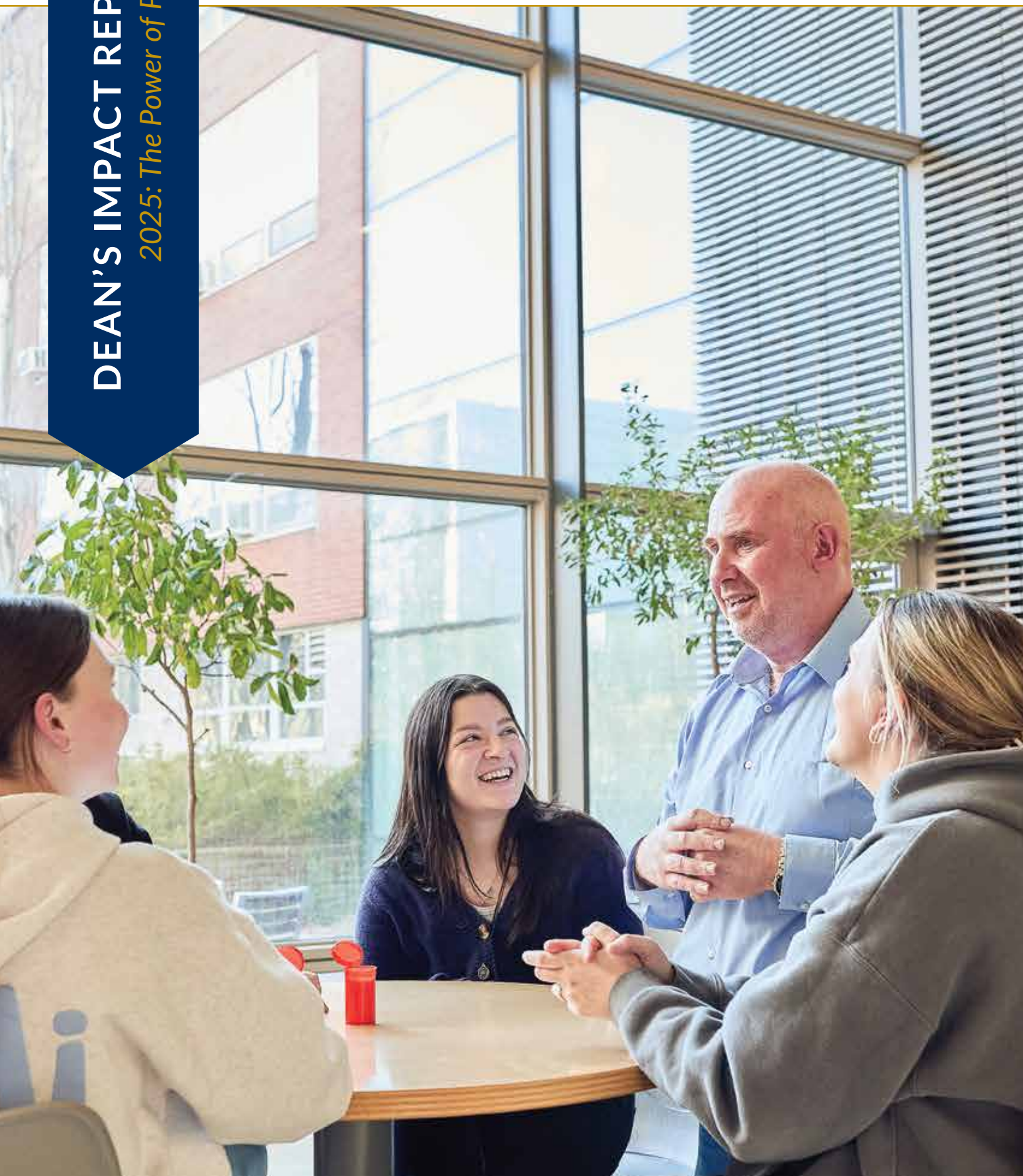


DEAN'S IMPACT REPORT

2025: *The Power of Purpose*

THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
COLLEGE OF PHARMACY





TWO
NATIONAL TITLES WON
in clinical skills *and* research!



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Purpose drives everything we do at the University of Rhode Island College of Pharmacy, and this year, that purpose has never been more visible or more powerful.

Across our classrooms, laboratories, and clinical settings, our students, faculty, and alumni are transforming knowledge into action, advancing science, improving outcomes, and redefining the future of healthcare.

Our curriculum remains the foundation of that purpose, preparing practice-ready professionals through immersive, real-world learning. Consistently strong PGY1 and near perfect PGY2 match rates, plus exceptional job placement, ensure our graduates make an impact from day one.

Our faculty lead groundbreaking research, and our alumni continue to drive innovation across healthcare, academia, and industry.

Together, we are proving that purpose powers progress. Thank you for your continued partnership, belief, and commitment to improving health for all.

With gratitude and Rhody pride,



Kerry L. LaPlante, Pharm.D., FCCP, FIDSA, FIDP
Dean and Professor
University of Rhode Island College of Pharmacy



*“Purpose drives
everything we do at
the University of
Rhode Island College
of Pharmacy”*

POSTGRADUATE
YEAR ONE (PGY1)

91.4%

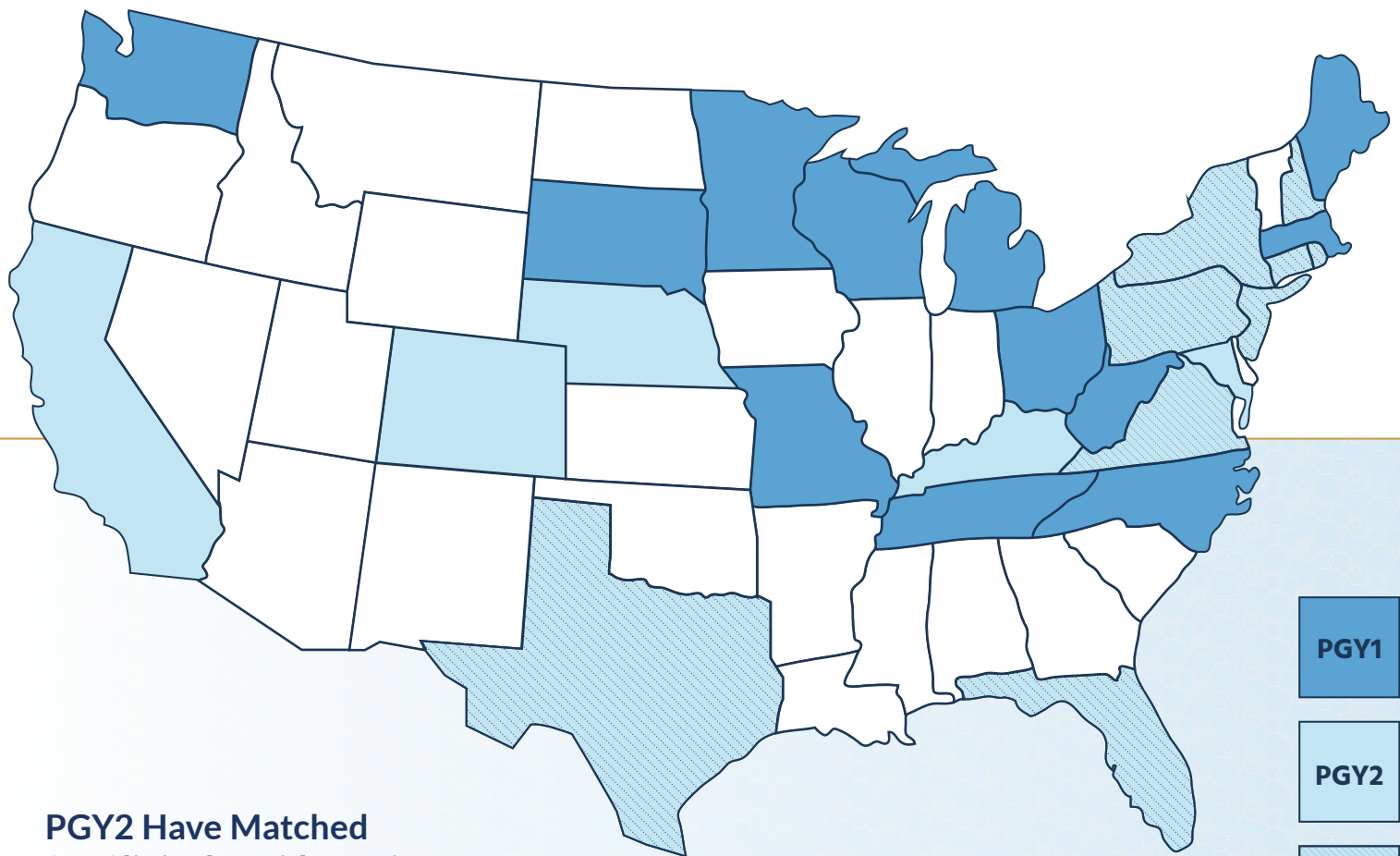
POSTGRADUATE
YEAR TWO (PGY2)

97.1%

2025 Residency Match

Top 10% in U.S. for
Total # of Matches

#3 in U.S. for
Total # of Matches



PGY2 Have Matched for Clinical Residency in:

- Ambulatory Care
- Cardiology
- Critical Care
- Emergency Medicine
- Geriatrics
- Internal Medicine
- Infectious Disease
- Pain and Palliative Care
- Pediatric Infectious Disease
- Psychiatry
- Oncology
- Solid Organ Transplant

THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
COLLEGE OF PHARMACY



7 FELLOWSHIPS

CURRICULUM

Preparing Tomorrow's Problem-Solvers

99%

of Pharm.D.
Students Employed
at Graduation

100%

of Students Feel
Ready to Enter
Pharmacy Practice

Top 10%

in the U.S. for
Total # of PGY1
Residency Matches
(2025)

#3

in the U.S. for
Total # of PGY2
Residency Matches
(2025)

300+

Industry
Partnerships for
Internships and
Rotations



History Made: Double National Champions!

URI College of Pharmacy made history this past year as the first school ever to win *both* of the nation's top student pharmacy competitions in one academic year: the 2025 ACCP Clinical Research Challenge *and* the 2024 ASHP Clinical Skills Competition.



*Read more about
this unprecedented
victory.*



URI Pharmacy Student Earns National Honor

Sami Gangji '27 was the *only* pharmacy student in the country selected for the Carl F. Emswiler Summer Internship with the American Pharmacists Association in Washington, D.C., a prestigious opportunity to advocate for the profession nationally.



*See how purpose and passion
opened national doors.*

Collaborating with Brown University for Better Care

On November 5, our Pharmacy, Nursing, and Physical Therapy students joined peers at Brown University's Warren Alpert Medical School for Interprofessional Education Day. College of Pharmacy faculty, residents, and fellows led hands-on standardized patient simulations that strengthened teamwork, communication, and shared decision-making. This annual partnership continues to build a more collaborative and patient-centered healthcare workforce for Rhode Island.



RESEARCH

Breakthroughs That Change Lives

From uncovering the molecular mechanisms of disease to shaping national health policy, URI researchers are driving innovation that improves lives—locally, nationally, and globally. Guided by three strategic areas, our research transforms care, advances knowledge, and promotes health equity:

- **Neuroscience and Healthy Aging**
Alzheimer’s, ALS, addiction, pain, and mental health
- **Infectious Disease, Immunology, and Natural Products**
Drug discovery, vaccines, and therapeutics
- **Healthcare Accessibility**
Pharmacoepidemiology, pharmacoeconomics, and public health



URI Study Links Microplastics to Alzheimer’s

Assistant Professor Jamie Ross, faculty member in the George and Anne Ryan Institute for Neuroscience, revealed that microplastics found in food, water, and air can reach the brain, potentially triggering Alzheimer’s-like decline in those with genetic risk factors.

See how the research, featured in Food & Wine, The New York Times, and The Guardian, reveals a link between microplastics and Alzheimer’s disease.



Unraveling the Connection Between Stroke and Alzheimer’s

Assistant Professor Claudia Fallini, faculty member in the George and Anne Ryan Institute for Neuroscience, supported by a \$413K NIH grant, is studying how stroke-related brain changes may contribute to Alzheimer’s disease, paving the way for therapies that prevent cognitive decline.

Learn how URI scientists are advancing understanding of brain health and aging.

Exploring the Ripple Effect of HIV Interventions

Associate Professor Ashley Buchanan is leading an NIH-funded study exploring how HIV prevention efforts can “spill over” through social networks of young Black men who have sex with men. This multi-institutional project aims to expand access to PrEP, reduce stigma, and strengthen community health.

Uncovering How Rare Genetic Diseases Affect the Brain

In collaboration with Belinda Barbagallo of Salve Regina University, Niall Howlett, associate dean for research and graduate education, received an NIH grant to study how Fanconi Anemia affects the brain. The project aims to uncover disease mechanisms and guide future therapies.

#1

in New England for
Research Funding*
(U.S. News & World Report)

Top 15%

in the Nation in
Research Funding for
U.S. Pharmacy Schools
(AACP, 2024)

Top 10%

Nationally in
NIH-Funded
Pharmacy Research
(Blue Ridge Institute, FY2024)

\$17.2M

in Research Funding
(FY2024)

72%

of Full-Time Faculty
are Actively Funded

120

Proposals Totaling
\$100.6M Submitted
(FY2025)

* Research expenditures reflect College of Pharmacy only; peer institutions may include medical schools.

ALUMNI

Leading the Evolution of Pharmacy

5,900+

Alumni Across 53 States/Territories and 21 Countries

520+

Alumni in Leadership Roles (Director, VP, C-suite, Founders)

131

Alumni Serving as Faculty in U.S. Pharmacy Schools

776

Alumni Working in Fortune 500 Healthcare and Pharmaceutical Companies



Takeda Appoints Rhonda Pacheco President of the U.S. Business Unit

URI College of Pharmacy alum Rhonda Pacheco '03 joins Takeda's Executive Team, bringing her visionary leadership and industry expertise to one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies. Pacheco's appointment marks a powerful step in Takeda's next chapter of innovation, trust, and patient-centered care.



Explore how Rhonda Pacheco's URI roots shaped a global leadership journey.



From Counter to Camera: URI Alum Educates Millions

Pharmacist and URI alum Ethan Melillo '17 has gained over 1,000,000 followers across platforms for his engaging videos that educate patients, debunk misinformation, and advocate for the pharmacy profession, all while balancing his full-time role at L'Oréal.



See how Ethan is redefining what it means to be a pharmacist.



From the Lab to Capitol Hill: Guiding the Nation's Health Policy

As staff director for the U.S. House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Health, Patrick Dumas '16 advises members of Congress on national health policy, Medicare and Medicaid reform, and strategies to make healthcare more effective and sustainable for all Americans. A URI pharmaceutical sciences graduate, he brings a scientist's perspective to Washington policymaking.



See how Patrick's shaping U.S. healthcare policy.

90%+

of Faculty are Actively
Engaged in Undergraduate
Student Research

44

of 61 Full-Time Faculty
Members Have Active
Research Funding

138

Faculty Publications
(2024)

7.8:1

Student-to-Faculty
Ratio

THE
UNIVERSITY
OF RHODE ISLAND
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACY

FACULTY

Educators Fueling Innovation



**Anita N. Jacobson
Receives 2025 APhA
Generation
Rx Award of
Excellence**



Anita N. Jacobson, Pharm.D., clinical professor, received the 2025 APhA Generation Rx Award of Excellence for her leadership in harm reduction and overdose prevention. As director of the Community First Responder Program, she has secured over \$5.5 million in grant funding and led statewide efforts to expand naloxone access and substance use education.



**Erica Estus Receives Two
National Awards from
American
Society of
Consultant
Pharmacists**



Erica Estus, Pharm.D., BCGP, was recognized with two national honors from the American Society of Consultant Pharmacists (ASCP): the 2025 Educator of the Year Award and the 2025 Outstanding Faculty Award. A leader in geriatric pharmacotherapy and experiential education, she has dedicated over two decades to mentoring and advancing future pharmacists at URI.



**PharmacyBridge.org:
Jeffrey Bratberg's
Mission to
Remove
Barriers
to Care**



In partnership with the Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts (FORE), Jeffrey Bratberg, Pharm.D., launched PharmacyBridge.org to expand access to buprenorphine treatment for opioid use disorder. Working with Legislative Analysis and Public Policy Association (LAPPA), the team reviews laws nationwide to remove barriers and empower pharmacists to provide life-saving care.



**Kelly Matson
Advances Pediatric
Medication
Safety**



Kelly Matson, Pharm.D., BCPPS, co-authored the Pediatric Pharmacy Association's 2025 KIDs List, published in JPPT, offering updated national guidance on safer medication use in children. The revised list identifies drugs and excipients potentially inappropriate for pediatric patients, reinforcing Matson's leadership in advancing pharmacy practice and child health.



**Amanda Alker
Reimagines the
Future of
Antibiotics**



Amanda Alker, Ph.D., and her team are harnessing advanced DNA editing to explore how beneficial bacteria can target harmful pathogens without disturbing the microbiome. Their work opens the door to next-generation antimicrobial therapies and new ways to fight drug-resistant infections. Through a Champlin Foundations proposal, she is hoping to introduce this technology into undergraduate learning, inspiring tomorrow's innovators.



Powerful Connections and Opportunities

From coast to coast, we collaborate with some of the nation's most influential organizations in healthcare, research, and industry. Our partners work alongside our students, faculty, and alumni to create opportunities for cutting-edge research, hands-on clinical training, and real-world impact.



WELCOME Introducing Our Newest Faculty

We proudly welcome an exceptional group of new faculty whose expertise elevates our teaching, research, and clinical excellence. Each brings an impressive record of achievement and a shared dedication to advancing health through discovery, education, and service.

Amanda Alker, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Focus: Microbiomes, Genome Editing, CRISPR, Symbiosis

Callan Bleick, Pharm.D., M.Sc.

Assistant Professor, Pharmacy Practice and Clinical Research
Focus: Infectious Disease, Immunology, Microbiology, Phage Therapy

Kaitlin Dailey, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor and RI-INBRE Faculty Scholar
Focus: Synthetic Biology, Cancer Therapeutics, CRISPR, Metabolic Engineering

Thomas Lavoie, Pharm.D.

Assistant Professor, Pharmacy Practice and Clinical Research
Focus: Infectious Disease, Antimicrobial Resistance

Bailey Miller, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Focus: Marine Natural Products, Antibiotic Discovery, Microbial Symbiosis, Biotechnology

Alissa Scalise, Pharm.D., BCPS, BCPP

Clinical Assistant Professor, Pharmacy Practice and Clinical Research
Focus: Psychiatry, Neurology, Headache Syndromes, Ambulatory Care

Joseph Schrader, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Pharmacy Practice and Clinical Research
Focus: Neuropharmacology, Alzheimer's Disease, Proteomics, Biomarker Discovery

Merina Varghese, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Ryan Research
Assistant Professor of Neuroscience
Focus: Neuroscience, Aging and Neuropsychiatric Diseases, Alzheimer's Disease, Epilepsy, Molecular and Spatial Neurobiology, Biomarker and Therapeutic Target Discovery