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**UAMS College of Pharmacy Business Plan Team  
Takes National Award for Fourth Time for Most Wins Ever**

LITTLE ROCK — A University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) College of Pharmacy team of four student pharmacists achieved a record-setting win recently in a national business plan competition.

It marked the fourth time in eight years a team from the college has won the National Community Pharmacy Association’s Good Neighbor Pharmacy Pruitt-Schutte Student Business Plan Competition. No other college’s teams have ever won the competition as many times in its 17-year history. The association announced the 2020 winners Oct. 18 at its annual convention, which was held virtually.

UAMS team members were team captain Marissa Johnston and team members Brittany Butterfield, Patrick Gurley and Byron Johnson. The team advisers were Seth Heldenbrand, Pharm.D., the college’s associate dean of experiential education, and Schwanda Flowers, Pharm.D., adjunct associate professor.

The 2020 competition drew participants nationwide from 27 schools and colleges of pharmacy. Teams from the University of Iowa and the University of North Carolina respectively were runner-up and second runner-up.

“All the college’s faculty and staff are so proud of the business plan team, and what it has achieved in making the College of Pharmacy the winningest team in the competition’s history,” said the college’s Dean Cindy Stowe, Pharm.D. “They and the teams before them have shown that striving for excellence and a commitment to developing an entrepreneurial spirit are hallmarks of the College and something we have sustained over many years. This competition is a celebration of independent pharmacists and a natural extension of one of the greatest pharmacy strengths in the State of Arkansas – improving the health and wellness of Arkansans through pharmacists delivered care.”

Business plan teams from the college previously placed first in 2012, 2015 and 2017.

Titled “Functional Pharmacy,” the team’s winning business plan was centered around the idea of using advanced testing and telehealth in an integrated way to identify the root causes of chronic diseases in individual patients who have them, Gurley said. One of

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Gurley's mentors — Michelle Crouse, Pharm.D., and a pharmacy owner — helped him early on to develop the concept for the plan.

The four further developed it as part of an elective entrepreneurship course Heldenbrand and Flowers teach. Once selected to compete nationally, the team began working toward presenting its plan at the association's convention this fall in Nashville. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the in-person convention was cancelled. The three finalist teams then had to prepare video presentations by mid-September and participate in early October in a live video question-and-answer session via Zoom. That meant moving up their deadlines by a month.

Nevertheless, Johnston and Gurley said, the team came together to overcome those challenges, separately and together contributing hundreds of hours of work to the effort.

The NCPA student chapter at the UAMS College of Pharmacy received \$3,000, and an additional \$3,000 was contributed in the dean's name to promote independent community pharmacy at the college. Team members, advisers and the dean also will receive complimentary registration, travel and lodging to NCPA's 2021 Multiple Locations Conference this February in Florida.

UAMS is the state's only health sciences university, with colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Professions and Public Health; a graduate school; hospital; a main campus in Little Rock; a Northwest Arkansas regional campus in Fayetteville; a statewide network of regional campuses; and seven institutes: the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute, Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute, Harvey & Bernice Jones Eye Institute, Psychiatric Research Institute, Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging, Translational Research Institute and Institute for Digital Health & Innovation. UAMS includes UAMS Health, a statewide health system that encompasses all of UAMS' clinical enterprise including its hospital, regional clinics and clinics it operates or staffs in cooperation with other providers. UAMS is the only adult Level 1 trauma center in the state. *U.S. News & World Report* named UAMS Medical Center the state's Best Hospital; ranked its ear, nose and throat program among the top 50 nationwide; and named six areas as high performing — COPD, colon cancer surgery, heart failure, hip replacement, knee replacement and lung cancer surgery. UAMS has 2,876 students, 898 medical residents and four dental residents. It is the state's largest public employer with more than 10,000 employees, including 1,200 physicians who provide care to patients at UAMS, its regional campuses, Arkansas Children's Hospital, the VA Medical Center and Baptist Health. Visit [www.uams.edu](http://www.uams.edu) or [www.uamshealth.com](http://www.uamshealth.com). Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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