



WESTERN NEW ENGLAND
UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE of
PHARMACY and
HEALTH SCIENCES

InSites: Winter Edition '21-'22

Reaching New Heights at Baystate

Briana O'Connell, Class of 2022

Springfield, Massachusetts—
My Block 4 rotation was in the Emergency Department at Baystate Medical Center, precepted by Tim Pchelka. Baystate Medical Center is a Level I Trauma Center located in Springfield, MA which provided many opportunities to care for a diverse patient population. The ED pharmacists are responsible for responding to all traumas and resuscitations brought to the hospital, which included Code Blues, rapid sequence intubation, stroke alerts, sepsis alerts, STEMI's, COPD exacerbations, seizures, overdoses, and more. As a student, I was fortunate to have many opportunities to integrate with the ED team by attending all resuscitations, investigating medication questions, providing dosing recommendations, completing vancomycin monitoring, explaining mechanisms of action, confirming IV compatibilities, and investigating drug-drug interactions. I was also actively involved in communicating with EMS to retrieve appropriate information regarding the patient, which included gathering the story, medication lists, and relevant laboratory data.

The rotation was strongly structured for learning and professional growth. There was something new to see and learn every hour of the day. I looked forward to my shift every single day and often found myself coming early and staying late just so that I could soak up a little bit more.



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Reaching New Heights at Baystate (continued)



Below, Emily Duff, Briana O'Connell, and preceptor Tim Pchelka stand in front of the Life Star critical care helicopter atop Baystate Medical Center's helipad.

It was incredible to see how much the healthcare team truly valued pharmacy input throughout resuscitations and how heavily involved the pharmacists were in the patient's care in terms of recommending appropriate doses and physically drawing up medications at the bedside. Providers often directly sought out the opinion of the pharmacists when determining the next appropriate steps of care. Given the wide variety of learning experiences and the genuine excitement that I felt each day, this rotation absolutely confirmed my practice interests in critical care and emergency medicine.

Tim was an incredible preceptor. It was

clear from the beginning that he is passionate about the work that he does every day. Tim made me feel like a valued member of the team and actively sought out opportunities for me to be involved in nurse education and answering provider questions. He made sure to ask me questions throughout resuscitations, prompting me to investigate questions that I had not previously considered. His most common question throughout the day was, "So, what's your differential diagnosis?" This was just one example of how Tim always challenged me to think one step deeper, to consider all the possible reasons a patient could be presenting with similar symptoms, and to evaluate the

"I cannot begin to explain how much this rotation experience positively impacted me and my outlook on my future influence as a pharmacist."



appropriate course of therapy. Tim made learning enjoyable, advocated for me as a student by increasing my opportunities for learning, and he always encouraged me to feel confident in my recommendations. His second most common question throughout the rotation was, "Is that a statement or a question?" Asking me this ensured that I felt confident in my responses to questions, which was helpful in prompting me to explore supporting literature as well as build my confidence throughout the rotation.

To be a successful preceptor, I believe that it is incredibly important to create a supportive environment where students feel comfortable learning. Tim challenged me to investigate questions, but never made me feel poorly for not knowing the answers to questions on the spot. He gave me time to think about my answers and to find supporting literature if needed. I think that it is also important for a preceptor to express enthusiasm about their area of practice and to identify how their

student learns best. Our APPE year is an incredibly important time to explore our passions and to prepare for a future as pharmacists, so making the most out of our time as students is absolutely crucial.

I cannot begin to explain how much this rotation experience positively impacted me and my outlook on my future influence as a pharmacist. I left the rotation with so much more knowledge and confidence in my abilities. I am so grateful for the experience and would recommend this rotation to anyone who has the opportunity to take it.



What's next for WNEU COPHS students?

Briana O'Connell has always been passionate about critical care concepts in pharmacy school and was excited that her APPEs confirmed these interests. She plans to pursue post-graduate residency training with a specialization in either critical care or emergency medicine.

Three IPPEs in One

Emily Cofsky, Class of 2023

My name is Emily Cofsky and I am a current PY3 at Western New England University. This past semester, I got the opportunity to do an IPPE rotation with Dr. Housman, Dr. Whitman, and Dr. Ostroff. I spent 5 weeks at Baystate Medical Center with Dr. Housman, 5 weeks at UMass Memorial Medical Center with Dr. Whitman, and 3 weeks at Kidney Care and Transplant Services of New England with Dr. Ostroff. Each site gave me the opportunity to complete a different project which helped my professional growth throughout the rotation.

At Baystate, I worked alongside the infectious disease team. Every day I attended rounds with the ID PGY2 pharmacy resident, ID attending, ID fellow, and ID residents. At the beginning of the day, I would use Epic to workup a patient and come up with a recommended treatment plan and any adjustments to their antibiotic therapy. I would present the patient to my preceptor, Dr. Housman, and then we would discuss it. During this portion of the rotation, I also got the chance to do a journal club. I presented a journal club on the MERINO-2 trial to my preceptors, WNE APPE students, and some members of the Baystate ID team. The trial looked into the use of meropenem versus piperacillin/tazobactam for definitive treatment of bloodstream infections caused by Amp-C producing organisms. My experience at Baystate definitely sparked my interest in specializing in the future, possibly even in infectious diseases.





Three IPPEs in One (continued)

My experience at UMass was a big shift in practice sites. At this location, I was in an ambulatory care setting at an oncology/hematology outpatient clinic. We called patients who were starting on cancer medications to go over their medication dose and frequency, counseled on what to do for a missed dose, went over their goals of therapy, vaccinations, adverse reactions to expect, alarm symptoms, and storage and handling precautions. Once the patient started the regimen, we would call to check up on the patient two weeks later to monitor for any new side effects and address how the therapy was going so far. Throughout this portion of the rotation, I presented a patient case to the PY2 Class. I went through a case about a patient with a diabetic foot ulcer

and taught the class the basics of infectious disease treatment. I talked about the goals of therapy, non-pharmacological therapy options, how to collect the culture, how to grade the severity of the wound, and how to choose the proper antibiotic by using the Sanford Guide. This presentation was a great opportunity to teach the class below me on a topic they haven't learned yet, while also improving my own presentation skills. This site gave me lots of practice interacting with patients and introduced me to the field of oncology pharmacy.

At the renal pharmacy clinic, I was able to get more experience in an ambulatory care setting. The patients we interacted with primarily had chronic kidney disease, diabetes, hypertension, and

"Throughout this portion of the rotation, I presented a patient case to the PY2 Class... This presentation was a great opportunity to teach the class below me on a topic they haven't learned yet, while also improving my own presentation skills."

What's next for WNE COPHS students?

Emily Cofsky currently works at UMass Memorial Medical Center in Worcester, MA.

She hopes to be an inpatient pharmacist in the future.

various other complications. We had regularly scheduled appointments with approximately 3-5 patients per day. During this rotation, I got the chance to workup a patient before their appointment by looking into their electronic health record (EHR). I presented it to Dr. Ostroff, and we discussed the possible therapy options. During the appointment, I talked to the patient about their medications and took notes on the interaction. I completed a SOAP note that was put into the EHR afterwards. I also worked with another student to create a diet handout for the patient, since she had expressed concern about her diet during the appointment. The patient had been told by doctors to eat a diet low in sodium, potassium, and phosphorus, so we assisted her by creating a handout with a comprehensive list of foods that followed this diet. We often ended our days with a topic discussion on subjects such as

motivational interviewing and anemia. During this portion of the rotation, I worked on a formal drug information request. I chose to research if patients with chronic kidney disease should restrict their dietary protein intake. This project helped enhance my literature research skills and increased my familiarity with clinical guidelines.

Overall, this rotation was a great opportunity to stimulate my professional growth for the future. The projects that I completed prepared me well for my upcoming APPE rotations. My preceptors for this rotation were and continue to be a great resource for me. They were all so helpful and I really appreciate the time and effort they put into teaching me new things throughout the rotation. This experience helped me develop many skills that will be useful in the future, and I encourage other students to apply for this IPPE too!



Valerie Amedeo, preceptor Yousef Toma, and Eve Carciofi pose in front of Optum Specialty Pharmacy in Phoenix, Arizona

What's next for WNE COPHS students?

Valerie Amedeo's post-graduation goals include completing a PGY1 and PGY2 residency specializing in pediatric pharmacy.

She aspires to become a board-certified pediatric pharmacist to ensure safe and effective drug use and optimal medication therapy outcomes in the pediatric population.

Exploring Specialty in Arizona

Valerie Amedeo, Class of 2022

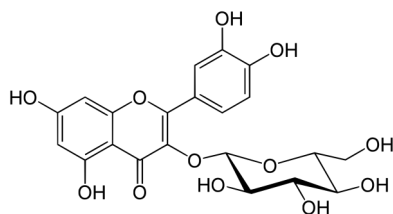
Phoenix, Arizona — My block 4 ambulatory care APPE rotation was at Optum Specialty Pharmacy in Phoenix, Arizona. There, I was able to expand my knowledge of specialty medications and their indications – which aren't typically seen in the community setting. I had the opportunity to speak with patients directly to complete medication therapy management consults and recommend options to lessen the effects of adverse reactions. Some of the disease states covered included inflammation, like rheumatoid arthritis, atopic dermatitis, and psoriasis, and cancer, such as breast cancer, prostate cancer, and renal cell carcinoma.

Throughout the rotation, we would have various topic discussions to review the disease states of the medications we were covering to ensure we were knowledgeable on the topic and medications. We also had at least one journal club every week to explore the research efforts for specialty medications. I specifically looked into a journal article discussing bicitgravir, emtricitabine, and tenofovir alafenamide in virologically suppressed adults with human immunodeficiency virus.

I had several memorable experiences when speaking with patients, but one that sticks out is when I was talking with a cancer patient. This patient in particular was Spanish-speaking and noted that they were experiencing discomfort upon urination as well as frequent urination with Ibrance. Due to adverse effects, the patient reported skipping ~2 doses/cycle, taking 19 rather than all 21 doses. I was able to contact their doctor to inform them of the adverse reactions and suggested that the patient might be showing signs of a UTI.

(cont. page 7)





Faculty Feature: Dr. Daniel Kennedy

The Western New England University COPS was recently awarded a \$300,000 research grant from Quercis Pharma. The grant, *The Role of Isoquercetin and/or Zafirlukast in the inhibition and possible treatment of cancer and such other diseases* is a four-year grant that will allow further development of the University's patented work on Zafirlukast in combination with Quercis's patented isoquercetin blend.

The grant will fund a PhD studentship in the laboratory of Dr. Daniel Kennedy, Department of Pharmaceutical and Administrative Sciences Chair and Professor of Pharmacology. Dr. Kennedy's laboratory explores a new class of drugs that can potentially treat diseases such as cancer, heart attacks, strokes, and pulmonary emboli. This work will expand on Dr. Kennedy's current NIH funded study exploring Zafirlukast for this purpose which is undergoing a Phase II clinical trial.

"This grant will further establish WNE as the preeminent institution in pharmacy, and pharmaceutical science education in Western Massachusetts," says Dr. Kennedy.

Faculty Feature: Dr. Kam Capoccia

At the Western New England University and Big Y foods Inc. Consultation and Wellness Center, Dr. Kam Capoccia teaches students about the challenges and successes people with diabetes face every day. The interactions with patients and the opportunities to improve their quality of life and outcomes are just some of the reasons why students enjoy her rotation and why she was named 2020-2021 Faculty Preceptor of the Year.

Dr. Capoccia also volunteers for the Massachusetts chapter of the Association of Diabetes Care and Education Specialists. Through this national organization, Dr. Capoccia has each pair of students write a blog article for the Pharmacy Community of Interest



(COI). The article is peer-reviewed by healthcare professionals who are members of the Pharmacy COI and results in a publication for students to add to their resume. It's a win of education for other health care professionals and a win resulting in a publication for the students!

Changes in the OPA

We would like to congratulate Operational Coordinator Joanne Moore on her retirement. Joanne worked in the experiential office for twelve years. Many of you may remember Joanne as the point of contact for site lists and CE programs offered by the college. Although we will miss Joanne and her wealth of knowledge, we wish her the best on her well-deserved retirement.

We are also happy to introduce Dr. Dominic DeFilipi, PharmD, BA. He will be the new Operations Coordinator for the Office of Professional Affairs starting January 10, 2022. He is a Class of 2020 graduate of the University of Rhode Island with degrees in pharmacy and Spanish language studies.

Dr. DeFilipi is eager to work in this new role and will be found inputting schedules, cataloguing site requirements, and recruiting new preceptors in CSP 210. His email is dominic.defilipi@wne.edu and his office phone is (413) 796-2046

The OPA is also proud to introduce our new Executive Director of Professional Affairs, Dr. Melissa Mattison. Dr. Mattison graduated from the University of Rhode Island with a BS in pharmacy then returned to school at the University of Florida for her PharmD degree. (cont. on page 8)



Betterment, Bedside, & Burnout

Sienna Wurl, Class of 2023

To those untrained in emotional intelligence, the concept may seem like common sense- “that person seems sad, I should help them” or “if I’m nice, others will be nice to me.” Upon further reflection, it is clear that emotional intelligence goes beyond this. It’s about discovering a deep understanding of yourself- your personality, strengths, and weaknesses- and utilizing that information to improve your interactions with others. It is about finding healthy ways to handle your own thoughts and emotions in order to make your patients feel comfortable and welcomed in your presence. Far too often, this is overlooked in higher education. It is expected that students are professional, but being professional is far from being emotionally intelligent.

“Betterment, Bedside, and Burnout: The Emotionally Aware Pharmacist”, a new elective taught by Dr. Kimberly Pesaturo, addresses these shortcomings in healthcare education. Through interactive lectures, students learned about burnout, imposter syndrome, guilt, resilience, vulnerability, and so many more subjects that typically don’t make it into the curriculum. With a semester to dive deeply into our own personalities and emotional wellbeing, we were able to obtain

a deeper understanding of our personalities and see how we can use them to our advantage when interacting with patients and coworkers. The major concepts covered in this course centered around the idea that we have to heal ourselves in order to heal others. For example: imposter syndrome, which is a mentality that plagues many healthcare professionals- that we are not worthy to be in the position we are, regardless of how hard we worked to get there. We also discussed safe relationships, nutrition, sleep, and physical wellness. Healthcare professionals frequently fall victim to burnout, and pharmacy students are no exception. *(cont. page 8)*



“I would highly recommend this rotation to each student as an opportunity to experience a different kind of patient population and disease states, as well as explore a new state and have fun with new friends.”

Exploring Specialty in Arizona (continued)



When she wasn’t busy making evidence-based interventions for her patients at Optum Specialty Pharmacy, Valerie Amedeo explored the Desert Southwest.

Balance is known to increase the risk of infection in patients taking it and according to the package insert has a >1% incidence rate.

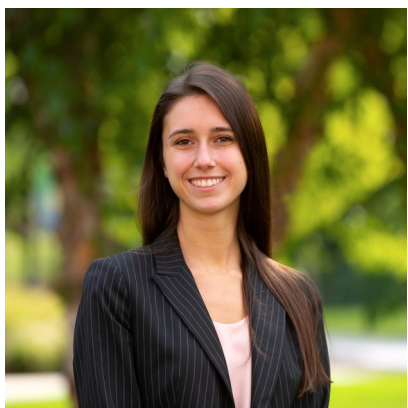
I recommended that the medication should be stopped until symptoms are resolved or that the medication should be reconsidered if the MD believes the risks outweigh the benefits. The patient was very grateful for my help since it was difficult for them to contact the prescriber and explain their situation – especially with a language barrier.

I was able to leave this rotation with a better understanding of specialty pharmacy and the monitoring that goes into specialty medications. It’s important that patients are adherent due to the severity of their disease state, but it’s also a hard balance when the patient is experiencing

severe side effects. My preceptor, Dr. Yousef Toma, was very helpful in ensuring that we were confident in the information before speaking with patients, as well as discussing difficult patient cases with us to guarantee we were providing the patient with evidence-based recommendations.

I had such an impactful time with Optum Specialty Pharmacy and was even able to explore Arizona as well! I would highly recommend this rotation to each student as an opportunity to experience a different kind of patient population and disease states, as well as explore a new state and have fun with new friends.

Betterment, Bedside, & Burnout (cont.)



This elective showed us how to avoid burnout and compassion fatigue in order to maintain a healthy work/life integration. We also discussed overcoming shame/guilt through resilience and grit, as we enter into the workforce and will be faced with difficult decisions or possible mistakes as we become practicing clinicians. The concepts learned in this class will prove themselves valuable in practice. The only way to help others is to help

ourselves, which stems from an understanding of our emotions. When interacting with patients in the future, we will be more aware of strengths and weaknesses regarding communication.

As pharmacists, we need to understand that patients come to us in a place of vulnerability, and we must respect and honor the fear that comes with vulnerability. By understanding the mentality of our patients, we can make them feel safe and understood. Emotional intelligence is bigger than solely being nice to others- it is about empathizing with them and using our own emotions to better connect with them and ourselves. Healthcare professionals can come off as “cold”, but the emotionally intelligent pharmacist will be welcoming, trusted, and respected. This elective shows students how to enhance their relationships with their patients by connecting with their own wellbeing.

What's next for WNE COPHS students?

As she prepares to begin her APPE rotations, Sienna Wurl plans to apply for PGY1 residencies with the goal of becoming either a clinical or ambulatory care pharmacist.

“We have to heal ourselves in order to heal others.”

Changes in the OPA (continued)

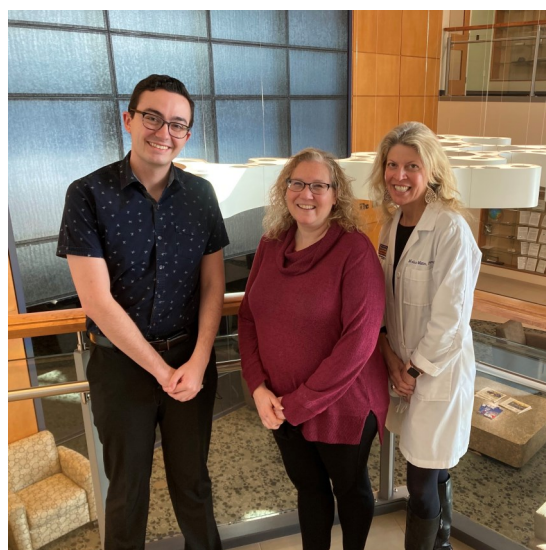
Prior to joining the faculty at Western New England University, Dr. Mattison worked in community pharmacy for Walgreens in Connecticut, Louisiana, and Massachusetts where she precepted students and trained new graduate pharmacists.

As the Executive Director of Professional Affairs, Dr. Mattison oversees interprofessional education and community outreach as well as experiential education. Dr. Mattison's areas of interest include health and wellness, motivational interviewing, interprofessional education, self-care, and disease prevention. Additionally, Dr. Mattison is the preceptor for the community care resident on campus. Dr. Mattison was recognized as

Professor of the Year in 2013 and 2020 and received the Excellence in Scholarship award in 2015.

Heather DeMar is the Director of Experiential Education. Heather graduated from Roberts Wesleyan College with a BS in elementary and secondary education and is currently finishing up her MS in organizational leadership. Prior to joining the OPA at Western New England University, she spent two years working for the Department of Pharmaceutical and Administrative Sciences at Western New England University.

Heather and her husband reside in Springfield, MA and have three children in college. Heather enjoys traveling, and spending time with her family.



*Your WNEU OPA Team (left to right):
Dominic DeFilipi, Heather DeMar, and Melissa Mattison*

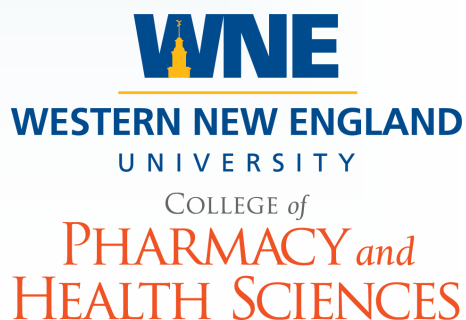
CE Opportunities in Western Mass — Spring 2022

| Sponsor | Dates | Topics |
|---------|--|--|
| PTCE | Online, on demand Links provided right: | “More than Skin Deep: The Pharmacy Technician's Guide to Treating Skin Irritations” : Dr. Melissa Mattison “Taking a Closer Look at Ocular Health” : Dr. Kam Capoccia |
| HPWM | Tues. February 8th | TBD |
| UMass | Mon. February 14th | CPS Insider II: Pharmacy Updates |
| UMass | Tues. February 15th | CPS Insider II: Pharmacy Updates (Repeat Offering) |
| WMPHA | Wed. February 16th | Asthma and COPD Review |
| UMass | Mon. March 7th | CPS Staff: Pipeline Agents Update |
| UMass | Wed March 9th | MH DUR Board: Pipeline Agents Update (Repeat Offering) |
| WMPHA | Wed. March 16th | Cannabis for Pharmacists: Dr. Dominic DeFilipi |
| HPWM | Tues. April 12th | TBD |
| WMPHA | Wed. April 20th | COVID Therapeutics: WNEU/Walgreens Resident Dr. Jacob Greenwald |
| UMass | Mon. May 16th | CPS Insider III: Pharmacy Updates |
| UMass | Tues. May 17th | CPS Insider III: Pharmacy Updates (Repeat Offering) |
| WMPHA | Wed. May 18th | Diabetes Update: WNEU/Big Y Resident Dr. Isabelle Dieu |
| WNEU | Tues. June 7th | Medication Safety (6 hour CE) |
| WMPHA | Wed. June 15th | TBD |

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HPWM — Hospital Pharmacists of Western Massachusetts
PTCE — *Pharmacy Times* Continuing Education (for pharmacy technicians)
WMPHA — Western Massachusetts Pharmacists Association

Stay tuned for more details on upcoming CEs!



Did you know that all WNEU preceptors get CEimpact memberships?

- Access to pharmacist over 100 hours of CE material, including over 12 hours of live continuing education
- New CE courses weekly
- Easy on-the-go access to CE
- 10% off all CEimpact education like immunization training & point of care testing
- Pharmacy Network exclusive events
- Podcast CEs, medication education, and guideline updates
- Journal Club access