1956 70th 2026 ANNIVERSARY
College of Pharmacy

LA PHARMACIE EN LOUISIANE

COLLEGE OF PHARMACY ALUMNI NEWS



Mary Rhea

PHARMILY SPOTLIGHT: MARY RHEA, M.Ed., NCC, LPC-S

My journey at ULM actually began in 1996, when I was hired to work in Residential Life. After just four months in what I thought might be the worst job imaginable, I knew I needed a change! Little did I know that what seemed like a rough beginning would lead me to the best career I could have ever hoped for.

In 1997, Dean William Bourn took a chance on a young, unlicensed mental health counselor who was looking for a new opportunity. I don't know if he realized it at the time, but that one decision would change the course of my life. I owe my entire career to Dean Bourn for seeing something in me that perhaps I hadn't even seen in myself. He opened a door that led to nearly 30 years of opportunities, friendships, memories, and a career that has been one of the greatest blessings of my life.

When I first walked through the doors of the College of Pharmacy, I never imagined how much this place would become a part of who I am. Over the years, I have watched students arrive as nervous young adults, uncertain of what their futures might hold, and leave as confident pharmacists ready to make a difference in the world. I have celebrated their successes, shared in their disappointments, wiped away tears, offered encouragement, and probably given more unsolicited advice than anyone ever asked for!

Along the way, I have had the privilege of working with incredible faculty and staff, planning countless events, building relationships with alumni, and being part of a College that has always meant so much more to me than its buildings or programs.

People often say that if you love what you do, you will never work a day in your life. I can honestly say that has been true for me. My career at the College of Pharmacy has never felt like a job. Even on the most difficult days, I have always said that my worst day here was better than my best day anywhere else. And I mean that with all my heart.

There have been challenges, changes, laughter, tears, long days, and more memories than I can count, but through it all, one thing has remained constant: my love for this College and the people who make it so special.

(Continued on page 3)

STAY IN TOUCH



UPCOMING EVENTS

Fall Commencement
Saturday, December 12
1:30 pm
B1 Bank Ewing Coliseum

10th Annual St. Vincent de Paul Poor Man's Run
Saturday, February 27
8:00 am
ULM College of Pharmacy
Register HERE

2nd Annual Car Show
benefitting
St. Vincent de Paul Community Pharmacy
Saturday, February 27
9:00 am - 1:00 pm
ULM College of Pharmacy
Early register a vehicle HERE.
Spectators $5 day of, free for registered runners!

As a graduate of ULM's pharmacy, Ph.D. or Toxicology programs, the College of Pharmacy hopes you will stay in touch. There are many events throughout the year to help you re-connect with friends and former classmates. We hope to see you at one of these events and ask that you will take a moment to share any exciting news for upcoming newsletters. Connect today!

SHARE YOUR NEWS!

Keep your pharmacy friends and colleagues updated. Use the link below to share any news such as new career moves, marriages, births, or condolences.
https://ulmapps.ulm.edu/webforms/form/college-pharmacy-alumni-news

FOLLOW US!

College of Pharmacy

1800 Bienville Drive, Monroe, LA 71201
Phone: 318.342.3800
Email: pharmacy@ulm.edu

Alumni Information or Questions:
Katie Scogin, MBA
Alumni Relations Coordinator
Phone: (318) 342-6010
Email: kkelley@ulm.edu

PHARMILY SPOTLIGHT

(Continued from page 1)

Mary Rhea

As I prepare to retire after nearly 30 years, I find myself struggling to imagine life without this place being part of my everyday routine. How do you say goodbye to something that has been such a big part of your life for so long?

The truth is, the College of Pharmacy isn't just where I have worked. It is my home. And the faculty, staff, and students aren't just people I have worked with or served. They are my family.

I will forever be grateful to Dean William Bourn for taking that chance on me in 1997. Looking back, I can even be grateful for those four months in Residential Life, because without that experience, I might never have found my way to the College of Pharmacy. Sometimes the worst experiences lead us exactly where we are meant to be.

What began as an opportunity became a career, a calling, and a lifetime of memories.

I may be retiring from the College of Pharmacy, but I will never retire from loving this place or the people who have made it so special.

Once you become part of a family, you are always family. And this will always be home.







Mary Rhea and family

ALUMNI NEWS

HOMECOMING WEEKEND BRINGS ALUMNI TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE 70 YEARS OF THE COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

The ULM College of Pharmacy celebrated Homecoming weekend September 25-26. Alumni from across the state and country joined for a weekend full of fun, including the Friday night alumni reception held at The Hotel Monroe, a Saturday morning Coffee at the College, and the traditional pharmacy super tailgate before the ULM football game. The 2026 College of Pharmacy Hall of Fame inductees were also honored with a luncheon on Friday, September 25, at The Warehouse No. 1 Restaurant. It was a great weekend to celebrate friendships, the pharmacy profession, and seven decades of the ULM College of Pharmacy and its impact on the state of Louisiana and beyond.

The College was honored to present the 2026 Hall of Fame inductees with their awards. Some other special guests in attendance at the reception included furthest traveled from Florida, Kathryn Lofton '76, and most senior alum, Paul Gewin '60 from Many, LA, who graduated in ULM's second pharmacy class!



Blake P. Pitre
Pharmacy Class of 1962



Richard A. "Andy" Soileau
Pharmacy Class of 1975



Sue Toups on behalf of
Robert B. Toups
Pharmacy Class of 1968



Nancy '(76) and Elton ('77) Farrar



Group of alumni pose for a picture



Kathryn Lofton ('76) and husband

(Continued on next page)

ALUMNI NEWS

HOMECOMING HIGHLIGHTS

(Continued from previous page)





















ALUMNI NEWS

Kanethia Daniel (Pharm.D. 2010) was named as one of the 40 Under 40 Class of 2026 honorees by the Young Professionals Initiative of Northwest Louisiana. This award recognizes professionals from businesses, government agencies, healthcare organizations, educational institutions and nonprofits. Honorees are selected based on achievement, experience, leadership, vision, and community involvement.

Troy LeBlanc (B.S. Pharmacy '88) serves as Director of Global Clinical Supply Operations at Takeda. One of his responsibilities is to hire and manage 2027 Summer Interns in the Boston, MA area and would love to have ULM alumni apply. Contact Troy for more details: troy.leblanc@takeda.com



T.J. Woodard (Pharm.D. '07) was named the winner of the 2026 National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) Willard B. Simmons Independent Pharmacist of the Year Award. The award was presented at NCPA's Annual Convention, held Oct. 3-6 in Kansas City, Mo.

The annual award is given to a pharmacist who exhibits exemplary professional leadership, service to community, and commitment to independent pharmacy.

T.J. and wife, Aimee (Pharm.D. '07), are the owners of Prescriptions to Geaux in Baton Rouge. Congrats, T.J.!



Madelyn Duplantis Orton (Pharm.D. 2025) got married to her college sweetheart, Carson Orton, on October 3, 2026. They were engaged the same day they both graduated from ULM.

Christine Jeansonne Hernandez (Pharm.D. '15) has completed 21 years total in pharmacy, 11 years being a pharmacist, and 5 years as a pharmacy manager. She is a part of a RXM Council for Walmart corporate office that helps figure out what works and needs to be changed in retail pharmacy. She is also part of a mentorship program for Walmart and serves as a preceptor for both Xavier and ULM pharmacy school.

Philip Reynolds, Jr. (B.S. Pharmacy '83) has retired after 36 years with Walmart Stores, Inc. Health and Wellness Division. His career started in pharmacy store operations as Pharmacy Manager through Divisional Sr. Director. He then moved to the Central Operations Team overseeing at different times the Mail Order Pharmacy, Specialty Pharmacy, Optical Lab Network, and the Pharmacy Central Fulfillment Network. Currently, he and his wife of 42 years, Robin, stay busy keeping their granddaughter during the week.

Ray Wilkes (B.S. Pharmacy '72) retired three years ago.

PHARMACY NEWS

Dr. Andrew Bolinger has been appointed Associate Director of the School of Basic Pharmaceutical & Toxicological Sciences. In this role, Dr. Bolinger will assist with departmental administrative oversight, graduate program coordination, graduate course scheduling, and faculty support, helping drive operational efficiency and academic success across the School and College.

Dr. Jameshia Below-Washington (Pharm.D. '18) has been promoted to Associate Professor with tenure.

Dr. Karen Briski, who joined our faculty in 1999, will be retiring from the School of Basic Pharmaceutical and Toxicological Sciences (BPTS). She has served as a cornerstone of our research and administrative leadership. Over her 25+ years at ULM, she served as Director of Research and Graduate Studies and as Head/Director of our department/school, establishing key junior faculty mentoring structures and research core facilities. As a Principal Investigator, Dr. Briski built an internationally recognized neuroscience program focused on neuroendocrine regulation and metabolic sensor brain circuitry. Her pioneering work secured millions in continuous extramural funding from the NIH, NSF, and Louisiana Board of Regents, culminating in nearly 200 peer-reviewed publications and 30 graduated Ph.D. students at ULM.

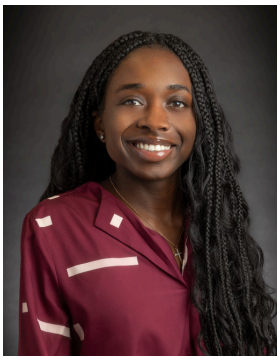
Mary Rhea, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and Development, will be retiring December 31 after serving 30 years in the College of Pharmacy.

Dr. Yong-Yu Liu will be retiring from the School of Basic Pharmaceutical and Toxicological Sciences (BPTS). He joined ULM in 2006 and has served as a tenured Professor of Pharmacology. An internationally recognized cancer researcher, Dr. Liu's work has fundamentally advanced our understanding of cancer drug resistance, glucosylceramide synthase (GCS), and p53 gene mutation targeting via m6A RNA methylation. Holder of a patent for novel ceramide-rubusoside nanomicelles, Dr. Liu has authored over 80 publications generating over 5,200 citations. Recognized with the ULM Foundation Award for Excellence in Research and as an LBRN/NIH Distinguished Researcher, his commitment to NIH-funded discovery, graduate student mentorship, and service on the school, college and university has been invaluable to our school's mission and growth.

The College of Pharmacy would like to welcome two new staff members in the Office of Student and Professional Affairs. Stacy Daugherty and Winter Campbell were hired as Academic Pathway Advisors earlier this Fall, helping with recruitment, student events, and advising pre-pharmacy students.



Stacy Daugherty



Winter Campbell

PHARMACY NEWS

Date set for 10th Annual Poor Man's Run benefitting St. Vincent de Paul Community Pharmacy

The 10th annual Poor Man's Run is set for Saturday, February 27, at the ULM College of Pharmacy. The Poor Man's Run is a 1 mile fun run and 5K that raises fund for our local charity pharmacy, St. Vincent de Paul Community Pharmacy (SVDP), which provides life saving medications to uninsured and underserved patients.



The schedule for the day is as follows:
Saturday, February 27, 2027
ULM College of Pharmacy
1800 Bienville Dr., Monroe, LA 71201
7:00 AM – Check-in/Registration
8:00 AM – 1-Mile Fun Run
8:30 AM – 5K
10:00 AM – Awards Ceremony

Register here:
https://runsignup.com/Race/LA/Monroe/StVincentDePaulCommunityPharmacyPoorManSRun?rsus=500-400-49b28480-03e1-4433-ae0c-fbb1184242cd

2027 Car Show

The race will be followed by the 2027 Car Show. This is event was started last year to bring together car enthusiasts, families and community members for a special and fun time to benefit SVDP. The car show will be help in the parking lot of the College of Pharmacy. Registration begins at 8:00 am and the show opens at 9:00am with awards at 12:00 pm. Early registration $30, day of registration $40. Spectators $5.

Early register here:
https://forms.cloud.microsoft/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=DDuWkDCw-0SpWp41mvT2aFL8MEKoUDpNqairTONYg6JUOTIaV082QUJJU1VaOEEwWVZIVVNBSEMyOS4u&origin=QRCode

About St. Vincent de Paul

The National Association of Free and Charitable Clinics (NAFC) is an organization founded in 2001 that works to serve the working poor, uninsured, and medically underserved of America. The NAFC utilizes volunteers and donations to provide health care in over 1,200 free health clinics across the country to those who have little or no access to care. We are fortunate enough to have one of those clinics in Monroe, LA- St. Vincent dePaul Community Pharmacy. The pharmacy opened in Monroe in April 1999, serving our community for the last 25 years and counting. In that time, the pharmacy has filled over 280,000 prescriptions, serving nearly 8,000 patients in 42 of the 64 parishes of Louisiana as well as the surrounding states during natural disasters.

PHARMACY NEWS

CVS Health donates $5 million in scholarships to Louisiana pharmacy schools



Gov. Landry (center) poses with the College of Pharmacy scholarship recipients and other special guests at the ceremony on September 28, 2026.

By ULM Office of Marketing and Communications

MONROE, La. – The University of Louisiana Monroe (ULM) College of Pharmacy welcomed representatives from CVS Health along with Louisiana Governor Jeff Landry at a ceremony on September 28, 2026, where Governor Landry announced a $5 million donation from CVS to fund scholarships for ULM College of Pharmacy students.

“Partnerships like what you’re seeing today actually matter,” said Governor Landry. “It means a lot when our corporate partners, those people who do business in this state, partner with our educational systems to help support them. I want to thank CVS for their partnership, and we look forward to them continuing to support the ULM College of Pharmacy.”

ULM President Dr. Carrie L. Castille welcomed Governor Landry and other special guests to the ceremony at the College of Pharmacy. “This gift from CVS will provide life-changing scholarship opportunities for our students. Thank you to CVS for your partnership and belief in the work that we do,” said Dr. Castille.

The scholarships are designated for students from Louisiana who are pursuing their Doctor of Pharmacy degree. The first round of scholarships, awarded prior to the Fall 2026 semester, helps to support 52 students who were recognized at the ceremony.

Angel Raney is a fourth-year Doctor of Pharmacy candidate from Rayville, La. Raney expressed her thanks to the CVS representatives in attendance. “I truly hope you know what a difference you have made for me. I feel incredibly blessed to have received this scholarship, and I don’t take your investment in me lightly. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for believing in me and helping me get one step closer to becoming Dr. Raney,” she said.

CVS Health Regional Director Dr. Council Powell spoke on behalf of the company at the ceremony. “Today is about more than awarding scholarships. It’s about investing in people who have chosen a profession rooted in service, trust, and human connection,” said Powell. He continued by encouraging the scholarship recipients, reminding them of the impact they will have throughout their careers. “On behalf of CVS Health, congratulations on this well-earned recognition. We are proud to support your journey and look forward to seeing the difference each of you will make going forward.”

PHARMACY NEWS

ULM College of Pharmacy announces 2026 Hall of Fame inductees



The ULM College of Pharmacy 2026 inductees were (L-R): Blake Paul Pitre, Andy Soileau, and Rob Toups

By ULM Office of Marketing and Communications

MONROE, La. – The University of Louisiana Monroe (ULM) College of Pharmacy (COP) announced the 2026 COP Hall of Fame inductees at its 70th Anniversary celebration on September 25, 2026. The COP Hall of Fame was established in 2025 to honor individuals whose careers and contributions have significantly impacted the college and the profession of pharmacy. Each year, up to three alumni will be inducted based on professional achievement, service commitment to the college, and personal integrity.

"I am proud to celebrate our second year of inductees into the College of Pharmacy Hall of Fame," said Dr. Gina Craft, Dean of the College of Pharmacy. "This prestigious recognition honors individuals whose leadership, dedication, and service have made a lasting impact on our college and the profession of pharmacy. Our inductees have not only distinguished themselves professionally but have also demonstrated an unwavering commitment to supporting the College of Pharmacy and its mission. Their continued generosity, involvement, and dedication to the success of our students and programs reflect the very best of what it means to be part of the ULM College of Pharmacy family. We are honored to recognize their achievements and grateful for their continued support."

The College of Pharmacy is proud to announce the 2026 Hall of Fame inductees:

Blake Paul Pitre, RPh ('62)
Blake Pitre has dedicated more than six decades to the profession of pharmacy as owner of Pitre's Pharmacy and as a longtime leader in organized pharmacy. He served 53 years on the Louisiana Board of Pharmacy and held leadership roles in numerous state and national pharmacy organizations. A recipient of the ULM Alumni Lifetime Achievement Award in 2025 and multiple Louisiana Pharmacists Association honors, Pitre is recognized for his extraordinary commitment to patient care, professional service, community leadership, and his alma mater.

Richard A. "Andy" Soileau, RPh ('75)
Andy Soileau is a distinguished community pharmacist, pharmacy advocate, and longtime supporter of the ULM College of Pharmacy. As long-time owner of Medicine Shoppe and Soileau's Pharmacy in New Iberia, he built a reputation for exceptional patient care and professional leadership throughout Louisiana. A former president of the Louisiana Pharmacists Association, founding leader of the Louisiana Independent Pharmacies Association, member of the Louisiana Board of Pharmacy, and ULM College of Pharmacy preceptor, he has dedicated his career to advancing patient care, mentoring future pharmacists, and strengthening the profession throughout Louisiana.

Robert B. "Rob" Toups, RPh ('68)
Rob Toups was a distinguished pharmacist, mentor, and champion of the ULM College of Pharmacy. A former President of the Louisiana Pharmacists Association and recipient of its Pharmacist of the Year Award, he dedicated his career to advancing pharmacy practice, mentoring future pharmacists, and supporting the College of Pharmacy through decades of leadership and service. He was a generous supporter of the College of Pharmacy through the Dufilho Society and his pride for the College of Pharmacy was always evident. His legacy of integrity, generosity, and commitment to others continues to inspire the pharmacy profession.

PHARMACY NEWS

Leaders for a Better Louisiana visit College of Pharmacy



Members of Leaders for a Better Louisiana smile for a picture at the College of Pharmacy

We were honored to have Leaders for a Better Louisiana at the College of Pharmacy on October 16, for an overview of our pharmacy program and the impact the College of Pharmacy has on the state. Around 25 members of the current Leadership Health Fellowship Class got to hear about unique pharmacy practice sites from pharmacy faculty and enjoyed getting a student perspective from the student panel. They ended the day with a tour of the pharmacy school. We hope they enjoyed their time in Monroe and at the College of Pharmacy.

For more information about Leaders for a Better LA, visit www.betterla.org.

College of Pharmacy now accepting applications for full-time faculty position in Community Pharmacy Practice

The University of Louisiana Monroe (ULM) College of Pharmacy, School of Clinical Sciences invites applications for a full-time faculty position in Community Pharmacy Practice at the rank of Assistant Professor or Clinical Assistant Professor. This is a 12-month appointment and may be either tenure-track or non-tenure-track, depending on qualifications and experience.

The faculty member will be expected to develop and maintain an exemplary clinical practice in collaboration with partnering community pharmacies and healthcare organizations. This practice site will serve as the foundation for didactic and experiential teaching, as well as scholarly and service activities. Additional service requirements consistent with a faculty position are expected. Benefits include a competitive salary, professional development opportunities, subsidized medical, dental, life, and disability insurance, vacation and sick leave, and several options for retirement plans.

Candidates should possess a Doctor of Pharmacy degree from an ACPE accredited college/school of pharmacy (or equivalent) with residency and/or fellowship training. Those with equivalent experience in the area of practice will also be considered. Eligibility for Louisiana state pharmacy licensure is required. Candidates should exhibit strong verbal and written communication skills, effective interpersonal skills, and dedication to student-centered education and lifelong learning.

Interested candidates should submit a letter of interest, curriculum vitae, and three (3) letters of recommendation. Application materials and letters of recommendation should be sent electronically to Dr. Victoria Miller (vmiller@ulm.edu). An online application through Human Resources is also required and may be found at: https://www.schooljobs.com/careers/ulm/jobs/5517071/clinical-assistant-professor-assistant-professor-of-pharmacy

For questions about the position, please contact Dr. Victoria Miller.

PHARMACY NEWS

Facutly member receives national award

Dr. Emily McGee received the 2026 American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP) Emergency Medicine Practice and Research Network (EMED PRN) Mentor of the Year Award. Being nominated by her peers and students she says makes it even more meaningful and she is grateful they appreciate her mentorship and dedication to developing future emergency medicine pharmacists.

She also received a travel grant to present her research, which evaluates the impact of emergency medicine clinical pharmacist administration of first-dose antibiotics on sepsis treatment and patient outcomes.

Additionally, students presented a project she is working on evaluating how pharmacist-led stroke education impacts rural emergency medical services (EMS) and emergency department (ED) clinicians' confidence and readiness to administer thrombolytic therapy for acute ischemic stroke.



Dr. Emily McGee and 4th year pharmacy students (Pictured L-R: Kaitlyn Edwards, Dr. Emily McGee, Caitlyn Breedlove, and Ceily Grisaffe)



Dr. Emily McGee receives Mentor of the Year Award at 2026 AACP conference.

Connect with the College of Pharmacy on LinkedIn

The College of Pharmacy has a new LinkedIn page and would love for you to give us a follow! You can connect with your school, alumni, colleagues, and potential employers. It is also a great way to showcase your experience, education, achievements and skills while staying updated on industry news.

Click the icon below or find us on LinkedIn by searching "University of Louisiana Monroe College of Pharmacy." You can also add add us as your education and it will show up on our page as "Alumni!"

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Full-time Pharmacist Position in Alexandria, LA

Rapides Regional Medical Center
Alexandria, LA

Learn more and apply here:
https://careers.hcahealthcare.com/jobs/18239998-pharmacist

Full-time Pharmacist Position in Pineville, LA

LALTC Pharmacy Solutions
Pineville, LA
Long term care experience preferred but not required.

Learn more and apply here:
https://www.indeed.com/viewjob?jk=7db59370397016c8&from=shareddesktop_copy

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LTC Pharmacy Management - Full-Time Pharmacists Positions

Healthcare Pharmacy in Shreveport, LA
Fusioncare Pharmacy in Alexandria, LA

Click the "View Job Openings" button on our careers page to apply.
https://ltc-pm.com/careers-2/



Community Pharmacy hiring part-time pharmacist!

We're looking for a dependable, patient-focused pharmacist to join our team.
Requirements:

- Active Louisiana pharmacist license
- Immunization-certified
- Strong communication and customer service skills
- Attention to detail and a commitment to patient safety
- Ability to work well with our pharmacy team

Send your resume to info@mycommunityrx.com or apply online at https://mycommunityrx.com/careers/

YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS



When you support pharmacy education, you invest in our students and the future of the profession.

Your gift helps fund student education, facility improvements, faculty development, community outreach and other programs that strengthen the mission of the ULM College of Pharmacy.

Ways to Give

ANNUAL GIVING

You can give directly to the Dufilho Society by check or online.

Check

Payable to ULM Foundation and mailed to:
ULM Foundation
700 University Avenue
Monroe, LA 71201
*Specify Dufilho Society in memo line

Online

www.ulm.edu/give
Click "Give to Academics"
Designation: Academics: Select a College, School or Program
Scroll down to select "Dufilho Society" from the second drop-down list

OTHER WAYS TO GIVE

Other ways to give include stock or security gifts, IRA gifts, endowments such as chairs and professorships, planned giving through a will or estate, or a naming opportunity.

For more information or to learn how to leave a lasting legacy to ULM, please contact the ULM Foundation by phone at (318) 342-3636 or by email at foundation@ulm.edu.

1956 70th 2026 ANNIVERSARY
College of Pharmacy

70 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE. A FUTURE WORTH INVESTING IN.

As the ULM College of Pharmacy celebrates 70 years of educating pharmacists, we invite you to help shape the next generation.

As you renew your Louisiana pharmacist license this year, consider making a meaningful impact by opting into the Pharmacy Education Support Fee.

This optional $100 contribution helps create valuable opportunities for future pharmacists, supporting educational experiences that shape the next generation of pharmacy professionals.

For 70 years, the ULM College of Pharmacy has been committed to advancing pharmacy education. Your support today helps continue that legacy and build a stronger, smarter, and more compassionate pharmacy workforce for tomorrow.

Thank you for being part of our history and investing in our future.