



## SCRIPT YOUR FUTURE PRESS RELEASE

# National medication adherence campaign honors student leaders in multi-profession challenge

*Fifth annual Script Your Future contest saw participation by 75 health profession schools hosting 300+ events in 19 states, and reaching more than 2 million consumers nationwide*

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Washington, DC — Today, the National Consumers League (NCL) and its partners announced the winners of the fifth annual *Script Your Future* Medication Adherence Team Challenge, a competition designed to engage health profession students and faculty across the nation by encouraging teams to develop creative ideas, events, and initiatives to raise public awareness about the importance of medication adherence. This year's winners are University of Charleston School of Pharmacy, University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy, Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED), University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-Chapel Hill) and the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy.

The 2016 Medication Adherence Team Challenge is part of the national *Script Your Future* public awareness campaign coordinated by NCL and its 135+ public and private stakeholder organizations, which include Challenge sponsors—the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP), the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) Foundation, the American Medical Association (AMA), the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) and the American Pharmacists Association (APhA).

“The *Script Your Future* Medication Adherence Team Challenge has been an innovative method for our future healthcare professionals to engage with their local communities,” said Dr. Lucinda L. Maine, Executive Vice President and CEO at AACP. “The communication and events held in these communities provide essential information and strategies for patients to improve their medication adherence and ultimately their health outcomes.”

Research shows that nearly three out of four Americans do not take their medications as directed. This may lead to devastating results, particularly for people with chronic conditions. National health advocacy leaders have recognized poor medication adherence as a public health priority, the outcome of which leads to more than one-third of medicine-related hospitalizations and at least 125,000 U.S. deaths each year. Improved medication adherence leads to better health outcomes and reduced total health care costs, and it was for these reasons that NCL launched the *Script Your Future* awareness campaign in 2011. The Team Challenge was established as a way to extend campaign messages into medical and other health profession schools, and to nurture adherence-minded values in future generations of professionals entering the workplace.

“We were so impressed by the interprofessional collaborations and creativity of this year’s teams in reaching out to their communities to improve adherence,” said Sally Greenberg, NCL Executive Director. “NCL’s recent survey research confirms the importance of good patient-provider communication in helping patients to take their medications as directed. We look forward to continuing to work with the next generation of health professionals as they seek to improve medication adherence and patient health.”

Top-performing teams are honored with a National Award for overall outstanding team achievement, or a Focused Award, which recognizes outstanding team achievement in the specific areas of health disparity/under-represented community outreach, media/communications outreach, or creative interprofessional team event. This year, the *Script Your Future* National Awards went to the University of Charleston School of Pharmacy and the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy. The Focused awardees were: Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) (Health Disparities), University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-Chapel Hill) (Media) and the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy (Creative Interprofessional Team Event).

“The lack of medication adherence in America is a disturbing phenomenon that undermines patient health and increases costs,” said NCPA CEO B. Douglas Hoey, RPh, MBA. “Solving this problem requires an all-hands-on-deck approach, and it is clear that health care providers, including pharmacists, can work together to drive greater adherence. That is why we strongly support the *Script Your Future* Medication Adherence Team Challenge, a contest for the next generation of health care professionals as they experiment with new ways to help patients take their medications as prescribed. Congratulations to this year’s very deserving award winners for their efforts.”

For this year’s Challenge, hundreds of future health care professionals held more than 320 events in 19 states, counseled more than 12,000 patients and reached more than 2.3 million consumers nationwide. Since the Challenge began in 2011, more than 9,500 future health care professionals have directly counseled more than 34,000 patients and reached more than 11 million consumers.

“Medication non-adherence is a key driver of health care costs and poor patient outcomes in our country. That’s why the AMA is a proud supporter of the *Script Your Future* Challenge aimed at promoting medication adherence through community outreach,” said AMA President Steven J. Stack, M.D. “The Challenge allows medical and pharmacy students, along with other health care professionals-in-training, to work together in teams to create innovative solutions to address this important public health issue and ultimately improve health outcomes for patients.”

“The Medication Adherence Team Challenge inspires students to develop efforts to boost medication adherence within their communities,” said NACDS Foundation President Kathleen Jaeger. “This year’s Challenge participants demonstrated the tremendous power that health care professionals can have advancing patient care and improving public health through medication adherence. We’re very proud to be a part of this Program that fosters education and collaboration among faculty and students, allowing them to work side-by-side to advance the health of their communities.”

“Considering both their expertise and accessibility, pharmacists are uniquely positioned to help patients maximize the value of their prescription medications which includes highlighting the need for adherence. We are excited to be involved with the Medication Adherence Team Challenge and the strong message it sends to health care professionals and patients about the

importance of medication adherence,” said APhA CEO Thomas E. Menighan, BSPHarm, MBA, ScD (Hon), FAPhA.

The recognized schools’ campaigns, selected from dozens of applications and 75 participating educational institutions, are listed below.

### **National Challenge Award: University of Charleston School of Pharmacy**

The University of Charleston School of Pharmacy partnered with the University’s Physician Assistant Program and 18 student organizations to sponsor 20+ innovative medication adherence events and activities that reached 1.05 million people in West Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Kentucky. The Charleston team participated in six health fairs, partnered with local hospitals, and provided direct patient counseling, point-of-care testing, and medication reviews to three underserved rural communities. Activities also included the distribution of 60,000 *Script Your Future* informational flyers through 29 locations of a large pharmacy chain, appearances on West Virginia Public Radio and local TV and radio shows, a Legislative Day, a 5K run and extensive social media outreach on the importance of medication adherence.

### **National Challenge Award: University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy**

The University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy partnered with medical, dental, nursing and occupational therapy students to counsel more than 1,000 patients about proper medication adherence in community pharmacies, hospitals, medical clinics and senior community and living centers throughout Western Pennsylvania. The team’s targeted interventions included disease state-focused conversations including cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, diabetes and smoking cessation.

The team’s social media platforms stressed the importance of medication adherence to nearly 75,000 people. In addition, the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy produced an excellent [video](#) with tips for improving medication adherence and recorded *Script Your Future* Public Service Announcements (PSAs) in 10 languages.

### **National Challenge Award: Finalists**

The following schools were named Finalists under the National Award category: Auburn University Harrison School of Pharmacy, Florida A&M University College of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences, Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine School of Pharmacy (LECOM), Temple University School of Pharmacy, Touro University California College of Pharmacy and the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy.

## **FOCUSED AWARDS**

### **Health Disparities/Under-represented Community Outreach Award: Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED)**

Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) focused its outreach on underserved populations and those with health disparities, addressing both economic and cultural barriers to medication adherence. Examples of NEOMED’s efforts include work in two free clinics, a medical mission trip to Honduras and outreach to Hispanic patients through an appearance on a local TV show, translation of the *Script Your Future* PSA into Chinese and Russian, educational efforts in three

underserved senior apartment complexes and outreach to underserved residents throughout Northeast Ohio.

### **Communication and Media Outreach Award: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**

For 2016, the Challenge incorporated a “Quality Video” component into the Media/Communications Outreach Focused Award in order to encourage the development of high-quality videos to promote medication adherence beyond the Challenge. This year’s Media/Communications Outreach Award went to the [University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](#) (UNC-Chapel Hill). UNC-Chapel Hill also educated thousands of patients through social media and “Medication Adherence Awareness Month” proclamations in Chapel Hill and Raleigh.

### **Creative Inter-Professional Team Event Award: University of Maryland School of Pharmacy**

The University of Maryland School of Pharmacy partnered with students from the University’s medical, dental, dental hygiene, nursing, law and social work schools to conduct 14 innovative events that raised awareness of the importance of taking medications as directed. Activities included participation in “Million Hearts Week,” educating 147 Maryland state legislators, teaming up with nursing students to educate patients on sodium intake and extensive interprofessional collaboration in which teams of students provided medication adherence education and [Script Your Future wallet cards](#), direct patient counseling and point-of-care testing.

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### **About *Script Your Future***

Launched in 2011, *Script Your Future* is a campaign of the National Consumers League (NCL), a private, non-profit membership organization founded in 1899. NCL’s mission is to protect and promote social and economic justice for consumers and workers in the United States and abroad. As an advocacy organization, NCL is working to educate consumers and key health stakeholders on the importance of taking medication as directed. For more information about the *Script Your Future* campaign, visit [ScriptYourFuture.org](#). For more information on NCL, please visit [nclnet.org](#).