UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy

Global Pharmacy Scholars Program
Dear students, alumni and supporters,

At the UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy, we aim to challenge our future pharmacists to explore healthcare practice in an unfamiliar setting and break the idea of cultural norms in a meaningful, contextual and deeply personal manner.

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, it is critical for our students to embrace, experience and exercise their cultural competency, global awareness, and service learning. They must also be able to communicate, analyze and solve problems through different perspectives, and in different settings, so they are prepared for whatever the field may hand them.

Our Global Pharmacy Scholars (GPS) program enables students to learn about health care issues in various countries around the world, and acts as a springboard to creating innovative solutions. This program gives students a life-changing experience that opens their mind to new ways of thinking; Positions students as global leaders who can thrive and adapt across diverse settings and patient populations; and Supports students to think globally and act locally to transform patient care in their own communities.

Together, we have the opportunity to improve human health worldwide and continue Advancing Medicine for Life.

All the best,

Angela

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GLOBAL PHARMACY SCHOLARS

Our Global Pharmacy Scholars (GPS) program is designed to prepare students to be leaders in addressing global health care needs and problems. Scholars can apply to programs in nine locations, including: Australia, England, Ethiopia, Honduras, India, Japan, Malawi, Moldova, and Zambia.
The international Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience rotation in Melbourne is clinically based within Monash University and Alfred Health System. Monash University, a member of the PharmAlliance partnership, was established in 1958 and is Australia’s leading pharmacy institution. The Alfred, founded in 1871, is a major tertiary referral teaching hospital and the oldest Melbourne hospital that is operating on its original site. It has a focus in acute and critical care.

“Looking back over the past month I spent in Australia, I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to experience an international rotation in Melbourne. I learned a tremendous amount of valuable information that I will carry with me for my entire career as a pharmacist. The overarching goal of this rotation was to experience the differences in healthcare, specifically related to pharmacy, in Australia compared to the United States. Our group was fortunate enough to see this relationship in three pharmaceutical areas while on our rotation – academia, hospital, and community. I am so grateful for having this opportunity to experience pharmacy in Australia. It was truly a once in a lifetime trip and I am so appreciative of all the new friends and connections that I made while on this journey. I would like to personally thank all the staff from UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy and Monash University that made this international rotation possible. I learned so many things that I will continue to use in my career from this experience and I am very thankful for that,”

— Tanner Trantham, Class of 2020
LONDON, ENGLAND

The clinical rotation provided in London works with University College London (UCL) and the National Health Service (NHS), England. Students rotate within NHS hospitals to experience various clinical pharmacy specialty fields. UCL is based in the heart of London and was founded in 1826. NHS, launched in 1948, and provides healthcare services to all UK residents.

At this site, there is a health system focus at St. Bartholomew’s Hospital or The Royal London Hospital, along with the opportunity for rotation in one or more of the National Health System hospitals affiliated with University College London. There is a focus on cardiology with opportunity for oncology, and a potential for research projects.

“Being able to complete a clinical pharmacy rotation in London, England was by far one of the highlights of my pharmacy school experience. While differences in healthcare between the UK and the US were readily apparent, what I really enjoyed during my time on cardiology wards was seeing the similarities between us and the pharmacists we worked with when it came to our values and goals, to provide the best care possible for our patients and work collaboratively with other members of the health care team.”

— Erin Mays, Class of 2020
Students are provided the opportunity to work with UNC Clinical Oncology Pharmacists to travel to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. On site, students work with preceptors to provide pharmacy education, conduct a short research project and round on adult hematology/oncology medicine teams. There is also an academic and health system focus within pediatric oncology and hematology. This experience is in association with Addis Ababa University and Black Lion Hospital.

“Being able to push myself to speak up more, and being able to initiate conversations with different people that have different background than me, has helped me gain more confidence. More than this, I feel like my team has become part of my family - we’ve experienced so much together in just a short period of time from food to challenges to conversations to many, many laughs. This has definitely been a humbling experience.”

— Bemnat Agegehu, Pharm.D. Class of 2020
Students work with JSS University and JSS Hospitals to learn about the role of clinical pharmacists within India. JSS College of Pharmacy has the only ACPE certified Pharm.D. programs within India and has been a leader of change for the profession of pharmacy within the country. Students will explore the evolving roles of clinical pharmacists in India and receive broad exposure across internal medicine with an opportunity to see a variety of specialty areas. This experience is in association with JSS Academy of Higher Education & Research in Mysuru, India.

“During my rotation here in Mysore, India I have been able to learn so much about India’s culture, as well as, how clinical pharmacy practice is similar and different to the United States. From day one, the students, faculty, and preceptors have gone above and beyond to make this an enjoyable and memorable experience for me. Their hospitality and willingness to help at any moment, and with any scenario was truly unparalleled. It really made for a smooth transition and helped set me up for a successful rotation!”

— Bernadette Gublo, Class of 2020
Students work with Keio University Faculty of Pharmacy to learn both the clinical aspect of pharmacy as well as the pharmaceutical science research that is included in the Japanese pharmacy curriculum.

Here, there are opportunities to shadow clinical pharmacists within Keio University Hospital, as well as visit various other hospitals around the city. Students are also exposed to the use of Kampo, a traditional Chinese medicine used in Japan. This experience is in association with Keio University and Keio University Hospital in Tokyo.

“My favorite part of Japan was learning about its unique culture. Most of my cultural training came from the students at Keio University. Outside of rotation, I had the opportunity to learn Japanese traditions and customs as the Keio students showed me around the city or as we ate Japanese meals together. The students showed me the importance of community, and particularly, the sense of unity that comes from sharing food. The students also took us to a rooftop field to play soccer which was one of my favorite activities,”

— Raena Rhone, Class of 2020
Students rotate weekly between three different health care institutions within the capital of the country. In collaboration with UNC- Project Malawi, students are able to learn about the practice of pharmacy in Kamuzu Central Hospital (tertiary referral hospital center), Lilongwe District Health Center on the Bwaila District Hospital campus, and The Lighthouse Trust HIV/AIDS clinic.

During this experience, there is a global health focus in ambulatory care, inpatient and government settings. Therapeutic areas include infectious diseases, as well as non-communicable disease states such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

“I spent 6 months of preparing and planning, over 48 hours of total airplane travel time, and 4 weeks in Lilongwe. However, all of the time spent surrounding my GPS rotation is in nowhere comparable to the amount of time I will continue reflecting on this experience and will hold this trip of a lifetime in my heart,”

— Karin Abernathy, Class of 2020
GPS students in Moldova have an unmatched experience in learning about herbal medications and pharmacognosy within health care in the country. In collaboration with State University of Medicine and Pharmacy and MedPark International Hospital, students learn about the differences in health care and pharmacy practice between the United States and Moldova.

At this site, students experience a rural health focus with broad exposure to community, health system and academic pharmacy. There is also an outdoor center for medicinal plants which offers an opportunity for students to learn about pharmacognosy or plant-based medicine.

“I gained so much more from my international rotation than I have from any of my other rotations. Not only was I exposed to the many different fields of pharmacy that are practiced in Moldova, but I was also able to learn about their culture and way of life. They are the most welcoming people I have had the pleasure of getting to know and a piece of my heart will always be in Moldova. The students and faculty that I worked with became more like family to me. I gained personal and professional relationships, as well as a wealth of knowledge about pharmacy practice around the world,”

— Liza Schimmelfing, Class of 2020

UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy students in Chisinau, Moldova.
This global experience is in partnership with UNC-Project Zambia. Students will have the chance to learn about the practice of pharmacy at the University of Zambia and the University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka. Students will work alongside clinical pharmacists and University of Zambia students.

“Our time in Zambia was full of adventure, fun, and learning. Really, we learned so much on rotations from these brilliant pharmacists and physicians who love teaching the hows and whys about every decision we make,”

— Jinah Han, Class of 2020
This global experience is in partnership with Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC). Students will experience a rural health/preventative care focus with exposure to interprofessional community health clinics. This international rotation is approximately two weeks in Honduras and two weeks in a local setting.

“I will often reflect back on and pull from my experiences in Honduras throughout my career. Despite being in a completely different country, the skills needed to deliver the best patient care is universal. Diabetes in an American patient is the same as diabetes in a Honduran patient. The biggest difference is that I was able to treat patients with a different lens. Instead of working with patients in a Durham clinic where the closest hospital is just a few miles away, I was working with patients in Limon where we were the only healthcare available in a two-hour radius. Therefore, we were providing both acute and chronic care at all hours of the day. This forced me to be adaptable and constantly switching my thinking from “what might be the best thing for this patient’s blood pressure over the next three months” vs. “what is going to get this patient’s blood pressure down within the next ten minutes” at a moment’s notice. This ability to think on my feet and be adaptable will benefit me as a future clinical pharmacist,”

— Bobbie Nguyen, Class of 2020
WAYS TO GIVE

The Global Pharmacy Scholars program is transforming students’ careers and leveraging ideas to improve human health worldwide. To sustain and grow this life-changing program, we need your help. Make a difference today:

$2,500 — Supports one Global Pharmacy Scholars student abroad

$1,000 — Provides housing for a scholar during their rotation

$500 — Pays tuition fee for one scholar

$100 — Provides meals for one scholar during their rotation

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