



APhA-ASP Regional Officer Elections
Candidate for Regional Delegate – Region 3

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GOAL STATEMENT

My vision for APhA-ASP is one of excitement, fervor, and passion—one where all students, regardless of title or experience, find value in policy and feel empowered to engage in the APhA-ASP policy process. As Regional Delegate, I will foster this community by leveraging my strength in mobilizing students and by “starting small,” so that policy feels approachable by all students. Instead of framing the APhA-ASP policy process through the lens of PBM reform or complex solutions to health insurance parity, for example, I’ll meet students where they’re at and facilitate initial conversations with chapters about, perhaps, desired changes to pharmacy school curricula, structure, or services. Regardless of policy background, all students are fluent in the language of pharmacy school and can imagine a world in which their classes are taught differently or where student pharmacists are provided additional resources by their schools; this means that all students, with the appropriate support, can think of policies that impact their learning and their profession—and understand why they matter. I’ll use this “start local, start small” approach to policy to ignite the spark for change, advocacy, and policy in all students; from there, we’ll work together to turn the spark into

BACKGROUND & EXPERIENCE

APhA-ASP Leadership:

University of Georgia APhA-ASP Chapter - President-Elect (Apr 2023 - Present)

University of Georgia APhA-ASP Chapter - Annual Conference Delegate (Spring 2023)

University of Georgia APhA-ASP Chapter - MRM Conference Delegate (Fall 2022)

Policy-Related Leadership:

US House of Representatives - Congressional Pharmacy Fellow (May 2023 - Aug 2023)

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Georgia Chapter - Public Policy Committee Member (Feb 2022 - Mar 2023)

Strategic-Planning-Related Leadership:

University of Georgia College of Pharmacy - Curriculum and Assessment Committee (Aug 2022 - Aug 2023)

Georgia Institute of Technology, Office of the President - Strategic Planning Committee, Cultivate Well-Being Working Group (Feb 2020 - Dec 2021)

My love and passion for policy and advocacy first blossomed in undergrad at Georgia Tech, where I served as the Executive President of the second largest student organization on campus. In that role, I served over 9,000 students, managed a quarter million dollar budget, and facilitated the passage of more than 700 pieces of legislation—on everything from funding for small events to sweeping organizational change. I quickly became familiar with complex policy processes, and I developed a strength for engaging other students in those processes. To pass over 700 bills that year, I had to meet students where they were at and inspire them to act on their desires for change. Helping students put pen to paper meant hosting office hours every week to provide feedback to interested policy authors, for example. It also meant ensuring that authors had the resources they needed to succeed—and so I worked with my team to provide examples of successful and unsuccessful policy statements from the past, equip students with templates for new legislation, put FAQs on our website, and host mock legislative sessions for newly interested students. While not pharmacy-specific, this experience of mobilizing others is directly applicable to the role of Regional Delegate, who is responsible for engaging and supporting APhA-ASP chapters in their development of policy statements. After serving as the University of Georgia’s MRM Delegate last year, I used this strength of engaging others to share my passion for policy with students at Presbyterian College’s School of Pharmacy, whose APhA-ASP Chapter invited me to present to their members information on the APhA-ASP policy process. This provided me first-hand experience working with another chapter across state lines and educating others about how to write policy statements for the House of Delegates—both valuable experiences that have now prepared me to do the same at a larger scale as Regional Delegate. My experience as Chapter Delegate at last year’s APhA Annual Meeting & Exposition has also prepared me well to step into the role of Regional Delegate. One of just two students to bring a New Business Item—a comprehensive and ambitious resolution related to sustainability in pharmacy—before the House of Delegates last year, I actively engaged in all aspects of the APhA policy process, and I’ve subsequently developed a deep understanding of what makes a policy statement successful and how to best navigate advocacy within the Academy. Now, I serve as my Chapter’s President-Elect, which has allowed me to further hone my skills in mobilizing and engaging students in policy. This semester, for example, I’ve already worked with our VP of Policy to more than triple the number of students working on our Chapter’s policy proposal for MRM compared to last year and secure a proclamation from the Governor of Georgia in celebration of American Pharmacists Month. Collectively, these experiences—alongside my policy knowledge, discussed more below—have prepared me to collaborate with even more chapters and student pharmacists as the Delegate for Region 3.

TALENTS & SKILLS

Because Regional Delegates (RDs) serve as voting members in the “big” APhA House of Delegates and represent their entire region’s collective will when voting, it’s important that RDs are well-versed in current policy and regulatory issues in the pharmacy landscape so that they can make well-informed decisions on behalf of the Academy when voting. That is, while RDs have a primary role in effectively coaching and mentoring other chapters in crafting their own policy statements, they also have an active role in policy “beyond” the chapter level, guiding not just the positions of the Academy of Student Pharmacists but also the entirety of APhA. I believe that my experiences in policy and strategic planning roles have afforded me the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively represent our Region and Academy. This past summer, I worked as a Congressional Pharmacy Fellow in the US House of Representatives with Rep. Buddy Carter, one of two pharmacists in Congress. In this role, I collaborated with the office’s Health Legislative Assistant to develop policy related to PBMs, drug pricing, and naloxone access; secure co-sponsors and endorsements for legislation; and submit comments to FDA and HHS on newly proposed rules about printed medication information. Additionally, I performed legislative research and attended briefings, hearings, and bill mark-ups to produce policy memos on drug shortages, health insurance, and food and drug law for senior staff. This experience helped me understand how policy works in the real world, develop a solid understanding of the most pressing issues facing the profession of pharmacy today, and actively practice engaging others in developing policy solutions to complex problems. Because I was working in an office with a political ideology opposite of my own, the fellowship also taught me how to collaborate effectively with people from diverse backgrounds and with diverse beliefs for the purpose of advancing a common, shared goal: bettering pharmacy. Policy experience alone does not make for a qualified candidate, however; a RD must also think strategically, both about how they plan to engage other chapters in the policy process and about what policies they will champion on behalf of the Academy. My past experiences on my college’s Curriculum and Assessment Committee and as a member of Georgia Tech’s most recent 10-year Strategic Planning Committee have allowed me to deepen my strategic thinking skills, which I now apply to my local APhA-ASP chapter and which I look forward to applying to the RD role. At UGA, for example, I’m currently leading a strategic reorganization of our chapter to increase member engagement, and I anticipate using strategic planning as an RD, for example, when it comes time to narrow the dozens of MRM policy proposals from all eight regions down to just 3-6 final policy statements for consideration by the House of Delegates. Collectively, it’s this applied experience in policy and my strength in strategic planning that makes me a qualified candidate for RD; I’m confident I can uniquely and effectively represent Region 3 with these skills.

PLANS AS REGIONAL DELEGATE

As an APhA-ASP Regional Delegate, how will you extend the involvement of student pharmacists in the APhA-ASP Policy Process and advocacy initiatives beyond chapter delegates and chapter policy vice presidents?

Igniting passion for policy, advocacy, and change in all students—regardless of title—requires ambitious and dedicated outreach. I first learned this lesson when I served as Executive President of the second largest student organization at Georgia Tech, where I was tasked with mobilizing students and student groups to submit bills—policy statements, if you will—so that we could allocate a quarter of a million dollars in funding equitably and comprehensively to groups across campus. Week after week, members of my team and I directly reached out via email and text to as many student groups on campus as we could to educate them about the process we had in place to allocate funding. When organization fairs were hosted on campus, I would go around and “reverse table” to all of the student organizations present, handing them information on our policy process and asking for a few minutes of their time to explain how my organization could help them. I set up informational meetings about our policy process in residence halls and study rooms across campus to meet students where they were at, and every time our organization hosted a social event, we kept pamphlets about our policy process on stand-by, handing them out alongside free giveaways and food to anybody who was interested. The outreach was constant, the outreach was ambitious, and the outreach was effective. By the end of the year, we had passed over 700 unique bills, representing thousands of engaged students and student groups across campus. That approach of dedicated and ambitious outreach that I used at Georgia Tech is the same approach I will use as Regional Delegate to engage student pharmacists in the APhA-ASP policy process. As RD, I will reach out to all chapters within my Region throughout the school year and request an opportunity to speak with their members via Zoom at an upcoming General Body Meeting or event. I’ll share my personal “start local, start small” approach to policy (as discussed above) to engage students, and I’ll also put together a short, informative, and personable about the APhA-ASP Policy Process—similar to the one I created last year for Presbyterian’s School of Pharmacy—for the region. I’ll host monthly virtual “office hours” for the region so that any student can drop by and chat about policy, and I’ll look into developing a forum (e.g., GroupMe or APhA Engage community) for Region 3 student pharmacists interested in policy to converse casually about current issues in the profession, new regulatory actions by FDA and HHS, policy action alerts from the APhA Government Affairs Team, etc. Perhaps most importantly, though, I’ll chat with chapter leadership across the region to understand what barriers to engaging in the APhA-ASP policy process exist within their specific chapters. Whether it’s a perceived lack of efficacy, a feeling of overwhelm, or just not knowing where to start, I’ll be able to provide support and mentorship to chapters on how to best get involved with policy and advocacy.