First-Ever “Script Your Future” Medication Adherence Challenge Awardees Named

Five Pharmacy Schools Recognized for Public Education Efforts to Help Patients Understand Importance of Taking Medications as Directed

Washington, D.C. - Today, the National Consumers League (NCL), the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) Foundation and the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) announced the awardees of the first-ever Script Your Future Medication Adherence Challenge for student pharmacists.

The Medication Adherence Challenge is part of a public awareness campaign launched in 2011 by NCL with more than 100 public and private stakeholder organizations, including NACDS Foundation and AACP. The campaign, titled Script Your Future, seeks to raise awareness with patients about the importance of taking medication as directed.

Nearly three out of four Americans don’t take their medications as directed and the results can be devastating, particularly for people with chronic conditions. More than one-third of medicine-related hospitalizations and almost 125,000 deaths in the United States each year are due to people not taking their medicine as directed. Medication adherence can lead to improved health and reduced total healthcare costs.

The Challenge is a coordinated initiative to engage student pharmacists in a public education effort on the importance of helping patients with chronic diseases take their medications as directed. More than 40,000 student pharmacists educated more than 250,000 individuals nationwide during the month of October in this concerted public effort about the importance of medication adherence.

This year’s awardees, selected from 81 participating colleges and schools of pharmacy, are: University of Maryland School of Pharmacy, Harding University College of Pharmacy, Creighton University School of Pharmacy and Health Professions, Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine School of Pharmacy, and University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Pharmacy.

“The goal is to educate the next generation of pharmacists to take a proactive role in encouraging patients to follow the instructions for taking their medication through medication adherence education,”
said Sally Greenberg, NCL Executive Director. Students at schools of pharmacy participated in the Challenge by engaging in community outreach activities to raise awareness about the health consequences of poor medication adherence, or not taking medication as directed.

“Script Your Future elevates the public expectation for medication education, of which the pharmacist is well educated to provide,” said Dr. Lucinda L. Maine, Executive Vice President and CEO at the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. “Student pharmacists work directly within communities to educate patients about medication adherence that leads to people living healthier lives as exemplified by the activities of the Challenge awardees.”

“These health care providers in-training have developed and implemented creative solutions for one of the biggest obstacles to patient health – poor medication adherence,” said NACDS Foundation President Kathleen Jaeger. “Medication adherence education initiatives via community pharmacy assist patients in increasing their awareness of the importance of taking medications as prescribed, which helps improve health outcomes and prevent avoidable adverse events and unnecessary hospitalizations. The Script Your Future Medication Adherence Challenge has advanced that goal while training the next generation of pharmacists to continue aggressively advancing the public health.”

The recognized schools’ campaigns were:

**Target Market Challenge Award: University of Maryland School of Pharmacy**
Led by faculty member Dr. Cherokee Layson-Wolf, student pharmacists at the University of Maryland worked with the Baltimore coalition for Script Your Future to raise awareness and educate the public through participating in health fairs and other local events. Students wore Script Your Future t-shirts, provided blood pressure screenings and talked about medication management with attendees. During their pharmacy rotation program these students worked with patients at local pharmacies to talk about the importance of taking their medications as prescribed, and distributed more than 800 medication wallet cards to patients.

**Social Media Challenge Award: Harding University College of Pharmacy**
Student pharmacists at Harding University created a Facebook page for their Script Your Future campaign and had each class focus on a particular chronic disease. Each team produced videos for the Facebook page along with basic questions patients might have about managing medications for those diseases. They also used the page to share tips on how following prescriptions improves health and posted photographs from events during the month. The page received more than 8,000 views. One student produced and posted to YouTube a rap video on medication adherence, discussing the possible side effects of a particular drug. A fourth-year student also created a presentation, “Medication Adherence Issues and their Effects on Four Disease States: Asthma/COPD, Diabetes, Hypertension, and Dyslipidemia,” which was approved for one-and-a-half hours of continuing education credit by the Arkansas Board of Nursing and the Arkansas Board of Pharmacy.

**National Challenge Award: Creighton University School of Pharmacy and Health Professions**
Creighton University student pharmacists, faculty, residents and Dean Chris Bradberry met with Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman (R) to discuss the Script Your Future campaign and Challenge, and to talk about the importance of the effort in improving public health. They also provided 50 wallet cards for the governor’s staff. During October, student pharmacists provided medication counseling services at pharmacy and clinical sites across the state, conducted presentations on medication management with senior citizens and distributed wallet cards at health fairs and special events throughout Omaha.
National Challenge Award: Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine School of Pharmacy (LECOM)

LECOM student pharmacists extended their *Script Your Future* efforts to include the HIV/AIDS community. During October, students provided more than 2,000 in-person patient counseling sessions to children, adolescents, adults and seniors. They developed a special Facebook page for the campaign and provided a link to the *Script Your Future* medication reminders program, where individuals can sign up for text message medication alerts. The students also held a Medication Adherence Awareness Day at the Therapeutic Riding Equestrian Center in Erie, where disabled children ride horses, while the student pharmacists talked with their caretakers about the importance of taking medication as prescribed.

National Challenge Award: University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Pharmacy (UMKC)

UMKC student pharmacists conducted one-on-one counseling sessions with more than 3,300 patients in the Kansas City area to discuss medications and help them develop plans to better follow their prescriptions. The sessions were held at a variety of events and locations, including the Columbia Farmers’ Market, the Binational Health Fair and the MedZou Free Health Clinic, which serves the uninsured. Faculty and students also educated nearly 70 health professionals in the local community about the role pharmacists play in patient care and their ability to help patients follow their prescriptions. A fourth-year student pharmacist offered presentations to pharmacists and other health professionals at pharmacies in southern Missouri, and another helped organize an event to educate employees of a rural factory about cardiovascular disease and the importance of medication adherence.

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*Script Your Future* is a campaign of the National Consumers League (NCL), a private, non-profit membership organization founded in 1899. NCL’s mission is to protect and promote social and economic justice for consumers and workers in the United States and abroad. For more information about the *Script Your Future* campaign, visit [www.ScriptYourFuture.org](http://www.ScriptYourFuture.org). For more information on NCL, please visit [www.nclnet.org](http://www.nclnet.org).

About AACP

Founded in 1900, the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) is a national organization representing the interests of pharmacy education and educators. Comprising 124 accredited colleges and schools of pharmacy with more than 6,000 faculty and 60,000 students, AACP is committed to excellence in pharmacy education. Visit [www.aacp.org](http://www.aacp.org) to learn more and stay connected with the Association on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

About NACDS Foundation

The National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization that serves as the education, research and charitable affiliate of NACDS. The NACDS Foundation seeks to improve the health and wellness of the people in America. It utilizes education, research, and charitable involvement to help people improve their health and quality of life through an understanding of medication therapy and the importance of taking medications appropriately. For more information, please visit [www.NACDSFoundation.org](http://www.NACDSFoundation.org).