



SCRIPT YOUR FUTURE PRESS RELEASE

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

Sixth annual Script Your Future contest saw participation by 66 health profession schools hosting 300+ events in 18 states and Puerto Rico, and reaching more than 12 million consumers nationwide

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Washington, DC — Today, the National Consumers League (NCL) and its partners announced the winners of the sixth 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, Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED), University of the Sciences Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, and University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy.

The 2017 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 National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) and the American Pharmacists Association (APhA). “The *Script Your Future* Medication Adherence Team Challenge continues to be an innovative method for our future healthcare professionals to engage with their local communities,” said Executive Vice President and CEO at AACP Dr. Lucinda L. Maine. “The broad social media outreach 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, the outcome of which leads to more than one-third of medicine-related hospitalizations and at least 125,000 U.S. deaths each year, as a public health priority. Improved medication adherence leads to better health outcomes and reduced total healthcare 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.

“Each year, we are so impressed with and inspired by the collaborative and creative outreach the student teams carry out to improve awareness of medication adherence in their communities,” said NCL Executive Director Sally Greenberg. “Though the current healthcare landscape is anything but certain, we know that the role of healthcare professionals in promoting medication adherence and improving health outcomes will always be integral. We look forward to continuing to work with the next generation of health professionals to promote an interprofessional approach to adherence-minded care delivery through the Team Challenge.”

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 Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED). NEOMED also won two focused awards in the areas of health disparities and media outreach. The University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy earned the focused award for creative interprofessional team event. For the first time, NCL also honored an outstanding team in their first or second year of the Challenge with the Rookie Award. This prize went to University of the Sciences Philadelphia College of Pharmacy.

“The *Script Your Future* Team Challenge is a forward-thinking, collaborative effort that could spark further improvements in medication adherence,” said NCPA CEO B. Douglas Hoey, RPh, MBA. “It’s appropriate that pharmacists play a prominent role in this annual event. They’re clinically trained medication experts with a commitment to driving patient adherence through services like medication therapy management and medication synchronization. The *Script Your Future* participants are experimenting with new ways to improve health outcomes and bend the cost curve—and we can all learn from their experience. NCPA applauds their efforts.”

For this year’s Challenge, hundreds of future healthcare professionals held more than 320 events in 18 states and Puerto Rico, directly counseled more than 15,000 patients, and exposed more than 12 million consumers nationwide to *Script Your Future*. Since the Challenge began in 2011, more than 12,000 future healthcare professionals have directly counseled nearly 50,000 patients and reached more than 23 million consumers.

“The Medication Adherence Team Challenge gives students the opportunity to build inter-professional healthcare teams that can help patients adhere to their prescriptions,” said NACDS Foundation President Kathleen Jaeger. “Participants in this year’s Challenge exemplified the influence that care collaboration has on advancing patient care and improving public health. The NACDS Foundation is proud to be a part of such an impactful and educational program.”

“Considering both their expertise and accessibility, pharmacists are uniquely positioned to help patients optimize the effects of their prescription medications which includes encouraging adherence. We are excited to continue our involvement with the Medication Adherence Team Challenge and the strong message it sends to healthcare professionals, patients and the community about the importance of medication adherence,” said APhA CEO Thomas E. Menighan, BSPHarm, MBA, ScD (Hon), FAPhA.

The recognized schools, selected from dozens of applications and 66 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, Nursing Program and several student organizations to sponsor 23 innovative medication adherence events and activities that reached 750,000+ people in West Virginia. The Charleston team participated in eight health fairs, partnered with local hospitals, and provided direct patient counseling, point-of-care testing, and medication reviews to three underserved rural communities. The team also introduced the “Generation Rx” program, through which more than 300 5th grade students were educated on medication adherence, medication safety, and proper medication disposal. In addition to targeted interventions addressing cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, and diabetes, the Charleston team, in partnership with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), incorporated educational outreach efforts to address the opioid epidemic and safe opioid use and disposal. Other activities included the distribution of 33,000 medication adherence flyers and wallet cards, the coordination of a West Virginia Pharmacist’s Day at the State Legislature, and a six-part radio series on medication adherence.

National Challenge Award: Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED)

The team at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED), comprised by pharmacy, medical, and nursing students, conducted several community and media events to educate a broad range of patient populations, including children, seniors, refugees, and low-income individuals, on the importance of medication adherence. The team established multiple touchpoints for patients and consumers to connect with the *Script Your Future* campaign by providing educational opportunities and disseminating thousands of wallet cards, posters, stickers, and pillboxes in various community settings—including college basketball games, senior assisted living facilities, local recreation centers, free clinics, and a cheer competition. Other activities included a medical mission trip to Honduras, participation in the Accelerate Northeast Ohio “Pillbox Project” Competition, and the direct counseling of 4,000+ patients. Additionally, the NEOMED team was honored for its medication adherence advocacy with a proclamation from Ohio Governor John Kasich, designating January through March “Remembering to Take Your Medicines Months.”

National Challenge Award: Finalists

The following schools were named Finalists under the National Award category: Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine School of Pharmacy (LECOM), Ohio Northern University Raabe College of Pharmacy,

St. Louis College of Pharmacy, Touro University California College of Pharmacy, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill - Eshelman School of Pharmacy, and University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy.

Rookie Award: University of the Sciences Philadelphia College of Pharmacy

University of the Sciences Philadelphia College of Pharmacy (USciences) made an excellent showing in the Team Challenge as a first-time competitor, reaching more than 15,000 people through 17 community events and social media outreach. Students from USciences' Colleges of Pharmacy and Health Sciences comprised the interprofessional team. In addition, the team forged partnerships with Pennsylvania's Dental Medicine School, Samson College of Health Sciences, Cooper Medical School of Rowan University, and Temple University's School of Dentistry and School of Medicine. Activities included a weekly table at the local farmer's market, partnerships with local pharmacies to counsel patients, and participation in the "Know Your Numbers" Men's Health Initiative of 2017, Philadelphia's largest screening event for men. The team's work on medication adherence and the *Script Your Future* campaign was also featured in its school newsletter and other Philadelphia news outlets.

Rookie Award Finalist: St. John Fisher College

St. John Fisher College in Rochester, NY also made a very strong showing in their Rookie year of the Challenge.

FOCUSED AWARDS

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

Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) addressed economic, educational, and cultural barriers to medication adherence through its robust outreach to underserved populations. Examples of NEOMED's efforts include a Night of Hope for refugees in Akron, a Heroin Epidemic community presentation, seminars in three underserved senior apartment complexes, and a medical mission trip to Honduras that reached 2,400+ patients.

Communication and Media Outreach Award: Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED)

This year's Media/Communications Outreach Award went to Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED), which reached more than 1 million people through several print and digital media. NEOMED's team produced two videos—the first highlighting *Script Your Future* campaign materials through the "Mannequin Challenge," and the other demonstrating the importance of medication adherence through a [music video](#). In addition to educating thousands of patients through social media, the team also promoted medication adherence through articles in university and local publications and local news segments.

Touro University California College of Pharmacy, a finalist for both the National Challenge Award and the Media Outreach Award, produced an excellent [animated video](#) about the importance of medication adherence and tips to improve adherence.

Creative Inter-Professional Team Event Award: University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy

The University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy partnered with students from the University's schools of medicine, nursing, public health, social work, and health and rehabilitation services to conduct several innovative events that raised awareness of the importance of taking medications as directed. In addition to patient counseling and point-of-care testing, other activities included a tabling event at a local pharmacy, presentations on the importance of medication adherence to occupational therapy students, a feature in the School of Social Work newsletter, and trainings to nursing and medical students on conducting the MMAS-4 survey, which measures medication adherence.

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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.