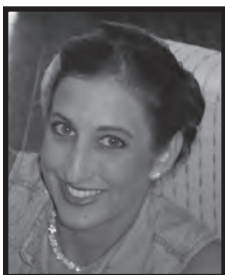


Number one request from student chapters? It is for you!!!

by Clarence Gissendanner and Julie McDonald.

About the Authors



Julie Lynch McDonald received her Doctor of Pharmacy degree in May 2008. Following graduation, Julie spent two years working at an independent retail pharmacy in south Florida, and recently relocated to accept a pharmacist-in-charge position at Whale Tail Pharmacy in

Craig, Alaska, where she is developing an experiential rotation site for students. She has been a member of CPFI's Board of Directors since June of 2007, and specifically serves to oversee student chapters and recent graduates. Additionally, Julie conducts in-depth research on abortifacients, and provides education presentations on this topic in a variety of settings.

CAPT Clarence E. Gissendanner, Pharm.D., RET-USPHS has been an active member of CPFI and is a former board member. He received his BS in Pharmacy from the University of Georgia, and was a member of the first PharmD class at Mercer University, graduating in 1974.



Having served with the Army and Air Force Reserves for 17 years, Dr Gissendanner was a partner in 3 community pharmacies. In 1979 he joined the USPHS as a Pharmacy Officer for the Southeast Regions, based in Atlanta, GA. He was a pharmacist consultant for the Hansen's Disease Center in Carville, LA, and practiced in mental health. At the time of his retirement in 2001, he was Director of Pharmacy of a regional mental health hospital for the State of Georgia. He and his wife currently live in West Palm Beach, FL, where they remain active in their local church, volunteer at a planned federal community health center, and regularly assist in the CPFI office. Along with Dr McDonald, Dr Gissendanner works with CPFI student chapters.

Over the last couple years the number of student members and chapters has grown exponentially. With this growth comes needs and opportunity. The number one request from student chapters is for more interaction with professional CPFI members. They want professional members to share their career experiences and struggles, describe how they incorporate their faith in practice, explain how they keep a balance life, and so forth. CPFI is currently seeking professional members willing to act as guest speakers for student chapters. Serving as a guest speaker may or may not lead to a mentoring relationship with the chapter. A mentor's involvement can be very diverse, such as simply attending chapter meeting, acting as a regular guest speaker, taking the student leaders to lunch, or helping with a chapter outreach project. In the following, Clarence Gissendanner will share from his practical experience acting as a mentor for multiple student chapters in Georgia.

One of the hindrances for mentors is not living close to the college of pharmacy they serve. It is difficult getting to meetings and providing encouragement to the students. When CPFI started the current push of developing a closer relationship with student chapters, I thought it would be an effortless interaction for the CPFI member to mentor these chapters. It was so simple at the annual meeting to have an instant sharing time with the students. We could develop good plans to meet after the annual meeting, but the reality was the enthusiasm between the mentor and students began to decline as the mentor and students returned to their respective living places. The communication lines essentially stopped.

Continued on next page

Number one request (continued)

I quickly learned that today's pharmacy students have minimum free time to devote to outside activities because of the intensity of the pharmacy curriculum.

In addressing the problem, I communicated with one student president about having a strategy meeting at my place one weekend with the three colleges in Georgia. We had wanted the faculty advisors to attend but their schedules did not allow. (I think we sometimes forget to give encouragement to the faculty member for the time and effort they provide these students.) The meeting occurred, but not without problems as one college set an exam on the Monday after the meeting which meant those students could not attend because they needed to study.

Nevertheless, the students who came did go away with ideas that could be shared with their peers. A lesson learned was that one mentor cannot effectively minister to multiple chapters. One important thing that came to light was the interactions that occurred with the two spouses that were at the weekend meeting. Students wanted to know how spouses helped their pharmacist spouses in making their faith evident in the pharmacy practice. I am thankful that my wife looked at my career as a partnership with her. These students with spouses (or future spouses) need to address this partnership as a Grace gift from the Lord willing to sacrifice time, effort and finances to assure Christ led lives will make a difference. I share this which really is not a pharmacy practice; however, it is important. Always have kind and encouraging word to people you meet in the work and living place, particularly at the check-out counter. You will be surprised at the reaction. I have never had a clerk who didn't thank me.

From this experience, as the mentor, some essential items need to occur for the mentor and students. The mentor needs a list of the student chapter members and faculty advisor that includes e-mail addresses, time and dates of meetings and activities. This information is a must for the mentor's monthly planner. In addition, the mentor needs to identify other Christian pharmacists willing to serve as mentors, and to attend chapter meetings and activities. In doing so, these mentors thru "table talk" with small groups of student could best relate to the students how their faith has influence their pharmacy practice. At the same time, this allows the students to tell about their faith in school and outside activities. Too often, we graduates forget that student are adults and have many excellent experiences that need to be shared.

Lastly, mentors need to make it their mission to encourage students to continue their membership in CPFI. To Virginia and me, CPFI is one of our extended family, and we look at the annual meeting as a family reunion where we gain understanding about Christ and pharmacy, and get to see younger pharmacists and their children up; about as close as you can get to Heaven.

If you are interested in serving as a guest speaker or mentoring a local student chapter, please email:

Jennifer Dunkle at:
jennifer.dunkle@ttuhsc.edu



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Interested in Being a Guest Speaker?

Most people do not relish the idea of public speaking, but you can truly play an integral part in the CPFI student ministry. In fact student chapters would love to form relationships with practicing pharmacists in their community. Simply be open to sharing a little about yourself, your faith, and be ready for some mutual encouragement!

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.” 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Please complete this form then mail or fax the completed form to the CPFI office. Once received, the Student Chapter Guest Speaker Director will send you a confirmation email. Your willingness to volunteer is deeply appreciated and you will be richly blessed through your involvement with students.



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