

2020 Annual Report

The Best of Times...Challenging Times

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President's Message

“It is the best of times, it is the worst of times. It is a day of tremendous opportunity, yet every day there is frustration or despair. It is a season where recognition of the good—and the harm—of medications for many stakeholders is as great as it has ever been. And, it is a season where pharmacists frequently feel undervalued, and they question the future of the profession.”

Dear Colleagues:

These words were the beginning of my address last July as I assumed the role of AACP's 120th President. How could anyone have imagined in mid-2019 how the world, our worlds, could change so significantly in just 12 months? No one in education, healthcare delivery or research has been untouched by the novel coronavirus that continues to rock the world with a seemingly unstoppable force. The opening lines of my speech are as applicable to today as they were when I spoke them, likely more so.

The year began with an amazing, record-breaking annual meeting in Chicago, the Windy City. Almost 2,900 members and guests came to enjoy the expanded education menus, hundreds of poster presentations, and most importantly, opportunities to reconnect with friends and colleagues and add new people to our networks.

The impact of the pandemic blunted the opportunity to meet in person in July 2020 and those networking opportunities will be different for participants at the Virtual AACP Annual Meeting. That said, with new tools and technologies for connecting with individuals, small groups or larger assemblies, AACP's meeting content will serve a wider audience than we ever have before.

The past year has been one focused on the actions needed to transform pharmacy education and practice. Our networks are so vital as individuals, a college or school, or a small group of members embarks upon the hard work of change. This became remarkably evident when COVID-19 forced us to leave our classrooms, laboratories and offices with virtually no warning in mid-March. AACP's networks, in the forms of our Councils, Sections and Special Interest Groups, deserve a loud shout out for the way they shared, supported and inspired one another.

Another force for change rocked our worlds this spring. My home is in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St Paul. On May 25th, 2020, the world witnessed the senseless murder of an innocent man and the arrest several days later of four members of the Minneapolis police force accused of taking his life. Protests continue around the country many weeks later. Academic pharmacy has a role to play in ending systemic racism and addressing social determinants of health and well-being that have become so compelling in the aftermath of the Floyd and other deaths and during the COVID pandemic.

It is a privilege to help guide AACP as the Association continues contributing leadership to important causes like these through education, practice, service, advocacy and research. This annual report will document how our work of the last year has moved us into action.



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Tale of Two Pandemics: Impact on AACP and Our Members

The Fall Semester of the 2019–2020 academic year began like many before it. Students arrived in August in most cases, soon after many members returned from AACP's outstanding annual meeting in Chicago. Renewed energy and many ideas gleaned from programming and networking propelled faculty and administrators into the new term. White coat ceremonies occurred on many campuses with live and often large gatherings of the new P-1 students, family members and friends, and faculty and staff. Rotations were in full swing for the Class of 2020, the members of which were actively processing decisions about pursuing residency positions or full-time employment in one of the traditional or expanding fields where their education could be put to best use.

Not all was where the Academy wished it could be. The continued downturn in applicants to our schools left too many empty seats in our classrooms. The pharmacy job market was spotty at best, with jobs for most graduates but perhaps not the kind of position or area of the country graduates were aiming to secure. AACP's top priorities were still well-aligned to address these issues, but the intended outcomes of our actions had not yet been achieved. President Sorensen laid out plans in July for a year that was focused on action! He even made major changes in how the 2019–20 standing committees would conduct their work—a great volunteerism experiment was in the works!

Late in 2019, public health officials began to sound alarms about a pneumonia-like illness, possibly a virus, that spread rapidly, appeared to have no effective treatment, and was sending increasing numbers of people, first in China and ultimately around the globe, into intensive care units that were quickly overwhelmed with too many cases. The US was unable to avoid this contagion and ultimately became the country with the highest number of cases and deaths.

The [June 2020 Issue](#) of the *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education* (Volume 84, Issue 6) includes 14 papers reflecting the impact of this pandemic on academic pharmacy. Topics range from the impact on students, how teaching and learning had to pivot to remote education very quickly, and changes in experiential and post-graduate education. Janet Engle, the new executive at the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, reflected on the role of the accrediting agency in the crisis. Lucinda Maine, AACP EVP and CEO, summarized the unprecedented commitment to collaboration among national pharmacy associations and the impact this had on advancing timely priorities for the profession. Pharmacy educators and learners proved themselves in many ways to be resourceful, resilient and committed individuals and teams.

Just as it seemed the virus was being contained in many places, multiple events that resulted in deaths of Black Americans at the hands of police officers ignited protests and violence in cities across the US and around the world. Many called violence against people of color a second pandemic that had been impacting individuals, families and communities for far too long. Systemic racism and white privilege were laid bare.

Academic pharmacy, and AACP specifically, have key roles to play in addressing these two pandemics. More effective prevention and accessible testing and treatment are key to the infectious disease case. Pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists have significant roles to play in these arenas. The issues of racism and bias, whether in education, access to health professions careers, health equity and social determinants of health are huge issues to confront and address. In neither case can pharmacy educators tackle these alone. That said, we must do more than talk; we must act and act persistently.

AACP Strategic Priorities: Moving Planning into Action

Communicating the Value of Pharmacists and Opportunities in Pharmacy Careers

Strategic Priorities #1 and #2 in AACP's current strategic plan both relate to increasing the reach and impact of communications about pharmacists and pharmacy careers. Priority #1 aims to refill the pipeline of talented individuals seeking careers in pharmacy. Programs associated with the campaign **Pharmacy is Right for Me** use social media and other channels to reach students from middle and high school as well as college students.

Below are additional highlights from Strategic Priority #1:

- ▶ Launched a new PharmCAS website and directory for the 2020–2021 cycle that offers a more contemporary and interactive design, facilitates the ability of users to easily compare Pharm.D. degree programs based on multiple criteria, and enhances the applicant experience.
- ▶ Initiated a new Pharm4Me Instagram Takeover, a monthly series of short videos featuring current student pharmacists and a behind-the-scenes glimpse into their academic, extracurricular, and campus life on the platform's stories feed, which has generated more than 25,000 impressions to date.
- ▶ Experienced a 42 percent increase in the number of Pharm4Me website sessions and a 47 percent increase in the number of new users over the past year, as well as an increased engagement and number of followers on all of Pharm4Me's social media channels.
- ▶ Offered an expanded series of Pharmacy School Virtual Fairs in summer 2020 to offset the impact of COVID-10 on in-person recruitment events across the country.
- ▶ Partnered with [CVS Health](#) to offer the second year of the CVS Health Minority Scholarship for Pharmacy Students consisting of five \$8,000 scholarships for underrepresented minorities with the goal of promoting and supporting a diverse population of student pharmacists who will care for an increasingly diverse population of patients. AACP received 390 completed applications in the first year of the award and 690 in 2020.
- ▶ Released a new Diversity Recruitment Guide that highlights programs and potential partner organizations to build better pathways for underrepresented and diverse student populations, and promote pharmacy education and careers.

The target audiences for **Pharmacists for Healthier Lives**, the Priority #2 campaign which launched in 2018, are suburban parents, caregivers and other health professionals. AACP leads this campaign on behalf of a growing list of organizations, including state and national pharmacy associations and corporate partners. Campaign objectives include increasing the recognition of pharmacists as trusted and highly accessible professionals, increasing the awareness of the extensive education that pharmacists receive, and ultimately helping to enrich the applicant pipeline for pharmacy schools. As of June 2020, there are 10 national and nine state organizations partnering on this campaign. AACP welcomes any organization that wishes to join the campaign as a financial partner at any time, as there is no deadline to join.

- ▶ The campaign utilizes several communication channels including paid social media, organic social media and earned media. All social channels direct viewers to the campaign landing page pharmacistsforhealthierlives.org.
- ▶ During the first year of the campaign (October 2018 through June 2019), paid media reached 5.7 million people in the target audiences and generated 19.7 million impressions, 15.7 million video plays and 2.5 million engagements.

AACP Strategic Priorities: Moving Planning into Action

- ▶ Year 2 of the campaign launched in September 2019, supported by the same media strategy and enhanced paid social media tracking. Through January 2020, with a 50% lower media budget, Year 2 media outperformed the Year 1 campaign for the same period. Paid media reached 3.1 million individuals and generated 9.7 million impressions, 7.1 million video plays and 1.4 million engagements.
- ▶ In March 2020, with the media landscape focusing primarily on the COVID-19 pandemic, the campaign strategy pivoted to concentrate on earned media, with organic social media support. In collaboration with our campaign partners, we developed and placed stories regarding the role of the pharmacist during COVID-19 in major media markets during Spring 2020.

Perhaps one of the few silver linings in the pandemic was the amount of media attention with excellent coverage of “frontline worker” roles pharmacists play in a crisis like the current one. Further, stories and opinions in many media channels asked why pharmacists are not allowed to contribute even more. These links take readers to several examples of these stories and opinion pieces on the pandemic:

- ▶ [Opinion: Expand pharmacists’ authority to help fight this pandemic](#)
Atlanta Journal-Constitution
- ▶ [Pharmacists Play A Key Role In The COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
WBEZ (NPR Chicago)—Reset with Jenn White
- ▶ [Debriefing the Briefing with Major Garrett](#)
May 25: American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy Executive VP and CEO Lucinda Maine
- ▶ [Debriefing the Briefing with Major Garrett](#)
June 2: Dr. Lakesha Butler

AACP also played an active role in a multi-organizational collaboration that released a joint statement in late March, communicating the potential for pharmacists to contribute to the needs of patients and communities affected by the coronavirus. Targeting state and federal policy makers as well as the media, the joint statement and aggressive follow up activities by members of the coalition yielded statements of affirmation from Capitol Hill, the White House and key agency leaders such as HHS Secretary Alex Azar and Admiral Brett Giroir, Assistant Secretary of HHS. Many governors affirmed that pharmacists should be activated for testing to increase access to those essential public health services.

In this period of turmoil related to social injustice and systemic racism, there was also recognition of roles pharmacists play in medically underserved rural and inner-city communities. Unfortunately, some neighborhoods with many peaceful protests also experienced looting and violence, which resulted in significant harm to community pharmacies which, in some cases, were virtually the only healthcare location for community residents. AACP released a statement that takes a stand against racial injustice with 13 other national pharmacy organizations.

AACP Strategic Priorities: Moving Planning into Action

Transforming Pharmacy Practice and Education

AACP Strategic Priority #3 recognizes that all the advocacy and public outreach efforts from our first two priorities will represent false promises without effective transformation of pharmacy education and practice. In too many cases, our graduates' knowledge and skills and their commitment to patient care remain out of sync with how the healthcare system integrates pharmacists into patient care services. There are structural barriers, including outdated practice regulations and payment systems. Digital information exchange of patient care plans is not yet at the point of full, real time integration and, too frequently, pharmacists' information is unavailable to other members of patients' care teams.

AACP has invested substantial time and effort into assuring that interprofessional education programs at the local and national levels integrate pharmacists and student pharmacists as the medication use experts on the team. Through the [Interprofessional Education Collaborative \(IPEC\)](#) which AACP co-founded in 2009, substantial recognition has been achieved. However, slow reforms in the actual delivery of healthcare services blunts the advancement of interprofessional collaborative practice in many care delivery systems.

The first action taken in the past year to facilitate the activation of AACP member institutions and faculty in practice transformation was active engagement in a project led by the University of Pittsburgh and funded by the Community Pharmacy Foundation. The [Academic-CPESN Transformation \(ACT\) Pharmacy Collaborative](#) now involves more than 85 colleges and schools of pharmacy working in collaboration with pharmacists in the growing Community Pharmacy Enhanced Services Networks. The aim is to support the transformation of community-based pharmacy practice from a product-based model to a care delivery model.

Key highlights of other Strategic Priority #3 include:

- ▶ AACP awarded [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Grants](#) for a third year in 2020 to fund AACP members who are engaging in educational research. The [American Foundation for Pharmaceutical Education](#) collaborates with AACP on this faculty development program.
- ▶ In Spring 2020, AACP presented a four-part webinar series with continuing education (CE) credit focused on pharmacy transformation efforts. Topics of the webinars included pharmacy workforce needs, Interprofessional Education and Practice, Professional Identity Formation in pharmacy education, and an examination of the relationship between CPESN, Flip the Pharmacy and the ACT Pharmacy Collaborative.
- ▶ The [Pharmacy Workforce Center \(PWC\)](#), a non-profit corporation of national pharmacy organizations of which AACP is the secretariat, sponsored the 2019 [National Pharmacist Workforce Survey \(NPWS\)](#). The results of the 2019 NPWS, which is the fifth survey of this type, was released in Spring 2020.
- ▶ AACP is partnering with National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations (NASPA) and the Cardinal Health Foundation on the Optimal Prescribing in Pain Management (OPPM) Initiative. This is a multi-stakeholder collaborative to drive leadership on improving prescribing in pain management by providing 2-year grant funding to engage pharmacists in helping to prevent opioid use disorder by implementing strategies that drive prescribing of pain medications (both opioid and non-opioid) and to facilitate appropriate pharmacists' interventions. Grants were provided last year to five states partnerships for work spanning 2019–2021.

AACP Strategic Priorities: Moving Planning into Action

Fortifying Change Through Relevant Research and Scholarship

Change in any context must be approached with both vision and discipline. Implementation science is an essential element of sustainable practice change in healthcare and numerous other fields. The American College of Clinical Pharmacy awarded a multi-million dollars implementation science grant to the UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy and University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy in 2016. The project specifically examined the integration of pharmacists into primary care medical practices. This work significantly influenced the work of all the AACP standing committees in 2019–2020 and specifically the work the Research and Graduate Affairs Committee was charged to address. Achieving President Sorensen’s bold aim that by 2025 fifty percent of primary care physicians would have a formal relationship with a pharmacist will require efforts aimed at sustainable practice transformation in all areas of pharmacy.

It became clear early in the work of this committee that implementation science should become a strategic target for AACP in Priority #4. Programs to expand the talent pool for implementation science should be priorities for professional development programs and scholarly publications for institutional research leaders, faculty and graduate students at member institutions.

Other key initiatives in Strategic Priority #4 which seeks to enhance AACP members’ research and scholarly activities include:

- ▶ Support for the competency framework for pharmaceutical graduate education through a Council of Deans task force.
- ▶ Advocacy for research funding via Research America, Coalition for Health Funding and other collaboratives.
- ▶ Membership in the Societies Consortium on Sexual Harassment in STEM to develop policies and practices that increase equity and improve the climate and culture in academic pharmacy.
- ▶ Participation in the NAM Action Collaborative on the Opioid Epidemic in the U.S. AACP continues to collect activities related to the opioid crisis at colleges and schools of pharmacy across the U.S. and maintains a database of more than 460 activities submitted by 110 schools. Findings from the survey were presented at the 2020 Virtual Rx Summit Poster Session in April 2020. AACP also promoted research using the database through a trainee travel award and mini session at Virtual Pharmacy Education 2020 and ongoing support for members of the Substance Use Disorder SIG who are analyzing the database activities.
- ▶ [The AACP New Investigator Award Program](#), which provides start-up funding for new pharmacy faculty’s research programs, presented a total of 16 awards in 2020.
- ▶ In 2020, three \$2,500 AACP Social and Administrative Sciences (SAS) Section Summer Research Exchange Mentorship awards were sponsored by the American Foundation for Pharmaceutical Education (AFPE.) These awards will support student pharmacists as they pursue research with host mentors outside of their home institutions. Students complete a research experience with a SAS faculty member outside their home institution, building their professional network and skills for residency, fellowship, and further graduate studies.
- ▶ AACP continues to offer and expand programming related to research and graduate education at its meetings, including the Research Symposium at INsight 2020, webinars in support of the competency framework for pharmaceutical graduate education in partnership with AAPS and FDA, and the Research and Education Poster session and Trainee Poster Competition at Virtual Pharmacy Education 2020.

AACP Strategic Priorities: Moving Planning into Action

President Sorensen dedicated the work of AACP and our standing committees to the development of action plans to stimulate change at the local, state and national levels in 2019–20. The reports from all six committees are currently accessible in www.ajpe.org as Early Release publications. Key highlights articulating action priorities include the following strategies:

- ▶ The critical examination of current Pharm.D. education and post-graduate training identified many opportunities for enhancement leading to the call for a Center for Academic Innovation and Practice Transformation at AACP.
- ▶ The Academic Affairs Committee conceptualized new approaches to current pharmacists' continuous professional development, encouraging the colleges and schools to take a lead role and for AACP to partner with organizations, like APhA, in the implementation of APhA ADVANCE to support professional development efforts.
- ▶ The Professional Affairs Committee developed plans to facilitate pharmacy schools' efforts to accelerate the development of interprofessional practices within their geography of influence.
- ▶ The Student Affairs Committee developed a plan to advance the efforts of pharmacy schools to establish strong professional identity formation in pharmacy graduates.
- ▶ The Strategic Engagement (Advocacy) Committee developed a plan to catalyze pharmacy schools' efforts to partner with pharmacy and medical societies for the purpose of advancing collaborative practice.
- ▶ Implementation science will be key to accelerating and sustaining practice transformation and the Research and Graduate Affairs Committee's work revealed that academic pharmacy must build additional expertise in this discipline to maximize our contributions through timely research.

The work of these committees, as well as the Council committees and taskforces, will significantly influence the development of a new AACP strategic plan for 2021 and beyond.

Planning for the Future: Core Operations and Work to Inform the 2021–2025 AACP Strategic Plan

Strategic priorities #5–8 address core member services, finances, our people and the infrastructure for delivering programs and services. Over the past year, the AACP Strategic Planning Committee, chaired by President-elect Anne Lin, worked with consultants at iBossWell, Inc. to conduct member needs analyses. Beginning with focus groups at the 2019 Annual Meeting and pilot surveys, an Institutional Member Needs Survey was administered in the first months of 2020. Responses were received from 117 of the 143 CEO deans. A topline summary of these results is integrated into an annual meeting program titled "Planning for the Future of Pharmacy Education". Terri Moore, AACP Senior Director for Academic Services, recorded this presentation.

An invitation to complete an Individual Member Needs Survey was sent to all AACP members, excluding the CEO deans, in late February. Approximately 300 surveys were completed but soon after its dissemination the Academy became focused on completing the Spring term during the pandemic. AACP ceased all activity on this portion of our planning efforts and will modify that survey by incorporating specific questions related to the pandemic. We anticipate fielding the new survey sometime in August.

Results from these analyses will be provided to the 2020–21 AACP Strategic Planning Committee chaired by Stuart Haines, AACP 2020–21 President-elect. That committee will prepare a revised strategic plan to present for adoption by the delegates at the 2021 House of Delegates in Toronto, Canada.

Concluding Thoughts

Planning in the face of the uncertain times in which AACCP and our members find themselves will present interesting but exciting challenges and opportunities! President-elect Haines and the AACCP staff welcome all suggestions and ideas that members have for new programs, modification of existing programs and sunsetting programs that may no longer be on-point in meeting the needs of our members.

What became so obvious throughout the ongoing pandemic is that the platforms and tools that AACCP provides our members were essential during times of crisis. The sharing of strategies and resources across the AACCP Connect Communities between March and June represent the best of being in communities where “all teach, all learn and all share” is our mantra.

Despite the pivot to remote education and association management in the last quarter of this past year, academic pharmacy delivered on its promise to our learners through agility, innovation and perseverance – true grit! And the AACCP staff teamed with each other, our members and key vendors to plan and deliver an amazing annual meeting!

That said, we can't wait for the day when we can convene in person again! Zoom, GoToMeeting and other communications tools have helped us immensely, but nothing can take the place of face-to-face networking in the halls between sessions, at social events, and all those places and ways we remain connected. Stay safe and stay healthy!

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