



# MONTANA PHARMACY TODAY

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## MONTANA PHARMACY ASSOCIATION PROVIDES SUPPORT AND FUNDING TO ARKANSAS'S PBM APPEAL AT THE US SUPREME COURT

MPA members have likely seen articles about the Arkansas Pharmacy Association success in getting the US Supreme Court to hear their appeal on a ruling by the Eighth US Circuit Court overturning PBM reform legislation they passed in recent years. Specifically, the US Supreme Court granted the appeal on January 10 for Rutledge (AR) vs PCMA (PBMs) on ERISA preemption for state PBM regulation. When this news was announced, the Arkansas Pharmacy began reaching out to national and state pharmacy organizations to assist in the effort. After considering the request, the MPA Board voted to add our name in support of the appeal effort and provided a \$2,000 contribution to assist in funding this legal effort.

More details on the appeal:

1. **Arkansas and NCPA officially have officially partnered** and hired legal counsel, Katten law firm for the US Supreme Court battle with the PBMs over ERISA preemption.
2. Numerous national and state pharmacy/pharmacist associations, including MPA, have agreed to sign on in support.
  - Most state attorney generals will collectively submit an amicus brief in support of Arkansas. California will lead this effort.
    - o Previously, these state AGs have already supported Arkansas asking for cert to be granted (in 2019 to the US Supreme Court)

CALIFORNIA, COLORADO, CONNECTICUT, DELAWARE, GEORGIA, HAWAII, IDAHO, INDIANA, IOWA, KANSAS, KENTUCKY, LOUISIANA, MAINE, MARYLAND, MASSACHUSETTS, MINNESOTA, MONTANA, NEBRASKA, NEVADA, NEW JERSEY, NEW MEXICO, NEW YORK, NORTH CAROLINA, OHIO, OKLAHOMA, OREGON, TEXAS, UTAH, VERMONT, VIRGINIA, WASHINGTON, WYOMING, AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AS AMICI CURIAE IN SUPPORT OF PETITIONER

- The US Solicitor General, Noel Francisco has already submitted a brief in full support of Arkansas and will represent the United States of America along side the Arkansas AG team in fighting the PBMs to overturn ERISA preemption.
- Important dates for appeal process so far (dates may change)

**Feb 24** – Arkansas AG office merit brief due to US Supreme Court

**March 2** – APA/NCPA/all other pharmacy association amicus brief due

**April 20, 21 or 22** – oral arguments in Washington D.C. (These dates are subject to change. The date has not officially been posted to the US Supreme Court calendar)

**By June 30** – written decision released

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## HOWARD BEALL RECEIVES BOWL OF HYGEIA PHARMACY AWARD



Howard Beall of Missoula has received the prestigious, "Bowl of Hygeia Award." He recently retired as the Dean of the Skaggs School of Pharmacy at the University of Montana in Missoula.

Howard was recognized during the association's annual award banquet by MPA Past Chair Rory Johnson who said, "Howard has dedicated a great deal of his life to mentoring

Ph.D. advisees and future pharmacists. His students recognize his dedication to their education and the profession and have recognized him as Rho Chi Teacher of the Year on three different occasions. He has been an integral part of the School of Pharmacy and University for more than 20 years, contributing to

college and campus wide committees and initiatives."

Rory added, "Howard has authored many peer reviewed articles, presented at national professional conferences, and received numerous grants from NIH and other well recognized funders. Such contributions have elevated UM's School of Pharmacy reputation at both the local and national levels. His contributions to pharmacy in Montana have been, and continue to be, frequent and significant."

The "Bowl of Hygeia" Award is presented annually by participating pharmacy associations in each of the fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the ten Canadian provinces. The recipients are selected by their respective associations for their outstanding record of service. The first Montana Bowl of Hygeia was awarded in 1959 to John J. Downey of Butte.

## LEIGH SCHERER - MPA PHARMACY TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR



The Montana Pharmacy Association (MPA) Board of Directors announces that Leigh Scherer, a pharmacy technician with Saint Vincent Hospital in Billings has won the Montana Pharmacy Technician of the Year Award.

MPA Chair, Jason Nickisch presented the award and had this to say about Leigh, "Leigh is a highly regarded professional who keeps

herself up-to-date on technician pharmacy practice. She is certified in Epic's Willow Inpatient and Ambulatory modules which helps her serve as an excellent resource for her team and others. She has a true passion for pharmacy and an intrinsic desire to support our pharmacists, technicians, physicians, nurses and everyone she comes into contact in providing patient care."

He added, "At Saint Vincent's, Leigh was instrumental with

helping implement their retail pharmacy system and spent countless hours ensuring that retail pharmacists were supported and could do their jobs. She also led the IT pharmacy team in the implementation of their oncology module."

### MORE ABOUT LEIGH:

Leigh is a Certified Pharmacy Technician with 24 years of diverse pharmacy experience including hospital and retail pharmacy, clinical and non-clinical staff training, informatics and consulting. She has worked for the last ten years as a Senior Application Analyst for SCL Health supporting the pharmacy module of their Electronic Medical Record (EMR). She was an essential member of the team that implemented Smart Pump Integration and electronic Medication Administration Records. That team was awarded the ASHP Best Practice Award in 2015 and a case study on the project was published in AJHP in July 2018.

Leigh is the mother of two delightful children and does an exceptional job balancing work and family.



## CHERITH SMITH MPA PHARMACIST OF THE YEAR

Cherith Smith, Assistant Director of Experiential Programs for the School of Pharmacy at U of M has received the 2020 Fitzgerald Pharmacist of the Year Award from the Montana Pharmacy Association (MPA). The Pharmacist of the Year Award is presented annually by MPA to someone who has demonstrated leadership and service to the pharmacy profession.

Cherith was recognized by MPA Chair, Jason Nickisch at the ceremony who said, "Cherith has been instrumental in writing the successful Indian Health Service Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) grant. As a result of her efforts, this program offers a wide range of diabetes care and prevention services such as personalized nutrition counseling and diet recommendations, home blood sugar testing instruction and troubleshooting problems, and insulin instruction and dose adjustments in coordination with MUIHC's Primary Care Provider. Cherith also makes time to see patients individually at MUIHC as well as coordinates the Pathway to Walking Well and Restoring our Relationships evening classes."

He added, "Twice a year, Cherith also organizes two health screening events for the MUIHC patients. She reaches out to community partners such as Partnership Health Center to provide medical and dental services. These two events reach many Native Americans who would not have access to these services. They are time intensive events for Cherith to put together, but she does it with a smile on her face and love in her heart."



In addition to her professional involvement in pharmacy Jason noted that Cherith is involved in activities at the Missoula International School (MIS). She participates in their Indian Education efforts as well as pharmacy and wellness activities. She and her husband are also active in their community church.

## DISTINGUISHED YOUNG PHARMACIST AWARDED TO SONJA CLAUSEN

The Montana Pharmacy Association is pleased to announce that Sonja Clausen, a pharmacist with Bozeman Health was selected as the winner of the Distinguished Young Pharmacist Award. This award is presented annually to a pharmacist who exemplifies professionalism, leadership and is a role model to their peers.

Sonja's award was announced at the Montana Pharmacy Association Awards Banquet. At the ceremony Sonja was commended for her many accomplishments by former MPA Board Chair, Stacey Pascoe who said Sonja is passionate about ambulatory care pharmacy and is a valued member of the team at Bozeman Health Internal Medicine Clinic. She noted Sonja is the lead pharmacist for the RN-Pharmacist Hypertension Clinic, which has developed a novel approach to treating hypertension involving nurse-led education and counseling with pharmacist-led review and management of each case. Stacey stated, "Sonja is an outstanding coworker, will take on any task with gusto, and has an outstanding clinical knowledge base. She is professional, exciting, and versatile."

### MORE ABOUT SONJA:

Sonja obtained her Bachelor of Science Degrees in Biology and Chemistry from Briar Cliff University in Sioux City, IA. She obtained her Master of Science in Toxicology in 2013 and her Doctorate of Pharmacy in 2017, both from the University of Montana.

Sonja has been involved in her state association, MPA in a significant way - she was the resident member of the Health Systems Academy and first introduced the idea of having a resident poster session at MPA's Winter CE and Ski. On the national level, Sonja is an active member of ASHP and ACCP. Outside of work, Sonja enjoys spending time in the mountains, snow or shine, with her husband and her two huskies.





## KRISTI MONSON OF BILLINGS CHOSEN WINNER OF THE EXCELLENCE IN INNOVATION AWARD



Kristi Monson, a Billings pharmacist who is the Manager of Hometown MTm has been awarded the Excellence in Innovation Award by the Montana Pharmacy Association (MPA).

As the Manager of Hometown MTm, Kristi oversees a disease state management program that works in collaboration with the UM Skaggs School of Pharmacy to provide

services to the State of Montana employees. In this position she oversees a closed network for the Montana Family Pharmacies (MFP) organization. Within MFP, Kristi wears multiple hats. Not only is she leading Hometown MTm she is also responsible for

reporting and analytics for all 83 MFP member Pharmacies. Because of her effort's MFP members receive weekly reports to help them make better decisions on their Rx buying strategies. It was noted Kristi is also the Pharmacist in Charge for RimRock Foundation, an inpatient drug and alcohol treatment facility in Billings.

MPA Chair Jason Nickisch presented Kristi with her award at the association's recent Winter Meeting in Big Sky and said, "On top of her job, Kristi finds time to volunteer and support her children's many activities. Co-workers report it is not uncommon to come into work in the morning to find e-mails that Kristi has written far after her kid's bedtime. Kristi is an extremely dedicated pharmacist who is pushing our profession forward in her quiet, non-assuming way. Thank you."

## MONTANA BOARD OF PHARMACY NOTICE

### PHOTO ID FOR CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES AND OTHER BOARD RULE CHANGES

The Montana Board of Pharmacy adopted a new rule expanding the types of photo identifications allowable for dispensing controlled substances, pursuant House Bill 86 and implemented in statute at 37-7-410, MCA. Effective January 18, 2020, the new rule, ARM 24.174.842, allows for a valid government-issued photo identification, including but not limited to passport, military, or state-issued identification. See the proposed and final rule for MAR Notice No. 24-174-73 on the Board's Rules Notices webpage. As a reminder, the statute, effective October 1, 2019, allows for a valid driver's license, a school district or postsecondary education photo identification, a tribal photo identification, and those allowed by Board rule.

For additional rule changes implemented by the Board effective

in September and December of 2019, go to the Board's Rules Notices webpage:

- MAR Notice No. 24-174-71 amending the following: collaborative practice requirements, internship requirements, pharmacy technician/pharmacist ratio, technician-in-training licensing requirements, transfer of prescriptions, and military training or experiences. Effective September 21, 2019 and reflected online in the Administrative Rules.
- MAR Notice No. 24-174-72 amending administration of vaccines by pharmacists and the Montana Prescription Drug Registry fee. Effective December 7, 2019 but not yet reflected in the online Administrative Rules.

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## MONTANA PHARMACY ASSOCIATION LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

The Montana Pharmacy Association has a Facebook page, available through the Association's website at [www.rxmt.org](http://www.rxmt.org). This MPA feature serves as a popular and easy way for members and anyone interested in Montana pharmacy related issues to stay connected. We hope you will join us!

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## PHARMACY TECHNICIAN SPOTLIGHT FEATURES COURTNEY BAHNY



### 1. WHERE DO YOU WORK AND WHAT IS YOUR POSITION?

I am a clinical pharmacy technician working at Mountain Pacific Quality Health in Helena, working in the Montana Medicaid Drug Prior Authorization Unit.

### 2. WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO PURSUE A CAREER AS A PHARMACY TECHNICIAN? WHY DID YOU BECOME CERTIFIED?

I started working as a pharmacy technician back in 2007. The job basically fell into my lap and, to be honest, prior to that happening I had never thought about being part of the profession. After working in the pharmacy, I quickly realized how much I enjoyed it and was determined to get my certification so I could continue with the profession.

### 3. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT BEING AN MPA MEMBER?

I appreciate how hard the association advocates for the profession, both for pharmacists and technicians. Pharmacy is an ever-changing profession, with new rules and policies being thrown at the people who work it, so having an association that helps its members navigate through all the changes occurring, and (at times) pushing for changes that directly benefit the worker, is a great resource to have.

### 4. WHAT IS YOUR LATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT?

Over the past 3 years, I've been part of a team working to aid providers in dosage reduction plans for high dose opioids in the Montana Medicaid population. Over the years, we've noticed the same trend that the rest of the country is experiencing – the quick rise in overall opioid use and rise in high dose utilization. When the CDC published their recommendations for combating this issue, we jumped on it and developed a program that allowed Montana Medicaid to request dosage reductions for those individuals who were/are exceeding the recommended dosing. This program went

live in August 2018 and started with those individuals who were exceeded 180 morphine milligram equivalents (MME) per day. Roughly every 4-6 months, we've reduced the number of MME allowed per day, and are now in the final phase of this program working on getting as many individuals as possible below 90MME per day. Helping develop this program has been very rewarding and has been successful. It was a great accomplishment for me to be one of the leads developing and implementing this program, and it shows that pharmacy technicians can be involved in clinical work.

### 5. WHAT ARE YOUR PASSIONS OUTSIDE OF WORK?

I'm married and a mother of two, so my passions basically include anything with my family. In the summer, our whole lives revolve around camping and RZR riding – there's generally not a weekend we aren't out doing these. In the winter, we try and snowmobile, but snow and NICE weather seem to be hard things to come by these days so we don't get out as much as we'd like.

### 6. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR OTHER PHARMACY TECHNICIANS?

We have a joke in my office that myself and our other technician are “just” pharmacy technicians, but we are so much more than that (and our pharmacists agree). And what makes us more is our ambition to be more than “just”. We both put in the time to learn the profession as a whole, and we ask questions about disease states and medications and why/how they work. My advice to other pharmacy technicians is don't settle for “just” as we have the ability to be so much more than that. If you see this job as a career, make it the career you want. Ask for more responsibilities, do extra CE's (with or without credit), and build the job you want.



# MONTANA PHARMACY TODAY



## MPA HEALTH-SYSTEMS ACADEMY UPDATES

### RESIDENT UPDATE

Jacqueline Bone, pharmacy resident at Benefis Health Systems become our resident liaison for this next year. With the expansion of residency programs there are now 23 residents in the state.

### ELECTIONS

With Logan moving into the chair position of the Health-Systems Academy an at-large position became available. Tamara Jost with the VA in Helena has filled the vacancy.

### REAFFILIATION UPDATE

Our documents were reviewed by the Commission on Affiliate Relations (COAR) in September 2019. The COAR makes a recommendation to the ASHP Board of Directors. This recommendation is reviewed and voted upon by the ASHP Board of Directors at their January 23-24, 2020 meeting. State affiliates will be notified of the ASHP Board action in early February 2020. Logan thanks everyone who helped to get necessary paperwork together to apply for reaffiliation.

### SURVEY RESULTS

We received the results of the eight-question survey sent in June 2019. There was very good feedback on how to improve the spring seminar. The Health-Systems Academy will begin to incorporate those suggestions starting in 2020.

### 7TH ANNUAL SPRING SEMINAR—APRIL 17-18, BILLINGS AND MISSOULA

Save the date for the seventh annual MPA Health-Systems Academy Spring Seminar on April 17th and 18th. The seminar will be held in Billings and the Skaggs School of Pharmacy in Missoula, with both sites linked by teleconference. The seminar will highlight research from the pharmacy residents throughout the state as they prepare for the regional Residency Conferences. The agenda will also include a speaker from ASHP, updates from the Montana state representatives to the 2020 ASHP House of Delegates. The planning committee is excited about the upcoming seminar and hopes to see you all there!

### 2020 ASHP HOUSE OF DELEGATE NOMINATIONS

Ballots have gone out through Qualtrics and email. The nominations for the house of delegates three-year term were:

- Elizabeth Klein, PharmD; Clinical Pharmacist; Billings Clinic; Billings
- Starla Blank, PharmD, BCPS; Pharmacy Director; St. Peters Healthcare; Helena
- Monica Orsborn, PharmD, NCPS; Clinical Pharmacist; Fort Belknap Hospital; Harlem

This nominee will serve as the alternate delegate from March 2020 to February 2021 then progress to the junior and senior delegate role from March 2021 to February 2023.

Questions, comments or concerns about the MPA Health-Systems Academy? Please contact: Stuart Doggett, MPA Executive Director ([stuart@montana.com](mailto:stuart@montana.com)) or Logan Tinsen, MPA Health-Systems Academy Chair ([LoganTinsen@benefis.org](mailto:LoganTinsen@benefis.org)).





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#### UM - Skaggs School of Pharmacy:

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**Executive Director:** Marcie Bough, PharmD  
[mbough@mt.gov](mailto:mbough@mt.gov)

### Calendar of Events

**March 6:** Nominations for MPA Board Members due

**July 1:** Nominations open for MPA Annual Awards:  
Form available at [www.rxmt.org/annual-awards](http://www.rxmt.org/annual-awards)

**October 15:** Nominations close for MPA Annual  
Awards

**January 8, 2021:** MPA Annual Awards and Longevity  
Recognitions at the MPA Banquet.

### Continuing Education Offerings

#### Health-Systems Academy Spring Seminar (video conference)

April 17-18, 2020– Billings and Missoula, MT

#### Northwest Pharmacy Conference

May 28-31, 2020 – Coeur d'Alene, ID

#### 2021 MPA Winter Meeting

January 8-10, 2021-Big Sky Resort