

**CPS President's Inaugural Address**  
**President Jim Stephens**  
Awards and Installation Banquet – June 12, 2004  
CPS Annual Summer Meeting

The editor of a popular pharmacy journal always signs off the editorial page with the statement, "looking forward for Pharmacy". I have always enjoyed this one line comment for its simplicity, and perhaps deeper meaning. I would like to challenge us all today to look forward for pharmacy.

Before we look in to the future challenges of our organization and profession, it is appropriate that we look back for a moment to recognize where we have been, and the leaders that have helped us succeed. I need to thank the CPS past presidents, Larry Clark, Doug Fish, Mary Newell, and Randy Knutsen. It has been a pleasure to work with each of you over the past 3 years. I am very humbled to have been chosen to follow in your footsteps. A special note for Mary. Your enthusiasm for this organization, and the profession of pharmacy are traits that have helped you accomplish many goals this past year. Your personality and charismatic appeal have helped cement relationships that will last a life time. For this we all thank you!

Randy, we all feel somewhat cheated by not having the opportunity to work with you during your year as this organization's leader, but we all support your decision, and thank you for your continued work on the State Board. To the members of the CPS board, this society owes you each a debt of gratitude for sharing not only your time and talents but in fostering a vision of Colorado's pharmacy future.

It is also important to recognize Val and Daina Kalnins for all of their continued support of the CPS mission; you remain the backbone of our organization.

As we look forward for pharmacy, we face a number of challenges as an organization and a profession. I would like to take a few moments to offer some observations and challenges:

#### MEMBERSHIP

Currently we have about 600 members of CPS, or about 25% of the registered pharmacists practicing in the State of Colorado. By most standards, this is average or perhaps would be considered above average membership support for a pharmacy organization. In order to survive and thrive, the group needs to actively recruit additional members into the organization. This group has experienced some success with membership recruitment. But as Mary Newell demonstrated this spring, recruitment needs to be a grassroots effort involving the very core of the membership of any organization. The president and board can set the goals, but it needs to happen from a member to member initiative.

#### MEMBERSHIP RETENTION

Once we have a member, we should never lose them. We need to cultivate an organization that pharmacists and technicians desire to remain members. We need to operate an organization where people perceive that they are receiving a special value or service for their dues, and they want to remain a part of the organization. I hope that as the board starts their new year, we can look at the "value" of membership and see what "value added services", need to be part of membership in the organization.

#### Communicate to the membership

We also need to communicate to the general membership, what the society does in their best interest. Very few of us understand the complexities of the legislative process, including CPS'

lobbying efforts not only on major bills like the practice act, but also the eye's and ears that are so important in the legislative process. We also need to share with the membership the importance of Colorado being represented at the national meetings of every major national pharmacy organization.

### CE programs

CPS has an impressive CE program; 10 hours of Continuing education have been offered here the past 3 days. Each of our annual meetings is packed with the opportunity for CE. Val Kalnins, along with several pharmaceutical companies have championed the dinner and CE programs over the past 5 years. This past year we were able to offer these programs in a variety of locations around the state, it is my hope, that the new board would extend this program to every corner of the state; these types of programs serve as an excellent "ambassador" for CPS and give an opportunity for members to interact with the board in their own region.

### Relationship Building

I think that it is important to continue to strengthen relationships with our academies, the School of Pharmacy and our respective national organizations. Strong relationships foster good communication and we have the opportunity to share each others ideas, mission and vision.

### RECOGNITION FOR THE ROLE OF PHARMACIST AND TECHNICIANS

I want us to blow our own horn a little more. It's nice that pharmacists have been acknowledged by national surveys as a trusted professional. I also want us to share some of the lime light as a valued health care provider. Get out and be amongst the patients, champion the profession in your community. I often think that as a profession, we all have a tremendous amount of knowledge and skills to share with our clients, but rarely get the opportunity because of time and workplace restrictions.

### Acknowledgement of Successes

It is important that we recognize the success that the society has enjoyed over the past 3 years. The simple feat of melding together the diverse pharmacy interest groups that existed in this state into a highly functional organization is a credit to the leadership, and also to the membership.

We also need to acknowledge the success of the pharmacy sunset review task force. What a great group of individuals who came together to review and revise the practice act. I also believe that a working model for future success has been developed by the cooperation of these groups and when the time arrives to launch additional legislation, this style of work group should be utilized again.

Each edition of our newsletter announces the successes of the organization and its members. A fine example is Dr. Catherine Jarvis and all those who helped make a pharmacist-based immunization program a reality in Colorado.

This organization has enjoyed many accomplishments over the past 3 years, but as a profession I feel that we are also being challenged on a variety of issues.

Over a decade ago, Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) came to pharmacies, telling us that they were the pharmacy's best friends; they existed to help us process claims quickly, increase our customer base, and guarantee fast reimbursement. PBM's have eroded the financial operation margins of every store. 10 years ago, Fort Collins had 10 independent retail pharmacies –today, only 2 have survived. PBMs are lining up again and are extending an olive branch with the same

promises to help us with the Medicare drug cards. We cannot afford friends like this. We must be proactive to chart our future.

Counterfeit drugs and prescription importation are among the many issues within this state and country that require our attention. As an organization we need to fight locally and communicate to our national organizations the need for patient safety legislation.

These issues and more will require strong leadership, again locally and nationally as they have a profound impact on the future practice of pharmacy.

In closing, I thank you for your time. I ask you to become active ambassadors for our profession, and our organization. "With you, I am looking forward for pharmacy".