



School of Pharmacy
University of Pittsburgh

2020
Graduation
Ceremony

Friday, April 24, 2020

Heartfelt Thoughts to the Graduating Class

Dear Class of 2020,

The faculty, staff and I share our heartfelt congratulations to you on your graduation, which promises to be memorable because of the joyousness of this event and also because of our unprecedented distance from each other today due to the pandemic.

We have watched with pride as you matured to the young professionals and scientists that you are today. Each of you is leaving your indelible print on PittPharmacy and leaving a legacy for those who come after you.

You have enriched our School and its traditions while you were students. And I know you will enrich PittPharmacy's outstanding reputation of excellence, innovation and leadership as you join our more than 5,000 alumni.

I congratulate you as you become my professional colleague and step up to a new level of responsibility. Some of you will become health care providers; others will be generating new knowledge; and all of you will be joining teams who will share common goals. Thank you for accepting your responsibility to serve humankind in whatever role you have chosen.

On behalf of the faculty and staff, I offer sincere warm wishes of your success and happiness in the career that awaits you. Please keep in touch! We look forward to sharing your journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia Kroboth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Patricia D. Kroboth, PhD

Dean and Dr. Gordon J. Vanscoy Distinguished Service Professor

Program

National Anthem

Introduction of Faculty

Patricia D. Kroboth, PhD

Dean and Dr. Gordon J. Vanscoy Distinguished Service Professor

Welcome

Patricia D. Kroboth, PhD

Presentation of Graduates

Doctor of Pharmacy

Doctor of Pharmacy Class of 2020 Video

Scott R. Drab Preceptor of the Year Awards

Stanford I. Cohen Teacher of the Year

Doctor of Pharmacy Class of 2020 Reflection

Class President, Kiana R. Green, PharmD

Graduate Program Class of 2020 Video

Presentation of Graduates

Master of Science in Pharmaceutical Sciences

Doctor of Philosophy in Pharmaceutical Sciences

Graduate Program Faculty Member of the Year Award

Graduate Program Class of 2020 Reflection

Alexander J. Prokopienko, PharmD, PhD

Welcome from Alumni Society Board President

Christine Ruby-Scelsi, PharmD

Oath of a Pharmacist

Appreciation from Graduates

Hannah A. Akerberg, PharmD

Katelyn N. Rudzik, PharmD

Amina Ibrahim Shehu, PhD

Aishwarya Vasudevan, MS

Alma Mater

Closing Remarks

Patricia D. Kroboth

Class of 2020 Video Celebration

Graduates

Doctor of Pharmacy

Benjamin P. Abinader
Hannah A. Akerberg
Amy L. Andreaggi
Christian A. Andreaggi
Marissa A. Angino
Rishi A. Arora
Rebecca O. Babalola
Samantha L. Bailey
Nicole A. Barber
Christine L. Barthen
Victoria E. Blake
Pooja Boghara
Sawyer B. Bressler
Lauren Brock
Matthew T. Brock
Meghan N. Browning
Casey M. Butrus
Colton D. Byerly
Marissa L. Campagna
Jessica N. Canonge
Dillan E. Casanova
Jessica L. Cercone
Jaehee Cho
Taylor J. Conrad
Emily B. Craine
Kim N. Dao
Garrett M. Day
Kara A. DeGrave
Ravi J. Desai
Rachel E. Douglass

Shannon L. Dudich
Lauren E. Exley
Nicole C. Farah
Domenick J. Francis
Olivia M. Fritz
Keely C. Gambler
Samantha T. George
Kiana R. Green
Samuel T. Gundling
Melanie T. Hawn
Jeong (Julia) W. Heo
Gwang-Yee Hu
Esther Yerim Hwang
Jarad W. Ickes
Jenna M. Ingram
Kelly A. Jenniches
Jennifer L. Jordan
Haram Ka
Cameron C. Karnick
Hannah J. Kelly
Jordan M. Kester
Nathan Z. Kiebler
Emily L. Kistler
Abigail K. Kois
Christopher M. LaFratte
Kimberly L. Landsittel
Polina Langer
Alyssa M. Lear
Jenny Sun Li
Haley M. Lien

Daniel Lim
Caleb F. Lynch
Kevin M. Mahar
Thomas G. Mancuso
Diana H. Mansour
Alexandra N. Maresh
Madison G. McConnell
Evan R. McGarry
Maura K. McGonigal
Erin N. McIntyre
Alexander K. Miller
Mitchell E. Mirabile
Ellis P. Mirone
Kathy E. Monangai
Steven R. Moretti
Gabrielle C. Nam
Emily A. Novak
Divya A. Patel
Megha A. Patel
Adam R. Patrick
Catherine I. Pfendner
Marisa R. Postava
Allen L. Potter
Dhanuvarshini Prakasam
Domenica G. Ricciuti
Katelyn N. Rudzik
Shivani Sampathkumar

Caylee R. Sams
Carly N. Schaechter
Spencer G. Schlecht
Eric A. Schneider
Jeffrey M. Schottenfeld
Daniel P. Schrum
Lina Shao
Carson E. Shoemaker
Julianna E. Slomer
Danielle E. Snyder
Andrew W. Stehley
Brittany E. Steiner
Damaris A. Szmaciasz
Tsion Z. Tafesse
Gina E. Tamanini
Alexandria M. Taylor
Gerald R. Taylor, III
Yuwei Vivian Tsai
Katherine A. Van Golen
John M. Wang
Erin L. Wasylson
Joseph W. Weidman
Rachel L. Writer
Lauren Xu
Amy Ling Zahn
Jinli Zhao

Class Officers

President: Kiana R. Green

Representatives: Hannah A. Akerberg, Gwang-Yee Hu

Master of Science in Pharmaceutical Sciences

Yuang Chen

Thesis: Farnesylthiosalicylic Acid-derivatized PEI-based Nanocarrier for Improved Tumor Vaccination

Advisor: Song Li, MD, PhD

Yun-Shan Chiang

Thesis: Development of a Vaginal film for Delivering a Sperm-Deactivating Non-Hormonal Contraceptive Candidate, Lupeol

Advisor: Lisa Rohan, PhD

Shuhan Liu

Thesis: In Silico Simulation of DUSP-YIV906 Protein-Ligand Interactions and DUSP3-ERK Protein-Peptide Interactions

Advisor: Junmei Wang, PhD

Xiguang Qi

Thesis: The Performance of Gene Expression Signature-Guided Drug-Disease Association in Different Categories of Drugs and Diseases

Advisor: LiRong Wang, PhD

Mingzhe Shen

Thesis: Pain Chemogenomics Knowledgebase (PAIN-CKB) for Systems Pharmacology Target Mapping and PBPK Modeling

Investigation of Opioid Drug-Drug Interactions

Advisor: Zhiwei Feng, PhD and Richard Bertz, PhD

Aishwarya Vasudevan

Thesis: Micropatterned, Mucoadhesive, Ocular Films for the Treatment of Diabetic Keratopathy

Advisor: Vinayak Sant, PhD

Siyi Wang

Thesis: Characterizing the Binding Region of GPCRs Based on Molecular Simulation and Energy Decomposition

Advisor: Zhiwei Feng, PhD

Yifei Wang

Thesis: MYC-binding lncRNA EPIC1 Promotes AKT-mTORC1 Signaling and Rapamycin Resistance in Breast and Ovarian Cancer

Advisor: Da Yang, MD, PhD

Ziqian Zhang

Thesis: YAP/TAZ-Inhibitor-Based Drug Delivery System for Cancer Therapy

Advisor: Song Li, MD, PhD

Doctor of Philosophy in Pharmaceutical Sciences

Celeste Alvarez

Dissertation: Synthesis and Structure-Activity Relationship of Allosteric Inhibitors of the AAA ATPase p97

Advisor: Peter Wipf, PhD

Haizi Cheng

Dissertation: The Role of Bone Morphogenetic Protein in Regulating Cell Cycle of Aged Muscle-Derived Stem Cells Osteogenic Potential In Vitro and Bone Regeneration In Vivo

Advisor: Johnny Huard, PhD and Samuel Poloyac, PharmD, PhD

Ashley Fancher

Dissertation: Disrupting Androgen Receptor Transactivation Domains to Identify Lead Compounds with Potential to be Optimized and Developed into Prostate Cancer Therapeutics

Advisor: Paul Johnston, PhD

Firuz Gamal Feturi

Dissertation: Site Specific Immunosuppression for Promoting Vascularized Composite Allograft Survival and Reducing Systemic Immunosuppression Related Morbidity

Advisor: Raman Venkataramanan, PhD

Ziheng Hu

Dissertation: Achieving Personalized Medicine Using Machine Learning: Clinical Data Mining Studies on Coronary Heart Disease, Substance Use Disorder, and Alzheimer's Disease

Advisor: Xiang-Qun (Sean) Xie, PhD, EMBA

Kunal Shriratan Jhunjhunwala

Dissertation: Rectal Suppository as a Versatile Platform for Delivering Physicochemically Diverse Antiretrovirals for HIV Prevention

Advisor: Lisa Rohan, PhD

Ziv Zalman Kirshner

Dissertation: Effects of Estradiol and Selective Estrogen Receptor Agonists on Biochemical Endpoints in the Brain: A Comparison between Transitional and Surgical Menopause Rat Models

Advisor: Robert Gibbs, PhD

Stanton J. Kochanek

Dissertation: Data-Driven HTS Strategies for Selection of Drug Combinations and 3D Models for Physiologically Relevant Drug Discovery

Advisor: Paul Johnston, PhD

Joshua D. Niznik

Dissertation: Deprescribing of Acetylcholinesterase Inhibitors in Older Adult Nursing Home Residents with Severe Dementia

Advisor: Carolyn Thorpe, PhD, MPH and Samuel Poloyac, PharmD, PhD

Akhil Pravinkumar Patel

Dissertation: Bioinspired Hydrogel Formulations for Bone Regeneration - Fabrication, Characterization, and In Vivo Efficacy Evaluation in Mice and Rabbits

Advisor: Shilpa Sant, PhD

Alexander J. Prokopenko

Dissertation: Effect of Kidney Disease and Gut-Derived Uremic Toxins on Flavin Monooxygenases: Clinical and Translational Research Studies

Advisor: Thomas Nolin, PharmD, PhD

Amina Ibrahim Shehu

Dissertation: Pregnane X Receptor Activation Potentiates the Hepatotoxicity of Pharmacoenhancers

Advisor: Xiaochao Ma, PhD

Harisudhan Thanukrishnan

Dissertation: Pharmacological Approaches to Preserve Renal Grafts and to Optimize Immunosuppression in Renal Transplantation

Advisor: Raman Venkataramanan, PhD

Hongfei Zhang

Dissertation: Optimization of Buprenorphine Dosing in Pregnant Women

Advisor: Raman Venkataramanan, PhD

School of Pharmacy Academic Regalia

The origins of the academic dress date back to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. American universities established a code of regulations in the late nineteenth century that is currently followed by most universities in the United States. Today, faculty and graduates wear academic regalia as an honor. While most universities use black for the cap and gown, some have chosen gowns in a color representing the school. The regalia also includes a hood, which varies in length and in color to recognize achievements. Each color on the hood has meaning.

The interior lining of the hood designates the university that awarded the degree. Thus, Pitt blue and gold lines the hoods of University of Pittsburgh graduates. The velvet portion of the hood designates specific degree or discipline. Olive velvet designates those who have earned the Doctorate of Pharmacy (PharmD) degree. Golden yellow is the color for Master of Science (MS) degree, regardless of discipline. Likewise, dark blue velvet designates the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree, regardless of discipline.

School of Pharmacy Faculty

Poonam Alaigh
Ameer S. Ali
Sherrie L. Aspinall
Neal J. Benedict
Lucas A. Berenbrok
Jan H. Beumer
Kim C. Coley
Sharon E. Connor
James C. Coons
Sharon E. Corey
Colleen M. Culley
Amy C. Donihi
Scott R. Drab
Kerry M. Empey
Philip E. Empey
Tanya J. Fabian
Bonnie Falcione
Roberta M. Farrah
Zhiwei Feng
Christian A. Fernandez
Mary M. Folan
Alexis M. Gaggini
Carl Gainor
Robert B. Gibbs
Sandra L. Gill
Leslie L. Gingo
Victoria L.B. Grieve
Deanne L. Hall
Inmaculada Hernandez
Edward T. Horn
Donna M. Huryn
Carlo J. Iasella
Prema C. Iyer
Heather J. Johnson
Paul A. Johnston
Stanton Jonas
Lauren J. Jonkman
Jaden J. Jun
Levent Kirisci
Amanda S. Korenoski
Patricia D. Kroboth
Song Li
Xiaochao Ma
Lee A. McDermott

Melissa A. McGivney
Terence F. McGuire
Susan M. Meyer
Margaret B. Minnigh
Thomas Nolin
Sraavan K. Patel
Karen S. Pater
Samuel M. Poloyac
Brian A. Potoski
Janice L. Pringle
Jennifer A. Pruskowski
James J. Pschirer
Catherine Rebitch
Bridget T. Regan
Maureen D. Reynolds
John Riley
Lisa C. Rohan
Shilpa Sant
Vinayak Sant
Christine M. Scelsi
Denise Schiff
Kristine S. Schonder
Amy L. Seybert
Iman H. Shaik
Susan J. Skledar
Randall B. Smith
Pamela L. Smithburger
Kangho Suh
Jingjing Sun
Dennis Swanson
Ralph E. Tarter
Lauren E. Trilli
Gordon J. Vanscoy
Michael Vanyukov
Raman Venkataramanan
Margaret M. Verrico
Junmei Wang
LiRong Wang
Wen Xie
Xiang-Qun Xie
Ying Xue
Da Yang
Michael A. Zemaitis
Min Zhang

Oath of a Pharmacist

I promise to devote myself to a lifetime of service to others through the profession of pharmacy. In fulfilling this vow:

I will consider the welfare of humanity and relief of suffering my primary concerns.

I will apply my knowledge, experience, and skill to the best of my ability to assure optimal outcomes for my patients.

I will respect and protect all personal and health information entrusted to me.

I will accept the lifelong obligation to improve my professional knowledge and competence.

I will hold myself and my colleagues to the highest principles of our profession's moral, ethical, and legal conduct.

I will embrace and advocate changes that improve patient care.

I will utilize my knowledge, skills, experiences, and values to prepare the next generation of pharmacists.

I take these vows voluntarily with the full realization of the responsibility with which I am entrusted by the public.

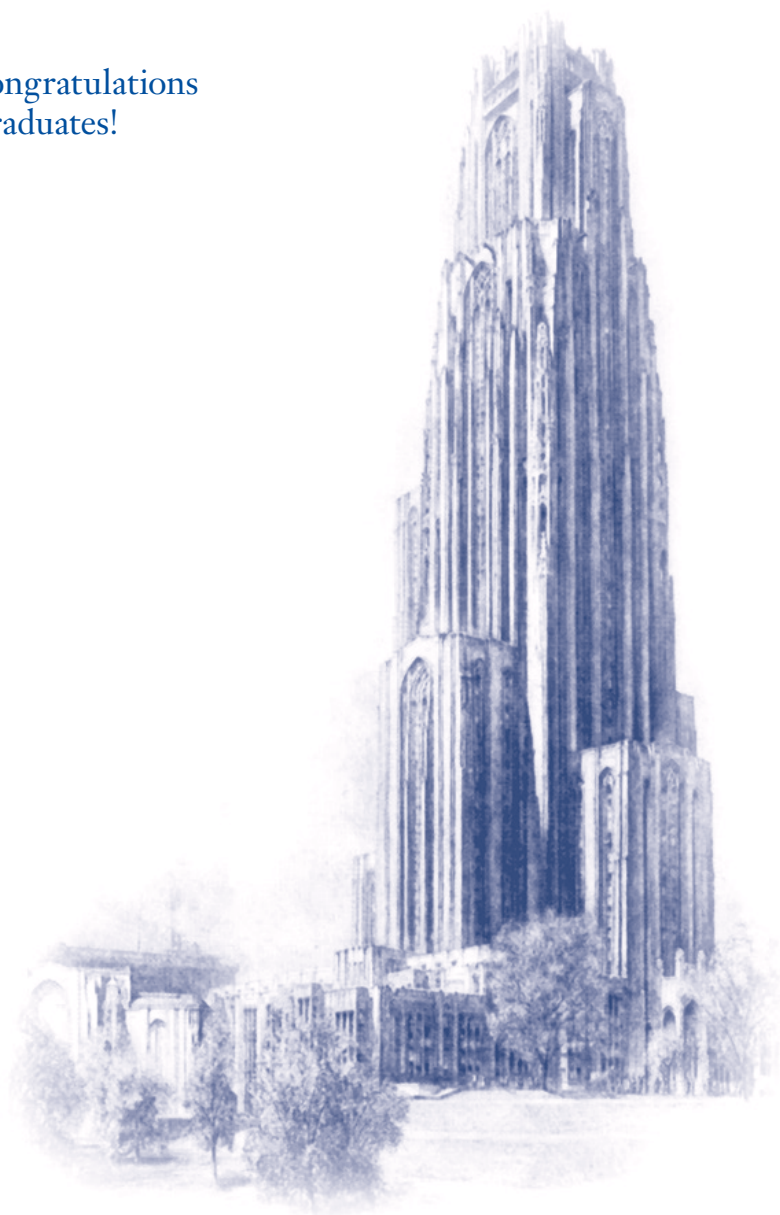
Alma Mater

Alma Mater, wise and glorious,
Child of Light and Bride of Truth,
Over fate and foe victorious,
Dower'd with eternal youth.

Crowned with love of son and daughter,
Thou shalt conquer as of yore.
Dear Old Pittsburgh, Alma Mater,
God preserve Thee evermore!

*Lyrics by
George M.P. Baird (1909)*

Congratulations
Graduates!



University of
Pittsburgh

School of Pharmacy