

Georgia Pharmacy[®]

April/May 2021

Inside:

**PHARMACISTS
RANKED 4TH
MOST TRUSTED
PROFESSION**

**NATIONAL
HEALTHCARE
SPENDING
PROJECTED
\$4 TRILLION
IN 2020**



THE NUMBERS



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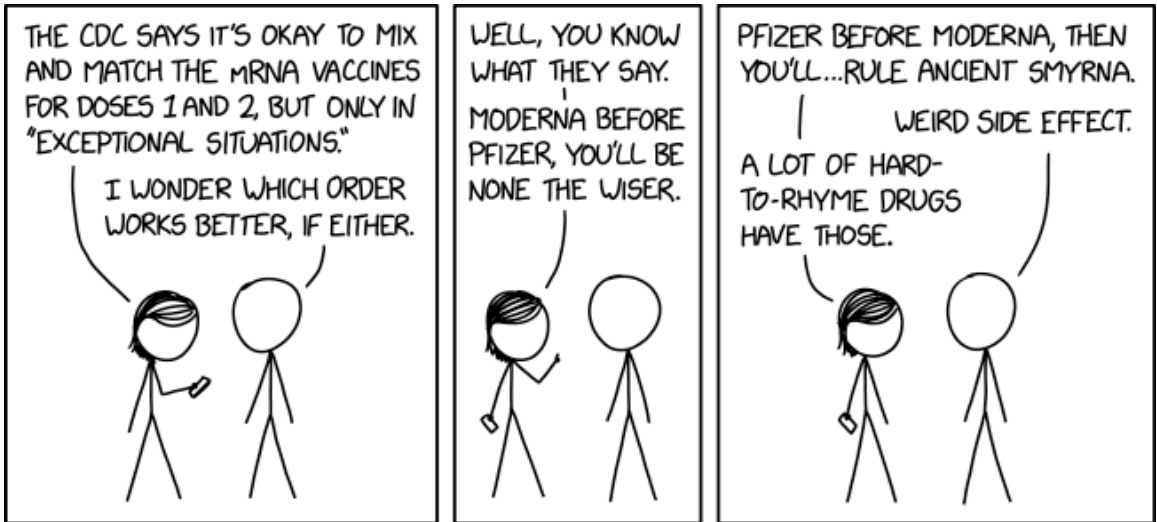
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<http://www.gpha.org/volunteer/>

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Georgia Pharmacy The Journal of the Georgia Pharmacy Association

Georgia Pharmacy
magazine
is the official
publication of the
Georgia Pharmacy
Association.

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From the CEO

And the Band Played On



BOB COLEMAN

You've probably heard the phrase, "and the band played on" before, but I'd be willing to guess that not too many readers know its origin. The phrase originated from the title of a nonfiction book written in 1987 by author Randy Shilts. The book went on to

become a documentary that aired on HBO in 1993. According to Wikipedia, Shilts explained that the title was just a snappier way of saying "business as usual."

Regardless of your political leanings, except for Operation Warp Speed, which was a miracle in and of itself, most health officials agree that the federal response to the current pandemic has been nothing short of a disaster. Yet week after week, month after month, the band played on during 2020. Public trust waned with each 180-degree shift in public health guideline, recommendation, and directive. To the point the public had to be warned not to inject themselves with disinfectant!

And, as predicted, once the vaccines became available, the issue became how to distribute them. The federal government ignored coming up with a plan, fifty states were left to come up with fifty ways to distribute the vaccine with control of how much going to each state left up to the CDC. Without a steady stream of vaccine coming to the states, it became impossible for providers to know when, or even if, they would be receiving an allotment of the vaccine.

At the time of this writing, there are over 48 independent pharmacies listed as vaccine providers on the Georgia Department of Public Health website. Kroger, Publix, and Ingles locations were added to the site as well. All are worried if they will be getting enough doses to cover their patients' second shot. Some pharmacies not on the list are wondering if they will ever get vaccines for their patient's first dose.

GPhA has been at the forefront on advocacy for pharmacy during this pandemic. We have

worked diligently with Georgia DPH to get answers whenever we can and promote the use of pharmacy as a part of the solution. In turn, Georgia DPH Immunization Program Director, Sheila Lovett, hosted a webinar, and Tracy Dabbs of Emergency Preparedness, along with various other DPH staff, have hosted weekly Q&A webinars. Our thanks go out to this tireless group of state workers. While there are plenty of questions about vaccine availability and being added as a provider, this staff is doing the very best they can under difficult conditions. Let's express our appreciation for their work, realizing while pharmacists would always like to do more, there are numerous doctors, dentists, and other healthcare workers who would like to be part of the solutions as well, but unfortunately, have not been able to receive any vaccine.

It's interesting to note that the frustration all groups are experiencing, and it would be fair to say there is quite a bit of frustration, is not that they are missing out on a gold mine of money giving vaccinations or a concern over a competitor, but rather the inability to take care of their patients. That's what makes health-care providers special. It's not a gold mine of money, but rather a heart of gold for their patient's well-being. And in my opinion, pharmacists have a little bit more gold in their hearts.

So, there's a new band in town with hopefully a new song. Let's give the new band a chance to regroup and hopefully provide some positive solutions to the current situation.

Let's just hope and pray their song won't be the Talking Heads hit from 1980, *Once in a Lifetime*, with the lyrics, "same as it ever was." [G](#)

Bob Coleman is Chief Executive Officer of the Georgia Pharmacy Association.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

By Mary Ritchie, GPhA Director of Membership

Ola Awwad, Woodstock
Sebrena Bartlett, Marietta
Kristen Black, Atlanta
Jesse Brown, Dunwoody
David Brushwood, Dunedin, FL
Jonathan Carr, Tucker
Martha Carruthers, Cumming
Alec Chan, Johns Creek
Sawapha Chombhubutr Verduci, Decatur
James Elledge, Atlanta
Ashley Gregory, Mineral Bluff
Chidi Ifedi, Suwanee
Ghazal Jahanshahi, Suwanee
Mureja Keraga, Tucker
Marisol Limehouse, Dawsonville
Leslie Lowe, Senoia
Subour Malik, Kennesaw
Mary Maloy, Alpharetta
Amanda Moon, Watkinsville
Robert Moskowitz, Suffolk, VA



These are the newest members of GPhA's President's Circle — people who recruit their fellow pharmacists, technicians, academics, and others to become part of the association. Recruit a member and join!

Ben Flanagan, Acworth
Christina Green, Atlanta
Hannah Head, Bonaire
Jennifer Lamb, Covington
Amy Miller, Gainesville
Daryl Reynolds, Fayetteville
Wade Scott, Macon
Jen Shannon, Alpharetta
Fred Sharpe, Albany
Karl Simon, Suwanee
Teresa Smith, Pembroke

Hala Obideen, Atlanta
Brenda Parker, Peachtree City
Jonathan Personius, Lilburn
Pruett Roof, Mableton
Cathy L Sasser, Peachtree Corners
Julie Smith, Norcross
Samuel Takor, Marietta
Patricia Templeton, Kingsport, TN
Julie Upton, Duluth
Jo Veal, Atlanta
Debra Weinstein, Roswell
Ellen Whipple, Marietta
Allison Williams, Woodbury
Byung Yoo, Suwanee

Academy of Clinical and Health-System Pharmacists

Gena Abdo, Buford
Kevin Basony, Alpharetta
Emelia Beam, Carrollton
James Chafin, Smyrna
Anthony D Gary, McDonough
Randy Goodroe, Hawkinsville
Elizabeth Gorse, Jesup
Carolee Grodi, Fayetteville
Judy Harrison, Milledgeville
Blake Johnson, Athens
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Shawn Law, Andersonville
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Christi Marsh, Atlanta
Kay Norton, Sparks
Nancy Parnell, Perry
Tonya Pearson, Newnan
Julia Reid, Canton
Karyn Roof, Mableton
Felice Slaughter, Stockbridge
Heidi Stoneking, Cumming
Alexander Tunnell, Macon
Amber Wasson, Glennville

Academy of Employee Pharmacists

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Allison Bachtle, Thomaston
Roselyn Banjo, Hiram
Courtney Caldwell, Macon

Marcia Chapman, Peachtree City
Brooklynn Davis, Winder
Mollie Durham, Atlanta
Tonya Ellis, Gainesville
Herb Ellis, Cleveland
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Kristen Forsstrom, Atlanta
Deena Gainous, Cairo
Michelle Glisson, Claxton
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Meredith Harrison, Cumming
Elizabeth Jones, Perry
Priti Joshi, Dacula
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Kelvin Tran, Marietta
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APT-Academy of Pharmacy Technicians

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Kimberly Barnes, Mableton
Brandi Barnes, Decatur
Richard Besaw, Hinesville
Jennifer Blevins, Montezuma
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Michelle Cummings, McDonough
Charlesnisha Davis, Hiram
Rachel Dembo, Valley, AL
Lashunda Glanton, Union City
Elizabeth Griffith, Marietta
John Hale, Americus
Shannon Houston, East Point
Kimberly King, Mableton
Ana King, Millen



YOUR WORD IS POWERFUL.

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Jennifer Lamb, Covington
Kaniya Little, Americus
Akia Maxi, Duluth
April McCormick, Vidalia
Rasheeda McNeal, Hampton
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Pamela Oliver, Lithia Springs
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Tiffany Price, Metter
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Kelsey Simon, Sugar Hill
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Alexis Solomon, Dallas
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Georgia Pharmacy
ASSOCIATION

CALENDAR

The Omni in Amelia Island, Florida



APRIL 2021

April 13
Spring Region Meeting
(Virtual via Zoom)

April 15
GPhA Board Meeting

April 18
APhA's Pharmacy-Based Immunization Delivery:
A Certificate Program for Pharmacists

JUNE 2021

June 17-20
2021 Georgia Pharmacy Convention at the Omni in Amelia Island, Florida

AUGUST 2021

August 29
APhA's Delivering Medication Therapy Management Services:
A Certificate Training Program for Pharmacists

SEPTEMBER 2021

September 19
APhA's Pharmacy-Based Immunization Delivery:
A Certificate Program for Pharmacists

September 24
Ready. Aim. Phire! A sporting clays event benefitting the Georgia Pharmacy Foundation.

OCTOBER 2021

October 3
Community Pharmacy-based Point-of-Care Testing Certificate Program

DECEMBER 2021

December 5
APhA's Pharmacy-Based Immunization Delivery:
A Certificate Program for Pharmacists



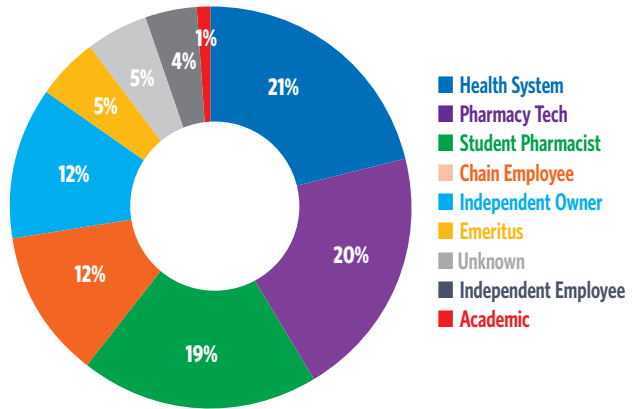
THE NUMBERS

EACH YEAR AROUND THIS TIME we like to take stock of some of the data we've been bombarded with over the last 12 months.

We always include our own membership, of course, and we know our members like to keep tabs on the economics of the profession — i.e., how much they earn compared to others. We've got you covered.

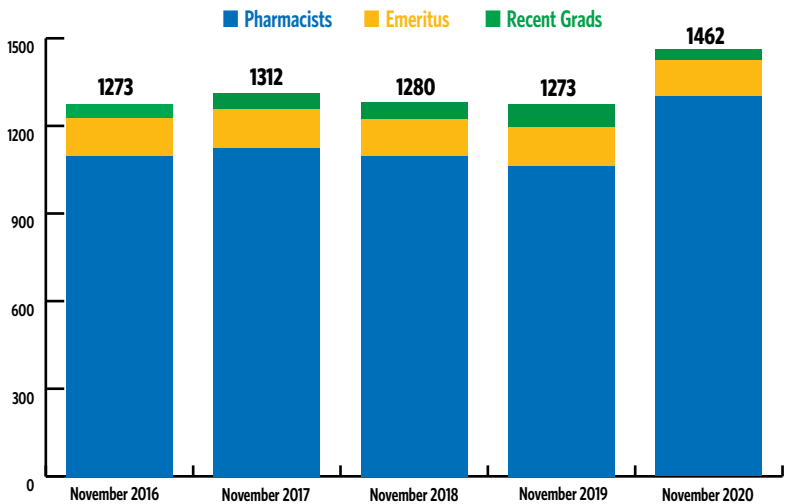
Over the last year, drug prices have been the focus of the national conversation, so it seemed a good idea this issue to look at how those have changed over time — and, of course, illustrate them. There are a lot of ways to slice those data depending on the story you want to tell, so we chose our favorites from a variety of sources.

2020 GPhA Members by Type



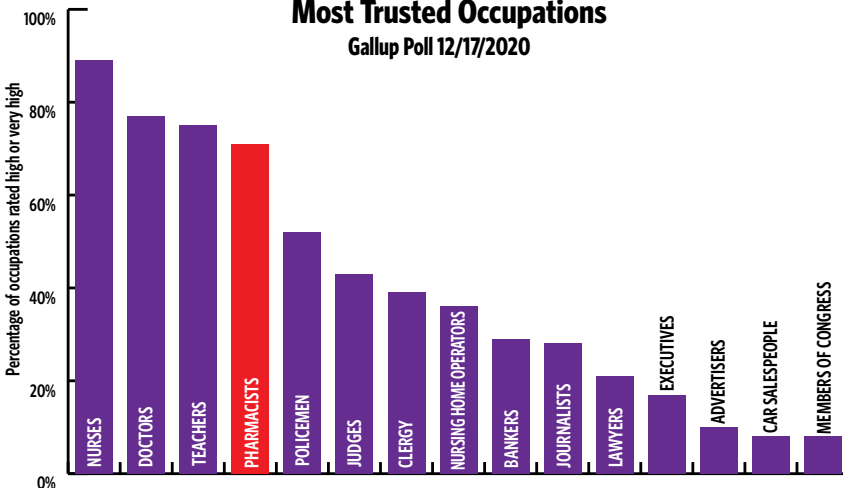
19%
growth in
5 years

GPhA Pharmacist Membership Trend



Most Trusted Occupations

Gallup Poll 12/17/2020



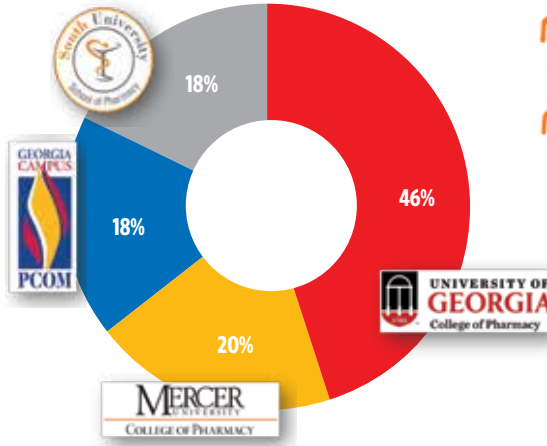
**Survey
says...
pharmacists
ranked
#4**

THE NUMBERS



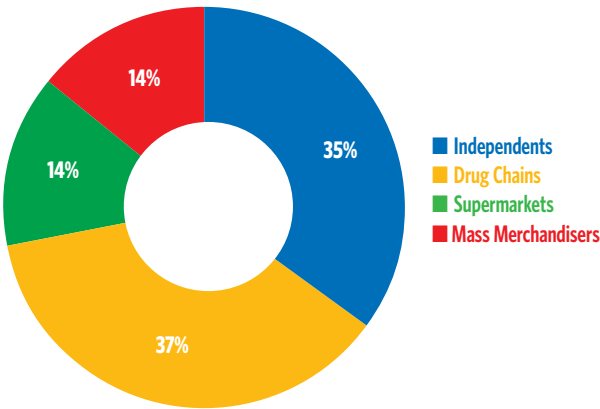
4 in 10 take 4+ prescription drugs

GPhA Membership by School



6 in 10 take a prescription drug

U.S. Pharmacy by Practice Setting



Independents #2 behind chain drug stores

Georgia pharmacists earn 98% of national average

Georgia # Pharmacists
9,110

Georgia Pharmacist Annual Media Wage
\$122,550

Georgia # Pharmacy Techs
11,360

Georgia Pharmacy Tech Annual Median Wage
\$31,360

USA # Pharmacists
311,200

USA Pharmacist Annual Median Wage
\$125,510

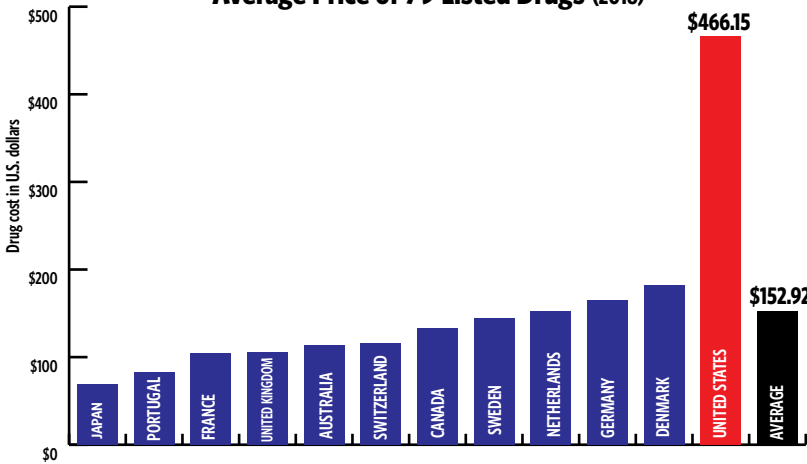
USA # Pharmacy Techs
417,780

USA Pharmacy Tech Annual Median Wage
\$35,250

BLS May 2019

THE NUMBERS

Average Price of 79 Listed Drugs (2018)

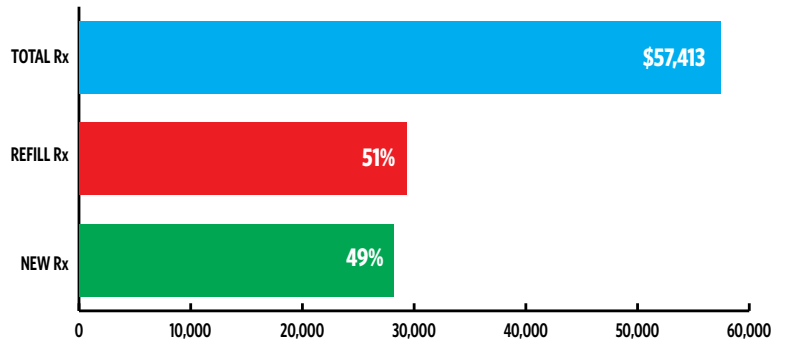


Average Number of Pharmacies Owned by Independents

2.1



National Average Number of Prescriptions Per Location



% Deviation from Median USA Price

Branded Drug 422%

Generic Drug 97%

Annual Change in Per Capita Prescription Drug Spending, 1970-2017 (Projected 2018-2027)

■ Prescription (Actual) -- Prescription (Projected) ■ Total Health (Actual) -- Total Health (Projected)



Source: KFF analysis of National Health Expenditure Accounts (NHEA)

THE NUMBERS

Life Expectancy



Pharmacies Using Social Media

	2018	2019
	90%	93%
	18%	19%
	4%	6%
	75%	77%

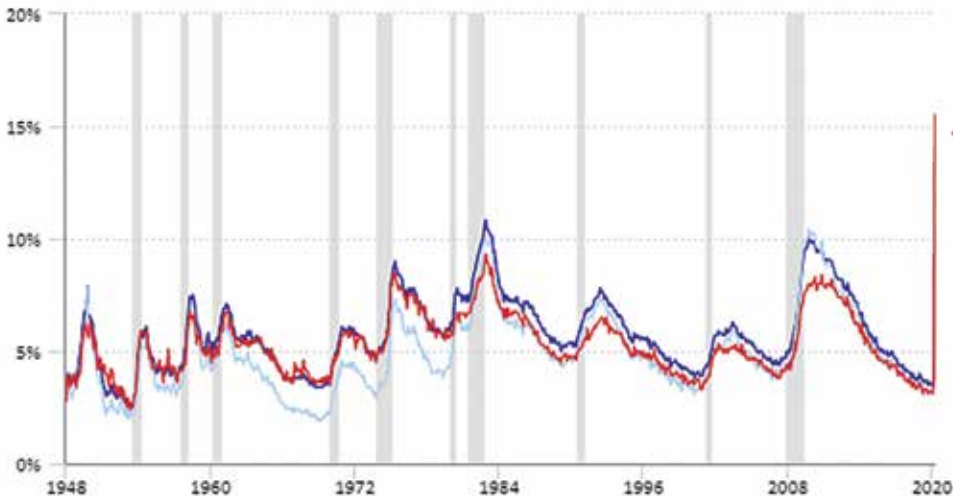


National health care spending is projected to be **\$4 trillion in 2020**

\$4T

Unemployment Rates 1948-2020, Seasonally Adjusted

■ Total ■ Women, 20 years and older ■ Men, 20 years and older



U.S. Unemployment April 2020 14.7% Highest Since 1948

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



THRIFTY MAC PHARMACY DELIGHTS PATIENTS AND STAFF

Georgia Pharmacy Offers Cutting-Edge Technology Compliance Packaging

BY **KAREN BERGER, PharmD**, pharmacist in northern New Jersey.

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GEORGE LAUNIUS, RPh, AND HIS WIFE, NANCY LAUNIUS, are the proud owners of Thrifty Mac Pharmacy in Madison, Georgia. Thrifty Mac opened in 1976 and was owned by friends of George. George purchased the store in 1978. Coming from a family of small-business owners, George, a 1975 graduate of the University of Georgia College of Pharmacy, knew he wanted to own a pharmacy and understood what it took to be successful.

Today, Thrifty Mac employs the newest technology, using Eyecon and Kirby Lester pharmacy automation systems. The pharmacy has more than 600 synchronization patients and provides compliance packaging. Its pharmacy software company, Cost Effective Computers, of Dalton, Georgia, has been instrumental in making programming changes to increase efficiency. "I keep coming up with ideas to make our work easier. Cost Effective Computers makes these ideas happen, sometimes within hours," shared George.



Thrifty Mac also offers a few uncommon items and services. "We have two departments that I can honestly say almost no pharmacy in the world has," George said, explaining that Thrifty Mac sells Big Green Egg smoker grills and rents out table linens for parties and weddings. Like most independents, superior service is of the utmost importance.

"We make sure we hire the friendliest staff possible. We greet every patient as soon as they walk in the store," George said. Because of its renowned service, Thrifty Mac's employees are well known in the community. "With our friendly staff and fast service, we rarely fall behind in our work," George said. "And we can fill a new prescription in less than 10 minutes."

Thrifty Mac is also the only pharmacy in the town with a drive-through window. With a rapidly growing volume, George knew he needed to increase efficiency. "We looked at all the technology on the market, but after studying our workflow, we realized our technicians were spending too much time going to and from the shelves," he said. "We decided to try to find a way to put the most used medications within arms' reach of the dispensing counter." George looked at different robots and shelf management machines, but the cost and monthly fees seemed too high.



That is when George got creative and constructed a comprehensive filling station. "Our main dispensing station has the 300 fastest movers within arms' reach. We call this our \$50 robot because it cost me only \$50 to make," George said. "Just a few pieces of plywood!" The shelf sits on the main counter and holds more than 200 fast movers. Drawers under the counter hold approximately 100 more drugs. "Our techs can fill over 75% of our prescriptions without moving away from this counter," he said. Extra stock is located just behind the techs. Final checks are done by the pharmacist on an island counter directly behind the techs. Again, the techs don't have to take additional steps.

Were the changes well received? One could say that. According to George, the techs' reaction to this workspace design was, "What took you so long to think of this amazing idea?"

The staff also adjusted the workflow to make the final verification process more efficient. The Eyecon machine sits on the main counter, and the Kirby Lester is on the second counter.



The employees during the trip to New York City (left to right): Lauren Launius, marketing; Lindsay Launius, customer service; Nancy Launius, co-owner and bookkeeper; Cheryl Gaines, customer service; Jenny Maddox, technician; Heather Gardner, customer service; Jennifer Hayes, CPhT; George Launius, RPh, owner; Denise Batchelor, customer service; and Kelli McCarty, PharmD, pharmacist.

To reward their "amazing, hardworking staff" and build team morale, Nancy came up with a great idea: A yearly weekend trip to a surprise destination. The first year was to New York City, "which was a big hit, since most of our staff had never flown and no one had been there before," George said. While there, the group saw "The Lion King" on Broadway, visited ground zero for the September 11, 2001, attacks, the 9/11 Memorial & Museum, and the Statue of Liberty, and explored Times Square. Their second trip took them to Nashville, Tennessee, where they visited the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum and the Grand Ole Opry. "The joke around our small town, is that everyone wants to work at our store now," George said. "I am obsessed with trying to make our jobs more efficient and FUN!"

The business also sponsors local charities and sports teams, and George participates in mission trips. During his most recent mission trip to Haiti, George and his group put a roof on a remote medical clinic that serves the area's villages.

George and Nancy have been married for 44 years and have three children and four grandchildren. In their spare time, they enjoy outdoor activities, family and friends, and worldwide travel. [G](#)

VANESSA DAVES CROLEY RECOGNIZED AS OPIOID SAFETY CHAMPION

AUGUSTA (JANUARY 2021)

Vanessa Daves Croley, RPh, was recently recognized as an Opioid Safety Champion by the Georgia Pharmacy Foundation. Croley is a Controlled Substance Coordinator and Quality Management Clinical Pharmacy Specialist at the Charlie Norwood Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center (CNVAMC), in Augusta, Georgia, for almost four years. Croley received the recognition after completing a series of educational programs aimed at reducing opioid-related overdoses. She is one of a small but growing group of pharmacists in Georgia to be recognized by the program. Croley earned her pharmacy degree from the University of Georgia College of Pharmacy in Athens, Georgia (1994). She is from Alpharetta, Georgia.

When asked why she became a pharmacist, Croley said, "I wanted a career where I could help others and always have more to learn. My interest in the medical field is never ending." We asked her why she became an Opioid Safety Champion, she told us when she was working as a front-line pharmacist for more than 20 years, she saw the risks, hardships, and loss of life associated with opioid use. "I feel pharmacists, the medication experts, are in the best position to educate their patients



and community, as well as provide all the safety precautions available to make a positive difference in the opioid epidemic," she shared.

Croley works in the VA system which presents some unique opportunities for pharmacists to operate under an expanded scope of practice. She is a member of the Opioid Safety Initiative workgroup for the Augusta area VA, where an interdisciplinary team reviews patient cases for higher risk opioid use to make recommendations, review clinician performance, and more. They follow VA policy for dispensing naloxone, but because it is the VA (a federal program), they do not require a standing order, but rather have their own protocols allowing pharmacist interventions. Narcan® nasal spray is covered with Veteran benefits, so they don't face some of the patient access barriers in the private sector. She hopes to provide the safest pain management therapy for the patients in their care, mitigating the risks associated with opioids. At the VA, they strive to enhance patient rehabilitation and to improve the quality of life of the Veterans they serve.

The Georgia Pharmacy Foundation launched its Opioid Safety Champions program to recognize pharmacists and their teams implementing opioid safety best practices and fighting opioid misuse in their own communities. Mike Crooks, PharmD, who leads the opioid safety workgroup for the Foundation, said some new processes pharmacists learn include assessing for opioid risk and counseling patients on how to administer naloxone. [G](#)



www.gpha.org/foundation/champion

2021 Georgia Pharmacy Convention

GROW | PLAY | CONNECT

JUNE 17-20, 2021 | OMNI | AMELIA ISLAND, FL

Amelia Island is calling you.

On June 17, Georgia pharmacy professionals will gather to grow, play, and connect.

- **Dynamic General Sessions**
- **Inspiring Key Note Speakers**
- **Lots of Continuing Education**
- **Pharm-a-Sea Sand Castle Contest**
- **Annual Academy Luncheons**
- **President's Bash with a Band**
- **Foundation Silent Auction**
- **Student Central**
- **Receptions**
- **Exhibits**
- **Fun!**



What's Happening at Convention?



<http://gphaconvention.com>
Room block open March 1 to May 26

Wednesday, June 16, 2021

4:30pm - 7:00pm GPhA Board Meeting
9:00pm - 10:00pm Council of Presidents
Dessert Reception



Thursday, June 17, 2021

7:00am - 5:00pm Registration/Help Desk
7:00am - 9:00am Morning Coffee/Pastries
8:00am - 10:10am CE Sessions
10:00am - 10:15am Refreshment Break
10:15am - 12:00pm Thursday General Session
1:30pm - 2:45pm CE Sessions
3:00pm - 6:00pm Expo Hall Grand Opening
and Reception



Friday, June 18, 2021

7:00am - 5:00pm Registration/Help Desk
7:00am - 9:00am Morning Coffee/Pastries
8:00am - 10:15am CE Sessions
10:15 am - 10:30am Refreshment Break
10:30am - 12:00pm CE Sessions
1:45pm - 4:00pm Friday General Session
4:00pm - 6:00pm Expo Hall and Reception
5:00pm - 6:00pm Bidding Open Foundation
Silent Auction
6:00pm - 6:30pm Student/Sponsor Reception
6:30pm - 7:30pm PharmPAC Reception
(\$250 min. investment)



Schedule subject to change.

Morris & Dickson Co., L.L.C.



Saturday, June 19, 2021

7:00am - 5:00pm	Registration/Help Desk
7:00am - 9:00am	Morning Coffee/Pastries
8:00am - 10:10am	CE Sessions
10:15am - 12:30am	Saturday General Session and Membership Meeting
2:00pm - 3:00pm	CE Sessions
2:00pm - 5:00pm	Pharm-a-Sea Contest
3:15pm - 4:45pm	GDNA/Board of Pharmacy
5:00pm - 6:00pm	Pharm-a-Sea Voting
7:00pm - 11:00pm	President's Bash



Sunday, June 20, 2021

7:00am - 9:30am	Morning Coffee/Pastries
7:45am - 8:30am	Inspirational Service
8:00am - 9:00am	Registration/Help Desk
8:30am - 10:30am	CE Sessions
8:45am - 9:30am	Region Presidents Orientation
9:30am - 11:00am	Board Member Orientation



Don't miss the President's Bash

featuring

BLONDE AMBITION

AMERICA'S PREMIER SPECIAL EVENT DANCE BAND



PATIENT ADVOCATE STUDY

Utilization of assigned patient advocates in a community-based pharmacy practice setting and its corresponding effect on patient's medication adherence rates

BY SAVANNAH CUNNINGHAM, Mercer University Student Pharmacist Class of 2022 and DR. JOSHUA KINSEY, PharmD



A RECENT STUDY from Mercer University College of Pharmacy found the utilization of a patient advocate in the community pharmacy setting improves medication adherence rates by 373%. The findings of this project were presented virtually at the Georgia Pharmacy Association Annual Convention 2020.



The large percentage increase in improved medication adherence rates proves that patients filling prescription medications in the community pharmacy

setting benefit greatly from this additional service. The pharmacies included in this study were a group of independent pharmacies owned by Pierce Pharmacy Management throughout the state of Georgia. As shown by previous studies, medication adherence is directly linked to fewer disease-related complications, decreased hospitalizations, and overall lower healthcare costs.¹

The study was conducted from September 2019 to May 2020 with an aim to determine the impact on medication adherence post-assignment of a patient advocate to patients filling medications for chronic conditions (e.g. cardiovascular disease, diabetes, asthma). In general, less than 50% of people take prescription medications as prescribed, and there are many reasons that contribute to this issue.² The goal of this study was to assess the impact on medication adherence rates in patients utilizing a patient advocate.

"We were thrilled to see that assigning patient advocates to patients with poor medication adherence rates actually improved their adherence in a significant way," said the study's lead author Savannah Cunningham, a student pharmacist at Mercer University College of Pharmacy. "Medication adherence greatly impacts the outcomes of patients who suffer from chronic conditions; therefore, any method pharmacy teams can identify to improve medication adherence is a big win."

The patient advocate is a pharmacy technician posi-


tion created to help coordinate pharmacy services for all patients at Pierce Pharmacy Management owned pharmacies in Georgia. The patient advocate manages the convenience program, ensures all patients receive medication refills on time, and identifies financial support or discounts for patients in need.

This study measured medication adherence using a validated equation, Proportion of Days Covered (PDC), which is the percentage of days a patient has possession of a medication out of the total days in each time period. Patients must have at least an 80% PDC to be considered "adherent."

Before the assignment of a patient advocate, patients enrolled in the study had an average 53.1% adherence rate – a rate far below the ideal threshold. However, after at

least 90 days of interacting with a patient advocate, the same patients had an average 90.4% adherence rate. The average increase in adherence rate was 373% - a statistically significant result.

When contacted for comments, the owner of Pierce Pharmacy Management, Dr. Loren Pierce, stated, "This data demonstrates the importance of our patient advocates, the value they bring to our pharmacies, and the significant improvement in the overall health of our patients. Low medication adherence rates are a huge problem in community pharmacies with patients taking complicated medication regimens. The implementation of a patient advocate program is a great service to help combat this issue."

The utilization of patient advocates in the community pharmacy setting has the potential to save patients time, effort, and money; not to mention the fact that it helps patients avoid serious health complications. Additionally, the cost savings are shared with insurance companies. Improvements in medication adherence rates utilizing a patient advocate has been proven to decrease hospitalizations and lower other costly issues associated with chronic disease management. 

90%
Adherence
with Advocacy

¹ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/15908846/>

² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3068890/>

Understanding the PREP Act

BY GREG REYBOLD, GPhA Vice President of Public Policy and Association Counsel



Beginning on March 17, 2020, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued several Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) declarations and guidance documents related to pharmacy-based COVID-19 care and services.

These declarations have granted significant regulatory flexibility and new authorities to pharmacists, student pharmacists (referred to as pharmacy interns), and pharmacy technicians. With everything going on these days, it can be challenging to keep track of it all, so here's a summary of these HHS announcements and the requirements that pharmacists must satisfy before ordering and administering COVID-19 tests and vaccines, and requirements that pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians must satisfy before administering vaccines, pursuant to these PREP ACT declarations.

What is the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) and what does a PREP Act declaration provide to pharmacists and pharmacy professionals?

The Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) authorizes the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (Secretary) to issue a declaration (PREP Act declaration) that provides immunity from liability (except for willful misconduct) for claims of loss caused by, arising out of, relating to, or resulting from administration or use of countermeasures to diseases, threats and conditions determined by the Secretary to constitute a present or credible risk of a future public health emergency to entities and individuals involved in the development, manufacture, testing, distribution, administration, and use of such countermeasures. A PREP Act declaration is specifically for the purpose of providing immunity from liability, and is different from, and not dependent on, other emergency declarations.

Importantly, the **PREP Act also preempts state law in conflict with any authorization made pursuant to the PREP ACT during the period of emergency.**

Authorization for Pharmacists to Order and Administer COVID-19 Tests

On April 8, HHS issued its PREP Act declaration authorizing licensed pharmacists to order and administer COVID-19 tests, including serology tests, that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized through Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). On May 19, the General Counsel for the HHS Office of the Secretary issued an advisory opinion further clarifying this PREP Act declaration and its preemption on local and state regulations that may conflict with the declaration.

What does this declaration do?

This PREP Act declaration authorizes Georgia-licensed pharmacists to order and administer COVID-19 tests that have been authorized by the FDA through its EUA process.

What does this mean?

If a pharmacy has an active CLIA waiver, the pharmacist is granted the authority, and is covered under the liability protections of the PREP Act, to order and administer COVID-19 tests that have been approved as "waived" by the FDA through its EUA process.

Authorization for Pharmacists to Order and Administer (and Pharmacy Interns to Administer) ACIP-Recommended Childhood Vaccinations

On August 19, HHS issued its Third Amendment to the Declaration under the Prep Act authorizing certain State-licensed pharmacists to order and administer, and pharmacy interns (who are licensed or registered by their State board of pharmacy and acting under the supervision of a State-licensed pharmacist) to administer, any vaccine that the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends to persons ages 3 through 18 according to ACIP's standard immunization schedule.

On October 22, the General Counsel for the HHS Office of the Secretary issued an advisory opinion clarifying the PREP Act declaration and its preemp-

tion on local and state regulations that may conflict with the declaration and inclusion of epinephrine in the PREP Act as a covered countermeasure.

What does this declaration do?

This PREP Act declaration authorizes certain Georgia-licensed pharmacists to order and administer, and pharmacy interns acting under the supervision of a Georgia-licensed pharmacist to administer, any ACIP-recommended vaccine to persons 3 through 18 years of age.

What does this mean?

As long as a Georgia-licensed pharmacist satisfies the requirements below, the pharmacist is granted the authority, and is covered under the liability protections of the PREP Act, to order and administer any ACIP-recommended vaccine to persons 3 through 18 years of age. In addition, any pharmacy intern acting under the supervision of a Georgia-licensed pharmacist is granted the authority and is covered under the liability protections of the PREP Act, to administer any ACIP-recommended vaccine to persons 3 through 18 years of age.

How does this PREP Act declaration temporarily modify existing Vaccine Protocol Agreements?

- Childhood vaccines: Under this declaration, Vaccine Protocol Agreement is **NOT required** (and not allowed) for pharmacists to order and administer ACIP-recommended childhood vaccines in Georgia.
- Adult vaccines: A Vaccine Protocol Agreement is still required for pharmacists to order and administer adult vaccines (pneumococcal; influenza, meningitis, shingles) in Georgia.

Authorization for Pharmacists to Order and Administer (and Pharmacy Interns to Administer) COVID-19 Vaccinations

On September 3, HHS issued guidance authorizing certain State-licensed pharmacists to order and administer, and pharmacy interns (who are licensed or registered by their State board of pharmacy and acting under the supervision of a State-licensed pharmacist) to administer, COVID-19 vaccinations to persons ages 3 or older.

What does this declaration do?

This PREP Act declaration authorizes certain Georgia-licensed pharmacists to order and administer, and pharmacy interns acting under the supervision of a Georgia-licensed pharmacist to administer, COVID-19 vaccinations to persons ages 3 or older.

What does this mean?

As long as a Georgia-licensed pharmacist satisfies the requirements below, the pharmacist is granted the authority, and is covered under the liability protections of the PREP Act, to order and administer COVID-19 vaccinations to persons ages 3 years or older. In addition, any pharmacy interns acting under the supervision of a Georgia-licensed pharmacist are authorized to administer COVID-19 vaccinations to persons ages 3 years or older.

Authorization for Pharmacy Interns and Pharmacy Technicians to Administer Childhood Vaccines, COVID-19 Vaccines, and COVID-19 Tests

On October 21, HHS issued guidance regarding the administration of childhood vaccines, COVID-19 vaccines, and COVID-19 tests by pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians.

What does this guidance do?

This PREP ACT guidance authorizes qualified pharmacy technicians and State-authorized pharmacy interns, acting under the supervision of a qualified pharmacist, to administer FDA-authorized or FDA-licensed COVID-19 vaccines to persons ages 3 or older, to administer FDA-authorized or FDA-licensed ACIP-recommended vaccines to persons ages 3 through 18 according to ACIP's standard immunization schedule, as well as administration of COVID-19 tests.

What does this mean?

Under this guidance, pharmacy interns in Georgia and Georgia-registered pharmacy technicians, acting under the supervision of a qualified pharmacist and subject to certain other requirements, are granted the authority, and are covered under the liability protections of the PREP Act, to:

- Administer FDA-authorized or FDA-licensed COVID-19 vaccines to persons ages 3 or older;
- Administer FDA-authorized or FDA-licensed ACIP-recommended vaccines to persons ages 3 through 18 according to ACIP's standard immunization schedule; and
- Administer COVID-19 tests

The pharmacist must order the vaccine or test, and the pharmacist must supervise the pharmacy intern or registered technician when administering any vaccine or COVID-19 test.

For more information on the requirements for Georgia licensed pharmacists, go to <http://www.gpha.org/prep-act>. [G](#)

Equipping an Army of Techs

BY TERESA TATUM, Director of Education, GPhA

IT WAS A CHILLY Sunday morning in February, as we prepared the training room to receive our very first wave of pharmacy technicians in Georgia to be trained in immunization delivery.

Gloves✓ Masks✓ Safety needles✓ Alcohol pads✓
Saline✓ Syringes✓ Cotton balls✓

The PowerPoint was up, and the room was set as we opened the doors to 30 eager (and early) pharmacy techs. They came from all over Georgia, including Atlanta, Brooklet, Chatsworth, Guyton, Ringgold, Valdosta, and Watkinsville. They were all excited even though some were a bit nervous.

In October, when the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) amended the Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP) to authorize pharmacy techs to administer vaccinations contingent on proper training and the supervision of a pharmacist, GPhA knew we needed a good training program. We would be equipping an army to assist pharmacists during the COVID-19 vaccination rollout.

Christine Klein, PharmD, from Mercer University

College of Pharmacy heard the call and rose to the challenge. As a long-time GPhA member, a regular trainer in immunizations and administration, and Clinical Associate Professor and Vice-Chair of the Department of Pharmacy Practice for Experiential Education at Mercer University College of Pharmacy, Dr. Klein has trained over 1500 student pharmacists at Mercer and over 250 pharmacists for APhAs Pharmacy-Based Immunization Training. She was the perfect GPhA partner to develop the curriculum.

After much collaboration and research, the result was a 5.75-hour immunization training program that consists of online self-study, in-person lecture, as well as hands-on technique and assessment. Techs were instructed on intramuscular injection (IM), subcutaneous injection (SQ), sanitary procedures, and sharps safety.

The program offers everything a pharmacy tech needs to feel confident and empowered to administer immunizations under the supervision of a pharmacist. The proof was in the many huge smiles and “thank you”s, as they left the training and headed back home to fight the good fight. 🇺🇸

“We appreciate being able to collaborate with GPhA to provide training to technicians in Georgia. Our first training on Sunday was very successful. It was exciting to see all of these pharmacy technicians learning how to safely immunize.”

— **Christine Klein, PharmD**

“After going through the training, our comfort level on giving vaccines increased tremendously. It’s also exciting being the first technicians in Georgia to be able to give COVID vaccines and for the opportunity to elevate our roles as technicians.”

— **Ashley Knighton CPhT, Barnes Drug Store**

“The training was one of the best experiences I have had during my career as a pharmacy technician. Chris and Jonathan did a great job answering questions and demon-

strating immunization techniques. I feel confident that I have been very well prepared to administer COVID-19 vaccinations at our next vaccine clinic. I’m so glad GPhA provided us with this opportunity.”

— **Rasheeda McNeal, BS, CPhT, Pierce Pharmacy Management**

“I really enjoyed the training! I think the review before the practical portion was helpful in understanding the entirety of the material. It also prompted some good dialogue and questions between participants and pharmacists that all have had real life experiences surrounding the virus and the vaccines. We all experience the pharmaceutical world in different ways, and I think it was helpful to have these discussions with experts in the field so we could ask questions and get clarification on things we have

seen or experienced firsthand. I also found that the hands-on portion of the training was well developed. I could tell the pharmacists knew, not only what they were doing, but how to teach others to give immunizations. While giving my first immunization, I was coached and given helpful feedback on what to do and not do. I feel confident in my skills and I am pumped to start helping our pharmacists out!”

— **Lizzie Atkinson, Barnes Drugstore**

“I really enjoyed the learning process in this training. I felt like both Professors were extremely knowledgeable about the background of the information and were prepared to answer all questions given to them without hesitation. I am extremely excited to be a part of the first techs in Georgia to have

completed this training, and feel highly confident to give vaccinations to our upcoming appointments and look forward to using this knowledge for the upcoming events in our company. Thanks again for putting together this class and allowing hands on preparation for us to receive the best training possible, making sure we were 100% comfortable in our techniques and knowledge in the entire process.”

— **Lexxi Clements, CPhT, Barnes Healthcare Services**

“After completing the immunization course, I feel confident to provide immunizations to all ages. The course curriculum was robust and covered a variety of immunizations. The instructors were amazing and made the class relaxing and fun!”

— **Jennifer Lamb, Pierce Pharmacy Management**



Tech Immunization Training

February 27, 2021



VOLUNTEERING IN A PANDEMIC

EMMA CHANDLEE (2022) Mercer University College of Pharmacy



During January, I had the opportunity to volunteer at Briarcliff Pharmacy to assist with the administration of over one hundred Moderna COVID-19 vaccines to medical personnel, high-risk patients, and people over 65 years old. During days at the vaccine clinic, I worked alongside pharmacists, nurse practitioners, and other student pharmacists to provide a safe and efficient process for individuals to receive their first or second dose of the vaccine. In addition, I counseled patients on potential side effects of the vaccine and reviewed with them the potential reactions that they could expect as a result of each dose.

I was so impressed with how the Briarcliff Pharmacy designed their clinic to ensure that the patients felt comfortable and had their needs met. This experience allowed me to gain patient care experience and I was able to practice the injection techniques that I had been first taught in the skills lab. After several

injections, I gained confidence that will aid me in my future encounters with vaccines. I learned a lot, not only from the immunization practice, but I also gained insight into the burdens people have endured during this last year.

I volunteered because it was important to me to play a role in serving the community to help mitigate the virus and protect my family and friends around me. I wanted to share with others a hope that we were facing the pandemic head on and slowing further transmission by vaccination. I enjoyed learning and serving others for the greater good to a community population. Furthermore, as a future pharmacist with family members in healthcare, I have seen how this virus has affected people from health considerations to financial burdens.

Pharmacists can play a crucial role during the pandemic by providing access to the vaccine. We are easily accessible in retail pharmacies and prepared to provide vaccines over the next couple months. We

have a responsibility to stay knowledgeable and to advocate for a safe and effective vaccine. I am honored to have been involved in this process locally to help prevent further transmission of COVID-19, and I am looking forward to seeing its positive impact on our health and communities.



ZACH DYKES (2021) PCOM School of Pharmacy



When Karl Simon approached me about putting together a COVID-19 vaccination clinic, I jumped at the opportunity. As a pharmacy student attending PCOM Georgia, I previously

completed an advanced pharmacy practice experience rotation at Suwanee Pharmacy with the owner, Karl Simon, as my preceptor.

Suwanee Pharmacy is an independent community pharmacy that opened in February of 2020, right before the pandemic hit. However, despite this challenge, Karl has grown Suwanee Pharmacy into a place where people feel welcome. Throughout my rotation, I have seen how much Karl cares for his community and how hard he works to make sure that every patient who walks through the door is greeted with a smile and treated like family. My rotation at Suwanee Pharmacy taught me a lot about how much goes into opening and running your own community pharmacy.

After my rotation at Suwanee was complete, Karl reached out and let me know that he had been able to obtain the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine but needed someone to help organize a clinic to distribute the vaccines. Over the next couple of weeks, I worked with Karl to develop and optimize the workflow for the clinic and reached out to a couple of my pharmacy classmates at PCOM, Macy Biddulph and Nakoasha Dillard, who graciously agreed to help administer vaccines. We began vaccinating at 2:00 p.m. and by 6:00 p.m. we were able to vaccinate 50 members of the community, including healthcare workers, firefighters, police officers, adults over 65 years of age, and their caretakers. It was encouraging to see so many smiling faces and to hear how genuinely grateful

people were to have access to the vaccine.

Pharmacists have an integral role to play in the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine. Counseling patients about the possible side effects of the vaccine, which type of vaccine they received, and the time frame when they should receive the second dose are extremely important. By keeping patients on site for 15 minutes after vaccination, we were able to monitor for an allergic reaction. With so much misinformation out there, it's important that we stay informed and share what we know with any patients who ask. As student pharmacists, we can have a massive impact during this time and I encourage everyone with the means and opportunity, to help.

A PHARMACIST'S PERSPECTIVE Working with Student Volunteers



The expansion of Phase 1A provided the opportunity to vaccinate more people within our community. To meet the demand for vaccinations, Suwanee Pharmacy partnered with students from PCOM School of

Pharmacy to provide a COVID-19 vaccination clinic open to the public.

"We were offering up to 20 COVID-19 vaccinations a day, but the calls kept coming in, my staff and I wanted to do more" said Karl Simon, PharmD, MBA, geriatric pharmacist and owner of Suwanee Pharmacy. "I reached out to my previous student Zach Dykes, a P4 at PCOM School of Pharmacy and asked if he would like to lead the COVID-19 vaccination clinic." Without hesitation Zach took action, he collaborated with his classmates Macy Biddulph

and Nakoasha Dillard to strategize the workflow for the clinic.

The vaccination clinic took place on a Saturday afternoon and it was a success. Every appointment slot was booked and accommodations were made for elderly

members in our community who were not able to schedule an appointment in advance.

During the clinic the students adapted to meet the needs of our patients. For example, a disabled patient was unable to leave their car, so Zach provided an in-car COVID-19 vaccine. When asked about his experience Zach said "I'm so grateful for the opportunity to help vaccinate and I would encourage other student pharmacists to help where they can.



Together we can make a huge impact."

The community support was contagious! The manager of the locally owned pizzeria saw our efforts and sponsored lunch. "Suwanee Pharmacy is grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with future pharmacists to serve the community. As more vaccines become available, we look forward to partnering with PCOM students again to host additional vaccination clinics," said Karl.

GENELL SINGLETON (2022) South University School of Pharmacy



The process of administering the COVID vaccine has been laborious but truly rewarding. Though only available to those over 65 or with other qualifying factors, it has been wonderful to see how many truly want the vaccine, and how the community has come together to help each other. It has been of the utmost importance to follow standard procedures and CDC guidelines on administering the vaccine and to follow appropriate precautions in minimizing risk for disease exposure and spread.

I have noticed that patients, while excited to receive the vaccine, still have reservations and questions about the efficacy of the vaccine, side effects, when to expect results, and when the vaccine will be available to everyone. Some people were afraid of contracting the virus from the vaccine. No stranger to hearing certain misconceptions about vaccines, I was ready to talk with each patient about their questions or concerns. I wanted to dissuade any fears and provide everyone with information about the COVID vaccine and the vaccination process in general.

As a pharmacy intern trained to immunize under the supervision of a pharmacist, I wanted to make patients as comfortable as possible when receiving their vaccine. I found that it was important to tell everyone that receiving the vaccine would benefit themselves and those around them, and that vaccination is an important tool in the global effort to stop the pandemic. Some patients had questions about the speed with which the vaccine was developed and whether it could have an adverse impact on their DNA. I was more than happy to explain how mRNA vaccines work and how the body begins to develop a robust immune response in making antibodies to fight infections.

What I found most important was the importance of kindness and compassion. Though the pandemic has put many through undesirable situations, it has brought the world together in the common goal of protecting the lives of all those around. As a final word of advice, take time with each patient. Be attentive to questions and address misconceptions.

FIRST YEAR EXPECTATIONS OF PHARMACY SCHOOL

MELISSA FRAZIER (2024) Mercer University College of Pharmacy



In August of 2020, I began my first semester of pharmacy school. Pharmacy school has been a dream of mine—since the age of 16, my goal has been to own my own pharmacy one day. So, you can imagine how excited I was to FINALLY take a huge step towards that goal! I had so many expectations of how my first year would go, hoping to gain new pharmacy and educational experiences.

Being involved on campus in class and in organizations is very important to me. Engagement in campus activities builds skillsets such as leadership and accountability that are vital to being a successful pharmacist. This semester pharmacy professional organizations held almost entirely virtual events. Under the circumstances, this was the best solution possible. Having meaningful conversations or making strong connections with students, who are supposed to be your “pharmily,” is difficult and awkward behind a computer screen.

I knew pharmacy school would be more difficult for me than anything I had previously completed. Class lecture is where I take in most new information and begin making sense of concepts, but now there are lecture streaming rooms, scheduling changes, and lots more virtual learning than before. Lectures and learning styles have drastically changed due to “new normal” practices and adapting to those has not been easy.

I miss the days when I felt like I got the most out of my educational, social, and free time. Life in general has been different for everyone. The combination of changes in school, social and organizational events, and daily life tasks, have taken a significant toll on my pharmacy experience, but I am hopeful for the future!



ANDREW WILSON (2024) PCOM School of Pharmacy



PCOM has responded to COVID by adopting a hybrid-learning environment. Students have been divided up into smaller cohorts and rotate going on campus for hands on classes, while remaining virtual for regular

lectures. There are pros and cons to this learning environment. Due to virtual learning platforms, blackboard collaborate, and Zoom, we can access recorded lectures with good sound/video quality to review for exams. We save time and money on transportation and create our own work environment at home. The downside is that we don't access the campus environment and lack in-person exposure to teachers.

We are in a state of constantly having to adapt to new challenges and overcome them day by day. The P1 class of pharmacy students has not had the luxury of meeting in person and have had to work hard to develop friendships and study groups at a distance. We have turned to social media to achieve these valuable experiences. We are constantly connected through the GroupMe app and can share ideas, keep each other up to date, and laugh together about school and life. This has helped to create friendships and strengthen the bonds between our class.

We have set up virtual peer tutoring platforms that allow us to review course material and learn from each other as we would in study groups. Staying united, voicing opinions, and hard work allows us to thrive in the pandemic. We have learned that we can be successful regardless of the situation, but we look forward to the day we can enjoy campus life as classes from previous years.



SHANNON BARBOUR (2024) South University School of Pharmacy



The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically changed everyday life for the world, but most students have been able to continue their education pursuits thanks to technology. I started pharmacy school at South University in

June of 2020, and the pandemic has made my education experience both challenging and unique.

My first quarter of pharmacy school was spent completely virtual from home. Not being able to attend class on campus, or meet my new classmates in person, was hard. Thankfully, South allowed students to return to campus in the fall with the option to continue virtually if preferred. I was excited to finally be on campus, but the experience has been far from normal.

Students and faculty are always required to wear masks, stay six feet apart, avoid gatherings, and frequently use the hand sanitizer stations. We sign into class with an app that keeps track of COVID-related symptoms and body temperature. Office hours are held virtually, as well as most extracurricular meetings. Usual study spaces throughout campus, such as study rooms, student lounges, and the library, have been closed.

Although it's been challenging to not have the usual education experience, I consider myself lucky to be able to pursue my degree amid a global crisis. Studying pharmacy during a time when public health is monumental has put everything I'm learning into perspective! I now further appreciate the importance of the profession I am entering, and the crucial role pharmacists play in public health.

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VALERY CEPEDA (2024) UGA College of Pharmacy



As an incoming first year pharmacy student, I was excited to start pharmacy school. I was motivated to attend lectures in a room with 145 other pharmacy students. I was looking forward to attending community and professional events that would help

bring awareness and advocate for the pharmacy profession. COVID-19 made my first pharmacy school year a lot different than expected. Since most of our classes are being taught remotely, this year has been more challenging for me as a student who was accustomed to attending lectures in person through face-to-face instruction.

Even though I now attend lectures in the comfort of my own home, I quickly had to learn to adapt to this new environment by eliminating distractions to help me focus throughout the day. Our class has been split into three groups, and every two weeks, we alternate and have the option to attend lectures in person. We also have designated weeks through the semester to attend lab sessions. These weeks are my favorite because I feel a sense of normalcy interacting in-person with professors and my fellow classmates, even while following protocol such as wearing masks and social distancing.

Although I may not physically see all of my classmates or professors as I previously expected to prior to COVID, I always feel connected to them in some way - whether it's through Zoom breakout rooms, one-on-one Zoom meetings with professors, or GroupMe messages. Everyone is always understanding and able to help one another through this unprecedented time. Being a part of professional organizations such as GPhA has helped me as a student feel connected to other pharmacy students who are passionate for advocating for our profession. This year, though different than expected, has taught me so much and has increased my self-awareness as a pharmacy student. 📍

There is Strength in Numbers: Group Health Insurance is Available



Bryan Turner is the managing director at J. Smith Lanier, a Marsh & McLennan Agency, in Woodstock, Georgia. He is also one of the owners of Blue Ridge and Riverstone Pharmacy in Blue Ridge, Georgia. Bryan is a native of Atlanta and graduated from the University of Georgia, Terry College of Business (2001). He has been in group health and employee benefits since that time. He married his high school sweetheart, Kristen Turner, PharmD. They have four children (two boys and two girls-14, 11, 8, and 18 months) and live in Roswell, Georgia. He loves golf, tennis, and wake boarding, and coached tennis during college. Bryan is active in numerous local and national organizations including the Habitat for Humanity and Roswell Rotary Club.

His progressive career in health insurance and benefits and pharmacy management uniquely positions him to be able to work with independent pharmacies across Georgia. Bryan prides himself on customer service and is dedicated to finding the best plans while keeping costs to a minimum. "We provide group health and employee benefits, to include health, dental, vision, life, and disability insurance. Our strategies allow small employers to provide Fortune 500 type benefits to their employees," Bryan said. The group purchasing power of GPhA allows pharmacy owners to save on health insurance and provide an important employee benefit.

Bryan partners with Mark Riley at American Benefits Services (ABS), a third-party benefits administrator, to administer the plans. This takes the administrative burden off their clients. ABS uses technology to streamline the benefits process from implementation to billing and everything in between.

Marsh and McLennan is the largest insurance consultant in the country. "Because of this, we can provide insurance products that improve the experience for employers and employees alike," said Bryan. He is available to give price quotes on benefit packages. You can reach him at bryan.turner@marshMMA.com or by calling 678-656-2093. 📍



PHARMPAC 2020

INVESTING IN PHARMPAC IS INVESTING IN YOUR PRACTICE.

The following pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, students, and others have joined GPhA's PharmPAC for the 2020 calendar year.

The contribution levels are based on investment through December 31, 2020.

DIAMOND INVESTORS (\$4,800 or \$400/month or more)



RALPH BALCHIN
Fayetteville



CHARLES BARNES
Valdosta



MAC McCORD
Atlanta



SCOTT MEESKS
Douglas



FRED SHARPE
Albany

TITANIUM INVESTORS (\$2,400 or \$200/month)



WILLIAM DUNN
Ty Ty



ROBERT DYKES
Cochran



MICHAEL E. FARMER
Winder



DAVID GRAVES
Macon



ANN HANSFORD
Athens



LON LEWIS
St. Simons Island



TOMMY LINDSEY
Omega



BRANDALL LOVVORN
Bremen

Platinum Investors (\$1,200 or \$100/month)

Thomas Bryan
William Cagle
Hugh Chancy
Wes Chapman
Keith Chapman
Dale Coker
W.C. Conley
Ben Cravey
Marshall Curtis
Blake Daniel
Al Dixon
Annette Duncan
Jack Dunn
Vic Johnson
Marsha Kapiloff
Ira Katz
Kenneth Kicklighter
David Leach
Jeff Lurey
Jonathan Marquess
Ivy McCurley

Amy Miller
Drew Miller
Cassie Riley
Houston Rogers
Ben Ross
John Sandlin
Tim Short
Teresa Smith
Carl Stanley
Dennis Strickland
Chris Thurmond
Danny Toth
Alex Tucker
Thomas Whitworth
Julie Wickman

Gold Investors (\$600 or \$50/month)

James Bartling
Lance Boles
Larry Braden
William Brewster
David Carr
Liza Chapman

Mahlon Davidson
Sharon Deason
Benjamin Dupree
Kevin Florence
Kerry Griffin
Johnathan Hamrick
Robert Hatton
Michael Iteogu
Stephanie Kirkland
George Launius
Eugene McDonald
Lisa McDonald
Robert Moody
Sherri Moody
Sujal Patel
Drew Pырz
Ola Reffell
Daryl Reynolds
Robert Rogers
Sharon Sherrer
David Stanley
James Thomas
William Turner
Chuck Wilson
Henry Wilson III

Silver Investors (\$300 or \$25/month)

Nelson Anglin
Michael Azzolin
Mark Barnes
Claude Bates
James Carpenter
Tina Chancey
Michael Crooks
Ed Dozier
Marshall Frost
Hannah Head
Joe Ed Holt
Amy Jacobs
Jason Jones
Susan Kane
Laura Ko
Willie Latch
Michael Lewis
Lauren Lindsey
Ashley London
Hilary Mbadugha
Donald Piela
Bill Prather
Terry Shaw

Thomas Sherrer
Jonathan Sinyard
Renee Smith
Richard Smith
Austin Tull
Randall Thonton
Carla Woodall

Bronze Investors (\$150 or \$12.50/month)

Dean Arneson
Phil Barfield
Ashlyn Carter
Bryce Carter
Matthew Crist
Michelle Cruson
Douglass Hall
James Harkleroad
Phillip James
Brenton Lake
Rabun Neves
Katherine Woods
Lou Woods

Member Investors (up to \$150)

Thomas Akins
Karine Alleyne
Robert Ault
Brandon Bailey
Lawrence Bridges
Annley Bryan
Kenneth Couch
Guy Cox
Alexis Davis
Wendy Dorminey
Bill Dunaway
Matthew Frazier
John Glenn
Samuel Goldberg
Fred Gurley
Gerald Hartman
Earl Henderson
Ralph Marett
Roy McClendon
Lisa McDonald
Joseph McEver
R. Pat McPherson
Mindi Miller

Simon Oduro
Abiola Oguntunmbi
Derek Osborne
Brenda Owens
Sonal Patel
Rhett Paul
Whitney Pickett
Leslie Ponder
Robert Probst
Reginald Pye
Thomas Rawls
Leonard Reynolds
John Richey
Stephen Shearer
James Stowe
Carey Vaughan
Robert Ward
Bonnie Warren
Joseph Woodson
Charlese Yates

Snapshot of 2020. Visit GPhA.org/PharmPAC to find out more.



*As of December 31, 2020

PROFILE

INDEPENDENTS ON THE FRONT LINE

GRIFFITH AND FEIL DRUG is an independent pharmacy in the small town of Kenova, West Virginia, population 3027 (2019). Located near a tri-state border, the city's name is derived from Kentucky, Ohio, and Virginia. More than 400 miles west of Washington, DC, pharmacist Ric Griffith is in the spotlight of a vaccination success story. While the rest of the nation struggled to get answers and to obtain the vaccine, Griffith & Feil Drug was vaccinating the elderly and essential.

According to the Associated Press (AP), the state of West Virginia made an early decision to reject a federal partnership with CVS and Walgreen to vaccinate residents against the virus. West Virginia decided instead to trust mom-and-pop pharmacies across the state to vaccinate residents. Rather than relying on national chains, 250 local pharmacists set up clinics in rural communities. The trust factor may have played an important role in the process. Residents trust their local pharmacist. That trust overcame hesitations about how quickly the vaccine was developed. Kevin Roberts, 59, a school bus driver in Kenova said, "It makes a difference if you know the pharmacist who's giving you the shot."

AP wrote its story in January 2021. At that time, West Virginia had given more vaccinations per capita than in any other state, with at least 75% of the population the first of two vaccinations. As of February 8, 2021, West Virginia ranked in the top three states (North Dakota, New Mexico, West Virginia), and have administered 90% of all distributed vaccinations (322,046 of 357,000). West Virginia was the first in the nation to finish offering first doses to all long-term care centers before the end of December 2020, with second doses given by January 2021.

"The West Virginia model is really one that we would like for more states to adopt," said John Beckner, a pharmacist who works at the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA), based in Alexandria, Virginia. Governor Jim Justice is proud that the vaccination efforts run counter to preconceived notions about the state. "Little old West Virginia, that



The old fashioned soda fountain at Griffith and Feil Drug in Kenova, West Virginia. Pictured right is Ric and his daughter, Heidi Griffith Romero.



was thought of for hundreds of years as a place where maybe we were backward," mused Justice.

"As my uncle always told me, these people aren't your customers, they're your friends and neighbors," said Ric Griffith, the pharmacist at Griffith & Feil. Griffith, 71, began taking over the pharmacy from his father in the early 1990s and was elected to the House of Delegates in 2020. His daughter, Heidi Griffith Romero, 45, followed into the family business and is also giving vaccinations.

While holding a vaccination clinic at the Ceredo-Kenova High School, Griffith recalled his uncle telling him he lost four classmates to the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic, which killed at least 50 million people worldwide. As of this writing and according to Johns Hopkins University, Coronavirus Resource Center, the COVID-19 worldwide death toll is 2.3 million.

Officials also credit the success to a 50-person command center at the state's National Guard headquarters, in Charleston, West Virginia. This is where the statewide logistics were coordinated. From there, vaccines went to pharmacies and local health departments.

The federal partnership involving CVS and Walgreens would have allowed Washington officials to dictate the terms of distribution to long-term care facilities. CVS has so far declined to work with state officials, but Walgreens is holding clinics at some nursing homes. "If the state would have activated the federal plan, the state would have had zero control over the situation," said Marty Wright, West Virginia Health Care Association.

Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Alex Azar praised West Virginia's efforts to vaccinate the elderly. "Expanding eligibility to all of the vulnerable is the fastest way to protect the vulnerable," said Azar. Mitchel Rothholz, who leads immunization policy at the American Pharmacist Association (APA), said other governors would be wise to enlist local pharmacies. [📍](#)

From the President

Let's Do the Numbers

And, I'll throw in some nonpharmacy trivia #s just to keep your attention.



WES CHAPMAN

As pharmacists, we are tuned into numbers. Our pharmacy school prerequisites were algebra, trigonometry, and calculus. The first pharmacy class most of us early timers took back in the day was pharmacy calculations. And who can remember (or really wants to forget) pharmacy statistics?

What is one of the first things we ask for from a patient? Your birth date, please. Or, what is the prescription number?

As a business owner, I'm constantly looking over financial numbers. My fellow GPhA board members and I are almost always going through the numbers. We are looking for trends and tendencies. And speaking of trends: Our association has experienced unprecedented growth in the last 5 years. Nineteen percent to be exact.

Where did the growth come from? Well, we have quite a diversity of pharmacy practices in our association. With the introduction of our practice academies several years ago, our numbers have flourished. Our inclusiveness has served the association well. We are gaining a sense of family as our academies bring forth talent, and not only talent, but a world of individual pharmacists who are lending their talents for the good of the association.

Years ago, who could have imagined that 12% of our members would come from chain store

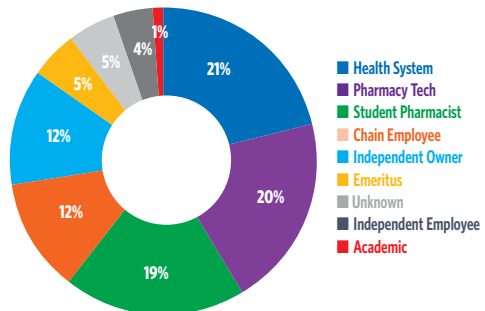
OK, BOOMER!

- Boomers (born 1946 to 1964) make up 45% of all US adults
- With 70% of US wealth, Boomers represent enormous buying power
- Boomers will represent 68% of adult population growth in the next 10 years
- 1 in 3 Millennials lives with their Boomer parents

No wonder they're jealous!

70%
of US wealth

2020 GPhA Members by Type



employees? Who could have imagined that our incoming president (Mahlon Davidson, Kroger) is a chain store employee pharmacist? Health system pharmacists make up the largest percentage at 21%. We are thrilled that Wellstar has joined our ranks and hope to bring in more pharmacists from the health-care system.

Google receives over 63,000 searches per second on any given day. That's the average figure of how many people use Google a day, which translates into at least 2 trillion searches per year, 3.8 million searches per minute, 228 million searches per hour, and 5.6 billion searches per day. In 2000, there were 18 million Google searches per day.

5.6
Google billion searches every day

Pharmacy technicians make up a resounding voice within the association and of course, independent pharmacists and their employees have long been a stanchion. We've watched our academicians and student numbers swell like never before. Our ears are ringing with a multitude of voices all lending their talents to the betterment of our association and profession. A huge THANK YOU is due to ALL of you for being part of a strong and dynamic chorus that brings a high-powered effective expression of what we can do together as a group of dedicated professionals. 📺

Wes Chapman is the Board President of the Georgia Pharmacy Association.



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AIP MEMBERS GET IT

They get help

- ✓ Help working with Medicare and Medicaid
- ✓ Help with audit relief
- ✓ Help with MAC appeals
- ✓ Help buying and selling a pharmacy

They get benefits

- ✓ Audit relief (AIP efforts saved members more than \$320,000)
- ✓ Services specifically for compounding pharmacies
- ✓ Free business consultations with pharmacy experts
- ✓ Access to the comprehensive AIP Pharmacy Manual, which offers extensive material about buying, selling, and managing a pharmacy — including information about regulatory issues and agencies

They get connections

- ✓ Connections to other independent pharmacies throughout the state
- ✓ Partnerships with OTC and nutritional supplement companies
- ✓ A chance to learn and network at AIP's fall and spring statewide meetings
- ✓ Access to telehealth and chronic care management resources through CriticalKey

With AIP, independent never means alone.

No other state association in the country has an organization like the Georgia Pharmacy Association's Academy of Independent Pharmacy. We are proud to represent our members and our profession!



For more information, visit GPhA.org or call
Verouschka Betancourt-Whigham at (404) 419-8102