



ALBANY COLLEGE OF PHARMACY
AND HEALTH SCIENCES

OFFICE OF DEI MARCH NEWSLETTER

MARCH IS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Women's Spotlight: Sheila Lelei

Sheila Lelei graduated in May 2023 and started her fellowship originally in June with Seagen - a midsize biotech company in the Pacific Northwest that focuses on oncology - and was acquired by Pfizer in December. "Seagen has an excellent culture and she has such a supportive team that saw the valuable traits that every single person had to offer," Lelei said when asked about her work experience so far. She decided to go into the oncology field because it affects so many people and it is meaningful to her to "make sure that people are able to get the medications for that disease state that has a very unfortunate outcome if not treated." Lelei works for a breast cancer medication and the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium Conference was her first big project. She was asked to develop all the assets such as digital touch screens, the LED video wall, decals, brandings, etc. She claims that this has been one of the highlights of her career so far.

Despite the fact that she has not been in the industry too long, one thing she has noticed is a lack of representation. "When I go to different meetings, conferences, or events it's rare or to see people that look like me," Lelei said when asked about her experience as a Black woman in the pharmaceutical industry. Now she is learning how to navigate this and how to exist within those spaces. When asked about the struggles she has had to overcome as a woman in the pharmaceutical industry, nothing came to her mind.

"It's recognizing how women and men can do the exact same thing. Just because we're women it doesn't mean that we can't achieve



certain positions, that we're not as qualified, that we're not as strong, that we're not as able to do things that historically people thought that women couldn't do," Lelei said when asked about what Women's History Month means to her. Her mom is one of the many women she looks up to because she has always championed women doing anything that men can do. Her mother grew up in Kenya where at the time there was a difference in privileges between a boy vs girl child. For example, going to different schools or getting the privileges to go out vs stay at home. One of the many tips she gives to all women is to "Be proactive – you have to make life happen for yourself and not necessarily wait for other people to give you the opportunities or to pull you up to certain places." She says this to encourage women who may be discouraged from making their dreams come true.

She liked that ACPHS afforded her an opportunity to be seen on campus. She feels that she knew a lot of people from various departments and her classmates, which allowed her to get involved in a lot of clubs and take on a leadership position to be able to have a really close-knit community. She really enjoyed her experience at ACPHS and believes attending ACPHS took her a lot farther than she probably would have if she had gone to a larger school where she would have slipped into the background. She was a resident assistant from her second year to her fifth year, a member of iPhO and director of professional development for two years, president and president-elect of AMCP, a member of ASHP, a member of APhA, and a member of BSU. A shoutout she would like to include are to ResLife (Allison Buckley & Megan Trigg), Dr. Ray, Alisa of the dining hall staff, and Linda Roberts.

First ACPHS Women's Graduate: Sarah E. Simonet

Sarah E. Simonet, the first woman graduate of ACPHS, was born on July 25th, 1854 in Schoharie County, NY. She was the daughter of Irish immigrants and lived in Croghan, NY, a tiny town at the western edge of the Adirondacks. Simonet lived in Croghan for 12 years before she studied pharmacology in Albany and medicine in Buffalo. She married Augustine Simonet in November of 1871 when she was 16 or 17 and over the next six years, they had four children together.

Simonet enrolled at ACPHS when she was 26 years old and graduated from ACPHS in 1883 in a class of 21 students – 20 men and one woman. At this time, the pharmacy program was just two years old. She and her husband owned a general

store, and not long after Sarah's graduation, they added a pharmacy. Two years later she went on to graduate from the University of Buffalo as a physician. Simonet went on to open offices in Croghan and Utica and was held in high esteem by Croghan which now has a historical marker that stands in her honor. She combined the practice of pharmacy with the practice of medicine and was completely dedicated to caring for a medically underserved population.



To learn more about Sarah E. Simonet and Women's History at ACPHS visit this link: [Women's History at ACPHS](#)

Featured events for ACPHS Clubs

Sunday, March 10th is the start of Ramadan, the holy month of fasting for Muslims. Muslim Student Association (MSA) is holding a Ramadan Social Media Raffle. The raffle starts **March 10th and ends April 10th**. To participate, follow MSA on Instagram @acphmsa and join their Ramadan Raffle to win a prize! Each day of Ramadan, they will be posting something on their Instagram.





Monday, March 11th from 3-5 PM, MSA will be hosting Decorate the Atrium for Ramadan! Kick off Ramadan with a good deed and some fun! Join MSA to decorate the Student Center Atrium for the holy month of Ramadan! They will also be collecting cash donations for Islamic Relief USA, a charity organization that provides aid and relief to several countries worldwide. This event will take place in the SC Atrium.

Register on Engage:
<https://cglink.me/2st/r379278>

Tuesday, March 12th during common hour, MSA will be hosting a Ramadan Fundraiser: DIY Tasbihs and Ramadan Lanterns! Join MSA to make your own tasbihs (prayer beads) and paper Ramadan lanterns! They will also be collecting cash donations for Islamic Relief USA. This event will take place at the Rite Aid Lounge.

Register on Engage:
<https://cglink.me/2st/r379284>



FUN FACT:

Did you know that the colors used to represent Women's History Month are purple, green, and white? These were the colors of the Women's Suffrage and Political Union (WSPU). Green symbolizes hope, new beginnings, and growth. Purple symbolizes royalty, loyalty to the cause, and women's quest for freedom. White symbolizes purity and equality.



Tuesday, March 12th from 6-7 PM, Multicultural Club (MCC) will be hosting a Minority in Pharmacy event. Join APhA-ASP, SSHP, MCC, and PLS as they highlight minority experiences in pharmacy! They will have pharmacists of diverse backgrounds share their perspectives and have time allotted for you to ask them your questions. This event will take place in SC201.

Register on Engage:

<https://cglink.me/2st/r379836>



Tuesday, March 12th from 5-6:30

PM, the Office of DEI will be hosting an International Student Appreciation Dinner. ACPHS wants to send out its appreciation to international students. This event is also an effort to inform, support, and further engage our international student population. The meal will be tacos and vegetarian options will also be available. Speakers will include school leadership and staff from various departments. There will be to-go boxes available for those celebrating Ramadan. This event will take place at the Rite Aid Lounge.

Register on Engage:

<https://cglink.me/2st/r379757>



Saturday, March 16th from 10:30 AM-12 PM, The Lighthouse will be hosting a Brunch and Journals event. Join the Lighthouse for brunch at Capital City Diner to enjoy food and decorate journals! Sign-up is required, learn more at their general meeting or by emailing julianne.yates@acphs.edu. Sponsored by your student activities fee!



Register on Engage:
<https://cmlink.me/2st/r379757>



Monday, March 18th from 11 AM-12 PM, the Jewish Cultural Club (JCC) will be hosting a Pre-Purim celebration. Come celebrate the Jewish holiday Purim! Purim is a celebration of the Jewish queen Esther saving the Jewish people from death by the Persian empire.

Register on Engage:
<https://cmlink.me/2st/r379395>

Thursday, March 21st from 6:30-9 PM, MSA will be hosting an Iftaar Dinner. They will be breaking their fast together, praying Maghrib, and learning a bit about Ramadan! This event will take place in HAB222.



Register on Engage:
<https://cmlink.me/2st/r379834>



Saturday, March 23rd from 5-8 PM, MCC will be hosting MCC Fest. Join MCC for a night of vibrant celebration and immerse yourself in a night of cultural performances, delicious cuisine, and a fashion show featuring your fellow ACPHS students. This event will take place in the ACPHS Gym. If you have any questions please contact multiculturalclub@acphs.edu.

Register on Engage:
<https://cglink.me/2st/r379323>

Thursday, March 28th during common hour, MSA will be hosting an MSA Lecture: The Story of Prophet Isa. Join MSA to watch a video lecture on the Story of Isa (Jesus)! The lecture is delivered by Mufti Menk, a well-known Islamic speaker. Everyone is welcome to join! This event will take place in the Rite Aid Lounge.

Register on Engage:
<https://cglink.me/2st/r379835>



FUN FACT:

The number of STEM degrees women received has increased 93% since the 2008-2009 academic year. Women earned 276,429 STEM degrees in the 2020-2021 academic year, up from 143,018 between 2008-2009. Despite this increase, women were only 35% of all STEM degree recipients in the 2020-2021 school year.



Featured events in the Albany area

March 18th-22nd is Albany Law School's 3rd Annual Diversity Week. Their campus will be filled with local musical entertainment, thought-provoking dialogue, and opportunities to engage with the larger Albany community. Be sure to follow their Instagram for more details: [@albanylaw_dei](#).

Tuesday, March 19th - "Tasty Tuesday." Check out footage from [last year!](#) On Tasty Tuesday, they gather baked goods created by bakers and pastry enthusiasts from the staff, faculty, and student community. All proceeds from this year's event will go towards the Albany County Crime Victims and Sexual Violence Center in collaboration with the Women's Law Caucus'. [Click here](#) to participate in baking or donating goodies for this event.

Friday, March 22nd will feature the 16th Annual Multicultural Cabaret! Check out this [reel from last year's cabaret!](#) In preparation for this year's cabaret, here are two opportunities for you to join in on the festivities. [Sign up](#) to participate in the Multicultural Cabaret talent show and/or [sign up](#) to participate in the Multicultural Cabaret fashion show (wedding-themed). All faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to participate.

Saturday, March 23rd from 8:30-11:30 AM, HVCC will be hosting their 10th annual Girls in STEM Conference. This is a free educational event featuring interactive workshops designed to illustrate the fun side of science and technology. The audience is expected to be 4th-8th graders, and the event will feature STEM-based activities. Dr. Michelle Lewis, Executive Director of CBET will serve as the keynote speaker for this event. Visit [this link](#) for more information.



FUN FACT:

Friday, March 8th is International Women's Day. This is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women!

About the ACPHS DEI Work Study Editors

Hi! My name is Angelina Reish. I am a first-year student in the PharmD program and I'm from Guilderland, NY. I'm on the track and field team and I love watching sports (football is the best sport to watch). I am the Education and Outreach Chair for MCC. I'm a member of Pinky Swear PACK, ACS on Campus, and APhA-ASP. My favorite movie is "Just Go With It" and I am the BIGGEST fan of the New York Giants.

Hello, my name is Tobias LaFountain, but you can call me Toby. I am a first-year microbiology student and an aspiring medical doctor. I am interested in playing most board and card games, love doing puzzles, am a competitive swimmer, and of course, love science!

We work with Jonathan Phipps in the Office of DEI to put together the newsletter for our faculty, staff, and students. We would appreciate any feedback you have about our newsletter to improve it for the next one in April! We hope that everyone has a fun & safe spring break!

