

NEW YORK CITY SOCIETY OF HEALTH-SYSTEM PHARMACISTS

Volume 42/ Issue 13

SPRING BULLETIN



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Marina Barsoum Gerges
PharmD, MBA, BCOP

President, New York City Society
of Health-system Pharmacists

Dear NYCSHP Members,

As we close another incredible year together, I am filled with gratitude, pride, and optimism for the future of our organization. Serving as President of NYCSHP has been one of the greatest honors of my professional journey, and I want to sincerely thank each of you for making NYCSHP such a vibrant, supportive, and inspiring community. Our theme, "Together We Thrive," truly captured the spirit of this year's programming, collaboration, and member engagement.

What makes NYCSHP special is not the number of programs we host, but the collective dedication and collaborative spirit behind every initiative. This year's programming reflected the diversity and strength of our organization. From educational sessions focused on advocacy, medication safety, cultural humility, financial wellness, and mental health, to networking opportunities designed for students, residents, new practitioners, and pharmacy technicians.

We also deepened our commitment to professional growth and leadership development through meaningful events such as the Clinical Pharmacist Panel and the NYCSHP Past Presidents Panel. These discussions not only inspired our members, but also reinforced the value of mentorship, leadership, and lifelong learning within our profession.

Bulletin Editors



Helen Li
PharmD



Tina Zheng
PharmD, BCIDP

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Message](#)



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT - CONTINUED

At the same time, we recognized the importance of wellness, resilience, and community engagement. Through events such as the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk, Cycle for Survival, Puppy Yoga, and our Pasta Making Class, members had opportunities to recharge, connect, and support meaningful causes. Our members also gave back through volunteering at community health fairs, participating in a high school Career Day, and supporting the Harlem Book Drive. These efforts reflected NYCSHP's ongoing commitment to service, outreach, and supporting the communities we serve, while reminding us that thriving as healthcare professionals also means uplifting one another.

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the dedication of our Board of Directors, committee chairs, speakers, sponsors, and members. Your passion, energy, and commitment continue to move NYCSHP forward and strengthen our profession. To our outgoing leaders, thank you for your service and the countless hours you devoted to this organization. To our incoming leaders, I am confident that NYCSHP's future is bright in your hands. And to every member who attended an event, mentored a colleague, volunteered your time, or simply showed up to support our community - thank you! Your involvement is what allows NYCSHP to continue thriving.

As we look ahead to the coming year, I encourage each of you to remain engaged, continue building meaningful connections, and seek opportunities to uplift and support one another. Together, we have accomplished so much. Together, we will continue to grow. And together, we truly thrive.

With gratitude,
Marina Barsoum Gerges, PharmD, MBA, BCOP
President, New York City Society of Health-system Pharmacists

BETTER
TOGETHER

PHARMACY ADVOCACY UPDATES



WHY IS ADVOCACY ESSENTIAL TO THE FUTURE OF THE PHARMACY PROFESSION?

Advocacy is what determines whether our profession grows alongside the constantly evolving healthcare system. It ensures that we are not left behind as changes occur. Advocacy also plays a critical role in defining the pharmacist's place in healthcare. Without it, our role could remain limited to dispensing medications. In addition, advocacy directly impacts patient care. Policies shape what pharmacists are allowed to do, and advocacy helps remove barriers so we can expand our scope and better serve our patients. For this reason, pharmacists, technicians, and students should actively engage in advocacy efforts. Involvement in professional organizations such as the New York State Council of Health-System Pharmacists and American Society of Health-System Pharmacists helps coordinate large-scale advocacy initiatives and influence policy at both the state and national levels.



Judy Haneul Kwon
PharmD, BCGP
Ambulatory Care
Clinical Pharmacist



Marissa Johnson,
PharmD, MHA, MAT, BS
Pharmacy Health
Administration Fellow

WHAT ARE SOME PROPOSED NYS BILLS THAT WILL IMPACT THE PHARMACY PROFESSION?

Senate Bill S6352:

- Currently, Collaborative Drug Therapy Management (CDTM) allows qualified pharmacists to work with a physician to review and manage a patient's drug therapy for specific diseases.
- CDTM was first introduced in 2011 and later expanded to include qualified pharmacists in Article 28 healthcare facilities (e.g. hospitals and clinics).
- The bill sunsets every two years and needs to be renewed periodically. The current bill is set to sunset in July 2026.
- S6352 would
 - Eliminate the sunset, making CDTM permanent.
 - Add nurse practitioners (NPs) as collaborating providers in CDTM agreements.
- Impact:
 - Establishes CDTM practice in NYS without concern for discontinuation if the law sunsets.
 - Expands access to CDTM in settings where NPs are the primary providers

Senate Bill S1913:

- The federal 340B Drug Pricing Program requires drug manufacturers to provide significant prescription drug discounts to hospitals and clinics located in low-income and in medically underserved areas. The discounts can be reinvested into patient care.
- Some drug manufacturers and PBMs have increasingly restricted access to 340B drugs, undermining the program's benefits.
- S1913 would
 - Prohibit discrimination against covered entities (e.g. qualified hospitals and pharmacies) based on their participation in the 340B program
 - Ban restrictions on the use of contract pharmacies
 - Block excessive administrative requirements, audits, rebates, instead of upfront discounts
- Impact:
 - Protects patient access to affordable medications through safety-net providers
 - Supports financial sustainability of safety-net hospitals and health centers that rely on 340B savings

A UNIQUE CAREER IN PHARMACY



Monica Mehta, PharmD, MPH
Director, Planning and Policy Development
American Society of Health-System
Pharmacists

MY CAREER, RECONSTITUTED

Hello, my dear New Yorkers. Although I now live in Washington DC, I lived in New York City for 20 years and loved every minute of it. I served as president of NYCSHP (2015 - 2017) and Vice President of Public Policy for NYSCHP (2011 - 2012). I also worked as a professor at Long Island University, Arnold and Marie Schwartz College of Pharmacy from 2005 to 2012, with Bronx Lebanon, now BronxCare, as my clinical practice site (shout out to the 4-train from Brooklyn to the Bronx). I worked at NewYork Presbyterian Hospital as an infectious diseases clinical pharmacist from 2012 to 2023.

In 2011, I returned to school to study public health at The Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University. I did not do this to advance my career, but rather because I wanted to understand our healthcare system. More specifically, why the United States spent so much money on healthcare while achieving relatively poor outcomes compared to other countries in terms of access to care, life expectancy, maternal health, and more. While I was studying, the Affordable Care Act was implemented. In my policy course with Dr. Michael Sparer, I learned about the legal challenges to the ACA (like the individual mandate), and the nuances of the Act (so many...Medicaid expansion, young adult coverage, how subsidies work). Serving as the class blogger also helped spark my passion for discussion and debate around public health, population health, systems thinking, and access to care. I tried to bring some of these ideas into my work as an infectious diseases clinical manager at NYP, where I focused on antimicrobial stewardship and projects involving social determinants of health with pharmacy residents.

I will not revisit the difficult days of the pandemic because we all lived through them, but I found the work of an infectious diseases clinical pharmacist to be incredibly important to public health. I am proud of what pharmacists accomplished, especially in New York City starting in March 2020.

Eventually, I realized I missed the debates and discussions from my public health days and wanted to capture that feeling in my career. Shifting from clinical pharmacy to public health felt daunting. Moving to Washington DC gave me more opportunities, but I arrived without a network and had to start again. I spent one entire year exploring the landscape to figure out where I belonged, from technology to the federal government to nonprofit organizations, and what opportunities existed for someone with a PharmD and MPH outside the hospital setting.

I relied on the contacts I already had, and people in DC were incredibly generous. It felt like a Peace Corps Spirit, where one person introduced me to three more. My network grew, and I learned about roles in small nonprofits, government contractors, federal agencies, international development, and large technology companies. I shared many of these conversations on my 2023 podcast, Career Reconstituted.

A UNIQUE CAREER IN PHARMACY

MY CAREER, RECONSTITUTED (CONTINUED)

One year after moving, I found my dream job and accepted a position with ASHP as Director of Policy Planning. I now oversee our policies from creation to refinement to approval by the House of Delegates, as well as our practice statements and guidelines. It is very different from patient care, but just as meaningful in a broader way. ASHP policies shape practice and public health, from expanding access to HIV and STI prevention services, understanding the standard of care regulatory model, to addressing the opioid epidemic and protecting safety net hospitals through the 340B program.

I would not be here without many people. I am grateful to my original mentor at NYP, Christine Kubin; my current boss at ASHP, Eric Maroyka, whose organization skills are second to none; and my career coach, Alex Barker, who taught me the art of the interview.

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

Passion and precision. Whether you are treating a complex infection or developing a guideline on sterile compounding, you must bring heart and careful attention to your work. Take pride in what you do. And my advice for pharmacists interested in this path is simple. Ask questions and connect with people. Curiosity and networking reveal your interests and open doors you might not know existed. Don't be shy. Introduce yourself. I sent a message to the CEO of Surescripts, asking him to be on my podcast at 4 a.m. one random day and he replied by 6 a.m. saying YES!

✓ believe
✓ achieve
✓ succeed

PHARMACY STUDENTS IN NYCSHP

HOW DID YOU FIRST BECOME INTERESTED IN SERVING AS A COMMITTEE CHAIR IN NYCSHP?

I first joined NYCSHP through my school's local chapter about two years ago because I wanted to stay informed about pharmacy practice in New York. When I started going to events, I noticed that there were so many members who were extremely passionate about the events that they worked on and made possible. As someone who thoroughly enjoyed the interactions and value these events brought, I wanted to make it more accessible for everyone to stay up to date with what we had available. A few months later, the opportunity for this arose when a second Digital Solutions chair position opened up, and I was able to apply. This was the perfect chance for me, as I was also interested in working on the technology side of the team to support everyone.



Jacky Wang, BPS
Long Island University
PharmD Candidate 2026

WHAT SKILLS HAVE YOU DEVELOPED DURING YOUR TENURE AS COMMITTEE CHAIR, AND WHAT BENEFITS HAVE YOU GAINED FROM HOLDING THIS POSITION?

During my tenure as a Digital Solutions committee chair, I was able to learn a lot about what goes into building a website. I had the opportunity to see what goes on behind the scenes and learned to think about details such as formatting, visuals, ease of access, and much more. This role also showed me the importance of keeping all of our information up to date as often as possible. This required me to always look for new changes and make edits as soon as they occurred. That also meant that I had many opportunities to interact with the other committee chairs and learn about their evolving timelines. One of the greatest benefits that I gained from this position was being able to learn from my Digital Solutions co-chair. I definitely wouldn't have gained so much experience at this rate without their patience and support along the way. Another invaluable benefit that I got from this position was being able to make connections with so many experts and leaders in pharmacy. Not only did I get to meet people involved with hospital practice, but I also got the chance to interact with people in industrial pharmacy.

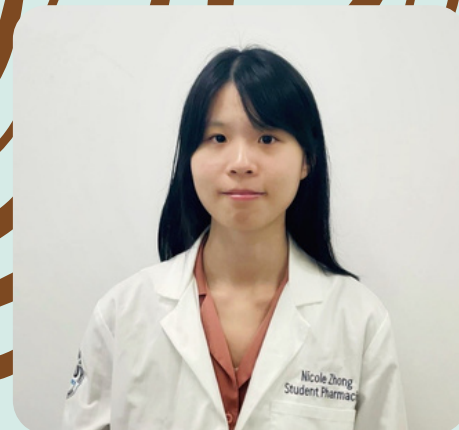
WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU OFFER TO STUDENTS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN JOINING A COMMITTEE CHAIR?

My advice would be to just go for it! When I first joined, I was also nervous, but luckily, I had some friends with me, and we were able to go through it together. The task of being a committee chair may seem daunting at first, but everyone in NYCSHP is extremely welcoming, and it's an honor to work with such distinguished leaders in the field. If you're looking to get experience outside of local school organizations, I would definitely recommend applying here. It's the perfect place to learn, grow, make new connections, and most importantly, have a fun time doing all of it!

PHARMACY STUDENTS IN NYCSHP

HOW DID YOU FIRST BECOME INTERESTED IN SERVING AS A COMMITTEE CHAIR IN NYCSHP?

Through attending the wonderful dinners with NYCSHP members, committee chairs, and e-board, I witnessed firsthand how much dedication and passion everyone poured into making each event and the organization as a whole successful. I was increasingly inspired to contribute where I could, from volunteering at the last installation to promoting NYCSHP at school. When I saw the opportunity to become a committee member, I was incredibly excited to use my digital skills in content creation to visually bring to life each event as a potential Marketing, Public Relations, and Social Media co-chair!



Nicole Zhong, BPS
Long Island University
Pharmacy Candidate Class of
2026

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU OFFER TO PHARMACY STUDENTS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A COMMITTEE CHAIR?

I would do your best to communicate with your committee co-chairs and split up the work when necessary. It's also important to keep in mind that your committee co-chairs may be busy during daytime business hours due to work or professional commitments. I would send messages or emails in advance to allow for processing time, and a good rule of thumb is to set softer earlier deadlines so that the harder deadline won't have issues being met. Please remember to be respectful and constructive as a committee chair, and you will without a doubt enjoy your time learning and being part of the NYCSHP team!

WHAT SKILLS HAVE YOU DEVELOPED DURING YOUR TENURE AS COMMITTEE CHAIR, AND WHAT BENEFITS HAVE YOU GAINED FROM HOLDING THIS POSITION?

I started off with a base knowledge on content creation, including using software such as Photoshop and Google Slides to create flyers for my school organizations. During my time as a Marketing, Public Relations, and Social Media co-chair, I learned how to better utilize the features available on Canva to create simple, yet effective displays of information. I typically enjoy a dynamic infographic, and this position has helped me hone in on creating more intentional and concise designs!



PHARMACY STUDENTS IN NYCSHP

HOW DID YOU FIRST BECOME INTERESTED IN SERVING AS A COMMITTEE CHAIR IN NYCSHP?

My journey with NYCSHP over the past two years has been incredibly rewarding. I initially joined to learn more about health-system pharmacy within New York City. As a student actively involved in many school organizations, I recognized the importance of creating connections between students, pharmacists, and pharmacy technicians. Through attending monthly meetings, I had the opportunity to network with members, gain insight into the roles of various committees, and participate in engaging events hosted by the Membership Committee. With an interest in increasing membership and advocating for the role in pharmacy, I realized that the Membership Committee aligned perfectly with my goals. This ultimately led me to pursue a leadership role as committee chair.



Jazmine Li, BPS
Long Island University
Pharmacy Candidate Class of
2026

WHAT SKILLS HAVE YOU DEVELOPED DURING YOUR TENURE AS COMMITTEE CHAIR, AND WHAT BENEFITS HAVE YOU GAINED FROM HOLDING THIS POSITION?

Serving as Membership Committee Chair has allowed me to develop both leadership and organizational skills. I have had the opportunity to plan and host engaging, interactive events, strengthening my skills in public speaking and event organization. In this role, I took on greater responsibility by representing our chapter at monthly state membership meetings, where I collaborated with peers from other chapters to share ideas and strategies for enhancing member engagement. I also gained technical and administrative experience through managing membership tracking systems, monitoring renewals, and contributing to communications such as welcome emails for new members.

One of the most meaningful aspects of this role has been the relationships I have built along the way. I have had the opportunity to connect with pharmacy professionals, build relationships with fellow students across pharmacy schools in New York City, and represent LIU within a professional organization. Additionally, working closely with my co-chair not only strengthened my leadership experience but also provided valuable mentorship and a lasting friendship that extends beyond pharmacy!

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU OFFER TO PHARMACY STUDENTS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A COMMITTEE CHAIR?

I strongly encourage pharmacy students to attend NYCSHP events whenever possible and to step outside of their comfort zones by introducing themselves to other members. I remember feeling nervous at my first event, but the welcoming environment, especially being introduced by the chapter president, made a lasting impression and motivated me to stay involved. Becoming a committee chair provides a unique opportunity to take on meaningful responsibility, collaborate with pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, and contribute to shared goals within the profession. NYCSHP has given me invaluable opportunities, professional connections, and a sense of community in a busy city -- experiences that I will always cherish.

PHARMGRADWISHLIST DEI SCHOLARSHIP SPOTLIGHT



Hajra Kamal

St. John's University
Pharmacy Candidate Class of
2026

WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR AS A DEI RECIPIENT?

Over the upcoming year, I hope to actively contribute to initiatives that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within the pharmacy community. I am especially interested in supporting programs that improve access to mentorship and resources for underrepresented trainees. As a member of NYCSPH's DEI committee, I am looking forward to connecting with a diverse network of professionals, learning from their experiences, and building meaningful relationships. I'm also excited about the opportunity to give back to the community and help create a more inclusive environment within the field.

WHAT ARE YOUR CAREER GOALS?

My long-term goal is to pursue a career in the pharmaceutical industry, where I can contribute to the development of innovative therapies and help improve patient outcomes on a larger scale.

WHY DID YOU JOIN NYCSPH?

NYCSPH stands out to me because of its strong commitment to professional development, advocacy, and fostering an inclusive community for pharmacists and trainees. The organization provides valuable opportunities to engage with leaders in the field, stay informed on advancements in pharmacy practice, and contribute to impactful initiatives that support both patients and professionals.

WHAT IS A FUN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF?

I've traveled to 16 countries!



ANNUAL ASSEMBLY 2026



NYCSHP IN A YEAR

Shoutout To OUR COMMITTEES ACHIEVEMENTS



RAISED IN FUNDS

\$38,000

IN JANUARY WITH 19 EXHIBITORS DURING THE WINTER EXHIBIT

- \$1,017.12 for **Making Strides Against Breast Cancer** by **Special Projects & Community Outreach** (in collaboration with WCSHP and Royals)
- Additional \$126.06 for **Cycle for Survival** by **Well-Being & Resilience**

RAISED

\$38,400

IN MARCH WITH 20 EXHIBITORS DURING QUAD



Winners
awarded in
NYCSHP RX
Tech Empower
Membership
Program



3

Events hosted by **Wellbeing and Resilience**: Puppy Yoga, Pasta Night, and Cycle for Survival

3

Events hosted by **Advocacy Committee**: Past President's Panel, ASHP Federal Policy & Advocacy Update with Dr. Kyle Robb of ASHP, and Career Day with Future's Ignite



PAST EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



PAST EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



PAST EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



Until next time!

