

APhA-ASP INNOVATIVE PROGRAMMING AWARD

Courage to Connect between Student Pharmacists through Professionalism, Advocacy and Mental Health during the COVID-19 Pandemic MCPHS University - Boston



Presented by Yara Al-Shaer, Sara Korotkevich, Ngoc Phuong Mai Le, Osama Abuhasan

Description:

Student pharmacists at the APhA-ASP MCPHS Boston chapter have shown resilience and **courage** to connect with each other through **professionalism**, **advocacy** and **mental health awareness** initiatives throughout the pandemic. These innovative programs empowered hybrid connections, leadership, mentorship between student pharmacists, and the courage to advocate for the pharmacy profession.

Methods:

APhA-ASP MCPHS Boston chapter reviewed events, programs and initiatives from September 2020 to September 2022. Events relevant to the theme were selected to be highlighted for the Award.

1) Mentor Mentee Program: October 2020 & 2021

***Planning:** A Microsoft form was created for students to sign up and share their interests to be matched with other students, in collaboration with ASHP, Rho Chi, PLS

***Impact:** Mentor/mentee relationships were established between student pharmacists, 300+ people were reached through public relations, and 80+ students joined the program

***Future ideas:** Continue with more bonding events



2) Student Pharmacist Writing Contest: November 2021

***Planning:** 3 different prompts were created for students to write and reflect upon. Our chapter designed a rubric and graded the submitted writing pieces anonymously to ensure that students were evaluated in a fair manner

***Impact:** First innovative writing competition for student pharmacists at the chapter to encourage creative writing and critical thinking skills, reached 500+ students & 15 students participated

***Future ideas:** Continue to create new prompts and encourage student pharmacists to write and advocate for the profession

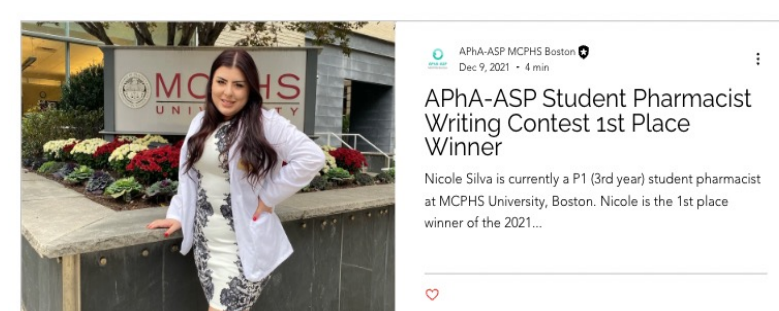
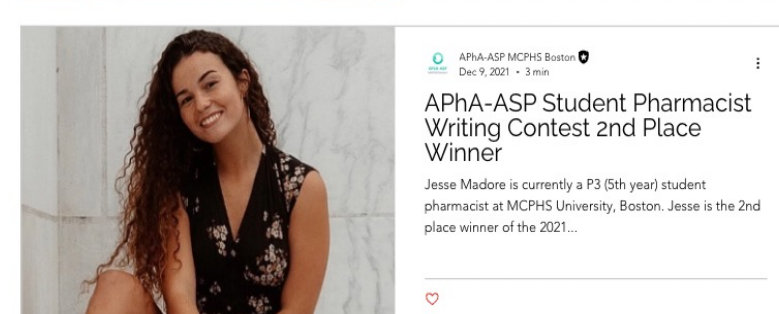
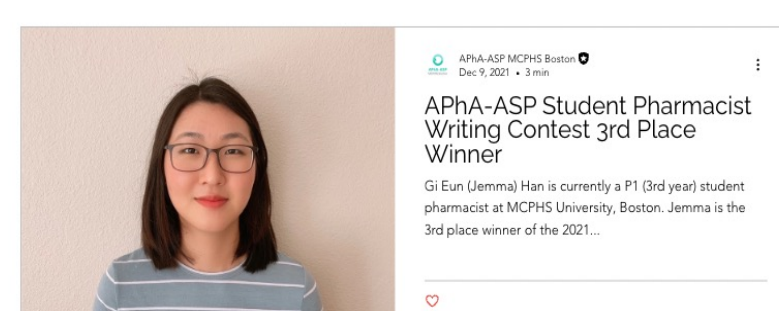
APhA-ASP Student Pharmacist Writing Contest 1st Place Winner

Nicole Silva is currently a P1 (3rd year) student pharmacist at MCPHS University, Boston. Nicole is the 1st place winner of the 2021 APhA-ASP Student Pharmacist Writing Contest at MCPHS University Boston chapter.



What was your inspiration for applying to pharmacy school? How has your vision changed since you first started pharmacy school?

My inspiration for applying to pharmacy school has always been on the basis of wanting to help out patients who come see me. During high school, I had already been working in the healthcare field and knew that this was my calling. The pharmacy profession has always gravitated towards me. I thought knowing hundreds of drugs and their mechanisms is impressive, and my fascination as a healthcare worker resonated throughout my life.



3) October is American Pharmacists Month (APhM): October 2021

***Planning:** We interviewed professors & pharmacists on how their positions in the pharmacy profession have changed during COVID-19 and created an educational poster. This event was in collaboration with 15 organizations: Pharmacy Council, DIA, PDC, ACCP, NCPA, Rho Chi, LKS, HerbalRx, IPHO, MSLS, ASHP, ISPE, SNPhA, SASP & VetRx

***Impact:** Advocated for the pharmacy profession, educated and answered questions from the public on the role of pharmacists during COVID-19. 1000+ people were reached via social media, and 100+ people attended the event

***Future ideas:** Continue to advocate for the pharmacy profession for future APhM initiatives



4) Breathe Strong Workshop Series: 2020, 2021 & 2022

***Planning:** We created breathing workshops and invited an instructor to provide breathing techniques. Collaborated with 25 organizations to encourage mental health awareness activities for students

***Impact:** Students learned various breathing and meditation techniques to help with how to deal with anxiety during finals, overcome sleeplessness and deal with depression. 2754+ people were reached via social media, and 270+ students attended

***Future ideas:** Continue for 2022-2023



5) MA Pharmacists Provider Status: What's Next: March 2021

***Planning:** MA Senate & House passed legislation that recognized pharmacists as healthcare providers. We invited 5 pharmacist panelists to discuss provider status, how it affects pharmacy practice, and what pharmacists and student pharmacists can do to advocate for the profession. We collaborated with APhA ASP chapters at MCPHS Worcester, Northeastern and Western New England university, ASHP and NCPA chapters

***Impact:** We reached 2500+ people on social media, and 150+ students & 18 pharmacists from 4 universities attend the event

***Future ideas:** Continue educational initiatives to advocate for the profession

