



Association of Faculties
of Pharmacy of Canada

Association des facultés
de pharmacie du Canada

A'FPC Awards

2025 Award Winners

2025 Student Award Winners

AFPC Graduate Student Research Award

Purpose: To recognize the best research paper written by a graduate student, and accepted for publication or published, during the calendar year preceding the AFPC annual meeting.

Thi Huyen Trang Nguyen, University of Manitoba

AFPC / CFP Graduate Student Award for Pharmacy Practice Research

Purpose: To recognize the best pharmacy practice research paper by a graduate student, published or accepted for publication during the year preceding the AFPC annual meeting.

Kathleen Bergin, Dalhousie University

AFPC Student Research Poster Awards

Purpose: To stimulate and foster the development of research programs and research skills, in all areas of pharmacy, by undergraduate and graduate students (3 national awards)

Abdul Aziz, University of Manitoba

Jean Laverdière, Université de Montréal

Victoria Nguyen, University of Waterloo

AFPC Whit Matthews Undergraduate Student Poster Award

Purpose: To recognize the best undergraduate student posters presented at the annual AFPC conference.

Name, University

AFPC Whit Matthews Graduate Student Poster Award

Purpose: To recognize the best graduate student posters presented at the annual AFPC conference.

Name, University



2025 Faculty Award Winners

AFPC New Investigator Research Award

Purpose: To recognize outstanding research achievements and contributions of the junior members of the academic staff of faculties of pharmacy in Canada.

Bowen Li, University of Toronto

AFPC / PEBC Award for Research or Innovation in Assessment of Competence

Purpose: To forge external partnerships and give recognition of support for PEBC. To recognize outstanding work in the area of assessment of competence in the field of pharmacy.

Kirsten Archbell & Kaitlin Bynkoski, University of Waterloo

AFPC Award for Innovation in Education

Purpose: To recognize the development of a significant innovation in teaching, learning and/or assessment that has been implemented and evaluated by members of the academic staff and are currently in place and operating within a faculty of pharmacy within Canada.

Sandra Bjelajac Mejia, University of Toronto

AFPC Educational Scholarship Poster Award

Purpose: To recognize the best innovative and effective educational scholarship poster presented by a faculty member at the AFPC annual conference.

Name, University

AFPC / Pfizer Research Career Award

Purpose: To stimulate and foster the development of research programs in all areas of pharmacy by recognizing research excellence of members of the academic staff.

Jillian Kohler, University of Toronto

AFPC Honoured Life Membership

Purpose: to recognize an individual's outstanding contribution to AFPC at a national level, in accordance with established criteria. Honoured Life Members shall have the right to belong to AFPC as a member for their lifetime.

John Pugsley, The Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada

Student Awards

AFPC Graduate Student Research Award

Purpose: To recognize the best research paper written by a graduate student, and accepted for publication or published, during the calendar year preceding the AFPC annual meeting.

Trang Thi Huyen Nguyen

University of Manitoba

Trang Nguyen is currently a second-year MSc student at the College of Pharmacy, University of Manitoba. Her thesis is under the supervision of Dr. Shweta Mital. Trang completed her BSc in Pharmacy from Hanoi University of Pharmacy in 2021 and worked as a Clinical Research Associate in the sector of clinical trials before moving to Manitoba to pursue graduate studies in 2024.

Trang's research interest lies in the field of pharmacoeconomics, with a focus on economic evaluation of novel oncology therapies whose effectiveness was demonstrated in the phase III trials. She published her first-author cost-effectiveness analysis in *PharmacoEconomics* in December 2024, which was honored as runner-up for the Cost-Effectiveness Paper of 2024 Award by the Center for the Evaluation of Value and Risk in Health (CEVR) - Tufts Medical Center, United States. Also, she was the recipient of numerous awards including the University of Manitoba Graduate Fellowship, College of Pharmacy Graduate Student Entrance Scholarship, International Graduate Student Entrance Scholarship (IGSES) and Faculty of Graduate Studies Research Completion Scholarship.



Student Awards

AFPC / Canadian Foundation for Pharmacy Graduate Student Award for Pharmacy Practice Research

Purpose: To recognize the best pharmacy practice research paper by a graduate student, published or accepted for publication during the year preceding the AFPC annual meeting.

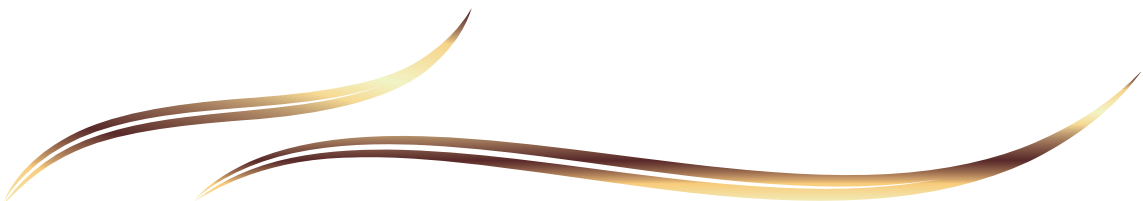
Kathleen Bergin

Dalhousie University

Kathleen completed her Bachelor of science in Pharmacy at Dalhousie University in 2023. She then completed her Master of science in Pharmaceutical Sciences at Dalhousie University in 2025, focusing on pharmacy practice research. To further her focus in pharmacy practice research, she is entering her PhD of Health in the Fall of 2025, supervised by Dr. Kyle Wilby, at Dalhousie University. Her master's thesis explored the acceptability of pharmacists to perform full scope independent sexually transmitted infection (STI) services such as prescribing and monitoring for Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to prevent HIV, as well as other services such as testing and treating for various STIs. Her PhD will continue in the realm of furthering the scope of practice for pharmacists to perform and deliver sexual health services to patients in the community pharmacy setting. Kathleen also holds various lecturing and teaching assistant positions within the College of Pharmacy at Dalhousie University.



Kathleen is a practicing pharmacist in both Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, working as a relief pharmacist. She also works in the Nova Scotia Community Pharmacy Primary Care Clinics at various locations.



Student Awards

AFPC Student Research Poster Awards

Purpose: To stimulate and foster the development of research programs and research skills, in all areas of pharmacy, by undergraduate and graduate students (3 national awards)

Abdul Aziz

University of Manitoba

Md. Abdul Aziz is a third-year PhD student and a Vanier Scholar at the College of Pharmacy, University of Manitoba, under the supervision of Drs. Christine Leong and Abdullah Al Maruf. He is an internationally trained pharmacist, holding a Master of Pharmacy in Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmacology (2021) and a Bachelor of Pharmacy (2019) from Bangladesh. Aziz's research focuses on understanding real-world prescribing patterns of antidepressants in Manitoba, utilizing data from the Population Health Research Data Repository at the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy (MCHP). His research investigates treatment persistence, medication switching, and combination or augmentation strategies for mood, anxiety, and related disorders. He also explores the frequency and trend at which antidepressants with pharmacogenomic prescribing recommendations are dispensed across the province. Through this research, Aziz aims to provide valuable insights into current antidepressant use and to identify factors that may influence treatment persistence.

Aziz's academic achievements, research excellence, leadership potential, and community engagement have been recognized through numerous awards at the university, provincial, and national levels. Most notably, he is a recipient of the prestigious Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship (Vanier CGS) (2025). He has also received the University of Manitoba Graduate Fellowship, the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies Student Achievement Prize, and the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences Graduate Studentship, among others. Driven by a strong commitment to healthcare and patient outcomes, Aziz aspires to bridge the gap between healthcare professionals and patients, focusing on optimizing drug therapy and reducing treatment gaps.



Jean Laverdière

Université de Montréal

Jean Laverdière is a pharmacist and graduate student in Pharmaceutical Sciences at Université de Montréal. During his Master's, he worked with some of the world's top researchers in 3D-printing of pharmaceuticals to help Canadians benefit from this technology.

In the last year, he developed a 3D-printed formulation for customizable, pediatric-adapted hydroxyurea gummies, a critical yet inaccessible medication to treat one of the world's most frequent genetic diseases, sickle cell anemia. In the upcoming years, he plans on completing his PhD, where he will work on implementing this technology in our hospitals and pharmacies. His mission : make 3D-printing of medication accessible to all Canadians by offering safe and adapted pharmaceutical compounding at point-of-care.



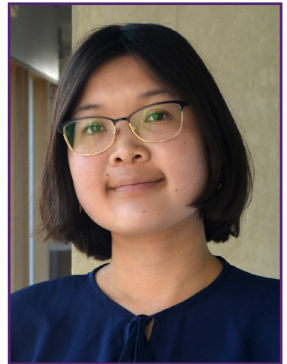
AFPC Student Research Poster Awards

Purpose: To stimulate and foster the development of research programs and research skills, in all areas of pharmacy, by undergraduate and graduate students (3 national awards)

Victoria Nguyen

University of Waterloo

Victoria Nguyen is a fourth-year student in the PharmD program at the University of Waterloo. Through her co-op experience as a General Internal Medicine and Clinical Research Student at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre and her research experience in Dr. Tejal Patel's lab, Victoria has developed a keen interest in optimizing medication management in geriatric populations. As she finishes her academic journey at the University of Waterloo, she is excited to further grow her research skills and contribute to advancing safe and effective medication use in vulnerable patient populations.



Faculty Awards

AFPC New Investigator Research Award

Purpose: To recognize outstanding research achievements and contributions of the junior members of the academic staff of faculties of pharmacy in Canada.

Bowen Li

University of Toronto

Dr. Bowen Li is an Assistant Professor and GSK Chair in Pharmaceutics and Drug Delivery at the Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Toronto, and an Affiliate Scientist at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre. He holds the Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in RNA Vaccines and Therapeutics. His lab utilizes a range of interdisciplinary strategies, including combinatorial chemistry, high throughput platforms, and AI-driven design of experiments, to develop new generations of delivery systems for RNA medicines. His work has led to over 60 publications in top-tier journals, such as Nat. Biotechnology, Nat. Materials, Nat. Biomedical Engineering, Nat. Medicine, Nat. Commun., PNAS, Sci. Adv., among others. Dr. Li is a recipient of Ontario Early Researcher Award (2025), Stem Cell Network Early Career Researcher Jump Start Award (2025), AFPC New Investigator Research Award (2025), National Sanitarium Association Scholar Award (2025), Oxford-Harrington Rare Disease Scholar Award (2024), NIH R01 grant (2024), CIHR project grants (2022, 2023, 2024), AAPS Emerging Leader Award (2024), CSPS Early Career Award (2024), Marsha Morton Early Career Investigator Award (2024), Biomaterials Science Emerging Investigator Award (2024), Gairdner Early Career Investigator Award (2022), and Connaught New Researcher Award (2022).



Faculty Awards

AFPC / Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada Award for Research or Innovation in Assessment of Competence

Purpose: To forge external partnerships and give recognition of support for PEBC. To recognize outstanding work in the area of assessment of competence in the field of pharmacy.

Kirsten Archbell

University of Waterloo

Kristen is the Associate Director of Assessment at the University of Waterloo School of Pharmacy. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Bachelor of Education, and Masters and PhD in Developmental Psychology. During her graduate training, Kristen's research focussed on anxiety, student performance, and measure development in higher education. She specializes in mixed methods research which she applies to her program evaluation work. Previously, she worked at the University of Waterloo (UW) Centre for Teaching Excellence in a research and programmatic assessment position, developing, facilitating, and evaluating programs and workshops on teaching enhancement and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. As Associate Director of Assessment, she focusses on operations related to programmatic evaluation, student assessment, and continuous quality improvement of the School, with a particular focus on the PharmD program and accreditation.



Kaitlin Bynkoski

University of Waterloo

Kaitlin is the Director of Admissions and Undergraduate Affairs at the University of Waterloo School of Pharmacy. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy and a Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Waterloo, as well as a Bachelor of Science degree in Biomedical Sciences from Brock University.

As a regulated pharmacist, Kaitlin's professional background spans community and hospital practice, with expertise in medication safety, continuing education for pharmacists, and continuous quality improvement initiatives. Currently, she is a full-time academic pharmacist, focusing on recruiting and admitting highly qualified students to Waterloo's PharmD program. Kaitlin also supports pharmacy students throughout their academic journey by leading efforts in orientation, professionalism, remediation, and student policy work within the undergraduate affairs portfolio. She enjoys teaching student leadership development and professional identity content and serves as the main liaison for PharmD students in leadership and student ambassador roles.



Faculty Awards

AFPC Award for Innovation in Education

Purpose: To recognize the development of a significant innovation in teaching, learning and/or assessment that have been implemented and evaluated by members of the academic staff and are currently in place and operating within a faculty of pharmacy within Canada.

Sandra Bjelajac Mejia

University of Toronto

Dr. Aleksandra (Sandra) Bjelajac Mejia is an Associate Professor in the Teaching Stream at the University of Toronto's Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy (LDFP). Sandra earned her BSc degree in Pharmacy with honours from Northeastern University in Boston. She went on to earn her PharmD and completed her Post PharmD Clinical Pharmacy Residency in Family Medicine at the Medical University of South Carolina. Over 25 years, Sandra's work has included pediatric pharmacy practice, professional practice based teaching, and clinical and education research. In 2021, she was honoured to receive 'Professor of the Year' from the Class of 2T4 students. In 2022, she completed a Master of Science in Community Health, Health Practitioner Teacher Education and in 2024, she began a PhD program in Health Systems Research focused on adolescent and young adult experiences with medication therapy management. Sandra was nominated for the AFPC Award for Innovation in Education for her work to develop virtual pharmacy simulations which have been integrated within the LDFP's Medication Therapy Management 2 course, within the PharmPath program, and have been adopted by the Ontario College of Pharmacists for one of their online training programs. Her current education research includes a highly collaborative project, co-led with Dr. Lachmi Singh, investigating the nature of K-12 and postsecondary partnerships to support underrepresented students' access to, and success in, health sciences.



Faculty Awards

AFPC / Pfizer Research Career Award

Purpose: To stimulate and foster the development of research programs in all areas of pharmacy by recognizing research excellence of members of the academic staff.

Jillian Kohler

University of Toronto

Jillian Clare Kohler, PhD, is a Professor at the Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy, the Dalla Lana School of Public Health and the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy at the University of Toronto. She is the Founding Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Governance, Transparency and Accountability in the Pharmaceutical Sector and a Senior Fellow and Member of the Board, Massey College. Her research and teaching are focused on global pharmaceutical policies related to improving fair access of those in need of critical medicines. Prior to joining the University of Toronto, she worked exclusively on global pharmaceutical policy for a number of United Nations (UN) organizations including UNICEF, the World Bank and the WHO. She continues to advise global institutions and NGOs on global pharmaceutical policy issues related to better access for populations. Dr. Kohler is the author of numerous UN policy papers, scholarly articles, book chapters and opinion pieces on pharmaceutical policy. She is the Editor in Chief of the Journal of Pharmaceutical Health Services Research published by Oxford University Press. She received the Policy and Practice Award from the Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Toronto in 2024 and the Canadian Integrity Award from Transparency International Canada in 2024. She is also one of the Canadian Women in Global Health that is a leadership listing by the Canadian Association for Global Health. She received her PhD in Politics from New York University.



Faculty Awards

AFPC Honoured Life Membership

Purpose: Awarded to eligible individuals to recognize their outstanding contribution to the Association of Faculties of Pharmacy of Canada at a national level, in accordance with established criteria.

John Pugsley

The Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada

John Pugsley served for almost 30 years as the Registrar-Treasurer and Chief Operating Officer of the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada. He retired from PEBC in April 2025. Under his leadership, PEBC was at the forefront of innovation in certification for licensure internationally. Dr. Pugsley has consistently advocated for excellence in the assessment of pharmacy professionals for entry-to-practice. Recognizing the importance of public protection, Dr. Pugsley continually strived to advance the assessment of competence to ensure the quality and competence of pharmacy professionals.

Dr. Pugsley has overseen many major milestones at PEBC, including the implementation of an OSCE, a new certification process following the introduction of pharmacy technicians as a regulated profession, and computer-based testing.

The pandemic greatly impacted competency assessment, especially that of performance examinations. Dr. Pugsley's determination to maintain the quality and integrity of PEBC's certification process was always paramount. He worked tirelessly with staff, partners, and stakeholders to support the continued administration of in-person performance examinations.

As credentialing organizations have been navigating the post-pandemic world, Dr. Pugsley has been a proponent of the continued evolution and innovation of assessments to ensure the competence of pharmacy professionals, with the exploration of virtual performance examinations, automatic item generation and artificial intelligence in item development, and the implementation of linear-on-the-fly testing (LOFT).

Dr. Pugsley previously was a member of the Leslie A. Dan Faculty of Pharmacy at the University of Toronto from 1986-1995. He served as the Faculty Clinical Coordinator for fourth year undergraduate students. He designed, implemented and developed a clinical clerkship program for fourth year pharmacy students. In addition, during his academic stay at the University of Toronto, he served as Chair of the Curriculum Committee for a five year period. As Chair, he played a key role in the design and planning of the new undergraduate five-year curriculum that had an increased emphasis on problem-based and small group teaching. He also played an important role in the establishment of the post-baccalaureate Pharm. D program, as well as in the development and introduction of a first year pharmacy communications skills course, a writing skills program and an ESL proficiency support program. During this period, he conducted clinical research in the area of respiratory diseases.

Dr. Pugsley also served from 1993 to 1995 as the APFC Councillor, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Toronto in addition to serving as Chair of the AFPC Education Committee.



CPERC Poster Awards

AFPC Whit Matthews Undergraduate Student Poster Award

Purpose: To recognize the best undergraduate student posters presented at the annual AFPC conference.

Name

University

Poster: *Description*

AFPC Whit Matthews Graduate Student Poster Award

Purpose: To recognize the best graduate student posters presented at the annual AFPC conference.

Name

University

Poster: *Description*

AFPC Educational Scholarship Poster Award

Purpose: To recognize the best innovative and effective educational scholarship poster presented by a faculty member at the AFPC annual conference.

Name

University

Poster: *Description*

Past President Awards

AFPC Past President Award

Christine Leong

University of Manitoba



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CFP Past President Award

Christine Leong

University of Manitoba



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