

Unite for Impact: A National Collaborative Challenge Check-In

February 19, 2026

1 PM ET

Facilitator: Olunife Akinmolayan, Pharm.D.

AACP invites colleges and schools of pharmacy, faculty, students, staff, and community pharmacies to partner with external organizations to design and implement bold new initiatives through the Unite for Impact: A National Collaborative Challenge.



Access the Challenge Homepage



Session Objective

Provide a mid-challenge touchpoint to clarify expectations, share new resources, demystify the submission process, and support teams as they develop their projects. We will also answer live questions and encourage collaboration across participants.



Challenge Goal

Generate fresh, tangible contributions to the field. This challenge aims to **showcase creative strategies** and **tangible outcomes** led by a team of **faculty, practitioners, learners, and their partners** launching new projects, campaigns, or partnerships that drives measurable change through advocacy, practice transformation, and/or public engagement.

This challenge is a direct follow-on to the insights fostered at the 2025 Advancing Community Pharmacy Institute and provides a concrete opportunity to translate ideas into action by encouraging ongoing collaboration. AACP challenges teams to **DO something new, CREATE new partnerships or campaigns, and SHARE the impact.**



Challenge Objectives

- Foster unprecedented collaboration by uniting pharmacy academia with essential partners across the healthcare spectrum, including **community pharmacists, state associations, national associations, boards of pharmacy, legislators, and other health professions.**
- Selected stories will be featured in a **national multimedia library** to strengthen advocacy, education, and outreach efforts. Together, AACP will amplify the voice, value, and versatility of community pharmacy. We can't wait to see what story you create. Check out the ACT Pharmacy Collaborative [50 Stories from 50 States Multimedia Library](#).



Why Now?

- **Current Pharmacy Landscape**

- Community pharmacy is at a crossroads: workforce shortages, reimbursement pressures, shifting care models.
- Since 2019, over 7,000 pharmacies have closed, with more than 2,200 closures in 2024 alone—that's about 8 per day, fueling the growth of pharmacy deserts ([NFP](#))

- **Advocacy Momentum**

- Growing policy focus on expanding pharmacist scope of practice and payment reform.
- Opportunity to amplify the voice of pharmacy at a critical time for healthcare transformation.

- **Innovation**

- Ideas from the 2025 *Advancing Community Pharmacy Institute* need a path to action.



Challenge Overview and Participation Guidance



**Advancing Community
Pharmacy Institute:**
Unifying Academia
and Practice for Impact

Review of General Challenge Timeline

- ~~• Challenge Launch & Registration Opens~~
 - ~~• October 31~~
- Challenge Check-In Meeting
 - February 19, 2026
- Team Registration Deadline
 - February 28, 2026
- Final Submission
 - April 6, 2026
- Review and Selection
 - April 7 - April 21
- Announcement of Winners
 - Late April 2026



Teams & Eligibility



Team Makeup

Each team must include at least:

- **Two** faculty members from one or multiple colleges or schools of pharmacy; **at least one faculty must attend the AACP Advancing Community Pharmacy Institute**
- **One** practicing community pharmacists (cannot be full time faculty member at a college/school of pharmacy)
- **Two** trainees (e.g., student pharmacist, resident, fellow, or graduate student).
- **At least one** other partner, which may include representatives from state associations, national associations, boards of pharmacy, legislators, and other health professions. We encourage participants to seek out multiple partners.



Unite for Impact: A National Collaborative Challenge

Register Your Team by February 28, 2026

Project Submissions due by April 6, 2026



Access the Team Registration Link



Submission Categories

Projects will drive measurable changes in one of the three areas: Culture, Practice, and Advocacy



[Culture] Cultivating a Stronger Community Culture

- Develop and implement new initiatives to promote community pharmacy as a dynamic and rewarding career path within colleges/schools of pharmacy and to prospective students (e.g., pre-pharmacy, high school students). This could include new mentorship programs, experiential learning opportunities, or innovative recruitment strategies.
- Develop projects that integrate community pharmacists more effectively into broader interprofessional healthcare teams, showcasing new workflows or communication strategies. Projects should actively involve other health professions in their design and implementation.
- Create and launch a new public awareness campaign focused on educating the public about the expanded capabilities and services that community pharmacists can provide. Consider collaborating with public health organizations or local community groups for broader reach.



[Practice] Pharmacists' Expansion of Patient Care Services in Community Pharmacy

- Explore and pilot new business models or strategies for medical billing and diversified revenue streams within community pharmacy settings. Focus on creating actionable plans and demonstrating initial implementation or potential. Projects should consider engaging with payers and other healthcare entities to establish new models.
- Propose and initiate new ways for community pharmacies to integrate into value-based care models, showcasing the impact of pharmacist-provided services on patient outcomes and cost reduction.
- Initiate and highlight new, positive physician-pharmacist collaborations that demonstrate improved patient care outcomes, enhanced communication, and shared responsibilities. This should go beyond existing relationships to forge novel, impactful partnerships.



[Advocacy] Advocating for the Future of Community Pharmacy

- Design and execute an activity for students (and faculty) to actively promote community pharmacy's value to legislative and regulatory stakeholders. This could involve virtual or in-person meetings, policy brief development, or organized letter-writing campaigns. Emphasis should be placed on building new relationships with legislators and board of pharmacy members.
- Model a collaborative advocacy day of service, potentially partnering with national pharmacy organizations (e.g., APhA, NASPA, NCPA) or state-level associations, to amplify the voice of community pharmacy on a specific legislative or regulatory issue.
- Identify and engage new advocacy champions (e.g., local leaders, community figures, other healthcare professionals) to support and promote community pharmacy advancements.



New Example Narratives

Visit the Challenge landing page for additional participant materials.



Example Narrative (Culture)

Project Idea

River Valley College of Pharmacy and Metro Health University partnered with local high schools, a community pharmacy network, and the state pharmacy association to build a new pipeline program focused on introducing students to community pharmacy careers earlier and more intentionally. The goal was to increase awareness of pharmacy as a meaningful, community-centered profession and provide early mentorship to students who might not otherwise consider healthcare careers.



Example Narrative (Culture)

Description of Collaboration

- Two colleges of pharmacy to share curriculum ideas and student mentors.
- Community pharmacists host site visits and career talks.
- High school counselors and science teachers who helped identify interested students.
- The state pharmacy association, which supported outreach materials and speaker coordination.

Together, the group created a “Pharmacy Pathways” program that included:

- Career days at three high schools.
- Pharmacy site visits for interested students.
- A student–student mentorship model pairing high school juniors with pharmacy students.
- Virtual Q&A sessions with practicing pharmacists from different settings.



Example Narrative (Culture)

Program-Level Outcomes (Sample Placeholder Data)

- In the first year, more than XX high school students participated in at least one Pharmacy Pathways activity.
- About XX students completed multiple activities, including a site visit and mentorship session.
- Surveys showed that most participants reported a stronger understanding of what pharmacists do and how to prepare for pharmacy school.



Example Narrative (Culture)

Impact Statement

This project shows how simple, intentional collaboration can build a stronger pipeline into pharmacy. By combining education, mentorship, and community partnerships, the team created a model that can be easily adapted by other regions. The work is ongoing, but early outcomes show that exposure, relationships, and representation matter in shaping who sees themselves as future pharmacists.



Example Narrative (Advocacy)

Project Idea

Central State College of Pharmacy partnered with a community pharmacy group, the state pharmacy association, and a local health nonprofit to launch a new “Community Pharmacy Day of Service.” The goal was to teach students and pharmacists how to engage policymakers while providing visible, meaningful service to the community.



Example Narrative (Advocacy)

Description of Collaboration

- Faculty and trainees who planned advocacy training sessions.
- Community pharmacists hosted service sites.
- The state pharmacy association, which helped coordinate legislative outreach.
- Local legislators and staff who agreed to attend service events.

The team created a two-part model:

- Advocacy Training – students and pharmacists learned how to talk about community pharmacy's value.
- Day of Service – teams provided services like health screenings, medication education, and vaccine awareness while inviting legislators to observe and participate.



Example Narrative (Advocacy)

Program-Level Outcomes (Sample Placeholder Data)

- More than XX patients were served during the Day of Service.
- At least XX legislators or staff members attended and interacted with participants.
- Many legislators shared that it was their first time seeing pharmacists deliver these services firsthand.



Example Narrative (Advocacy)

Impact Statement

This initiative shows that advocacy does not always start in legislative offices—it can start in the community. By combining service with storytelling, students, pharmacists, and partners created meaningful connections with policymakers. While policy change takes time, this project built relationships, visibility, and trust that will support future advocacy efforts at the state and regional level.



Example Narratives

Additional Materials

- A short video (3 min max) presentation or visuals highlighting the project.
- Supporting Appendices (max 5 pages): data tables, workflows, media, partner letters, etc.

These materials are optional but highly encouraged for participating teams. The stronger your package, the higher your chance of winning.



Unite for Impact: A National Collaborative Challenge

Access the Submission Form Here!
Submissions due by April 6, 2026



Access the Submission Form Link



Submission Package



**Advancing Community
Pharmacy Institute:**
Unifying Academia
and Practice for Impact

Narrative Submission

- Word limit: 1,500 words max (not including appendices)
- Must include:
 - Problem Statement
 - Project Objectives
 - Description of New Initiative
 - Outcomes Achieved
 - Sustainability/Next Steps



Supporting Appendices

- Page limit: up to 5 pages
- May include:
 - Visuals
 - Workflow diagrams
 - Data tables
 - Partner letters
 - Media
 - Testimonials



Judging Criteria



Judging Criteria

- **Innovation & Originality** (20 points)
- **Collaboration & Partnerships** (20 points)
- **Measurable Impact** (25 points)
- **Sustainability & Scalability** (15 points)
- **Storytelling & Presentation** (20 points)

Total: 100 points



Innovation & Originality (20 points)

Description: We are looking for projects that introduce a fresh idea, a new partnership, or a creative approach to an existing challenge. Strong submissions clearly show what makes their work distinct and how it moves the field forward in a meaningful way.

What Strong Projects Do: Strong projects introduce a clearly differentiated idea or approach that meaningfully advances community pharmacy rather than simply continuing existing work.



Collaboration & Partnerships (20 points)

Description: High-scoring projects demonstrate authentic, multi-role collaboration where faculty, trainees, practitioners, and partners each play a meaningful role. Reviewers will look for shared ownership, clear partner contributions, and evidence that the work was truly collaborative—not siloed.

What Strong Projects Do: Strong projects demonstrate authentic, shared leadership among diverse partners, with clearly defined roles and meaningful engagement from faculty, trainees, and external collaborators.



Measurable Impact (25 points)

Description: Projects should demonstrate tangible results aligned with their stated goals, whether through quantitative data or credible qualitative outcomes. Strong submissions clearly connect their activities to measurable change and show evidence that the initiative made a difference.

What Strong Projects Do: Strong projects connect their activities to clear, credible outcomes and show evidence that their work produced tangible results aligned with their stated goals.



Sustainability & Scalability (15 points)

Description: Reviewers will look for evidence that the project can continue beyond the challenge period and has potential to expand or be replicated elsewhere. Strong submissions describe practical next steps, ongoing support, and how others could adapt the model.

What Strong Projects Do: Strong projects outline realistic plans for continuation and describe how their model can be adapted or expanded to other settings or institutions.



Storytelling & Presentation (20 points)

Description: Submissions should be clear, organized, and compelling, helping reviewers understand both the impact and the human story behind the work. High-quality narratives combine strong structure, clear data, and engaging storytelling to effectively communicate why the project matters.

What Strong Projects Do: Strong projects present a clear, compelling narrative that integrates data and human impact in a well-organized and professional submission.



Judging Criteria



Prizes & Incentives



All Participants

- Certificates of participation
- Opportunity for stories to be archived in the AACP national multimedia library for use in advocacy and education



Category Winners

- Podium presentation at the 2026 AACP Annual Meeting
- Highlight in AACP's online multimedia library and newsletter
- Recognition in communication by national partners (NASPA, NCPA, APhA, and ASHP)



Grand Prize Winner

- Featured presentation at the 2026 AACP Annual Meeting
- Dedicated multimedia package (press release, video highlight, feature article)
- Publication support to develop a manuscript or white paper
- Invitation to policy roundtables with other national partners



Partnership Support

Reach out to aacpcenter@aacp.org to submit your partner support request.



Collaborators

- Bring expertise, networks, or resources to project teams
- Providing subject matter experts to serve as mentors or advisors to challenge teams
- Co-developing toolkits, templates, or practice models



Supporters

- Provide in-kind support, guidance, visibility opportunities, or data expertise
- Offer in-kind resources such as access to data, evaluation tools, communication staff, or design for campaign materials



Amplifiers

- Share winning stories broadly with the pharmacy community and the public
- Publish features on winning teams in their newsletters, journals, podcasts, or national meetings
- Leverage social media reach by co-branding and pushing out challenge content to broader audience, including policymakers



How to Submit Your Partner Support Request

- Reach out to aacpcenter@aacp.org to submit your partner support request.
- Subject Line: Unite for Impact Support Request
- Message:
 - Organization you would like to receive support
 - Brief description of your project
 - Explanation of how this organization can support your project



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



FAQs

How will project submissions be judged?

Projects will be reviewed by AACP staff, AACP Academy leaders, and external partners. Submissions will be evaluated based on Innovation & Originality, Collaboration & Partnerships, Measurable Impact, Sustainability & Scalability, and Storytelling & Presentation.

Who is considered a practicing community pharmacist?

A pharmacist not employed full-time in academia who primarily provides direct patient care within a community setting (e.g., chain or independent pharmacy).



FAQs

Are trainees required to participate in the entire project?

No. Trainees must make a recognizable contribution to the project but are not required to participate in all components.

Does my project need to be completed, or can it be ongoing?

Projects do not need to be fully completed by the April 6, 2026, deadline. Ongoing or incomplete projects may be submitted, though the stage of completion may influence scoring.



FAQs

Does our team need representation at the AACP Pharmacy Education Annual Meeting in Grapevine, TX?

Yes. Category winners and the overall winner must have at least one representative attend Pharmacy Education 2026. Travel and lodging costs are the responsibility of the attendees.



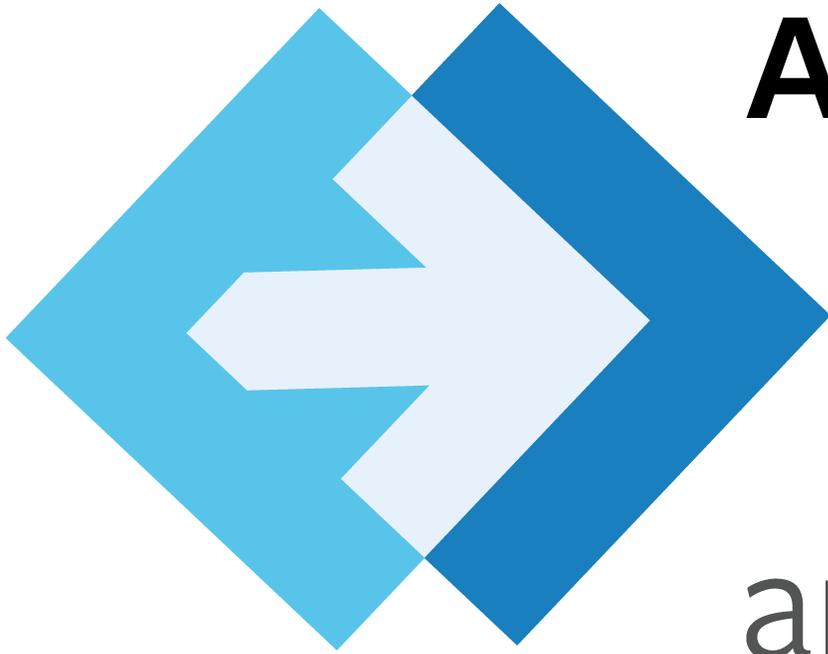
Questions?

For general questions, please reach out to aacpcenter@aacp.org

AACP Staff Contacts

- Olunife Akinmolayan, Director of Policy, Advocacy, and Strategic Engagement (oakinmolayan@aacp.org)
- Nidhi Gandhi-Patel, Director of Transformation and Academic Initiatives (ngpatel@aacp.org)
- Miranda Steinkopf, Director of Transformation and Community Building (msteinkopf@aacp.org)





Advancing Community Pharmacy Institute:

Unifying Academia
and Practice for Impact



October 29–31, 2025

American Association of
Colleges of Pharmacy **AACP**
Pharmacists Help People Live Healthier, Better Lives.