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### Four Dual Degree Students to Receive Scholarships through the Medco Scholars Program

Alexandria, Va. – After receiving nearly 200 applications, the Medco Foundation will provide four \$10,000 scholarships to dual degree students as part of the new, AACP-administered Medco Scholars Program. The awarded students will receive \$2,500 per semester for four consecutive semesters, totaling \$10,000 over two years.

The 2011 Medco Scholars are:



**Obinna Alu**, South University, Pharm.D./MBA Candidate – A child of Nigerian immigrant parents and the youngest of seven children, Alu is pursuing a dual Pharm.D./MBA degree to better position himself to one day become a successful business owner. Upon graduation, he intends to develop a patient care clinic that partners with physicians, pharmacists, nutritionists and exercise physiologists. Alu intends to cater to a diverse patient population suffering from chronic conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, hypercholesterolemia and obesity. Alu's degree in exercise science/kinesiology with a pre-pharmacy concentration from The University of Tennessee allowed him to work as a personal trainer and nutrition coach prior to beginning pharmacy school.



**Timothy Bensman**, University of Southern California, Pharm.D./Ph.D. Candidate – Timothy Bensman originally found inspiration for medical sciences after being diagnosed with Crohn's disease in the sixth grade. His overarching long-term career goals include practice and research. More specifically, upon completion of his Pharm.D./Ph.D., he will pursue a faculty position as a practicing clinical pulmonary pharmacologist at an academic medical center where he can help optimize and manage drug therapies in asthma, COPD, CF, etc. Bensman earned his Bachelor of Arts in biology from Capital University in Ohio and his Bachelor of Science in pharmaceutical sciences from The Ohio State University.



**Thomas DiPiro**, South Carolina College of Pharmacy, Pharm.D./MBA Candidate – Thomas DiPiro is energized by his passion for pharmacy care excellence. His short-term plan is to network with clinical, administrative and faculty pharmacists in order to broaden his knowledge of the profession through shadowing and menteeship. DiPiro’s long-term plan is to grow as a leader, manager and mentor in an organization, such as a hospital, in order to gain the experience he will need to lead a private company to the forefront of innovation and technology in the field of health services. DiPiro earned his Bachelor of Science in education from The University of Georgia.



**Stefanie Wiegand**, University at Buffalo, The State University of New York, Pharm.D./J.D. Candidate – Stefanie Wiegand is pursuing a Pharm.D./J.D. dual degree at the University at Buffalo. In five years, she sees herself working for a pharmaceutical company in either their regulatory or intellectual property department, then transitioning to the Food and Drug Administration to work as a policy advisor. Wiegand would eventually like to start her own consulting firm and sit on a local hospital board. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in biology and German from Washington University in St. Louis.

“AACP was pleased with the opportunity to administer this scholarship program for the Medco Foundation,” said Lucinda L. Maine, Ph.D., R.Ph., AACP executive vice president and CEO. “The Medco Foundation should be commended for their recognition of the increased financial need and support of these ambitious dual degree students who will, one day, become future pharmacy leaders.”

AACP and the Medco Foundation recognize that students interested in dual degrees may have increased financial need, and support the efforts of academic pharmacy to educate students with diverse interests. AACP awarded the scholarships in accord with its mission and based on academic achievement, commitment to pharmacy and scholar diversity.

“As our country seeks to improve our healthcare system, the role of the pharmacist as a vital resource for patient care will continue to grow, and we will need more pharmacists with advanced training and dual degrees,” said Pamela T. Miller, Esq, VP sustainability and community investment, Medco Health Solutions, Inc. “Medco Foundation created the Medco Scholars Program to address this need and help students looking to make a profound difference in patient care. We are proud of these four students and look forward to supporting their education.”

“We congratulate these individuals and see their potential as future industry leaders who will advance and shape the profession in the years to come,” said Tracy Furgiuele, head of the Medco Foundation’s Professional Practice Committee and Medco’s chief pharmacist. “Medicine is changing at such a fast pace that pharmacists are relied upon as subject matter experts by both physicians and patients. Through the knowledge they acquire, these individuals will continue to make medicine smarter and demonstrate that our profession is a critical part of the healthcare delivery team.”

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About AACP

Founded in 1900, the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) is a national organization representing the interests of pharmacy education and educators. Comprising 124 accredited colleges and schools of pharmacy with more than 6,000 faculty and 60,000 students, AACP is committed to excellence in pharmacy education. Visit [www.aacp.org](http://www.aacp.org) to learn more.