



Candidate for the Office of APhA-ASP National President-elect

Clayton Melson, Presbyterian College
ccmelson@presby.edu

GOAL STATEMENT

My goal for APhA-ASP is simple. I wish to continue to build upon those before me in developing student pharmacists that are as passionate about our profession as I am. I intend to do this by supplying our chapters with the ideas and resources they need to help others within each chapter begin their own legacy. The most astounding thing about APhA-ASP are its constituents. Our student pharmacists are some of the brightest, driven, and most creative minds in healthcare and facilitating your chapter goals and your passions could not fulfill me more. Through patient centered initiatives, chapter visits, strategic planning, and open communication, I hope to turn your opportunities into realities and ultimately your successes.

APhA-ASP has already given me more than I could ever return to them, even as your president-elect, but I would spend my term in steadfast dedication to that very resolve. We are among the smallest group of healthcare professionals, but when it comes to patient care, I believe we possess the biggest hearts. To date, nothing has been handed to us. We have earned it. And we must continue to move forward with the same passion that got us to where we are now.

BACKGROUND & EXPERIENCE

Currently, I hold the position of President-elect at my chapter. While this position is one that requires a lot of learning and gathering experience to prepare myself for my presiding year, I have taken it upon myself to dive into every opportunity and be an active participant of, or at least present in, nearly every patient care project we implement. I have taken no opportunity for granted as growth is attained from monitoring our successes and our failures. This year has been characterized by networking with other chapters, local healthcare providers, local businesses, and local government. My goal is to solidify strong relationships that will outlast my term as President. I would like to set up my successors for the same successes I have experienced and will experience in the future.

In my current role, I have done everything from managing my chapter's involvement in large scale health fairs to filling whatever final volunteer spot is necessary for a highway cleanup. The emphasis on service and the vision of APhA has always been something that seems to fit hand in hand with the motto held by Presbyterian College School of Pharmacy: Dum Vivimus Servimus or "while we live, we serve." This phrase could not be any more applicable to the profession of pharmacy and the direction in which this profession must proceed. The community in which we serve is the epitome of everything that provider status stands for and my colleagues and I are making a lasting impact on the lives here. This impact is proving our value long before we ever attach PharmD to the end of our names.

PHILSOPHIES ON APhA & APhA-ASP

APhA-ASP succeeds in delivering the fundamental pieces that complete the entire package that is today's pharmacist. As we embark into the future, it is increasingly important that we continue to prove our value and our worth in the healthcare system. This value begins in service. As I am writing this, we have just passed the threshold of 51 seats in the senate toward approving our provider status. It is commitment to our mission that has opened opportunities and proven our worth time and time again. Healthcare is undergoing a cultural change and the rest of the medical professions are becoming increasingly aware that pharmacy is not only an integral part of the medical team, but an indispensable component of positive patient outcomes. Through our diligence and advocacy at the student level and beyond, APhA has propelled this profession forward with its dedication to one thing and one thing alone: the patient.

Pharmacy is a profession built on service. As the scope of practice continues to change through technology, legislation, and time, it is that very foundation that has prevailed through all. APhA-ASP engenders pharmacists who place this foundation at the forefront of their practice. It instills the values and attributes that prepare the profession to face these aforementioned obstacles and surmount them.

Love for one's profession is not always automatic. Often times, it is acquired through investing ourselves into something we find rewarding. The programs of APhA and APhA-ASP offer this component to the profession of pharmacy. At the student level, it provides the infrastructure necessary to effectively impact our communities and allow us to visibly see the fruits of our labor on the faces and the well-being of those we serve. In this investment, we find reward and ultimately love for this profession. Love breeds motivation and it is this motivation that precedes advocacy.

Human nature leads us to promote our passions. Where pharmacy school plants the seeds of practice, APhA-ASP cultivates servitude and provides meaningful experiences that evolve us into not only better pharmacists, but passionate pharmacists motivated to advance this profession forward for ourselves and those to come after.

On a personal level, I am privileged to have been involved in APhA-ASP in conjunction with my education. If the APhA-ASP experience was a mandatory element to our curriculum and our development as pharmacists, I believe that not only would we produce better pharmacists resulting in better outcomes, but we would ultimately produce better human beings; bent on advancing the profession, not for the sake of ourselves, but for the sake of the patient.

SPECIALIZED TALENTS & SKILLS

My leadership skills tend to manifest themselves through others. I lead through empowerment. Just like the evolution of the medical team in modern medicine today, I consider those around me to be my equal and/or my better. A wise entrepreneur once said to hire those that are smarter than you. This creates a culture where thoughts and ideas are constantly challenged. No one stream of thought goes executed unopposed without being collectively rationalized. Goals are set and achieved via a careful blend of unified thought. Successes and failures are shared and responsibility breeds growth in every individual.

I have a talent for seeing the potential in people that they may not see themselves. From time to time, I ask more of others than what they may believe they are capable of. I will task committee chairs in my chapter with events that push their managerial limits and creativity, but I will always praise them in success and cradle the fall in their failures. I never ask any member of my team to do something I wouldn't do myself from the most complex task to the most mundane. Believing in others reciprocates belief in me, fostering trust and respect. These two faculties are imperatively valuable in leading effectively and they are not free but earned.

Outside of my leadership strategies, I possess an infectious positive attitude. I tend to find the silver lining and make light of the most hapless situations. Negativity tends to elicit wasted energy. Furthermore, in a position of leadership, a negative attitude is like a plague that can spread throughout its host. Rather than being patient zero in an epidemic, I consistently choose to be a shot of dopamine to keep spirits high and my team motivated. I am also quite adept at creating excessively cheesy analogies to describe management strategies.

If there is one take away from my qualities to fulfill this position it is that I believe in what APhA-ASP stands for. I believe in the mission and I believe in its vision. But most of all, I believe in you. I believe in the people that make up this organization. From the President now to the incoming student that isn't even a member yet, we are the future of this profession. We are the difference between whether this profession thrives or dies. Proving our value and worth in an ever-changing world will be a constant struggle and there is no other group of passionate medical professionals that I would rather fight alongside. Whether as your President or in some other capacity, I hope that we will always share that same passion in moving this profession forward.