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on how to excel in the interview process. Specific to the residency process, there are many residency-prep resources, such as curated videos to guide students through the steps of how to acquire and thrive in a residency. Many schools and colleges of pharmacies that have a similar resource available to student pharmacists to help them prepare to effectively network and apply for and interview for jobs and internships.

American Pharmacists Association—Academy of Student Pharmacists (APhA—ASP) works to help student pharmacists be competitive candidates and the transition to becoming a new practitioner. APhA—ASP structure and programming uniquely supply opportunities for student pharmacists to gain a competitive edge. There are a plethora of experiences available to members in the areas of leadership, professional development, and policy opportunities.

The leadership opportunities within APhA—ASP are unmatched with local, regional, and national leadership positions available that are listed on pharmacist.com. Being elected to a regional or national officer position within the association is just one way that leadership can set apart a candidate. APhA—ASP invests a lot of leadership training into its regional and national officers, and these skills are applicable to many fields. Postgraduate training often requires an interview, and the experiences that leaders within the academy enjoy help them stand out among other candidates. Regional and national leaders help plan conferences, develop and debate policies relevant to pushing the profession forward, and connect to student pharmacists from around the country.

APhA—ASP offers numerous meetings and webinars that provide students the opportunity to truly expand their network. Meetings such as the APhA—ASP Summer Leadership Institute and APhA—ASP Midyear Regional Meetings are developed specifically for student pharmacists. Other meetings such as APhA Annual Meeting and Exposition and the APhA Institute for Substance Use Disorders are attended by pharmacists, giving student pharmacists the chance to expand their network further. Pharmacy truly is a small world, and that network helps to set candidates apart as they search for postgraduation opportunities.

Advocacy opportunities available through APhA—ASP are unique experiences that sets the academy apart from other organizations. The policy process begins at the individual member, and any member may develop a policy to then be worked up into both the APhA—ASP and the APhA House of Delegates (HoD). Every chapter gets a delegate in the APhA—ASP HoD, where resolutions are debated and voted upon. Student pharmacists that serve as regional and national officers also have a voice in the APhA HoD; their voice affects pharmacy policy but also ensures that resolutions passed are including student pharmacist. Being a delegate in either HoD is a great learning experience exclusive to APhA.

All in all, there are a multitude of ways that a student pharmacist can participate and facilitate their own professional and personal growth to avoid the market saturation. Pharmacy has so many traditional and nontraditional paths that allow student pharmacists to build their career any way they choose. The market might seem saturated in the traditional sense. However, pharmacists have been entering nontraditional fields such as functional medicine, consulting, pharmacogenomics, and so many other areas to carve out their own space in the profession. The market saturation may be a problem when the path is linear, so it is important to get comfortable with being uncomfortable and be willing to engage in any opportunity that may arise. Student pharmacists should look deeper into all the resources that pharmacy school has available, reach out to faculty and career coaches, actively engage at their APhA—ASP chapter, and use their network—peers, faculty, organization leaders, etc.—to guide them along the way.

Create value in the work that you do and always strive to be the best pharmacist that you can be for your patients, no matter the practice setting that you are in. This is what will help market saturation because pharmacists will find the niche they love and not just be completing a job to have a job.

Sidrah Alam, Final-Year Student Pharmacist, Shenandoah University Bernard J. Dunn School of Pharmacy, Winchester, VA, National Member at Large, 2021-2022 APhA—ASP; E-mail: salam18@su.edu

Shirly Ly, Third-Year Student Pharmacist, University of Florida College of Pharmacy, Gainesville, FL; Member, 2021-2022 APhA—ASP National Standing Committee on Communications

APhA—APRS

An opportunity to impact public health and expand the pharmacist's role

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a decrease in pharmacist employment from 2020 to 2030 by 2.2%, with community pharmacy projected to see the greatest decline (–10%). These numbers taken without any context may look grim. However, over the next decade, it is expected that there will be more than 11,000 pharmacist job openings each year on average, and other community-based areas of pharmacy, such as ambulatory care pharmacy, are expected to see an increase in employment.¹ For



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community pharmacy to combat this decline, it needs to be reimagined beyond the dispensing model and transition to a “health care destination.”² This type of practice transformation in community-based pharmacy will not only increase job opportunities but has the potential to meet public health needs.

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic proved community-based pharmacists' value and impact in the public health arena. Through the provision of rapid antigen testing, administration of monoclonal antibodies, and COVID-19 vaccinations, pharmacists have been invaluable health care providers during the pandemic. With pharmacists demonstrating their capacity to addressing public health needs, now is the time for our profession to leverage

this influence and create novel community-based pharmacist roles.

Public health is affected by a wide array of factors including social determinants of health (SDOH), health care policy, availability of health services, individual health behaviors, and biology and genetics. Pharmacists have the skills and training to address certain aspects of SDOH, provide additional health services such as preventive care, and affect individual health behaviors through targeted patient education. Current initiatives such as the Community Pharmacy Enhanced Services Network are evaluating what this expanded role can look like from the both the pharmacy and payer perspective.³ Pharmacy should continue to evaluate where pharmacists can fill gaps in care and improve public health. Expanding the community-based pharmacists' role to target aspects of public health will be a win for patients and pharmacists.

For pharmacists to have the biggest impact on public health, they need to be present in the communities facing public health crises. Although pharmacists are often viewed as the most accessible health profession, pharmacy deserts present a barrier to accessing care, particularly in areas that have the greatest public health needs.⁴ Pharmacy deserts often exist in historically marginalized and vulnerable communities, being most prevalent in predominantly Black, Hispanic, and Latinx communities, and communities experiencing consequential impacts from SDOH, such as a lack of economic stability, education and language barriers, and inadequate transportation.^{5,6} Everyone has a right to accessible care and medications; therefore, it is vital that pharmacies services expand to eradicate pharmacy deserts. Expansion of pharmacies into pharmacy deserts will not only have the potential to address public health needs but will create more community-based pharmacy jobs.

In discussing community-based pharmacy expansion in underserved areas, it is important to highlight the need for increased diversity in the pharmacy profession. According to the 2019 National Pharmacist Workforce Study, the current pharmacy workforce is primarily white (78.2%) followed by pharmacists who identify as Asian (11.1%), and 4.9% of pharmacists identify as Black.⁷ Not only is it important to

increase diversity in pharmacy from a professional perspective, but it is vital for patient care. Health professionals from historically underrepresented groups are more likely to practice in historically underserved areas, and patients are more likely to receive better care from providers who are of the same racial or ethnic background.⁸ As we look toward the future of community-based pharmacy and pharmacists' impact on public health, the profession should be committed to increasing health equity by escalating recruitment of people from historically underrepresented groups to the pharmacy profession and creating opportunities for pharmacists to provide pharmacy services in historically marginalized communities.

We urge all current and future pharmacists to reject the scarcity mindset when looking at the job market and instead consider the abundant possibilities that are available. From practice advancement and transformation to community partnerships, there are many ways in which pharmacists can address public health needs while also improving and expanding the profession. We hope that pharmacists remember why they chose this profession: to serve patients and consider all of the ways in which that is possible. We hope that student pharmacists and new practitioners commit to continuing to move the profession forward by carving out new roles for pharmacists in public health, whether that be through research, practice, or policy.

Achieving health equity cannot occur without pharmacists' participation, and there are limitless opportunities for pharmacists to make an impact in improving the health of their communities.

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Tamera D. Hughes, PharmD, PhD, Postdoctoral Research Associate, UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy, Chapel Hill, NC; 2021–2022 APhA-APRS Postgraduate Advisory Committee Member; E-mail: tamera_hughes@unc.edu

Jessica S. Roller, PharmD, Postdoctoral Research Associate, UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy, Chapel Hill, NC; 2021–2022 APhA-APRS Postgraduate Advisory Committee Member

APhA–APPM

Innovate, lead, and advocate

The landscape of the pharmacy profession is constantly evolving. Pharmacists are well recognized and trusted as medication and patient safety experts, but even as we expand training and scope of practice, we are faced with challenges such as job market saturation, poor working conditions, and pharmacy burnout.^{1–3} With an increase in the number of pharmacy schools and new graduates in recent years, the market has shifted in favor of employers.¹ Although this can be disheartening and discouraging, with challenge comes opportunity.



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