alumna, who serves as director of pharmacy services for the S.C. Department of Health and Human Services and president of the S.C. Pharmacy Association, credits her collegiate mentors with inspiring her own dedication to mentorship. "It's not always the amount of money you give back to the school. It's your time. Your experience," says Anderson. "My mentors helped me prepare to think outside of the box. I received job offers that I would have probably never had without their guidance."

**BEHOLD THE REMARKABLE We**