



American Chinese Pharmaceutical Association Newsletter

美洲華人藥學會通訊

Editor: James W. Shaw, Ph.D., Pharm.D., M.P.H.

April 2005

Message from the President Keith Chan, Ph.D.

When things get tough, the tough get going. However, it's nice to have some friends, too.

Time truly flies. It has already been four months since I took on the responsibility of being president of ACPA. This time around, things are completely different from when I last officially served the organization 11 years ago. When talking to many friends, they all agree that the pharmaceutical world has changed drastically. The good old days are gone forever. Nowadays, pharmaceutical scientists are not scientists; they are project managers and operators. The deadlines are getting shorter and shorter, and there is less time to spend with one's family. People have no time to communicate or even think. They react to their basic animal instincts. They have no time for the organization, etc.

All of the above statements may be true; however, I hope for something else. The Chinese word "danger" actually consists of two separate parts: "danger" and "opportunity." We have to work together to make our lives easier. I have no magic bullets. I can only offer one English saying: "When things get tough, the tough get going." Hopefully, you are one of the lucky ones that can see the light at the end of the tunnel. Oh, and one more thing. In this long struggle with life, I hope that you have some friends, too. That is exactly the purpose of my serving this organization. Let me direct you to the philosophy of ACPA's founding members:

"ACPA was formed through the vision of a group of people who believe that we should organize and assist each other in our education and professional development. Their philosophy of unification and networking became the foundation upon which the objectives of ACPA were established."

As far as I can see, this philosophy still holds true today. It's nice to have friends to support you during this tough time. I sincerely invite you to join me.

I would like to take this opportunity to report to all of you on the recent progress for ACPA. My major objective over the last several months has been to organize all of the ACPA functions as I used to know them. We are revising our By-laws and updating our membership database. Our website—www.acpa-rx.org—is now up and running. I encourage everyone to visit the website and give us your opinions and comments. We are also vigorously trying to set up some networking activities, including regional and international meetings. One meeting currently in the planning stage focuses on Comparability Protocols. This is a very hot topic applicable to all biotechnology therapeutic products. Please look for further announcements on this exciting event. We are also actively recruiting young scientists and future leaders. We have had several student chapters established in the past, and they have not been active for quite some time. Our first student chapter is now being established at the University of Houston under the leadership of Dr. Ming Hu. I sincerely hope that we will have many more to come.

How do you plan an ACPA-sponsored meeting or initiate a student chapter? First, you have to send an e-mail describing your intentions to a member of our Executive Committee. The paperwork is painless. You need only submit a 1–2 page proposal to tell us what you want to do and the proposed budget. Once approved, then you are essentially free to proceed. We will even help you find speakers and provide logistical support. Your obligations are simple: write a short report after the activity is completed, reconcile the expenses, and provide us with all the receipts for tax purposes. We will reimburse you for all legitimate expenses and even provide you with payment up front for some expenses.

ACPA wants you to help each other. All you have to do is join hands together to promote the professional well-being of Chinese-American pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists as stated in our By-laws.

Report from the Treasurer Marina Chang, R.Ph.

Below is an itemized report of ACPA's income and expenses

for 2004. The organization currently has a balance of \$58,056 in multiple accounts.

Accounts	Income	Expense
<i>Maryland</i>		
Balance as of 12/31/04	\$30,132.72	
3/18/05 deposit of matured Chevy Chase CD	\$8,360.20	
Total Interest earned		
from matured CD	\$27.40	
from checking account, January	\$6.40	
Harbor Capital National Bank, February	\$5.78	
Expenses		
Website migration and update		\$500.00
Check printing		\$6.40
November EC telecom reimbursement		\$6.86
TOTAL	\$38,532.50	\$513.10
BALANCE	\$38,019.40	
<i>New Jersey</i>		
Checking Account	\$4,106.57	
Mutual Fund with T Rowe Price	\$15,930.00	
TOTAL	\$20,036.57	
GRAND TOTAL	\$58,055.97	

Report from the Communications Committee
James W. Shaw, Ph.D., Pharm.D., M.P.H.

We have finished migrating the ACPA website to its new home and updating its content. Kudos to ACPA's new webmaster, Bao-Cun Sun, Ph.D., M.S.! All members are encouraged to visit the site at www.acpa-rx.org and let us know what they think. Comments may be directed to the chair of the Communications Committee at james_shaw2004@yahoo.com or to the webmaster at baocsun@yahoo.com. Please note that, although we have updated the content of the site, we still hope to implement many more improvements of the site's appearance and functionality. These will take time.

The committee has also been working on updating ACPA's by-laws. Based on feedback received from individual members of the Communications Committee, a revised draft of the by-laws was developed. This draft was presented to the Executive Committee at a meeting on April 2, 2005. Members of the EC reviewed the draft and provided feedback, which was incorporated into a final revised draft that was approved for distribution to the membership on April 21, 2005. You have each received a copy of the approved revised draft by-laws with this issue of the newsletter. **We ask that you review the by-laws and submit comments or suggested changes to the chair of the Communications Committee no later than May 30, 2005. No response will be interpreted as tacit approval of the draft by-laws.**

Announcement of Student Scholarship Program

The Organization of Chinese Americans, New Jersey Chapter (OCA—NJ) is sponsoring an Asian-American essay scholarship program for high school students. Asian-American high school seniors who reside in the state of New Jersey and expect to attend college in fall 2005 are eligible to participate. Essays should consist of two double-spaced, typed pages (450–500 words) and describe a personal experience that gave the student his/her greatest feeling of achievement or satisfaction because of the challenges he/she met as an Asian-American. Five (5) copies of the essay along with the completed application (included with this issue of the newsletter) should be mailed to:

Organization of Chinese Americans—New Jersey Chapter
 Essay Scholarship Program
 Linda Lee, Education Chairperson
 16 Meadow Lane
 Verona, NJ 07044

Please note that all entries must be postmarked no later than May 1, 2005. Winners will be announced at the OCA—NJ Asian-American Heritage Luncheon on June 5, 2005. Awards of up to \$500 will be given. Winners must attend the luncheon to receive their award. Further inquiries should be directed to Ms. Lee at 973-239-1985.

Announcement of Public Affairs Internship Program

OCA—NJ is sponsoring a public affairs internship program for Asian-American students. Those who are eligible include Asian-American college students living in the state of New Jersey who have good oral and written communication skills and an interest in public affairs. Applicants must be committed to work for four (4) weeks from June 13—August 13, 2005 in the New Jersey office of one of eight public officials. Applicants should submit five (5) copies of a 2-page, typed, double-spaced essay describing why they want to participate in the internship program. They must also submit academic transcripts from their current school, two letters of recommendation, and a completed internship application (included with this issue of the newsletter). All application materials should be mailed to Ms. Linda Lee at the address given above. **Entries must be postmarked no later than May 1, 2005.** Students selected for an internship are required to attend the OCA—NJ Asian-American Heritage Luncheon on June 5, 2005. Further inquiries should be directed to Ms. Lee at the telephone number given above.

ACPA Establishes a Student Chapter at the University of Houston College of Pharmacy
Ming Hu, Ph.D.

This is to announce the establishment of an ACPA student chapter in the Department of Pharmacological and Pharmaceutical Sciences, College of Pharmacy, University of Houston (UH). The purpose of this organization is to promote the professional well-being of pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists of Chinese heritage and to encourage the exchange of ideas among pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists of Chinese heritage in regard to pharmacy practice and research. However, the student chapter is open to pharmaceutical scientists and students from all ethnic backgrounds.

At our first meeting, which was held on February 25, 2005, we decided to create three positions with assigned duties as follows:

1. President: Yousif Rojeab
2. Vice-President: Wei Zhu
3. Treasurer: Stephen Wang

The president and the vice-president will be representatives of the chapter and in charge of official communications with any party of concern as well as arranging for any proposed activities. The treasurer will be in charge of any financial issues concerning collecting and spending money. Currently, we plan to:

1. register our organization with the Office of Campus Activities in the UH student center,
2. open a bank account in the name of the organization (i.e., ACPA/UH chapter) as soon as we receive any sum of money,
3. have a group photo taken of the founding members, and
4. establish a website for the organization and have it linked to the official ACPA website and/or Pharmacy Graduate Student Association website in our department.

Other members of the ACPA/UH chapter include Rania Haddadin, Pranav Gupta, Elimika Pfuma, Kaustubh Kulkarni, Rashim Singh, Lucy Liu (post-doc), and Zhong-Qiu Liu (visiting student). The chapter's first activity will be to develop a plan for the founding members to participate in the 37th Annual Pharmaceutics Graduate Student Research Meeting (PGSRM), which will be held June 16–18, 2005 in Lawrence, Kansas.

Economic Impact of Tobacco in China
James W. Shaw, Ph.D., Pharm.D., M.P.H.

As a nation, China consumes more cigarettes than any other country in the world. About 360 million Chinese smoke cigarettes, representing a quarter of the world's smokers. With an annual consumption of around 2 trillion cigarettes, China accounts for 30% of the world market volume (Rossel 2004). In 1996, the prevalence rate for ever-smokers aged 15 or older was estimated to be 67% for men and 4% for women, with an overall prevalence of 38% for the combined

population. More recently, 63% of men and 4% of women were estimated to be current smokers, yielding 35% of the total population (Yang et al. 1999).

The prevalence of nonsmokers exposed to secondhand smoke in China has been estimated to be 54%, with about 0.3 billion people aged 15 years or older being affected. More than 80% of female nonsmokers of childbearing age are exposed to secondhand smoke. Combining active smokers with passive smokers, more than 72% of all Chinese (>800 million people) are exposed to tobacco smoke. Seventy-one percent of Chinese are exposed to smoke in the home, where women and children are at greatest risk of being exposed, 32% in public places, and 25% in the workplace (Yang et al. 1999).

China produces more cigarettes than any other country in the world. The production of tobacco products is organized under the State Tobacco Manufacturing Administration (STMA), which is a subsidiary of the government's Ministry of Economics and Trade. There is a single national producer, the China National Tobacco Company (CNTC), which consists of numerous branches that compete with one another. In 1994, approximately 1.7 trillion cigarettes were produced in China, while another 900 million were imported (World Health Organization 1997). In 1997, China produced over 84 billion packs of cigarettes and used over 1.3 million hectares of tobacco in cigarette production (China Statistics Bureau 1998).

Since China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, its tobacco market has become increasingly competitive. After joining the WTO, China lowered its import tariff on tobacco from 40% to 10% and reduced its tariff on cigarettes from 36% to 25%. The STMA has made efforts to streamline the country's fragmented tobacco sector to enhance competitiveness. Through mergers and closures, the STMA has reduced the number of CNTC factories from 185 to 80, including 36 key factories. Within the next several years, its goal is to establish 50 key enterprises and to eliminate two-thirds of the more than 300 cigarette brands currently produced by CNTC factories. The market may become even more competitive if the government allows joint ventures between international cigarette manufacturers and the CNTC (Rossel 2004).

The Chinese government derives a substantial portion of its tax revenues (over 11%) from tobacco taxes. According to Hu and Mao (2002), taxes account for approximately 38% of the retail price of tobacco products in China. These taxes are paid by producers, i.e., they are not retail sales taxes. However, they are passed onto consumers in the form of increased retail prices. It is because of this tax structure, perhaps, that the government does not appear to favor using tax increases as a means of curbing tobacco consumption. In fact, the substantial revenues derived from tobacco taxes present a disincentive to the Chinese government to implement aggressive tobacco control measures.

The high tariff on foreign cigarettes has traditionally made the smuggling of foreign brands into China an important issue. It

has been estimated that 100 billion cigarettes enter China illegally each year and that 8–9% of all cigarette sales involve foreign brands that have been smuggled into the country. This level of smuggling equates to about 15 billion Yuan (or US\$1.8 billion) of lost tax revenue each year (Hu and Mao 2002). Since 1998, the government has sought to crack down on cigarette smuggling. This is due, in part, to the losses in tax revenues attributable to smuggling.

Two studies have estimated the health and cost consequences of smoking in China. Jin et al. (1995) estimated that 896,000 premature deaths occurred in 1989 due to smoking-related illnesses. The estimated cost associated with lost productivity due to illness or premature death was 20.1 billion Yuan (or US\$2.4 billion). In a more recent investigation using data from large mortality study (Liu 1998), Jiang and Jin (2000) estimated that 514,100 premature deaths occurred in China in 1998 due to smoking-related illnesses. These included 210,000 due to cancer, 190,300 due to respiratory illness, and 113,700 due to cardiovascular disease. The estimated number of premature deaths was smaller than that reported in the previous study since a different data source was used. Even then, the estimated productivity loss due to smoking was staggering. Using 60 years of age as a cutoff for productive life expectancy, the investigators reported that 1.15 million productive person-years were lost in 1998 as a result of smoking-related mortality. Jiang and Jin estimated that 347 million outpatient visits and 1.52 million inpatient visits were attributable to smoking-related illnesses, with associated direct medical costs of 22.9 billion Yuan (US\$2.8 billion). This would amount to 6% of all direct medical costs in China.

Both studies' cost estimates are conservative since they do not include illnesses arising from exposure to secondhand smoke. Additionally, it is expected that further refinement of death certificate data collection, cancer registries, and other data sources will demonstrate even greater mortality from tobacco use in China. Although the estimated costs are considerable, the Chinese population is largely unaware of the health consequences of smoking. According to a survey conducted in China in 1996, 61% of respondents indicated that cigarette smoking posed no harm to their health (Chinese Academy of Preventive Medicine 1997).

Given the health consequences of smoking as well as the dependence of the national economy on tobacco sales, efforts are urgently needed in China to develop, implement, and sustain effective tobacco control policies. This will require creative thinking and decisive action on the part of policymakers.

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