

Technician Education...Reaching for the Stars ***2003 Pharmacy Technician Educators Council*** ***Annual Conference Meeting Report***

STANLEY J LLOYD

The 2003 Pharmacy Technician Educators Council (PTEC) Annual Conference, "Technician Education... Reaching for the Stars," was held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Minneapolis, MN, July 19–22, 2003. Attendees numbered approximately 50 and came from as far away as Hawaii and even New Zealand. Representatives of the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB), American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP), American Council on Pharmaceutical Education (ACPE), and National Association of Chain Drug Stores were in attendance as well.

The talks began with "Your Efforts Are Never in Vain" by Darrell C Hartley BA MA EdD PhD, Chairman, The Arts and Education Institute, Bixby Knolls, CA. Hartley's energy-filled, inspiring talk focused on the need for daily rejuvenation of classroom instructors as well as students, the importance of recognizing students' academic standing and moral and ethical values, and the need to develop a core curriculum that enables students and instructors to use positive learning experiences.

The session continued as Lisa F Lifshin RPh, Manager, Program Services, Coordinator, Technician Program Development, Accreditation Services Division, ASHP, gave a talk titled "An Update on ASHP Accreditation of Pharmacy Technician Training Programs." Lifshin's informative update suggested potential uses of the Model Curriculum for Pharmacy Technician Training, described the steps necessary for a program to become ASHP-accredited, and reviewed the number of ASHP-accredited technician programs and the impact that various organizations have had on technician practice and program accreditation.

Next, Miriam Mobley Smith PharmD, Coordinator, Academic Programs, Department of Pharmacy Practice, University of Illinois at Chicago College of Pharmacy, gave a timely update titled "Tracking the Trends: Pharmacy Technicians and PTCB 2003." The talk described the

latest trends in pharmacy technician education and training, the introduction of the 2002 White Paper, and pharmacy manpower and patient safety issues. Mobley Smith also provided an overview of PTCB new technology initiatives and instructed technician educators on how to become involved with PTCB.

Sunday's talks concluded with a thought-provoking presentation titled "World View and Multiculturalism: The Role of the Pharmacy Technician" by Jeanie Barkett RPh, Director, Pharmacy Technician Program, Clark College, Vancouver, WA. Barkett defined key terms and concepts of cultural tradition, outlined healthcare demographics of the 4 major ethnic minorities in the US, described the relevance of multicultural pharmacy care to the patient, and presented personal self-assessment strategies for beginning to understand one's personal ethnocentric worldview.

The PTEC awards dinner banquet was held Sunday night, July 20. Present were PTEC meeting attendees, including the following members of the PTEC Board of Directors: President Larry E Nesmith, Pharmacy Educator, Academy of Health Sciences, Pharmacy Branch, US Army; President-elect Valerie L Wagner, Director, Pharmacy Technician Program, California Paramedical and Technical College, Long Beach, CA; Vice President Jeanie Barkett; and Treasurer Lucien Van Elsen, Instructor, Milwaukee Area Technical College, Brookfield, WI. New elections and assignments for the 2003–2004 PTEC Board of Directors were announced, with Jeanie Barkett moving into the role of President-elect; new Vice President Sandra Tschritter, Director, Spokane Community College, Spokane, WA; Secretary Stephanie Smith-Baker, Coordinator, Pharmacy Technician Program, Anne Arundel Community College, Arnold, MD; and Reporter Mary Ann Stuhan, Pharmacy Technician Program Manager,

STANLEY J LLOYD PharmD, Assistant Editor, *jPT*.

Cuyahoga Community College East Campus, Highland Hills, OH. Valerie L Wagner assumed the role of President, while Larry E Nesmith became the Immediate Past President. Lucien Van Elsen continues to fill the role of Treasurer (Figure 1).

The banquet also featured the presentation of the Roy Kemp and Phil Naut awards. The Roy Kemp Award is presented annually to an outstanding pharmacy technician educator. This year's Roy Kemp Award was presented to Jan Keresztes PharmD, Pharmacy Technician Program Coordinator, South Suburban College, Orland Park, IL. The Phil Naut Award is given each year to a noneducator who has consistently supported PTEC and the pharmacy technician profession. This year's Phil Naut Award was given to Melissa Murer RPh, Executive Director, PTCB, Washington, DC (Figure 2).

The talks continued on Monday with "How Pharmacy Practice Acts Can Influence Delivery Methods — Experience in the Rural Areas," a report of the valuable experiences of Kenneth M Strandberg BS MBA, Program Director, North Dakota State College of Science, Wahpeton, ND, and Barbara Lacher BS CPhT, Assistant Program Director, North Dakota State College of Science. Together, Strandberg and Lacher compared on-campus versus off-campus student learning styles, identified unexpected consequences of legislation and regulations, discussed the paradigm shift in technicians' roles and duties, and described the unique responsibilities and needs of telepharmacy technicians.

Hartley continued the morning with a universally important topic, "Students...How to Get Them, How to Fund Them, and How to Keep Them." Hartley discussed various strategies for student recruitment including use of the media, career fairs, and ways to identify dislocated workers. Sources of financial support were discussed, from vocational rehabilitation and state and government funding to strategies for developing relationships with funding agency representatives. The importance of per-



Figure 1. 2003–2004 PTEC officers (L–R): Larry Nesmith, Immediate Past President; Valerie Wagner, President; Jeannie Barkett, President Elect; Lucien Van Elsen, Treasurer. Not pictured: Sandra Tschritter, Vice President; Stephanie Smith-Baker, Secretary; and Mary Ann Stuhan, Reporter.



Figure 2. 2003 PTEC Award Recipients (L–R): Jan Keresztes PharmD, Roy Kemp Technician Educator of the Year Award; and Melissa Murer RPh, Phil Naut Pharmacy Technician Associate of the Year Award.

sonally connecting with each student in the program was discussed, particularly with regard to student retention and success. Finally, Hartley presented other community resources available to help students stay in school.

A buffet lunch and exhibitor hall followed, with informative exhibits and generous sponsorship from the following companies: American Pharmaceutical Association; ASHP; EMC/Paradigm Publishing; Lippincott, Williams and Wilkins; Michigan Pharmacists Association; and the National Pharmacy Technician Association.

Monday's afternoon session began with an inspiring panel presentation on Advanced Pharmacy Technician Practice. The discussion was moderated by Anita A Lambert BS RPh, author of the book *Advanced Pharmacy Practice for Technicians*. Panelists included technicians Trudy Hartman, CIGNA Tel-Drug Mail-Order Prescription Center, Sioux Falls, SD; Barb Hintzen CPhT, Pharmacy Operations Supervisor, Department of Pharmacy, Fairview University Medical Center, Minneapolis, MN; Susie Holien CPhT, Gundersen Lutheran, La Crosse, WI; and JoAnne L Myhre CPhT, Operations Manager, Pharmacy Department, United Hospital, St. Paul, MN. The panelists helped attendees understand the varied scope of advanced practice opportunities for pharmacy technicians by describing their roles in mail service, chemotherapy preparation, and operations management. Discussions focused on the educational and practical experiences necessary for specialized technician practice, as well as job requirements, certifications, pay, benefits, and working conditions associated with advanced pharmacy technician careers.

Monday's session concluded with a fascinating historical discussion of "The Role of the Protestant Deaconess in American Healthcare," presented by Ronald O. Nickel, PhD, Associate Professor of Pharmacy Practice, College of Pharmacy, Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, SC. Nickel detailed the beginnings of Protestant Deaconess orders in Germany and how these consecrated women, little-known but just like their Catholic counterparts, founded and ran many hospitals in the US that continue to this day.

The PTEC meeting concluded on Tuesday, beginning with an open forum by ACPE Executive Director Peter H Vlasses PharmD BCPS and Assistant Executive Director Michael J Rouse BPharm (Hons) MPS titled "ACPE Open Hearing on Pharmacy Technician Education and Training." This open forum, one in a series being held at key pharmacy meetings throughout 2003, provided an opportunity for individuals and organizations to comment on issues that impact the education and training of pharmacy technicians. Information presented at these open forums will be considered in future decisions regarding the regulation and quality assurance of tech education by the ACPE and other involved parties.

Next, attendees upgraded their computer skills at "Tips for Making PowerPoint Presentations," a talk by Paul Wagner RPh, Pharmacy Technician Program Coordinator, Greenville Technical College, Anderson, SC. Wagner, also PTEC's webmaster and technical expert, discussed and demonstrated both fundamental concepts and little-known pearls regarding the design and layout of attractive, effective computer-based slide show presentations using Microsoft PowerPoint software.

The day continued with a presentation titled "Innovative Pharmacy Technician Programs — Meeting the Chal-

lenge of Diversity in Education" by Gail Askew PharmD, Department Chair, Pharmacy Technician Program, Santa Ana College, Santa Ana, CA; Dolores Sewchok BA CPhT, Director, Medical Training, Bidwell Training Center, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA; and Barbara Snyder RPh, Instructor, Bidwell Training Center, Inc. The speakers detailed various innovative ways that pharmacy technician programs are educating students to meet the needs of their local communities, suggested ways to involve Colleges of Pharmacy in technician education, and provided information on implementing articulation agreements with Colleges of Pharmacy.

Next was an informative presentation by Gerald R Finken RPh MS, CEO and President, CSM-plus, Fargo, ND. Finken drew attention to the current and future changes facing pharmacy and helped attendees learn to recognize opportunities within the profession and make the most of them.

The 2003 meeting concluded with a presentation titled "Effective Teaching Techniques — The Cornerstone of Quality Education" by Janice Johnson, Education Specialist, ECM/Paradigm Publishing, St. Paul, MN. Johnson helped attendees understand effective teaching and assessment, described how new media can motivate and educate diverse groups of learners, and discussed how subject-area experts can become more effective classroom teachers.

Clearly, PTEC's meeting continues to be a tremendous resource and networking opportunity for technician educators, enabling them to keep "reaching for the stars." Information on next year's meeting will be posted on the PTEC Web site (www.rxptec.org) as it becomes available.