

# The Secret to the Success of the CSHP Saskatchewan Branch Student Symposium

By Cheyanne Boehm, Student Representative and Audrey Smycniuk President-Elect –CSHP Saskatchewan Branch



This summer, the Saskatchewan Branch of CSHP was nationally recognised for recruiting the highest number of student members. How did we do it, you ask? Was it free [Rider tickets](#)? Sadly, no. However, we will share our secret...

For years, the branch has hosted an annual student symposium at the University of Saskatchewan. The event aims to provide all pharmacy students with earlier exposure by creating an opportunity to meet pharmacists practicing in a variety of clinical settings. Students are typically introduced to hospital practice in third year.

This year, we held the symposium early September for strategic reasons: we avoid inclement weather, conflicting exam schedules and most notably, it allows us to advocate for one of the most valuable CSHP member benefits, professional education. The next educational event is the branch AGM and educational sessions which are held in collaboration with the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. Students are invited to participate in mentorship activities held on the first night of the conference.

In line with CSHP 2015 initiatives, the event also provides a chance for upper year students to hear about hospital residency. Current Saskatchewan residents provided insight into their residency experience. Dr. David Blackburn, a professor at the University of Saskatchewan involved with the Saskatchewan program, discussed the residency process. Holding the event early in the semester allows ample time for students to consider and complete applications, due in late October.

The branch traditionally invites guest pharmacists to speak. With this year's event, we featured Dr. Brenda Schuster (Past President, Saskatchewan branch), Audrey Smycniuk, (President-Elect, Saskatchewan branch), Zack Dumont (numerous positions on branch council), and Dr. Neil MacKinnon (Past President, National). The speakers detailed their diverse clinical career paths, the role of CSHP membership, and the importance of volunteerism within CSHP to move our profession forward.

The branch invites additional hospital pharmacists to attend and share career perspectives, one-on-one, with the students. Thank you to Dr. Brenda Thiessen, Dr. Blair Seifert, James Lacey, and Katie Schmyr and residents, Eric Landry, Katherine Lang, Barrett Blue, Carla Alexander and Becky Hartz for attending the reception.

The student symposium was exceedingly well received. Not only did students have the chance to speak with hospital pharmacists, but additional incentives to attend included discounted student memberships (subsidized by the branch) and door prizes. The prizes were collected by our student representative who targeted local businesses in Saskatoon, offering an opportunity to advertise to pharmacy students and professionals. All prizes were donated, allowing more flexibility in the budget for catering and speaker appreciation.

True to the successes of past membership/communications co-chairs, Maria Paiva and Audrey Smycniuk, our new co-chairs Lori Zulyniak and Kaitlyn McMillan (past student representative) and our current student representative, Cheyanne Boehm, who carried the torch and put on an extremely successful event. With nearly 120 students in attendance, over half of whom became CSHP members hopefully next year's recognition award comes back to Saskatchewan!

In true [Rider spirit](#), the Saskatchewan branch has dispensed this friendly challenge to you!