



PHARMACEUTICAL CAREER ENHANCERS

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

A Future in Pharmacy: The University of Maryland School of Pharmacy

[By Jill A. Morgan]

Careers in pharmacy offer many benefits and opportunities. These include working in the community, hospitals, home health care, pharmaceutical research companies, nursing homes, government health agencies, and higher education. Pharmacists play a vital role in improving patient care through the medicine and information they provide. Pharmacy is a well-rounded career blending science, health care, direct patient contact, computer technology and business. In addition, pharmacy has excellent earning potential and is consistently ranked as one of the most highly trusted professions due to the care and service pharmacists provide.

The University of Maryland School of Pharmacy offers several programs to prepare individuals for the practice of pharmacy or for independent basic or clinical research. The mission of the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy is to enhance health through innovative pharmaceutical education, research, practice, and public service. As a Top five research school, we apply an integrative understanding of drug discovery, development, and utilization in conducting groundbreaking and translational research. The outcomes from this research make a major impact on improving the quality of people's lives. Our community service programs bring education and care to people in the city of Baltimore and throughout the state. These endeavors, coupled with our national and international collaborations, improve the effectiveness of pharmaceutical care throughout the world.

The School of Pharmacy is comprised of three departments: Pharmacy Practice and Science, Pharmaceutical Sciences, and Pharmaceutical Health Services Research. The Department of Pharmacy Practice and Science promotes the health and well-being of the public by advancing the practice of pharmacy and generating and disseminating new knowledge related to pharmacy practice and drug use. The Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences conducts state-of-the-art research and discovers novel advances in biopharmaceutics and drug delivery. The Pharmaceutical Health Services

Research Department provides teaching, service, and scholarly activities related to the behavioral sciences, pharmaeconomics, pharmacoepidemiology, and regulatory issues.

The University of Maryland School of Pharmacy was founded in 1841 and is the fourth oldest pharmacy school in the nation. The school is ranked eighth among pharmacy schools by *US News and World Report*. The School of Pharmacy is responding to the statewide and nationwide pharmacist shortage by opening a satellite location at the Universities at Shady Grove campus in Montgomery County, Maryland, in Fall 2008.

Our Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) program emphasizes problem solving and critical thinking and qualifies the graduate for national and state licensing exams. Maryland students learn to practice as patient-oriented health care professionals who will work as part of an interdisciplinary team. PharmD students can choose from many electives, explore pathways that focus on areas of interest, and seize opportunities to work closely with members of our large and excellent faculty. To round out their educations, students elect practice rotations from among hundreds of preceptors working in every imaginable setting in which pharmacy is the focus.

A PharmD degree can be applied to diverse careers. Clinical pharmacists promote

appropriate, effective, and safe medication use for patients. By working as part of a health care team, pharmacists are able to closely monitor patient drug therapy and make recommendations on the selection of the best medication for a patient's condition, the correct dose, and the duration of therapy.

Some community pharmacists provide specialized services to help patients manage conditions such as diabetes, asthma, smoking cessation, or high blood pressure. Community pharmacists are the most visible branch of practice, advising patients on the proper use of their prescription and non-prescription medication, and keeping records of their patients' health, illnesses, and medications.

A hospital pharmacist advises other health professionals about the actions, interactions, and side effects of drugs, and counsels patients about medications. They advise physicians and other health practitioners on the selection, dosages, interactions, and side effects of medications.

Graduates can work for the Food and Drug Administration, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Veterans Administration, the Public Health Service, the armed forces, the National Institutes of Health, and many other government agencies. Pharmacists in academia require a postgraduate degree and/or residency and are involved with teaching, research, public service, and



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patient care. Others serve as consultants for local, state, national, and international organizations.

In addition to our PharmD program, the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy offers Doctor of Philosophy programs in Pharmaceutical Sciences and Pharmaceutical Health Services Research. Our Ph.D. students develop the knowledge and skills necessary to conduct independent research and go on to direct the discovery, development, and delivery of medications for safe and effective therapy, as well as to improve pharmaceutical outcomes and geriatric care. With a Ph.D., pharmacists may work in research, development, testing of medications in humans, production systems, quality control, government regulation,

marketing, public relations, sales, and management.

In addition to the PharmD and Ph.D. programs, the University of Maryland offers three dual degree programs for PharmD students who are interested in gaining specialized expertise in law, business administration, or public health. The Doctor of Pharmacy/Juris Doctor program is in conjunction with the University of Maryland School of Law. Graduates of the PharmD/J.D. program will be prepared for careers in a diverse range of health care and legal areas, such as consulting on health law issues and regulatory policy for government agencies, trade associations, and pharmaceutical companies. The Doctor of Pharmacy/Master of Business Administration program is in

conjunction with the University of Baltimore Merrick School of Business and is for those interested in a management role or owning their own pharmacy businesses. For those who are interested in becoming well-trained pharmacists who have a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of public health issues, the University of Maryland offers a dual degree of Doctor of Pharmacy/Master of Public Health.

Our graduates practice in a variety of areas. In the past few years, 55% practice in community pharmacy, 20% go on to receive postgraduate training (residency, fellowship, or Ph.D. program), 18% work in hospital pharmacy, 5% work in industry or for the government, and less than 1% go into managed care.

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