

Barry and Judy Silverman  
College of Pharmacy  
NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

**NSU**  
Florida

# SHARKS NEWSLETTER

**SUMMER 2024**



## Dean's Message

The summer is well underway, and I hope you are enjoying the summer break and taking time to exhale, relax, and rejuvenate prior to returning to a busy fall semester and academic year. The college continues to be a busy place, even in summer, as we actively prepare to welcome the Advanced Standing Class of 2027 later this month and the incoming Class of 2028 in August 2024. As our graduating class of 2024 prepares to take the NAPLEX and MPJE exams, I wish them every success and encourage them to use the tools and resources provided for them in their courses, and APPEs. We look forward to hearing of your many successes as you move forward in your career.



Michelle A. Clark  
Dean

This summer I had the privilege of participating in the 2024 Travel Study Program to Spain with 39 students and two faculty members. The program has been on hiatus since 2020 but we are happy to resume the annual offering this year. The program began in Madrid on May 22 with visits to cultural sites and learning activities. A few days later the group transferred by bus to Salamanca for the remainder of the two-week program in Spain where faculty from the University of Salamanca College of Pharmacy provided lectures and activities. The program provides students with an overview, understanding, and appreciation for pharmaceutical and medical practices outside the United States. Highlights are featured on our social media page and below. I highly encourage interested students to plan to be part of next year's program.

This fall the Pharm.D. program at the Palm Beach campus will be consolidated with the Davie/Fort Lauderdale Campus where students from the Palm Beach campus will complete coursework, labs, and activities. I look forward to welcoming the faculty and students knowing they will enjoy the wide variety of opportunities and experiences that are available at the Davie/Fort Lauderdale campus.

I invite you to visit, like, and follow us on social media to see all our activities and accomplishments as they occur throughout the semester. Go SharksRx!



[Facebook NSU COP](#)



[Instagram NSU COP](#)



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[LinkedIn NSU COP](#)

*Fins Up!*

Michelle A. Clark, Ph.D.

## College Accomplishments

**Annual Faculty Development Program**



The Silverman College of Pharmacy faculty came together in May, as they do each year, for two days of professional development programming. This is the hallmark event for the college's Development Committee and this year's theme was "Cultivating Resilience and Embracing People". The program brings together faculty from Florida and Puerto Rico campuses to learn new ideas, share best practices, reflect on the past year, and plan for the future of the college. Integrated into all of that are team building activities, casual conversations, and a little bit of fun.

Keynote speaker, Jeffrey Buller, Ph.D., speaker, author, workshop leader, and President and CEO, ALPHA Leadership Programs, kicked off the program with a presentation and discussions around academic leadership in the new normal and ways to develop resilience as an academic leader. The session stimulated meaningful dialogue on this important issue. Other highlights of the program included an overview of the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) Standards 2025 and an interactive session on the new college Canvas

template to be used in all courses. The morning of the second day focused on research and scholarly activities, balanced out with wellness programs, and a creative, fun, and slightly competitive activity. Faculty teams competed to craft a caricature creation of Hubert Humphrey who, prior to his role as the 38th Vice President of the United States, followed in his father's footsteps by becoming a pharmacist. Who knew we had so many talented artists among us?

It was a wonderful few days for the *pharmily* to be together. The lessons learned will help the college evolve, adapt, and embrace the new normal as we move forward, continuing our path to preeminence.

## **¡Olé! Travel Study Goes to Spain**











The Silverman College of Pharmacy had an opportunity to embrace many of the university's core values, such as academic excellence, diversity, innovation, and opportunity, with the recent travel study program to Spain. Students earned elective credits towards their Doctor of Pharmacy degree through this memorable experience. The travel study program is designed to provide students with an overview, understanding, and appreciation for pharmaceutical and medical practices outside the U.S. Course content is delivered through a combination of self-study, classroom study, and a plethora of visits to cultural sites in Spain. These experiences allow students to study and experience the history, culture, and health care practices native to Spain.

Thirty nine students participated in the program, led by **Enrique A. Nieves, Ph.D.**, clinical assistant professor, pharmaceutical sciences. Also present as contributing faculty members were **Michelle A. Clark, Ph.D.**, dean and professor, pharmaceutical sciences, and **Frances Colon-Pratts, Pharm.D.**, clinical assistant professor, pharmacy practice. The program started and ended in Madrid, with visits to Toledo, Avila and two weeks in Salamanca. Students were excited to learn about topics such as pharmacy-related legislation in Spain and the European Union, the drug approval process at national and community levels, production and distribution of medications in Spain, as well as the use, misuse, and abuse of alternative medicines.

## Preceptors of the Year

Each year, the NSU Office of Experiential Education coordinates a student nominated award to recognize those preceptors who provide exceptional instruction, dedication to excellence, exhibit high standards of professionalism, and have made incredible contributions to the growth and development of the students (future pharmacists). Students complete a nomination and provide a short narrative that describes the impact the preceptor had on the student's future and career goals. There are four categories: Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experience (IPPE) Community, IPPE Health System, Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience (APPE), and Faculty APPE. In recognition for their high standards of professionalism and commitment to students as a pharmacy mentor and teacher we celebrate the following **Preceptors of the Year** for academic year 2023-2024.



**IPPE Community: Aneesa Khan, Pharm.D. ('12) of Walgreens**  
 Nominator comments: *I had the opportunity to go over almost everything and see all the responsibilities a pharmacist would have in a community setting. From making MTM calls, contacting physicians, counseling patients, filling prescriptions, helping at the desk and drive- thru, and presenting to the staff. It was a pleasure and honor to have been able to learn from such a wonderful team.*



**IPPE Health System: Kaleed Mohammed, Pharm.D. ('09), of Broward Health Coral Springs**  
 Nominator comments: *A very firm and approachable preceptor. He makes sure his students have all the tools necessary to achieve the intended experience while still under his watch. He gives excellent feedback and encourages you to open up to all opportunities while still in this early experience at the hospital.*



**APPE: Mina Abdalla, Pharm.D. ('12) of Memorial Hospital Miramar**  
 Nominator comments: *Amazing Preceptor, very knowledgeable, flexible, and passionate about pharmacy practice especially ID and students learning. Preceptor is up to date with clinical trials and current research and knowledge in pharmacy. Overall easy to work with, fun and makes learning infectious diseases super easy and understandable.*

**Faculty APPE: Melissa Santibañez, Pharm.D. ('15)**

Nominator comments: *This rotation proved to be an invaluable learning opportunity, as it helped me develop essential patient workup skills, which proved helpful throughout my subsequent rotations. Dr. Santibañez's*





*organization and attention to detail were evident in the rigorous syllabus designed to provide students with a comprehensive learning experience. Her organizational skills have been a great source of inspiration for me to become a more organized person.*

### **One NSU: Days of Giving Competition**



Faculty and staff from the Silverman College of Pharmacy participated in a friendly competition in support of the university campaign, One NSU: Days of Giving. The college was divided into five teams by department; college administration, pharmacy practice, pharmaceutical sciences, pharmacy services, and sociobehavioral and administrative pharmacy. These contributions help advance our mission of becoming a preeminent institution. Donors could select a particular designation such as scholarship or research, and funds were tracked per department.

The endeavor was a success. The College met its goal of 70% employees contributing to support NSU Sharks; we had 76% of employees contributing, a record for us!

After many encouraging emails, congenial banter, and teamwork, the pharmacy practice department was announced as the winner of this competition. Until the next campaign, the pharmacy practice group gets to retain bragging rights and display a special trophy in the department chairperson's office. The faculty and staff had a good time and made a meaningful impact.

## Celebrating Excellence and Innovation in Teaching



Each year the Silverman College of Pharmacy Golden Apple Award is given to a faculty member who has demonstrated excellence and/or innovation in classroom teaching in the Doctor of Pharmacy Program. Individuals selected to receive this award achieve distinction because of their efforts to communicate course material clearly and concisely; their efforts in promoting student learning; their abilities to demonstrate enthusiasm for course material; as well as fostering student success.

Each class year finalist is selected by students in the respective classes. Selection of the final Golden Apple winner, out of the four finalists, is by a simple majority of the votes by students with the highest academic performance (top 10) from each site and class, together with the current class presidents. The two finalists were **Mamta Pansuria, Pharm.D.** ('03) for the Class of 2027 and **David Gazze, Ph.D.** for the Classes of 2024, 2025, and 2026. **Dr. Gazze** was announced as the winner at the April faculty and staff college meeting.

## Working Collaboratively on Best Practices in Teaching and Learning

**Jaime Riskin, Pharm.D.** ('03), clinical assistant professor and laboratory director, was the lead author in a recent publication in the journal *Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning*. The article, published online on April 8, 2024, focused on virtual self-care simulations for third year students in a skills laboratory course. The project, which included data from multiple institutions, was designed to determine whether a virtual, self-care activity improved knowledge and confidence in students. The results showed improved knowledge and confidence from all students, however there was varying significance between data from the institutions. We are proud of her contributions to literature in the area of best practices in teaching and learning. Collaborations with multiple pharmacy schools provide a group with diverse perspectives. To read the full article refer to [doi:10.1016/j.cptl.2024.02.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cptl.2024.02.001)



## Faculty Researcher Makes an Impact at the 2024 American Physiology Summit



**Anastasios (Tassos) Lymperopoulos, Ph.D.**, associate professor, pharmaceutical sciences, participated in the 2024 American Physiology Summit, held in April in Long Beach, California. Nobel Laureate Brian Kobilka, M.D. kicked off the meeting which provided innovative scientific sessions, career enhancing professional development and community building social events. Lymperopoulos had the honor of organizing and chairing a session “RGS Proteins in Cell Signaling: Holding the Keys of Specificity in Cell Physiology” accompanied by



leading minds in the field and some amazing colleagues. In addition, he won the award, abstract of distinction, for “Adrenal GRK2 downregulation and RGS4 upregulation mediate the sympatholytic effect of dapagliflozin”.

Dr. Lymperopoulos serves as Editor-in-Chief for the Molecular Pharmacology section of the *International Journal of Molecular Sciences* and an Editorial Board Member of Nature Publishing Group's Scientific Reports. His contributions to this field of study support the university's core values of scholarship/research, innovation, and opportunity, and enhance the recognition of NSU and the Silverman College of Pharmacy at national and international levels.

### International Research Collaborations with Mexico



**Silvia E. Rabionet, Ed.D.**, professor and chair, sociobehavioral and administrative pharmacy, is spearheading a research collaboration with faculty members from her department and health care researchers from the Mexico Ministry of Health and the National Institute of Public Health of Mexico (INSP). Leveraging the strengths of individual faculty members, **Alexandra Perez, Pharm.D.** ('05), **Ioana Popovici, Ph.D.**, **Jesus Sanchez, Ph.D.**, and **Patrick Sullivan, Ph.D.**, the project involves policy analysis, along with outcomes and community-based research to show health care access and health inequities among the poor and marginalized in Mexico. The team is currently working on a collaborative grant application to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to help fund this research.

### New Faculty and Staff

Basma Gomaa, Ph.D., assistant professor, sociobehavioral and administrative pharmacy.

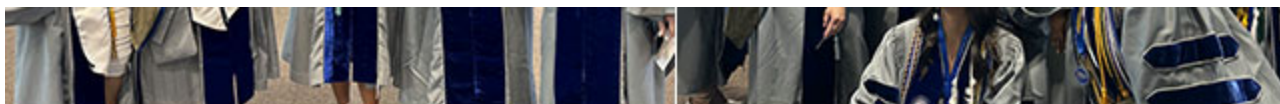
## Student Successes

**2024 Commencement**









On May 10<sup>th</sup> we celebrated commencement with our 2024 graduates at the NSU Rick Case Arena. We had 200 graduates in the Pharm.D. program, 6 Ph.D. graduates in Pharmaceutical Sciences, and 20 M.S. graduates in Pharmaceutical Affairs and Pharmaceutical Sciences. The crowd showed their excitement with applause, and once again, the Silverman College of Pharmacy group was the loudest and the proudest. **Elizabeth Sherman, Pharm.D. ('07)**, associate professor, pharmacy practice, was the Grand Marshal. She had the privilege to convene and dismiss the commencement and carry NSU's mace. When not in official use, the mace is displayed in the rotunda of the William and Norma Horvitz Administration Building.

John P. (Jack) Seiler, J.D. addressed the graduates and referenced his time as principal at Seiler, Sautter, Zaden, Rimes, & Wahlbrink, his time as the Mayor of the City of Fort Lauderdale and other public service positions held. The ceremony concluded with the Pharm.D. candidates rising to recite the Oath of a Pharmacist, led by Dane Rusk, R.Ph. vice president, pharmacy for Publix Supermarkets, Inc. Each year as the group makes the shift from students to alumni, we experience a plethora of feelings, but mostly we look forward to hearing about their accomplishments across the broad landscape of the pharmacy profession.

## **Graduates Continuing on with Post-Graduate Training Programs**

As each March approaches, we excitedly wait for the results from the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) Matching Program for pharmacy students pursuing postgraduate year 1 (PGY1) or 2 (PGY2) residency positions. At the Silverman College of Pharmacy, the 2024 PGY1 match rate was 64.2%, as 45 applicants were matched into positions. Of those students going for PGY2, there were 17 students who matched; seven for early commitment, seven in phase I and three in phase II. PGY2 programs included specializations in Ambulatory Care, Cardiology, Critical Care, Geriatrics, Infectious Disease, Pediatrics, and Psychiatry.

We inform our students about post-graduate training opportunities from the very beginning of their P1 year. There are many opportunities for students to learn about how they can become the strongest candidate they can possibly be. Some development programs originate from the college, some from our student chapters of professional organizations, and some from the state and national associations. The programs cover a variety of topics such as curriculum vitae development, interview skills workshops, an overview of the match process, and other training opportunities such as fellowships.

We had four students obtain fellowship positions: Global Regulatory Affairs Fellowship, Sanofi, Strategy and Marketing in Rare Diseases Fellowship, Sanofi Global/US Commercial, Regulatory Affairs-Chemistry



Manufacturing & Controls Fellowship, Boehringer Ingelheim, US Medical Affairs: Vaccines Fellowship, GSK/Howard University. We are committed to providing support to those students who want to pursue post-graduate training opportunities and are proud to see many continue with their professional studies after completing the Doctor of Pharmacy program. Post-graduate residency programs and fellowships provide advanced training for pharmacists to achieve professional competence in the delivery of patient-centered care, leadership, and pharmacy services. These programs bridge academics and pharmacy practice and showcase the depth of drug knowledge that pharmacists have.

### Local Campus Celebrations in Advance of University Commencement



Before the large university commencement ceremony on May 10, each campus hosted a local celebration to honor their graduates. In San Juan on May 1 the college's faculty and staff celebrated their 2024 graduates with a luncheon at Zafra del Caribe in Caguas. The next day in Palm Beach, the group gathered at Carmine's Coal Fired Pizza to eat, drink, and celebrate with formal awards, as well as recognize one another with some fun class superlatives. The final celebration was for the Davie/Fort Lauderdale students at the Funky Buddha in Fort



Lauderdale. Faculty advisor, **Brian Hierholzer, Pharm.D. ('03)** and **Dean Michelle A. Clark**, along with other faculty were present to celebrate student achievement awards. **Camille Mercado, Pharm.D. ('24)** and **Samantha Shields, Pharm.D. ('24)** presented the class superlative awards, as class presidents for the entry level and advanced standing classes, respectively. All the celebrations were full of food, drink, laughter, and stories of student success. We hope that the students, now alumni, will maintain an active relationship with NSU as they begin their next professional chapter.

Congratulations to the Class of 2024! You are forever a Shark!

**Big Thank You Scholarship Luncheon**



Every year, students and administration gather to honor scholarship donors at “The Big Thank You” Luncheon. This annual event brings together scholarship benefactors and recipients and shows how these life-changing scholarships help deserving students achieve their educational goals. Attendees explored interactive kiosks that provided information about donors and scholarship recipients. Two students from the Silverman College of Pharmacy were featured: **Maricela Moreno** ('25) and **Alejandra M. Rincon-Ponte** ('25).

Maricela showcased her research on the use of opioids and benzodiazepines in adults. Her work emphasizes the importance of collaboration between pharmacists and physicians to ensure safe prescribing and use of

these controlled substances. Maricela has completed a rotation at Memorial Regional Hospital, with upcoming rotations planned for South Florida State Hospital and the Miami VA.

Alejandra's research about marijuana use in adults and why it's important for pharmacists to ask questions because there are potential health implications involved in overlooking marijuana use as a factor in health care was also featured at the event. She recently completed a rotation at Amazon Pharmacy and has upcoming rotations planned at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and at local hospitals.

### **Ph.D. Student Receives National Recognition**



**Yasser Alharbi, Pharm.D. and Ph.D. candidate ('25)** participated in the 2024 National Institutes of Health (NIH) All of Us Research Scholar Program after being selected through a competitive application process. Between October 2023 and April 2024, Alharbi gained proficiency in using the All of Us research hub through didactic training, other development opportunities, and participation in the Racial Equity Consciousness Institute Program.

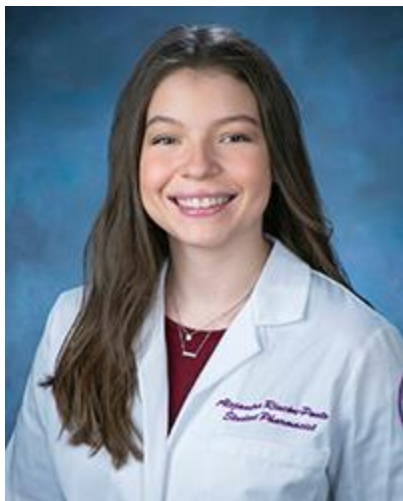
Alharbi was paired with mentor, Jordan Smoller, M.D. who holds positions at Massachusetts General Hospital and as a professor at Harvard University. His research project examined the association between the control of hemoglobin A1C and social determinants of health among adults with type 2 diabetes using All of Us Registered Tier Dataset v7, Researcher Workbench. At the end of the experience, Alharbi participated in the All of Us Researcher Convention and won one of two People's Choice Awards in the Graduate Student category.

### **P4 Student Reflects on her First APPE**

**Alejandra M. Rincon-Ponte ('25)** shares her thoughts after completing her very first APPE...

"I was apprehensive about starting rotations, but I was also determined to learn from every situation and every pharmacist I encountered. My first Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience (APPE) was with Amazon Pharmacy's Patient Safety team. Early in the experience, I was investigating medication-related events with my preceptor and the team. Throughout the process, I worked closely with the preceptor to keep them apprised of the cases being investigated and the analysis, then what safety concepts were applied after it was understood





why the error occurred."

[Continue reading ....](#)

## Alumni

### Notable Alumni Achievements

**Tahleel Abu Iqab, Pharm.D.** ('23) started a new position as a Pharmacist at MD PHARMACY.

**Ahlam Alghamdi, Pharm.D.** ('16) was promoted to Associate Professor at Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University.

**Angelica Borrero Olan, Pharm.D.** ('15) was promoted to Hematology & Cell Therapy – Senior Scientific Advisor at Bristol Myers Squibb.

**Alex Cruz, B.S.** ('93) started a new position as Director of Pharmacy at CAPS® (Central Admixture Pharmacy Services, Inc.).

**Priscilla Franco, Pharm.D.** ('19) started a new position as Pharmacy Supervisor at SCAN Health Plan.

**Michael Gallagher, Pharm.D.** ('11) started a new position as Cryptologic Warfare Officer with the United States Navy.

**Yadi Garcia, Pharm.D.** ('05) started a new position as Associate Director of Functional Excellence at Daiichi Sankyo, Inc. (United States).

**Ramy Gabriel, Pharm.D.** ('10) started a new position as Clinical Pharmacist at Moffitt Cancer Center.

**Christian Gonzalez Hernandez, Pharm.D.** ('20) started a new position as Clinical Pharmacy Specialist at Memorial Healthcare System.

**Lilia Nazef, Pharm.D.** ('19) started a new position as Transitions of Care Pharmacist at Baptist Health Bethesda Hospital.

**Hong Nguyen, Pharm.D.** ('18) has been promoted to Pharmacy Director at St. Mary's Medical Center.

**Katherine Nguyen, Pharm.D.** ('12) started a new position as Founder, CEO at Sparked Innovations.

**Ryan Nowicki, Pharm.D.** ('09) started a new position as Director Outpatient Pharmacy at AdventHealth.

**Matthew Madayag, Pharm.D.** ('22) was promoted to Pharmacy Manager at CVS Health.

**Nayeli Montes, Pharm.D.** ('17) started a new position as Clinical Pharmacy Coordinator – Critical Care and PGY1 Residency Program Director at Memorial Hospital West.

**Danielle Padgett, Pharm.D.** ('14) was promoted to Cardiology Clinical Specialist – Advanced Heart Failure at Memorial Healthcare System.

**Belmarie Palén, Pharm.D.** ('19) started a new position as Clinical Pharmacist Liaison at Kroger Specialty Pharmacy.

**Merlin Paul, Pharm.D.** ('19) started a new position as Clinical Pharmacist at Duke Children's Hospital and Health Center.

**Bhumi Patel, Pharm.D.** ('19) won the CVS Paragon award within Region 26.

**Bhumi Patel, Pharm.D.** ('19) is starting a new position as District Support Pharmacy Leader with CVS Pharmacy.

**Claudia Pérez Jaime** ('21) was promoted to Oncology Clinical Pharmacist at Memorial Hospital West.

**Priyal Popat, Pharm.D.** ('20) started a new position as Medical Science Liaison at Sanofi.

**Angelie Ruiz Sánchez, Pharm.D.** ('22) started a new position as Clinical Pharmacist at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

**Samantha Shaffer, Pharm.D.** ('18) started a new position as Ambulatory Clinical Pharmacist at University of Cincinnati Academic Health Center.

**Stephanie Toledo Ramirez, Pharm.D.** ('19) was named the Medical Scientific Liaison of the Year 2023 at the Johnson & Johnson Puerto Rico Awards.

**Luis Urbina, Pharm.D.** ('21) started a new position as the Emergency Medicine Pharmacist at Broward Health, Coral Springs.

**Chase Vickers, Pharm.D.** ('09) started a new position as Supervisor Pharmacy Ambulatory at UF Health.

## SharksRx Alumni Legacy Fund



### LEVELS OF GIVING



The SharksRx Alumni Society created the legacy fund to support the College through the knowledge, skills, and financial resources needed to invest in the future of pharmacy education. The Society's goal is to grow student scholarship opportunities. You can help meet this goal by supporting the SharksRx Alumni Legacy Fund. Your contributions help the next generation of pharmacists in perpetuity. For more information on the Legacy Tree contact [Carla Luque, Pharm.D.](#), assistant dean, student services. To purchase an engraved leaf with your inscription [click here](#).

## Upcoming Continuing Pharmacy Education

The Silverman College of Pharmacy provides a variety of training programs and workshops. Currently, the following programs are being offered:

 [Cancer Therapies](#)

 [Initial Consultant Pharmacist Licensure Course](#)



[Cancer Therapies 2024  
Metabolic Approach to Cancer  
and Clinical Applications](#)  
August 17-18, 2024

[Initial Consultant Pharmacist  
Licensure Course Consultant  
Re-Certification Conference](#)  
September 14-15, 2024

Silverman College of Pharmacy Alumni events, training/workshops, and Continuing Education courses are listed on the [Silverman 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](mailto: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  
Silverman College of Pharmacy.



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