
A DYNAMIC SUMMER INTERNSHIP AT CSHP



As I packed my bags for my third year of pharmacy school in Toronto, I came across a stack of business cards that I had received from various people throughout the summer. One was from a director of pharmacy, one from a pharmacist consultant, and some from university professors and pharmacy students from all over Canada. There was even one from the Chief Executive Officer of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists. The cards are a true reflection of the diverse experiences and networking opportunities I had during my summer internship with the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists (CSHP).

From May to August, not a day went by where I didn't learn something new about the profession, the direction in which it is heading, or the people that drive it. On my first day of work, I attended a Health Canada stakeholder meeting on progressive licensing. The internship also included eight days shadowing a clinical pharmacist in Thrombosis & Orthopaedics Surgery, as well as in Drug Information and Drug Distribution, at the Ottawa Hospital. Seeing first hand what the work of a hospital pharmacist entails was an eye-opening experience and made me truly understand the importance of CSHP's efforts.

Along with executive and staff meetings, I joined Myrella Roy, the Executive Director, at various external events. I was fortunate to be able to attend the annual trilateral meeting with the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists and the Mexican Association of Hospital Pharmacists which was held in Ottawa this year. It was very interesting to hear about the challenges facing Mexican pharmacists in establishing the foundation of their profession and about the undertakings of pharmacists in the United States.

My lucky streak continued as the Canadian Pharmacists Association's centennial conference and gala also took place in Ottawa. There, I met students and colleagues from across the nation, learned about current issues facing the pharmacy community, and even got to hear from David Suzuki and Jack Layton! Another great learning opportunity was my visit with representatives of the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technology in Health, where I was made aware of their extremely important efforts of promoting evidence-based medicine and optimal prescribing to healthcare workers.

Not all of the external activities were in Ottawa, though. I went to Montreal for a two-day conference on optimizing prescribing behaviours. Teaming up with different healthcare professionals, academics and policy makers to brainstorm ideas on improving prescribing in Canada was a great privilege. And the travelling didn't stop there! In August, I headed west to Regina, Saskatchewan for CSHP's Annual General Meeting and Educational Sessions. Golfing with other members in the fundraising tournament for the CSHP Research & Education Foundation, being inspired and mentored by pharmacy leaders, networking with future colleagues, celebrating the launch of the *CSHP 2015* initiative, and witnessing the formation of CSHP's newest branch in Prince Edward Island were all memorable and invaluable experiences.

In between all of the meetings and the travelling, I actually did spend some time at the national office, working with staff and completing different projects. One of my main tasks was to compose standard letters promoting CSHP benefits to hospital pharmacists and managers. Going through all that I accomplished this summer and having met so many exceptional members, I realized that I don't have to formally work for CSHP to promote its benefits to others. The benefits speak for themselves...and I have business cards to prove it.

*Rabiah Siddiqui
3rd Year Pharmacy Student
Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy
University of Toronto*

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