The pharmacy program at Wayne State University is an excellent program. We have excellent students, staff, and faculty, great teachers, researchers, and clinicians. Our people serve in leadership at all levels. As a student pharmacist at Wayne State, you can be proud of the quality of education you receive and how you are being prepared to enter the practice of pharmacy, one of the most trusted and prestigious of all professions. Not long ago, I convened meetings of stakeholders in our community to talk about our program, our faculty, our students, and our graduates. These are district and corporate leaders in community pharmacy and administrative leaders in health-system pharmacy. Across the board, they describe Wayne State graduates as ready and eager to work, committed to excellent patient care, and loyal to our community.

Let me familiarize you a little with the Department of Pharmacy Practice. As the name implies, we teach about the practice of pharmacy. Our faculty teach and practice in many settings, including community pharmacy, ambulatory clinics, and hospitals. The courses we offer include the treatment and prevention of illness and the roles of medication and pharmacists. Reflecting an increasing emphasis on interprofessional team-delivered care, our faculty also participate in the education of other healthcare professionals. What may not be as obvious to many students is the diversity of our department. We also include experiential education, which comprises about a third of the entire curriculum. Nearly 300 volunteer faculty members in all practice settings in the Detroit area and beyond take you under their wings in introductory and advanced practice to guide you in your transformation from student to practitioner. Our faculty include social and administrative science professors.

Their courses focus on pharmacy law, ethics, public health and disease prevention, epidemiology, economics, outcomes, and leadership and management in complex health systems.

Our faculty members conduct research. We have a large laboratory research program on the fourth floor of EACPHS. For example, the Anti-Infective Research Laboratory under Dr. Michael Rybak’s leadership is internationally distinguished in infectious diseases pharmacotherapy. Our faculty and postdoctoral fellows study a variety of outcomes challenges, such as the work of Dr. Linda Jaber in the Arab American community. Our clinical faculty conduct research in their clinical practice and study new educational methods to enhance the quality of your learning.

I’m energized by the challenges and opportunities that are before us … a renewed curriculum, new accreditation standards, and all the changes that are occurring in practice. I hope you are, too. The future for you is bright and we want to help you to reach your potential. To our graduating students, congratulations! Your career of service and caring lies before you. To all returning and entering students, get involved, take advantage of opportunities, and learn to be the very best pharmacist.

Our department is large and complex. We sincerely care about you and we want you to be successful, not only while you are a student, but after you graduate. Your success is our success. I encourage you to visit me and our faculty to become better acquainted and learn more about opportunities for you to learn and work with us on interesting projects. I want to hear your views about what you’re learning, what you think are the best parts of what we do and areas where you think we need to focus more and improve. My office is on the second floor in room 2190. My door is almost always open. Come on in!
APhA Academy of Student Pharmacists

APhA-ASP continually outperforms its previous annual records and this year was no exception to that trend. Our initiatives are the strongest that they have ever been and the energetic leadership behind the committees perpetually drives the profession forward. Operation Immunization immunized 1,061 patients over a period of nine days. The H1N1 strain will undoubtedly claim fewer victims in our great city of Detroit thanks to the hard work that the immunizers put forth! Flu clinics were a collaborative effort in association with Operation Diabetes and it was through their diligent efforts that they were able to screen seventy-five patients for hyperglycemia. In a comparable campaign to that of flu clinics, Operation Heart screened 1,009 patients for hypercholesterolemia and hypertension during the twelve day Wellness Warriors initiative throughout Wayne State’s campus. Operation Heart persistently stresses the importance of properly managing the silent diseases in order to decrease complications and reduce overall healthcare costs by preventing hospitalizations. One of our newest initiatives, Generation Rx, has exponential grown this past year through its collaboration with the Yellow Jug Old Drugs program in order to properly dispose of nearly 300,000 unused or expired pills. Generation Rx has also branched out to do an Adder-all awareness campaign, as well as, a medication abuse seminar for the Pre-Professional Medical Society. However, one of the most successful events Generation Rx put together was their “pharm party” simulation during Community Apple Day in which students were able to learn about the dangers of prescription drug abuse. Another awareness campaign was brought forth by Operation Self-Care to address acetaminophen induced hepatic injury at every opportunity that it could find, including, but not limited to, flu clinics and Community Apple Days. Operation Self-Care also spearheaded the Great American Smokeout on main campus to raise awareness to eighteen patients about the various methods available for smoking cessation. Our last initiative, Non-Traditional Patient Care Projects, successfully executed their Sex, Drugs and the Dragon event as well as Student Pharmacists Advocating for Sexual Health in order to educate about preventable transmittable diseases. Funding for all of these patient outreach initiatives was secured through our annual Pie-in-the-Face and Wine and Dine fundraisers in which we raised over $2,000. Additional funding was used to support travel for sixteen student pharmacists to attend APhA2014 in Orlando, FL for a weekend of voting, leadership seminars, educational seminars, and networking. The success of our APhA-ASP chapter is due to the outstanding volunteer force that our general members contribute to each vision that the committees embody. We are excited for what is to come and to continually provide the best experiences for our members!
This semester at EACPHS, the student chapter of FAWN increased awareness of the AIDS epidemic in Sub-Saharan Africa and raised funds to purchase liquid nutritional supplements to have shipped to Sub-Saharan AIDS victims. FAWN is also able to accept direct donations of canned Ensure, the primary nutritional supplement that raised funds is used to purchase. Since 2001, FAWN has sent a total of 30 shipments to Sub-Saharan Africa with the last shipment totaling over 4,200 cans.

The annual FAWN fundraiser has become competitive among the pharmacy classes over the last few years, and the stakes are high. The P1, P2, and P3 classes are in competition with one another to save the hair of their class presidents. The president whose class raises the least money for FAWN will have their head shaved after the deadline of this fundraiser (April 2nd). EACPHS faculty and students of other professional programs at EACPHS are also encouraged to donate to this worthy cause. Every Wednesday, between 11:00-1:00, FAWN has a table set up in the commons and is able to accept donations here.

The EACPHS chapter of FAWN also engages in fundraising activities outside of the college. This past December, the student chapter helped hold the Motown Christmas Spectacular concert in Melvindale where half of all proceeds were used to buy cans of Ensure to be shipped over to Sub-Saharan Africa. This event was a huge success, and we aim to help offer an even greater experience this coming December when we do it all over again.

The organization’s leaders have given several presentations here at the college in the recent months. FAWN’s presence at Community Apple Days included a presentation from the organization’s founder, Reverend Frank Julian, highlighting FAWN’s mission and the pivotal role of nutrition in an AIDS patient receiving antiretroviral therapy. Frank Julian Jr., the son of Reverend Frank, also visits the college on an annual basis to give a presentation summarizing the research that has led to our understanding of the role of adequate nutrition alongside antiretroviral therapy in AIDS patients.

Throughout the months the students have been continuing their collections of cans with donations coming from various professors listed here: Dr. Abramson, Dr. O’Connell, Dr. Smith, Dr. Parker, Dr. Commissaris, Dean Young, Dean Slaugher, and Dr. Cha. Additionally, Wayne County Pharmacy Organization, Oakland County Pharmacy Organization and Global Education Excellence have contributed significant donations towards the FAWN student Chapter.

In early spring, Bishop Isaac of South Africa visited the school to give his thanks and support accompanied by members of the FAWN E-board, including Rev. Frank Julian. Bishop Isaac was very impressed with the efforts of the students and explained what a huge difference we are making on the fight against AIDS.

If you are interested in learning more about or joining the efforts of the EACPHS chapter of FAWN, please contact the chapter’s president, Libin Philip (ea9638@wayne.edu) for more information.
The Student Society of Health-System Pharmacists (SSHP) is an organization that works on behalf of student pharmacists who are interested in practicing in hospitals, health systems, and ambulatory clinics. SSHP collaborated with Oakland and Wayne County Pharmacists Association to hold the 4th Annual Health and Wellness Festival: “Tune up your Family Health!” The health fair was held at St. John Armenian Church of Greater Detroit in Southfield. The health fair provided a wide variety of free services for the public, including influenza vaccinations, blood pressure screenings, blood glucose testing, HIV screenings, healthy food samples, activities for kids and much more. SSHP members provided respiratory health education to approximately 30 patients at this event. SSHP also participated in EACPHS Apple Days, providing respiratory health education to community members visiting the College. This fall, SSHP hosted Health-System Speaker Series Part 1, “Ambulatory Care Practice: A Key Aspect of Health-System Pharmacy Practice”. Dr. Candice Garwood was the prime speaker at this event focusing on recognizing that ambulatory care is a key component of health-system pharmacy practice, the importance of good transition of care, and roles for pharmacists in an ambulatory care practice. Due to their outstanding work in ambulatory care, Dr. Garwood and her colleagues were selected for an American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) Best Practices Award, which was presented to them at the ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting in December 2013. WSU-SSHP also held its Residency Information Session in the fall semester. The event featured a panel of current pharmacy residents (PGY1 and PGY2), a residency program director, and a postdoctoral fellow from a variety of practice sites including Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit Receiving Hospital, and our very own Department of Pharmacy Practice. Their specialties included critical care and emergency medicine. The seminar was a great way to learn about pharmacy practice residencies, whether a residency is something a student may be interested in, and what steps students can begin taking in school now if they are interested in doing a pharmacy practice residency upon graduation. In the winter semester, SSHP held the Health-System Speaker Series Part 2, “Looking Forward in Health-System Pharmacy Practice”, which was delivered by Kathleen Pawlicki who is the Administrative Director of Professional Services and Director of Pharmaceutical Services at Beaumont Hospital. Dr. Pawlicki evaluated the changing health care in our nation and the emerging roles for pharmacists in practice.

Speaker at SSHP’s Residency Information Session: From left to right: Dr. James Kalus, Henry Ford Hospital; Dr. Tom Smoot, Henry Ford Hospital; Dr. Libby Conger, Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, Dr. Libby Giesler, Detroit Receiving Hospital, and Dr. Minu Jacob, Detroit Receiving Hospital.

Focus On the Faculty: Dr. Randall Commissaris

Dr. Commissaris is a Michigan native, hailing from Kalamazoo. His collegiate career began at Alma College for his Bachelor’s degree in biology followed by graduate school at Michigan State to pursue his Doctorate degrees in Pharmacology and Toxicology. He completed his Post-Doctorate at Yale in New Haven, CT in a psychiatry department. He found his way back to Michigan in 1983, accepting an opportunity to research and teach within Wayne State’s College of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions.

Dr. Commissaris has been a faculty of Wayne State for over 30 years, and during this time he has worked on a number of research projects, receiving several publications in the process. His love for research has even taken him abroad. Dr. Commissaris took his sabbatical leave, along with his wife and three children to England, doing research and guest lecturing at the University of Nottingham. One project that he is currently working on focuses on the age-related differences in texting-induced disruption of driving, which several students will be assisting in this summer through a directed study program.

A sentiment Dr. Commissaris would like to share with the College is his appreciation for the quality and caliber of students that goes through the pharmacy program each year, not only in academics but also with their outstanding work in organizations. Through his work on the Awards and Honors Committee, he is able to recognize these students through various honors and scholarships. His advice for current pharmacy students is to continue the good work and strive for excellence in the program.
CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2014!

Photographs by Libin Philip
Q: You've have been involved with the profession for almost 30 years and connected to WSU and the college as an active alum, just as long, please tell us why this has been important to you?

A: The importance of giving back has always been a key goal for my career. Giving back takes on many forms and upon graduation, when finances were tight, the only way that I could give back was as volunteer hours. I've served on many committees and boards throughout my career. The interaction with other pharmacists throughout the profession at a local, state and national level has "molded" me into who I am today. So you could say that giving back is two-fold. I gained just as much as I have given. As I advanced throughout my career and my financial situation changed I was able to contribute to programs and foundations that were in alignment with my goals and my passions for the profession. Staying connected also allowed me to continue with my professional development. Upon graduation my career catapulted and I was in the spotlight at a very young age. I didn't have all of the answers but I did have many mentors that helped me navigate through the uncharted waters of our profession. Many of these relationships were a direct result of staying involved in the profession and staying connected and they have been career long connections.

Q: Recently you received the APhA-ASP National Outstanding Chapter Advisor Award what does receiving this recognition mean to you?

A: While I'm not a huge fan of being in the spotlight-being honored and recognized by student leadership with this award was an outstanding experience and it also allowed me to stand in the spotlight for a moment and speak to the importance of faculty organization advisors. Not just for APhA but for all student organizations. Hopefully, when student pharmacists read this they will understand the commitment and dedication of their faculty advisor. I was able to shed light on this during my acceptance remarks at the award ceremony and it is worth reiterating. Students if you were not aware, a faculty organization advisor assumes this role above and beyond their full-time role as a faculty member, researcher and oftentimes a clinician. The hours and dedication they have to assist your organization with achieving your goals is remarkable and I am very proud and honored to have stood with them during my time as APhA-ASP advisor at EACPHS.

Q: Since the profession is ever changing are there any words of advice that you can give to assist student pharmacists as they seek out career opportunities?

A: I have a top ten list of phrases and words that I use, even for myself, as my mantra for my career and I thoroughly believe that these words/phrases are what have kept me grounded and fortunate to continue to be "relevant" in this profession.

My Top 10 Career Advice list:

10. Stay relevant and network-continue to professionally develop and market yourself regardless of your comfort zone of your career
9. Sometimes it is okay to think outside of the box
8. Gray is okay- not everything is black and white
7. Don't burn any bridges-pharmacy is a very small world
6. Think twice about using social media to vent. You never know who is watching or who might mistake your intentions.
5. It's best to confront a situation head-on or face-to-face. Email and text should not be used for confrontational situations.
4. Don't expect to be an overnight success!
3. Treat everyone fairly and with respect and don't step on anyone on the way up cause there is always a chance that you won't be up there very long if you do!
2. Get involved, stay involved, be involved and GIVE BACK to the profession. Chances are you've been influenced by a pharmacy mentor that has done just that!!
1. THIS IS MY ALL TIME FAVORITE and has been with me for over 30 years- CHANCES ARE NOT GIVEN-THEY ARE TAKEN!!!

Last but not least, BALANCE is imperative. Family, friends and your passions should not take a back seat to your career aspirations. It is possible to balance as long as you don't lose focus of what is important to your core values. Create your own strategic plan-have a mission, vision and a set of core values that you can continually refer back to as you proceed with your career and your life.