

# NEW YORK CITY SOCIETY OF HEALTH-SYSTEM PHARMACISTS

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FALL BULLETIN



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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



It is truly an honor to serve as President of NYCSPH this year. My journey with this incredible organization began several years ago as Membership Chair, followed by a two-year term as Secretary, then President-Elect, and now President. Each role has been an opportunity to learn, grow, and connect with some of the most passionate pharmacy professionals in our community.

Outside of NYCSPH, I am the Clinical Pharmacy Lead at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital and am currently pursuing my MBA. Balancing professional responsibilities, leadership commitments, and personal life has taught me one invaluable lesson – growth happens when you step outside your comfort zone and give yourself grace along the way.

My theme for this year, “Together We Thrive,” reflects the power of collaboration, mentorship, and shared purpose. None of us achieves success alone. Every opportunity, even the ones that seem intimidating, can open doors you never expected. So, my advice is simple: don’t say no just because you feel unready. Say yes and allow yourself the space to learn and grow into the role. You’ll be amazed at what you accomplish and the support you receive along the way.

At its core, leadership is about service – lifting others, creating opportunities, and helping those around us shine. I encourage all of us to practice servant leadership by passing forward the same guidance, encouragement, and support that helped us reach where we are today.

As we celebrate Pharmacy Week, I want to take a moment to recognize all of you who go above and beyond every day to care for patients and advance our profession. We should all be incredibly proud of the impact we make and the difference we bring to healthcare.

Together, we truly thrive.

Marina Barsoum Gerges, PharmD, BCOP  
President 2025–2026, New York City Society of Health-system Pharmacists

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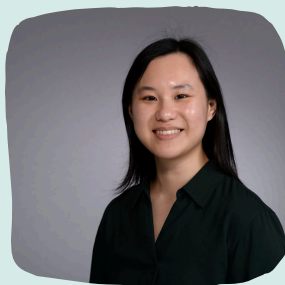
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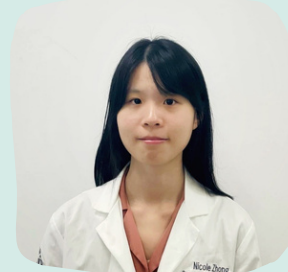
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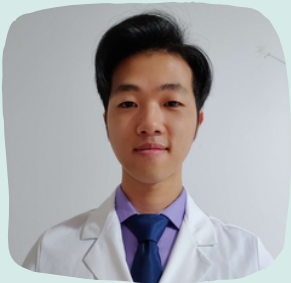
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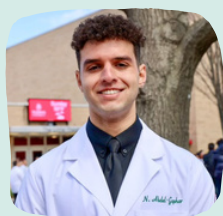
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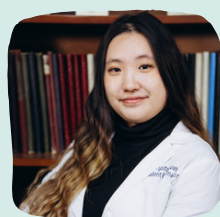
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# ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN HEALTHCARE

**How is AI currently being integrated into healthcare systems and clinical practice? Can you list some examples?**

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a general term used to describe the theory and development of computer systems to perform tasks that normally require human cognition. They can range from expert systems, which are sets of explicit programmed logic, to machine learning (ML). ML is a statistical approach to artificial intelligence and has increased in popularity as computers have become more powerful. The umbrella of ML includes everything from multivariable regressions (e.g. CHA2DS2-VASc), Bayesian pharmacokinetic modeling (e.g. vancomycin AUC), computer vision image analysis, and generative AI models. In 2018, the FDA approved the first device with an AI model that analyzed patient retinal scans for the presence of diabetic retinopathy. The usage of ML allows for faster analysis and can free up the time of healthcare professionals to do other tasks. I recommend reading the below article which gives a detailed overview of machine learning from a pharmacist perspective.

Nelson SD, Walsh CG, Olsen CA, et al. Demystifying artificial intelligence in pharmacy. Am J Health Syst Pharm. 2020 Sep 18;77(19):1556-1570. doi: 10.1093/ajhp/zxaa218.

**What are some of the key benefits and potential risks associated with the use of AI in healthcare?**

Current day AI models are a next step in advanced statistical methods of data analysis. They can identify patterns and associations within training data sets and draw conclusions based on this data. With the advancements in computer technology, we can use these complex mathematical methods to analyze more data faster. However, this does not necessarily imply the conclusions drawn from AI powered analysis are always better or "more correct." For example, implementing a model that was trained on patient data that does not reflect the actual patient population can cause erroneous responses from the model. A mismatch of what the model "knows" compared to the current problem being tasked can result in inaccurate answers. Particularly in healthcare, this can cause greater consequences. For many generative text models (e.g. ChatGPT, Copilot, Gemini, etc.), the training data they are based on is not curated, accurate, nor up-to-date health care information. As a result, they can often give misleading or inaccurate answers when used. Critical assessment of AI models prior to implementation are crucial to successful usage of AI in healthcare.



**Steven Stettner, PharmD**

Clinical Pharmacy Manager, Data Analytics  
NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital Enterprise

**Do you foresee AI significantly impacting or replacing certain roles within the healthcare workforce in the future?**

AI is already impacting roles within healthcare. Currently AI is being used to make specific predictive assessments. For example, an AI algorithm can compare a lung X-ray to those of patients with pneumonia and generate a likelihood of disease. AI has the potential to augment our capabilities and when properly implemented can provide us with the ability to raise the quality of healthcare and expand access of healthcare.



# ADVICE FOR PHARMACY RESIDENCY CANDIDATES



**Dimitrios A. Savva, PharmD, BCPPS**  
Clinical Pharmacy Manager, Pediatric Critical Care  
Program Director, PGY-1 Pharmacy Residency  
NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital

**What advice would you give to pharmacy students who are considering pursuing a residency?**

For those considering residency, clarify your goals -understand your "why" for pursuing residency. Make sure your motivation is clear! Start preparing early and seek advice from mentors and faculty members to make your application the strongest version of you! Lastly, be your genuine self - make sure you know your own value and worth!

**What do you believe are the key qualities of a residency program that help prepare residents for success?**

Some core qualities include:

- 1) broad and challenging experiences
- 2) strong preceptor and mentorship
- 3) commitment to continuous improvement
- 4) supportive learning culture

The most successful residency programs are those that challenge you clinically, support you personally, and empower you professionally. They combine strong mentorship, diverse experiences, and a culture of learning that prepares you not just to success as a resident, but to thrive as a lifelong pharmacist.

**How has residency training helped you in your pharmacy career?**

Residency helped me strengthen my clinical decision-making by exposing me to a wide variety of complex patient cases and requiring me to take ownership of care decisions under the guidance of experienced preceptors. Beyond clinical knowledge, residency taught me how to think like a clinical pharmacist, how to critically evaluate evidence, justify recommendations, and continuously self-assess to improve. It also enhanced my leadership and communication skills. Residency helped me develop confidence, adaptability, and professional resilience. The skills I gained have been ingrained into my practice and continue to shape how I approach my career growth today.



# A UNIQUE CAREER IN PHARMACY



**Elizabeth Cobb, PharmD**  
SVP, Group Director, Strategic Planning  
Mosaic Group

## **Which skills from your pharmacy background have been most transferable or valuable in your current role?**

During my time as Assistant Pharmacy Director at Mount Sinai and as a member of the P&T Committee, I built a strong foundation in evidence-based decision-making, formulary management, and bringing different stakeholders together. These experiences have been instrumental as I now lead strategic planning initiatives. Where I once led key hospital meetings, I now guide important business discussions at our agency with major clients.

Pharmacists develop the ability to translate complex clinical information into clear, actionable insights for a variety of audiences—a skill that has proven essential in my current strategic leadership role. It allows me to shape brand narratives and influence both payer and hospital decision-makers. My understanding of the healthcare ecosystem—from reimbursement models to provider workflows—helps me anticipate industry changes and design strategies that help our pharmaceutical partners achieve their goals in hospital access.

## **What is your current role and title?**

I am currently a Senior Vice President, Group Director, Strategic Planning for the Mosaic Group, an IPG Health Company. I am also the Director of Outreach for the New York State Council of Health System Pharmacists.

## **Can you describe a typical day or week in your current position?**

Every week in my role brings something new and exciting! I work with different clients and brands to develop strategies that help them succeed. My days often include researching, talking with experts, and coming up with creative solutions with my team. Sometimes I travel to meet clients or attend industry conferences, which is a great way to learn and network.

One important part of my job is presenting our agency's ideas to new clients, which involves teamwork and storytelling. As a manager, I also help my teammates grow in their careers by providing support and guidance.

What I enjoy most is how every day combines problem-solving with creativity, and no two weeks look the same. It's a fast-paced environment that's perfect for anyone who likes variety and working with others!

## **What advice would you offer to pharmacists interested in transitioning into this field?**

Networking has played a significant role in my career journey. Organizations like NYCSHP provide platforms to connect with peers and industry leaders, explore new roles, and contribute meaningfully to the profession. Building and maintaining these connections is one of my favorite aspects of being a pharmacist.

LinkedIn is also an essential tool for anyone considering a career in the agency space. My initial opportunity to transition out of the hospital came from a recruiter message that I was fortunate enough to respond to. Build your network and always stay responsive to messages, even if you're not interested in the opportunity at the moment.





# PHARMACY TECHNICIAN CAREER ADVANCEMENT

## What is the purpose of pharmacy technician training programs?

The purpose of pharmacy technician training programs is to prepare individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to assist pharmacists in providing safe and effective patient care. These programs focus on developing technical, clinical, and administrative competencies to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations. They emphasize accuracy, attention to detail, and professionalism to support the healthcare team and improve patient outcomes.

Pharmacy technicians play a vital role in addressing staffing gaps by completing an accredited program and gaining hands-on experience in an inpatient setting, including exposure to pharmacy informatics and automation.

## Can you provide an overview of the program and outline the core competencies and knowledge that participants will gain?

The program combines classroom instruction, hands-on skills labs, and experiential training. Core competencies include medication preparation, pharmacy calculations, inventory management, sterile and non-sterile compounding, and understanding drug classifications. Participants also learn pharmacy law, ethics, insurance processing, and customer service. Under the supervision of a pharmacist, technicians operate robotics and automated dispensing devices, manage inventory, process controlled substance requisitions, and collaborate with pharmacists and nursing staff to meet patient care needs.

## What career pathways or future opportunities does the program help prepare pharmacy technicians to pursue?

Graduates can work in hospital, retail, or specialty pharmacies and pursue certification exams such as the PTCB. Career advancement opportunities include operations manager, procurement manager, informatics analyst, 340B specialist, quality assurance coordinator, or roles in education, management, or regulatory compliance.



**Sandy Trueba, R.CPhT**  
NYU Langone Health



**Kim Annunziato-Pizzarro, R.CPhT**  
NYU Langone Health



# CELEBRATING PHARMACY MONTH

Happy American Pharmacists Month to all pharmacists, technicians, and those who serve in the pharmacy profession! In celebration of pharmacy week, we asked our members to share their journey with NYCSHP, their professional goal/accomplishment, and a fun fact.

## MARINA GERGES

I first joined as a student at St. John's University to network and learn more about residency. After pharmacy school, I wasn't really involved for a while, but in 2021 I became active again thanks to a friend who encouraged me to get involved. One of my biggest professional accomplishments is serving as president of this chapter. When I first became an active member, I never imagined I'd one day be in this role. Over time, I fell in love with this organization and its incredible members. It has such a strong history and an inspiring spirit, and I'm truly honored to serve as president. 2. I'm currently pursuing my MBA to continue growing both personally and professionally. I have been skiing since I was in elementary school

## STEVEN STETTNER

I joined in 2019 and became co-chair of Special Projects & Community Outreach in 2023. I enjoy participating in health fairs and making a direct impact in our community. A professional accomplishment I am proud of is expanding the usage of data analytics at my health system to proactively manage drug shortages. We recently wrote and submitted a paper describing how we set up our drug shortage committee and lessons that we have learned from managing shortages over the past 4 years. I picked up a guitar for the first time in 20 years and am relearning how to play.

## JENNI XU-STETTNER

I joined NYCSHP in 2019 and became more involved in Fall 2023 with the Special Projects & Community Outreach. I initially joined NYCSHP for the CE events but have subsequently enjoyed networking with others in the pharmacy profession and expanding our community outreach. A recent professional accomplishment involves a quality improvement project regarding screening for hepatitis C virus (HCV) in our primary care clinics. Since there is no vaccine to prevent HCV, the best way to reduce transmission and prevent long-term complications of chronic HCV infection (e.g. cirrhosis, liver failure, hepatocellular carcinoma) is early detection and treatment. We were able to exceed our screening goal and will be presenting the project at the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) Forum in December. I enjoy doing diamond painting/art!

## TAMARA OZ

I joined as a third year student back in 2018 to network with health system pharmacists in preparation for the residency. My most recent professional accomplishment is being elected as President-Elect for NYCSHP with a goal to learn from the best President Trilogy I could wish for how to lead the society and serve its members. I speak 3 languages - Russian (native), English and Turkish

## QINGXIANG MO

I just joined this year in June for the networking opportunities.  
Professional goal: Continue to fill my own knowledge gap and grow the next generation pharmacists  
Just got married in March!

## ALICE WANG

I have been a member for 3 years and joined to be more involved in the pharmacy community. A professional goal is to be a strong advocate for patients and future pharmacists. I can wiggle my ears.



# CELEBRATING PHARMACY MONTH

## HUILIN

I joined NYCSHP two years ago to gain a better understanding of the pharmacy community and practice in New York as someone who had just moved here! My professional goal includes increasing education and awareness about pulmonary hypertension, both amongst the general population and amongst pharmacists. I am an avid foodie and enjoy photography in my spare time.

## JUDY KWON

I have just joined this year to be more involved in the pharmacy community. A professional goal of mine is to be a better advocate for my patients by providing effective interdisciplinary care. I love to eat and a majority of paycheck goes to trying new restaurants!

## HELEN LI

I joined NYCSHP as a student liaison for St. John's University and have stayed on as bulletin editor after graduation. Through NYCSHP, I have met many truly amazing and empowering pharmacist which has really inspired me to want to do so much more for the profession. I have gained a lot of valuable advice and guidance and am truly grateful to be a part of NYCSHP Chapter! I can't wait to see what new opportunities awaits! I am good at claw machines.

## BRIANNA GILL

I have been a member since late April. I joined at the recommendation of several friends and classmates.

A professional goal of mine is to complete a PGY1 and find a specialty that interests me. I am closer in age to my nieces than I am to my brother.

## VICKIE POWELL

I have been a member for 35 years. I joined because my Director of Pharmacy, Harvey Maldow paid the membership for all of the Pharmacist to be a member. I have more that one professional accomplishment that I am most proud. I was hired as the first African-American Director of Pharmacy at New York Presbyterian Hospital. I was the first African American elected as President of NYCSHP. I was also past president of NYCSHP and am only the third person from New York State to be elected to the ASHP Board of Directors. I love to walk and have closed all three rings on my apple watch 170 days straight.

## MICHELLE LASZCZYCH

I became a member of NYCSHP this year during the membership drive. I joined to meet new people in pharmacy and be part of a supportive professional community.

One of my proudest accomplishments is being elected President of the Rho Chi Society at SJU. A professional goal of mine is to do residency! I love to knit!

## ELIZABETH COBB

I have been a member for 15 years. I joined early in my career and stepped into the role of Editor to help build my qualifications to be a PGY1 Preceptor at BronxCare as they were just launching their residency program. Two professional accomplishments stick out- serving as NYCSHP President back in 2009 and being chosen by my students as the 2025 TCOP Students' External Preceptor of the Year. I met Mike Tyson at ASHP back in 2012!!

## MARK KAMEL

I joined in the spring of last year after a fellow student invited me to a dinner. Securing my first internship has been my proudest accomplishment so far. I hope to one day do a fellowship! I've been to 23 countries!





# CELEBRATING PHARMACY MONTH

## CRYSTAL GUAN

I have been a member of NYCSPH since April of last year. I joined due to the encouragement and support of several pharmacy mentors to learn more about opportunities to reach out to the community as a student! One of my proudest accomplishments is when I translated a 30 minute presentation about OTC medications in Cantonese, and presented it via the Department of Aging to multiple Chinese senior centers- it was an incredibly rewarding experience. A professional goal I have is to complete a PGY-1 and PGY-2 residency, continuing to develop my clinical knowledge! I taught myself how to read Korean in 30 minutes.

## BRIANNA BRAMSWIG

I joined in February 2025 to meet health systems pharmacists and become part of the NYCSPH community I had a very healthy patient who came in with textbook broken heart syndrome. Considering her lack of medical history, she refused all meds. We had a very successful conversation discussing the importance of temporarily taking heart failure meds while she gives her heart time to heal. Together, we picked the most pertinent meds from the regimen prescribed and she agreed to take them until her follow up appointment outpatient. After graduation, I hope to continue my education by matching with a PGY 1 residency program in New York. I live near my beautiful little niece and have a nephew on the way in January!

## TINA ZHENG

I joined this year to connect with more people in the pharmacy community and become more involved in a professional pharmacy organization. As a new member, I've been inspired by the dedication and hard work of past members who helped shape the organization into what it is today. My professional goal is to mentor and teach pharmacy learners about infectious diseases. A fun fact about me is that I'm a competitive powerlifter!

## JAZMINE LI

I have been a member for about 1.5 years and joined originally to network and learn more from pharmacists in their respective fields and their paths to personal success. I stayed because I loved building relationships and took that extra step as a student to recruit more members to experience the same feeling I did! A proud accomplishment of mine was the time I spent serving as Rho Chi President 2024-2025 where I was able to establish a clinical column in the school newsletter, a mentorship program, and established professional development, exam preps, and wellness events to support students. I thrive when I see my contributions benefiting others! A professional goal of mine is to enter the pharmaceutical industry within medical affairs and continue building relationships while being a drug information expert!

I have a cat named Dad!

## MICHELE B. KAUFMAN

I joined to network and learn more about pharmacy. I have been a member of NYCSPH for over 30 years, I was initially a Royals member when I moved to NYC for an academic position @ St. John's University and later joined NYCSPH (member ~30 yrs). One of my professional accomplishments is researching, authoring and editing my first book, "Healthcare Heroes: The Medical Careers Guide," in 2019. It is a health careers guide for middle school age and up, and has won numerous rewards and is still used today to guide individuals interested in healthcare careers. A professional goal is to continue to be educate other healthcare professionals on how to best use medications in patients. I love being a drug information resource to other healthcare professionals. I play the saxophone with The Manhattan Wind Ensemble.





# CELEBRATING PHARMACY MONTH



Happy Pharmacy Month!





# CELEBRATING PHARMACY MONTH

