The Congressional Healthcare Policy Fellow Program, a collaborative effort of the School of Pharmacy at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), the American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP), and ASHP (American Society of Health-System Pharmacists) has prepared pharmacists for public service for a decade.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
The program offers pharmacists a year-long congressional experience and an opportunity to make practical contributions to the effective use of scientific, therapeutic, and pharmaceutical knowledge in professional organizations and government policy decision making.

Fellows gain experience in issue prioritization, policy analysis, legislative evaluation and policy development, research, writing, and advocacy program development and implementation skills. The integration of these skills becomes the foundation for a future focused on practical policy development and evaluation.

As a policy fellow for a congressional committee or as a member of the personal staff of a member of Congress, the Fellow’s responsibilities include researching and writing briefs on healthcare issues, assisting with policy analysis, drafting memoranda, floor speeches and questions for panelists at congressional hearings, as well as planning, organizing, and contributing to the member of Congress’s office policy and management issues.

During the program, the Fellow is actively mentored by the VCU program director and members of the ACCP and ASHP government relations and professional affairs staff. The Fellow will receive assistance and guidance in securing a congressional placement.

“Working on the Hill greatly improved my understanding of how policy is developed and negotiated among the political parties and diverse stakeholder groups. I learned to look at the bigger picture, and to not get lost in the weeds.”


PROGRAM-AT-A-GLANCE

JULY
Attend “Inside Congress” orientation at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C.

JULY-AUGUST
Work with the ACCP and ASHP government relations and professional affairs staff.

AUGUST
Begin tenure as a health policy fellow on the staff of a congressional committee or in the personal office of a member of Congress.

SEPTEMBER
Participate in ASHP’s Policy Week activities.

The Fellow will also conduct two seminars for VCU pharmacy students.
QUALIFICATIONS
Candidates must be pharmacists who are U.S. citizens with at least one year of residency training or several years of professional experience, ideally providing direct patient care. Preference will be given to pharmacists with demonstrated awareness and/or a track record of advocacy regarding political, healthcare, and/or social issues.

BENEFITS AND COMPENSATION
The Fellow will be designated an adjunct assistant professor of the VCU School of Pharmacy and will receive a stipend of $70,000. An allowance for moving expenses of up to $1,000 and a professional education or travel allowance of $1,500 for use during the Fellow year will also be provided. Healthcare insurance, life insurance, retirement, and/or leave benefits are not provided with this appointment. Vacation will be available according to the congressional calendar.

APPLICATION PROCESS
Interested pharmacists should submit a letter of introduction, biosketch, curriculum vitae, conflict of interest disclosure, and three letters of recommendation. Applications will be accepted until January 31. Detailed information and application materials are available at: go.vcu.edu/congressionalfellow
The finalists will be interviewed in Washington, D.C., and the successful candidate will be announced in the spring.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Program Director Kristin Zimmerman, Pharm.D (kzimmerman@vcu.edu) or visit the Program website at go.vcu.edu/congressionalfellow

CURRENT FELLOWS
Mary Abdelmalak, Pharm.D.
Fellow Placement: Sen. Charles Grassley (R-IA)

PROGRAM ALUMNI
2015-2016: Rita A. Habib, Pharm.D., M.P.H.
Fellow Placement: Sen. Michael Bennett (D-CO)
Current Position: Office of Sen. Michael Bennett (D-CO)

Fellow Placement: Sen. Robert Casey (D-PA)
Current Position: Consumer Safety Officer, U.S. Food and Drug Administration Office of Compliance

2013-2014: Daniel Nam, B.S. Pharm., J.D.
Fellow Placement: Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO)
Current Position: Director of Federal Programs, America’s Health Insurance Plans

2012-2013: Derrick Griffing, Pharm.D., M.P.H.
Fellow Placement: Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RJ)

2011-2012: Sarah Steinhardt, Pharm.D., J.D., M.S.
Fellow Placement: Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR)
Current Position: Assistant Professor, University of South Florida College of Pharmacy

2010-2011: Joshua Lorenz, Pharm.D., M.B.A.
Fellow Placement: U.S. Senate HELP Committee; Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA)
Current Position: Assistant Professor, University of Cincinnati, James L. Winkle College of Pharmacy

2008-2010: Stephanie Hammonds, Pharm.D.
Fellow Placement: U.S. Senate HELP Committee; Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA)
Current Position: Health Insurance Specialist, The Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services Medicare Drug Benefits Group, Division of Part D Policy

2007-2008: Anna Legreid Dopp, Pharm.D.
Fellow Placement: Sen. Joseph Lieberman (I-CT)
Current Position: Director, Clinical Guidelines and Quality Improvement, ASHP

2006-2007: George Neyarapally, Pharm.D., M.P.H
Fellow Placement: Sen. Joseph Lieberman (I-CT)
Current Position: Lead Health Policy Analyst, MITRE Corporation