

Fall 2021

SharksRx Newsletter Fall 2021

Nova Southeastern University

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College of Pharmacy
NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

NSU
Florida

SHARKS NEWSLETTER

FALL 2021



Dean's Message



Michelle A. Clark, Ph.D.
Dean

Fall 2021 has arrived and, with it, our return to campus full-time. I am excited to welcome our incoming and returning students in all our programs.

While this year will look different as we return to campus, and maintain health and safety standards, our commitment to student success and academic excellence remains the same. The College of Pharmacy is dedicated to student success and we move forward thinking positively about the future. Faculty and staff are here to help and guide you as we transition back to being safe on campus. I encourage you to take advantage of the many services available to you through Nova Southeastern University and the College of Pharmacy.

The College will continue to follow public health and university guidelines, keeping everyone informed as we enter the Fall. We are used to adapting for natural disasters, unforeseen circumstances, and helping our students be successful and graduate. That will not change. Rest assured in our continued commitment to developing professionals who will be leaders in the science and practice of pharmacy.

This year we welcomed 268 incoming Sharks to the *Pharmily*: 241 Pharm.D; 11 Ph.D; 5 M.S. in Pharmaceutical Sciences; and 11 M.S. in Pharmaceutical Affairs. See below for more information on our orientation and activities occurring in the college.

Fins Up!

Michelle A. Clark, Ph.D.

College of Pharmacy New Student Orientation 2021



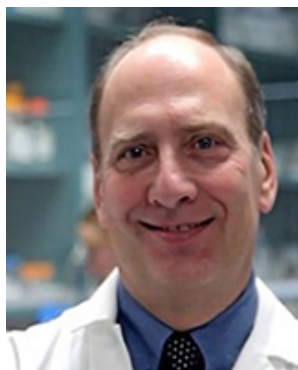
The college is thrilled to welcome 268 new students across four programs and three campuses into the *Pharmily*. A variety of programming was designed to enhance communication with the new students beginning with the first round of accepted students in late 2020.

Students took part in pre-orientation sessions, emails, phone calls, as well as in-person and zoom meetings. At these meetings, the diverse group of students received updated information regarding the status of academic activities and how the college planned to

return to on-campus learning in Fall 2021. As a result of the enhanced communication plan, students came to the New Student Orientation well prepared to dominate as new members of the *Pharmily*!

Orientation activities were tailored to the needs of each program, and was inclusive of an overview of the curriculum, exam policies, co-curricular programming, academic policies and procedures, and for the Pharm.D. students, the experiential education process. We look forward to the coming year and hope it brings the new students with new-found knowledge, friends, and community!

Renowned Professor Appointed Chair, Pharmaceutical Sciences Department



NSU College of Pharmacy is excited to announce that **Benedict C. Albensi, Ph.D.** joined our *Pharmily* as Professor and Chairperson for the Pharmaceutical Sciences Department. Albensi is highly accomplished in the areas of pharmacology, neuroscience research, and administration. He has spent his career driving investigation into mechanisms of dementia, Alzheimer's disease, brain injury, mitochondrial dysfunction, memory, and aging using basic, translational, and clinical research approaches.

Albensi earned his Ph.D. in Neuroscience from the University of Utah School of Medicine, then went on to Georgetown University School of Medicine and University of Kentucky as a post-doctoral scholar and fellow, respectively. Albensi spent the past 15 years in academia at the University of Manitoba, where his work has largely focused on

mitochondrial dysfunction in Alzheimer's disease. His research has shown very early deficits and sex-based differences in mitochondrial function before the appearance of plaques and tangles, the classic hallmarks of Alzheimer's disease.

At NSU he will be co-director of the Institute for Brain Research and Integrated Nutrition (B.R.A.I.N) which focuses on brain metabolism and the crucial roles of antioxidant and nutritional factors across the lifespan. Specifically, research efforts will center on metabolic pathways which support the unique functions and energy demands of the brain, including antioxidant requirements as well as the interconnecting pathways that support epigenetic regulation of gene expression.

Distinguished Professor Retires – Manuel J. Carvajal, Ph.D.

Nova Southeastern University (NSU) College of Pharmacy wishes **Manuel J. (Manny/Manolo) Carvajal, Ph.D.**, all the best on his retirement and his transition to Professor Emeritus effective July 1, 2021.

An academician for more than 40 years, Carvajal was a faculty member at the University of Florida and Florida International University prior to joining Nova Southeastern University. At NSU College of Pharmacy, he was the founding chairperson of the Sociobehavioral and Administrative Pharmacy (SAP) Department where he was



responsible for a cadre of scholars who worked together to train M.S., Ph.D. and Pharm.D. students. Carvajal was instrumental in the establishment of the Ph.D. in Pharmaceutical Sciences program and, in 2016, the M.S. in Pharmaceutical Affairs, an innovative program that captured his commitment to providing students an opportunity to enter the pharmacy profession.

As Professor Emeritus he will continue his research and publications, and continue to mentor and collaborate with NSU faculty members. As an authority on matters related to the pharmacist workforce, his scholarly work has attained national and international recognition. Knowledgeable of our history, challenges, and capabilities, Carvajal will continue to add important perspectives to the discussion and recommend solutions as we move forward. We wish him all the best in his well-deserved retirement!

Faculty, Alumni, and Student Leaders at FSHP



Dionis F. Malo, Pharm.D. ('10)
Board of Directors



Stacey Maravent, Pharm.D. ('02)
Board of Directors



Farima Raof, Pharm.D. ('17)
Chair Elect



Dave Lacknauth, Pharm.D. ('02)
Treasurer Elect



Jeremy Espeut ('23)
Student Director

We are proud to announce that the above faculty, student, and alumni leaders have been elected to serve on the Board of Directors at Florida Society of Health-System Pharmacists (FSHP).

Faculty awarded \$199,445 Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Expansion of Practitioner Education Grant



Devada Singh-Franco, Pharm.D.



Daniela Fernandez, Pharm.D.



William R. Wolowich, Pharm.D.



Jillian Paprota, D.O.



Michelle Krichbaum, Pharm.D.

A team of faculty from the College of Pharmacy has been awarded \$199,445 for a grant entitled "*Interprofessional Substance Use Disorder Education: Implementation of a required program to improve knowledge of Entry-Level Doctor of Pharmacy and Medicine students in a Hispanic-serving institution*". The faculty team lead by **Devada Singh-Franco**, Pharm.D., includes pharmacy faculty **Daniela Fernandez**, Pharm.D. ('18), **William R. Wolowich**, Pharm.D., Jillian Paprota, D.O. from the Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine, and Michelle Krichbaum, Pharm.D. of Broward Health Medical Center (BHMC).

The two-year grant includes an elective course in the Doctor of Pharmacy program and an interprofessional educational program at BHMC. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of assessment and treatment principles related to substance use disorders. Additionally, the grant enables interprofessional training, bringing together residents at BHMC, pharmacy students, and allopathic medical students. All participants are required to complete a six-hour Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) training administered by the University of Pittsburgh Program Evaluation and Research Unit.

COP Faculty awarded the President's Faculty Research & Development Grant (PFRDG)



PFRDG Recipients, left to right: Tricia Gangoo-Dookhan, Pharm.D., Young Kwon, Ph.D., Jean Latimer, Ph.D., David Mastropietro, Ph.D., Yadollah Omid, Ph.D., and Hossein Omidian, Ph.D.

Six COP faculty were awarded the President's Faculty Research & Development Grant (PFRDG) for Excellence in Research and Scholarship:

- **Tricia Gangoo-Dookhan**, Pharm.D. ('00), 'Evaluating the impact of enhanced TCM follow-up calls on hospital readmissions'
- **Young Kwon**, Ph.D., 'Site-specific, thrombolytic conjugates to address MMP-9 burst from neutrophils'
- **Jean Latimer**, Ph.D., 'Molecular Analyses of the Five Pathways of DNA Repair in Gulf War Illness'
- **David Mastropietro**, Ph.D., 'Development of ultra-fast oral disintegrating tablets for pediatric preanesthesia'
- **Yadollah Omid**, Ph.D., 'Hybrid hydrogel for localized ocular drug delivery via conjunctival route'
- **Hossein Omidian**, Ph.D., 'Therapeutic Compositions Containing Abuse-Deterrent and Surface-Active Agents'

Congratulations to all!

New Telepharmacy Services Program – Clinical Pharmacy Solutions



Amidst the struggles of the COVID-19 pandemic, opportunities have arisen for expanding the pharmacist's role in patient care. During a time when social distancing has become a necessary part of life, telehealth services have been a major tool to ensure a safe environment for patients and health care workers.

As such, NSU College of Pharmacy created Clinical Pharmacy Solutions (CPS) to provide telepharmacy services through partnerships with local primary care offices. The main goals of this program are to provide profitable pharmacy services, innovative student learning opportunities, research prospects, and to develop a national reputation in the area of telepharmacy services. CPS will offer unique application-based, real-life virtual educational experiences for students with operational centers at all three College of Pharmacy campuses. The services offered include medication therapy management, medication adherence, transitional care services, chronic care management, and chronic disease state management. Furthering collaborative pharmacy practice, CPS will exemplify the impact and importance of the pharmacist/medication expert within the multidisciplinary team during and post-COVID through telehealth. For more information contact **Goar Alvarez**, Pharm.D. ('94) at galvarez@nova.edu.

Jeremy Espeut "I Can Too" Student Scholarship



Pharm.D. student **Jeremy Espeut** ('23), class president, dean's ambassador, President's 64 member, dually enrolled Pharm.D./M.B.A. student, and recently inducted Student Director on the FSHP 2021-2022 board, is paving the way for future pharmacists and giving back to students at NSU College of Pharmacy. The Jeremy Espeut "I Can Too" Scholarship will be awarded to a student in the college this academic year. Espeut says his biggest blessing is his family who emigrated from Jamaica almost four decades ago. They instilled in him a strong work ethic and determination to reach his goals as well as love and compassion for all races, ethnicities, and cultures. His drive for success comes from them.

Welcome new Faculty and Staff Members



Dmitriy Minond, Ph.D. joined the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences as an Associate Professor. Minond is a biochemist specializing in drug discovery with a strong interest in cancer and neurodegenerative diseases. He received his Ph.D. in Chemistry and Biochemistry from Florida Atlantic University. He went on to complete post-doctoral studies at The Scripps Research Institute before becoming an Assistant Member at Torrey Pines Institute for Molecular Studies and, consecutively, an Associate Professor at Harrison School of Pharmacy at Auburn University. Minond is a member of International Proteolysis Society and American Peptide Society, has authored more than 40 scientific articles and book chapters, and serves as a reviewer for multiple scientific journals and grant review panels. He is a recipient of multiple grants, including Florida Biomedical

Council and NIH R01 "HTS for selective inhibitors of meprin a and b" in collaboration with Scripps Research Florida.



Erika Zwachte, Pharm.D. ('20) was appointed Clinical Assistant Professor in Pharmacy Services at NSU College of Pharmacy. She will be involved in students' and residents' education and provide clinical services. In addition to her faculty responsibilities, Zwachte will also work with a managed care organization, Primus, LLC, assisting patients with managing various chronic diseases. Zwachte recently completed a one-year post-graduate residency at NSU's Clinic Pharmacy where she focused on general community-based care. During her residency, Zwachte was heavily involved in the NSU COVID-19 Vaccination Initiative that provided the NSU community with close to 6,000 vaccinations.

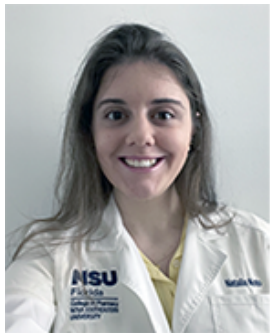


Shamirah Abraham, B.S. - Administrative Coordinator I for the Ph.D., M.S., and Pharm.D. programs working closely with Drs. Castejon and McGory, associate deans of the respective programs.



Toni Spadaro – Administrative Coordinator I assisting Karen Fiano, Pharm.D. assistant dean of Assessment and Accreditation, and Elizabeth Shepherd, Pharm.D., assistant dean for Strategic Partnerships and Program Development.

Students Experience the NSU Edge at Accelerating Therapeutics for Opportunities in Medicine (ATOM)



Natalia Noto
Ph.D. student



Zahra Mehrabi
Pharm.D. student ('23)

Natalia Noto, second year Ph.D. student and **Zahra Mehrabi**, Pharm.D. student ('23) were selected to participate in the ATOM consortium 12-week Summer 2021 internship - a truly eye-opening and unforgettable experience. They were trained to use the coding language PYTHON as well as RuleBender (rule based modeling and simulation) in a short and accelerated bootcamp provided through the organization and Butler University. Utilizing their academic training and clinical experience, Noto and Mehrabi developed computational models. These models were advanced with no preliminary base and truly tested their abilities to use clinical knowledge as well as data driven science and artificial intelligence to predict specific outcomes of cancer therapies. They

were able to develop models that can be utilized in the future to shorten the timeline of drug development through artificial intelligence and predictive pattern behavior. The students stated:

"It was an irreplaceable experience that any student would be lucky to gain. It is extremely satisfying and rewarding to accomplish something through methods that 12 weeks prior you had zero experience with. With the right opportunity and support, anything is possible."

NSU College of Pharmacy, seeks partnership with industry, business, and health care organizations to provide students with experiences outside of the classroom. Contact Elizabeth Shepherd, MBA, Pharm.D. (elizshep@nova.edu) for more opportunities to work with the College and its students.

Students in the News

Nima Ataei ('22) and **Aaron Johnson** ('22) produced and hosted the first podcast at Florida Society of Health-System Pharmacists annual meeting this summer.

Danial Mehranfard ('22), under the mentorship of **Robert Speth**, Ph.D., professor, pharmaceutical sciences, was awarded the Gateway to Research fellowship award (<https://lnkd.in/eysqVdY>) from the American Foundation for Pharmaceutical Education. Mehranfard will spend the next year exploring the "Anti-proliferative and Anti-inflammatory effects of the Renin-Angiotensin System Modulators as Novel Therapeutic Agents for Rheumatoid Arthritis Treatment".

Alumni Leadership and Achievements



Carla Luque, Pharm.D. ('94) was awarded the IPA Roman Maximo Corrons Inspiration and Motivation Award from the Florida Pharmacy Association. The award is given to those who inspire others to continue to advance the profession by guiding and supporting visionary leadership.



Silvia Torres, Pharm.D. ('95) started a new position as Principal Medical Science Liaison-Microbiome and Gastroenterology Ferring Pharmaceuticals at Ferring Pharmaceuticals in Miami, FL.

Nick Mordwinkin, Pharm.D. ('04) was promoted to Senior Director, Corporate Development at Gilead Sciences. Mordwinkin will lead a variety of transactions including partnerships and M&A in inflammatory diseases as well as corporate

Shivana Syne, Pharm.D. ('04) started a new position as Systems Operations, Corporate Pharmacy at Baptist Health South Florida.



development activities for all of Gilead's inflammation franchise and support the full range of deal making activities including search and evaluation, due diligence, negotiation, and transaction execution.



Jennifer Gershman, Pharm.D. ('06) started as Clinical Course Developer at Accreditation Council for Medical Affairs (ACMA)



Eric Larson, Pharm.D. ('07), received a proclamation that declared May 27, 2021 as *Eric Larson Day* in the city of St. Cloud, Florida. Larson, the owner of Prescriptions Unlimited, sourced and delivered personal protective equipment to first responders

in the St. Cloud police and fire departments, and other agencies to help them stay safe during the pandemic.



Christine Manukyan, Pharm.D. ('07) was recognized as one of the Top 20 Female Entrepreneurs Disrupting Their Industries in 2021 by Disruptors Magazine. Manykian (formerly Chukajian) is the founder of the Functional Medicine Business Academy™, a best-selling author, STORRIE™ podcast host,

and an international speaker. To read more visit [Disruptors Magazine](https://disruptorsmagazine.com) online.



Marcia Demers, Pharm.D. ('09) completed her dream and published her book "*Out of the Fire – From Poverty to Prosperity*". The book takes the readers on a journey from humble beginnings growing up in Jamaica to a life of prosperity as a prominent pharmacist in the United States.



Kaleed Mohammed, Pharm.D. ('09), Regional Pharmacy Manager at Broward health received the *Excellence in Leadership* award at the Florida Professional Pharmacy Society. Mohammed believes pharmacists have a vital role in helping make better professionals.



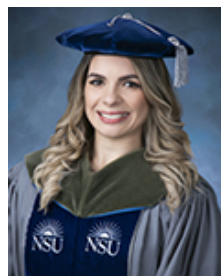
Ariel Zlich, Pharm.D. ('13) started a new position as Pharmacy Director at Onco360 Oncology Pharmacy. Onco360 has developed an oncology-specific pharmacy dispensing and clinical model that provides value-based solutions for patients, physicians, hospitals, payers, and manufacturers.

Danielle Lerch, Pharm.D. ('16) was promoted to Deputy Director, Product Manager, Fluzone High Dose and Flublok at Sanofi Pasteur.

Rodney Colon, Pharm.D., ('21) received the *Resident of the Year* award at Brookdale Hospital Medical Center in New York.



Christian J. Gonzalez Hernandez, Pharm.D. ('21) was *Resident of the Year* for 2021 at Broward Health Medical Center.



Carolina Rosario, Pharm.D. ('21) received the residency *Award on Professionalism* from the VA Caribbean Health Systems in Puerto Rico.



Dorinda Segovia, M.B.A., Pharm.D. ('92), vice president of pharmacy services at Memorial Healthcare System (MHS), was awarded the *Mentor of the Year* during the Annual FSHP Meeting.



Rani Sanan, Pharm.D., M.S. ('21) started a new position at QuVa Pharma, Inc. in quality assurance.

Upcoming Alumni Events

The College of Pharmacy Alumni events and Continuing Education courses are updated on the College of Pharmacy [website](#).

The NSU Alumni Association (NSUAA) hosts a variety of programs and events to keep you involved and active throughout the year. Please check the [NSUAA website](#).

Share Your Story

Email your updates and stories to copalumni@nova.edu.
Please include one or two high resolution photos when possible.

Join our social media groups and keep updated on what's happening in and around the College of Pharmacy.



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