

**The Rho Chi Society**

Annual Chapter Report: 2016-2017

May 14, 2017

Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Alpha Eta Chapter, Region II

Chapter Advisor: Lucio Volino, Pharm.D. | VolinoL@pharmacy.rutgers.edu

Delegates at Rho Chi Annual Meeting:

* Carolyn Zhu – Chapter President
* Lucy Lin – Chapter Vice President

Date delegates’ names submitted: February 7, 2017

**Past Officers**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Position** | **Name** | **Email** |
| President | Carolyn Zhu | carolynxzhu@gmail.com |
| Vice President | Lucy Lin | lucy.lin94@rutgers.edu |
| Secretary | Angie Kang | akang0316@gmail.com |
| Historian | Kristian Casem | kristian.casem@rutgers.edu |
| Treasurer | Emily Tiao | emily.tiao@rutgers.edu |
| RU4Kids Liaison | Rebecca Sheng | r.sheng17@gmail.com |
| Fundraising Chair | Nirali Kalaria | nirali.kalaria@rutgers.edu |
| PGC Representative | Jenny Shah | jds321@scarletmail.rutgers.edu |
| Head of Academic Committees | Cynthia Cheung | cynthiacheung94@gmail.com |

**New Officers**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Position** | **Name** | **Email** |
| President | Shilvi Shah | shilvishah25@gmail.com |
| Vice President | Helen Wang | hw294@scarletmail.rutgers.edu |
| Secretary | Dimitra Hasiotis | dimitra.has@gmail.com |
| Historian | Tracy Zhang | tracyzhang100@gmail.com |
| Treasurer | Amy Huang | ah677@scarletmail.rutgers.edu |
| RU4Kids Liaison | Soham Shukla | shukla95@hotmail.com |
| Fundraising Chair | Medha Rao | medharao13@gmail.com |
| PGC Representative | Vini Dhanky | vini676@gmail.com |

**Number of Rho Chi Student Members**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Program | Class Year | Number of Students |
| PharmD | Class of 2017 | 36 |
| PharmD | Class of 2018 | 42 |
| PharmD | Class of 2019 | 37 |

**Meetings**:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Attendance** | **Agenda** | **Action Steps** |
| May 24, 2016 | 8 | E-board meeting. Discussed vision for next year, responsibilities for each member, potential new initiatives, events for the fall semester (assigned responsibilities for these events), and applications for academic committees. | E-board members will reach out to the e-board members who held their respective positions from last year to understand responsibilities. Committee application will be sent, rooms for our fall events will be booked. |
| September 29, 2016 | 9 | E-board meeting with Dr. Volino, chapter advisor. Discussed upcoming plans for the fall semester, including the blood drive, Faculty/Staff Appreciation Breakfast, fundraising ideas, academic committees, and new initiatives. | Emily, our treasurer, will be planning the blood drive, and all members are expected to help advertise. Carolyn will reserve the room for the breakfast and create a spreadsheet for donation sign-ups. Cynthia will create a survey to determine the most useful resources for students. |
| October 6, 2016 | 40 | Fall general meeting. Shared our upcoming semester plans with all members. Cynthia shared results from the Academic Committees survey. Dr. Katelin Kimler discussed bone marrow donation (will be held in conjunction with the blood drive). Discussed AJHP article and the true meaning of Rho Chi membership. | All Head Chairs of academic committees will contact professors for an updated syllabus for their respective courses. Will create a schedule with deadlines for the resources that will be shared for each exam throughout the semester. |
| October 18, 2016 | 4 | Meeting with PLS and XAE members. Discussed details for the Pharmacy Advocacy Month Conclusion Event. | Rho Chi members will assist in creating the presentation that will be used during this event, which will include current trending topics in the pharmacy profession. |
| January 3, 2017 | 3 | Meeting with Dr. Max Ray to discuss the potential adaptation of his article *Curbside Conversation about Noblesse Oblige and Moral Commitment* into a video. | Carolyn, Cynthia, and Lucy will create a project proposal based on this article, taking into account Dr. Ray’s suggestions for adaptation. |
| January 17, 2017 | 8 | E-board meeting: established overall organization goals for the spring semester, discussed goals for the Rho Chi Annual Meeting, primary charity and organization events, and planning for induction ceremony | Rebecca, our RU4Kids Liaison, will roll out more fundraising opportunities for Dance Marathon which will be advertised throughout the semester. Cynthia will organize a recap of the Academic Committee’s accomplishments and goals for the remainder of the year.  Emily will plan another blood drive, and all members are expected to support and advertise the event. |
| January 18, 2017 | 25 | Spring academic committees meeting: Established roles and responsibilities for all Head Chairs and academic committee members. Reviewed contract that delineated deadlines and communication expectations. All committees broke off into groups to discuss their goals and specific agenda for the semester. | Head Chairs will delegate responsibilities to each of their committee members. They will create a plan of action based on student feedback after each exam and email this plan of action to the Rho Chi Gmail account. |
| February 5, 2017 | 2 | Meeting with Kelly Kempa, chapter president of Rho Chi at Wilkes University. Created an agenda for the upcoming Region II Skype meeting. | Carolyn will send a meeting reminder email to all Region II presidents and advisors. |
| February 12, 2017 | 8 | Region II Skype meeting. Chapter presidents from 8 schools in Region II shared unique initiatives held at their schools. Discussed issues each chapter is facing and brainstormed ideas for improvement. | Contact information was exchanged, which will open doors for future collaborations and potential in-person summit meetings. |
| March 20, 2017 | 8 | E-board meeting: finalized 2017 Induction Ceremony procedure. Practiced speeches and induction ceremony ritual. | All e-board members have been assigned specific responsibilities and items they are responsible for bringing to the induction. |
| April 10, 2017 | 45 | New e-board election. Newly inducted Rho Chi members gave speeches for their candidacy and all members voted. | The 8 new e-board members will exchange contact information with each other and this year’s e-board will establish a communication network. |

**Strategic Planning**:

*Goal #1: Initiate collaborations with Rho Chi chapters across the region to gain insight into unique events and projects held at other schools, and open doors for future partnerships and meetings.*

Our chapter was very interested in gaining insight into the initiatives that other Rho Chi chapters hold. As a result, our chapter president reached out to the Wilkes University Rho Chi chapter president to initiate a Region II Skype meeting that brought together leaders from schools across the region. In February, officers from eight schools in Region II met via Skype to discuss the organizational structure of our chapters and potential areas for improvement and collaboration. It is our chapter’s goal to establish an in-person meeting in Region II within the next year. As such, we concluded the meeting by forming a shared contact list of leaders at each chapter, and created a map that pinpoints the location of each school in the region. We intend for this to serve as a platform for nearby schools to begin forming partnerships and sharing innovative ideas that may be replicated at other chapters.

*Goal #2: Set higher academic standards and enhance the quality of academic support offered to students by 1) improving communication among our committees and 2) adapting our resources based on student needs and feedback.*

This year, a new position of Head of Academic Committees was created in an effort to better coordinate the extensive work of the Academic Committees. In addition to fulfilling his/her duties as a committee member, the Head of Academic Committees was responsible for overseeing, monitoring the progress of, and maintaining contact with all committee Head Chairs for the year. At the beginning of the fall semester, the Head of Academic Committees created a survey that was sent to current P3 and P2 students to assess the helpfulness of the materials they had used from previous Rho Chi members. Over 70 students responded, and the results of the survey revealed a consensus in the usefulness of practice questions for nearly every course. This information was then disseminated to each committee to emphasize the importance of creating high quality practice questions. As a result of this survey, our 11 committees provided more in-depth practice questions than we had in previous years for nearly all P1 and P2 exams.

*Additional Goals:*

* Reaffirm the greater responsibilities that are implicated with Rho Chi membership and create a sense of camaraderie among the Alpha Eta chapter members.
* Establish a stronger presence within the School of Pharmacy by collaborating with other organizations to create innovative events that align with the Rho Chi mission.
* Improve community service and outreach initiatives.
* Encourage academic collaboration among all Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy students.

**Activities**:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Alpha Eta Chapter, Rutgers University Activity Table** | | | | | | | |  |
| **Category of Activity1** | **Title of Activity** | **Brief Description2** | **How Does This Activity Align w/ Rho Chi Mission** | **Years the Activity has Been Ongoing?** | **If Activity has Been Ongoing for >1 Year, What Evaluations Have Been Done to Assess the Success and What Improvements?** | **How Many Members Participated in the Activity?** | **How Many Students impacted by the Activity?** | **Financial Information for the Activity** |
| Intellectual leadership activities | Academic committees/ tutoring | Established 11 academic committees specializing in one course; offered academic help and support to P1 and P2 students. Created 2 new committees. | *Encourages intellectual achievement and stimulates critical inquiry.*  The academic committees are established to propel learning and encourage academic success, as well as enhance communication of concerns regarding courses amongst students and faculty. | 6+ | Feedback forms from participating students regarding content and structure of review sessions, tutoring sessions and online chat sessions are utilized monthly to evaluate Rho Chi’s success. Feedback from previous years revealed a demand for support in two courses that did not yet have Rho Chi support, and we thus created committees to meet this need. | 42 | 400+ | Not applicable |
| Intellectual leadership activities | Research Slam: EMSOP Faculty Edition | Seven faculty members conducting bench and clinical research gave 15-minute presentations about their research projects, paths into academia, and tips for students interested in getting involved in pharmacy research. Collaboration with ISPOR. | *Stimulates critical inquiry to advance pharmacy and fosters collaboration.*  Provided students the opportunity to learn about research as a potential career path, and allowed students to better understand the importance of research as a critical component of their pharmacy education. | \*New event\* | Although this was a new event, feedback was gathered for the program. The number of speakers can be reduced next year, which would allow more time for students to have one-on-one discussions with the professors after the presentations. | 3 | 30 | Pizza: $79.50 |
| College of pharmacy event | Faculty/Staff Appreciation Breakfast | Members donated items (bagels, muffins, orange juice, coffee, fruit, etc.) for a breakfast in the Pharmacy Lounge to show our appreciation for our faculty/staff. | *Fosters collaboration.*  The breakfast allowed us to thank our professors and staff members for their support over the years and for investing in our education. | \*New event\* | Not applicable | 25 | Over 30 faculty and staff members | All items were donated by Rho Chi members |
| College of Pharmacy event | Classmate of the Year Nomination | P1 and P2 students nominated classmates who went above and beyond in helping others in their class succeed. Students who were nominated had regularly shared their notes and study guides with the class, acted as a liaison between the class and professors, and/or were consistently willing to answer academic questions. | *Recognizes intellectual achievement, promotes highest ethical standards, fosters collaboration.*  Encouraged all students to maintain an academically collaborative spirit. Received 15 total nominations. Two winners were selected, and they were each awarded a gift card and were featured on our Rho Chi Facebook page. | \*New event\* | Not applicable | 2 | 15+ | Gift cards: $30 |
| College of pharmacy event | How to Survive P1 and P2 Years | Offered advice to P1 and P2 students about how to handle the workload for notable classes in the professional program. The Head Chairs for each committee presented a PowerPoint and offered the students the opportunity to ask any questions or share any concerns that they had. Collaboration with PLS. | *Encourages intellectual achievement.*  Allowed for open communication between chapter members and P1 and P2 students. Reinforced Rho Chi as the primary source of academic resources for students and established our investment in the academic success of other students. | 5+ | This year, our members tailored this event accordingly to students’ needs by allowing more time for students to ask specific questions to our Head Chairs. From some verbal feedback we received, students preferred having the opportunity to ask about studying methods and what to expect from specific professors. | 20 | 30+ | Not applicable |
| College of Pharmacy event | Pharmacy Advocacy Month | Rho Chi, PLS, and XAE members introduced major current issues in pharmacy (drug price hikes, prescribing authority, immunization rights) with a slide deck. All attendees were assigned one of these topics, worked in teams to research the issue, and presented their findings. | *Stimulates critical inquiry to advance pharmacy.*  Educated our peers on current trending topics in the pharmacy profession. | 2 | Next year, may improve on this event by following up with action steps for students to take. For example, students may influence pharmacy policy by contacting local and state representatives who have a voice in creating policy change. | 3 | 40 | Not applicable |
| College of pharmacy event | Blood Pressure Training Session | A PGY-1 pharmacy resident presented on how to perform proper blood pressure screenings and provide a demonstration as well as counseling points once the screening is complete. Collaboration with NCPA. | *Fosters collaboration and contributes to the development of intellectual leaders.*  It was recognized during an NCPA e-board meeting that students participating in health fairs lacked training prior to the experience, and this ultimately limited participation to P3 students who have completed blood pressure training. | \*New event\* | Rho Chi members created a short post-quiz to assess student knowledge after the presentation. Members were also available to assist and answer questions during a practice session that followed the demonstration. | 10 | 30 | Not applicable |
| College of Pharmacy event | School of Pharmacy Fall and Spring Involvement Fairs | The Pharmacy Governing Council hosts fall and spring involvement fairs. Rho Chi participated as one of 17 pharmacy organizations to educate students on our organization and the academic support we offer. | *Encourages intellectual achievement.*  Students learn about the selection requirements for Rho Chi as pre-professional or P1 students, which encourages academic excellence throughout pharmacy school. | 5+ | This is the major venue where we provide information on how to access our academic materials, which are posted on a Rutgers-based site. After each involvement fair, the number of students who add themselves to our site increases significantly. | 5 | 200+ | Not applicable |
| Community service / fundraising | Fall and Spring Blood Drives | Blood drives hosted in collaborations with the Community Blood Council of New Jersey once per semester. | *Fosters collaboration.*  Aligns with our mission to be a positive force in the community and to give back to the health systems in New Jersey. | 4+ | Turnout was below goal, so increased efforts were put toward advance sign-ups, earlier program announcement, and change of location. In the future, we plan to wear white coats to further identify ourselves as a pharmacy organization. | 10 | 100 | Room booking: $50 |
| Community Service / patient outreach | RU4Kids Program and Dance Marathon | An ongoing community outreach initiative where we spent quality time with our sponsored child, participated in Embrace Kids holiday events such as the Halloween Party, and supported families struck by cancer or hematologic diseases through the Rutgers University Dance Marathon. | *Fosters collaboration.*  Established our presence within the greater Rutgers community through Dance Marathon, where over 2,000 students participated and raised over $1 million for the RU4Kids program. | 3+ | Hospital visits started as soon as we connected with our child through Embrace Kids staff. Individual as well as group fundraising efforts such as bake sales also started early in the semester. Over time, we were able to encourage more student involvement and raise a total of $1,171 toward Embrace Kids Foundation. | Five students visited our sponsored child and participated in Embrace Kids holiday events. | Not applicable | In order to participate in the RU Dance Marathon, each student was required to raise a minimum of $350. Three participants raised a total of $1,171 from donations as well as bake sales. |
| Fundraising | White Coat Clipboards | The chapter sold clinical clipboards which contains charts, lab values, and other key information for clinical use. In total, we sold over 140 clipboards. | *Fosters collaboration.*  These clipboards reinforce clinical knowledge in a visual manner. This year, we extended sales to medical students, enhancing communication between the professions. | 2 | Demand was particularly high, as the clipboards were well advertised. At least 40 medical editions were purchased; we hope to establish better connections with the nursing school in the future. | 2 | 140+ | $547.74 profit (compared to $214 profit in 2015-2016) |
| Fundraising | Bake Sales | Fundraiser for the Embrace Kids Foundation. | *Fosters collaboration.*  Continually striving to contribute to the community with our traditional focus on the Embrace Kids Foundation. | 4+ | We utilized class schedules to optimize bake sale times and also offered unique goods for classmates to enjoy. | 15 | 100+ | $60 profit |
| Leadership Social | Transition Dinner | P2 and P3 executive board transition dinner. | *Fosters collaboration.*  Gave this year’s chapter officers and the chapter advisor, Dr. Volino, the opportunity to share this year’s successes and areas for improvement with the incoming e-board. | 3+ | Will continue to maintain communication with the incoming e-board and provide support throughout the transition process. | 18 | 18 | Dinner: $490.23 |

**Budgeting**:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Item | Amount Credited ($ Raised) | Amount Debited ($ Spent) | Balance |
| 9/5/16 | Starting balance | $5,184.30 | $- | $5,184.30 |
| 10/17/16 | Pizza for How to Survive-Reimburse | $76.25 | $- | $5,260.55 |
| 10/27/16 | Pizza for How to Survive | $- | $76.25 | $5,184.30 |
| 11/04/16 | Room Reservation (Blood Drive) | $- | $50.00 | $5,134.30 |
| 11/17/16 | Pizza for General Meeting | $- | $76.84 | $5,057.46 |
| 11/17/16 | Starbucks Gift Card Prize | $- | $15.00 | $5,042.46 |
| 11/17/16 | Faculty Breakfast Food | $- | $25.17 | $5,017.29 |
| 11/17/16 | Faculty Breakfast Decorations | $- | $16.68 | $5,000.61 |
| 11/17/16 | Candy for Embrace Kids | $- | $14.90 | $4,985.71 |
| 11/17/16 | Faculty Breakfast Food | $- | $29.90 | $4,955.81 |
| 11/17/16 | Faculty Breakfast Plates, etc. | $- | $15.52 | $4,940.29 |
| 11/17/16 | Clipboard Sales Revenue | $2,050.00 | $- | $6,990.29 |
| 11/22/16 | Clipboard Order | $- | $1,733.30 | $5,256.99 |
| 2/2/17 | Candles for Induction Ceremony | $- | $15.36 | $5,241.63 |
| 2/3/17 | Deposit for Induction Ceremony Venue | $- | $500.00 | $4,741.63 |
| 3/2/17 | Class of 2017 Fees and Dues | $7,470.00 | $- | $12,211.63 |
| 3/15/17 | Returned Check | $- | $155.00 | $12,056.63 |
| 3/21/17 | Deposited Check for Fees and Dues | $155.00 | $- | $12,211.63 |
| 3/22/17 | National Fees for Alpha Eta | $- | $2,877.00 | $9,334.63 |
| 4/10/17 | Room Reservation (Blood Drive) | $- | $50.00 | $9,284.63 |
| 4/12/17 | Gifts for Professors | $- | $45.98 | $9,238.65 |
| 4/12/17 | Faculty Gifts | $- | $25.78 | $9,212.87 |
| 4/12/17 | Pizza for Rho Chi Social | $- | $176.56 | $9,036.31 |
| 4/12/17 | Chapter Dues | $525.00 | $- | $9,561.31 |
| 4/13/17 | Balance for Induction Ceremony Venue | $- | $3,112.00 | $6,449.31 |
| 4/20/17 | Reimbursement Clipboard Sales | $- | $1,318.96 | $5,230.07 |
| 5/01/17 | Reimbursement for Transition Dinner | $- | $490.23 | $4,739.84 |
| 5/01/17 | Clipboard Sales | $1,525.00 | $- | $6,264.84 |
| 5/10/17 | Pizza for Research Slam | $- | $79.50 | $6,185.34 |

**Initiation Function**:

Our induction ceremony took place on March 30, 2017 at Pines Manor in Edison, NJ. The ceremony started at 6PM and ended at 9PM, and it included dinner, a keynote presentation, as well as the induction of the new members. Thirty-seven inductees and their corresponding guests attended the ceremony. The Alpha Eta chapter faculty advisor Dr. Lucio Volino and all members of the 2016-2017 executive board were also in attendance. Invitations were additionally extended to members of the 2015-2016 executive board, as well as to all faculty members at the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy. Deans and faculty who attended the ceremony included Drs. Joseph Barone, Donald Woodward, Carol Goldin, Chung Yang, Michael Toscani, Marion K. Gordon, and Donald Gerecke.

The current chapter president Carolyn Zhu gave a welcome speech at the beginning of the event, while the current chapter vice president Lucy Lin concluded the ceremony with a brief speech thanking all those who attended the ceremony. The keynote speaker was Dr. Joseph A. Barone, the current Dean of the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy, who provided insightful advice and relatable anecdotes to the inductees.

As in previous years, the setup included an area of the venue for dining tables and a separate area with chairs for the candle lighting ceremony. This allowed inductees to be easily be seated in a separate area for the ceremony while their guests sat off to the side to view and take photos. Overall, the induction ceremony was a great success.

**Evaluation/Reflection**:

This year, our chapter set out with two main goals: 1) to create higher quality resources and expand upon the academic assistance we provide for our students and 2) to implement a broader scope of innovative initiatives that give back to our school and promote academic excellence.

Our academic committee program underwent several major improvements this year. Before the beginning of their P3 year, each Rho Chi member is assigned to an academic committee designated to a specific challenging course in the P1 and P2 curriculum. This year, we established two new committees to meet the demand for two challenging courses that did not yet have Rho Chi support: Introduction to Pharmacology and Introduction to Biopharmaceutics and Pharmacokinetics. Our chapter now has committees established for 11 total courses, and we have received very positive feedback from students who have benefited from our resources and tutoring sessions.

In order to provide students with ample time to access our resources, we implemented a firm deadline of having study materials prepared and uploaded one week before the exam. During the fall semester, there were issues with adhering to these deadlines, but there were no systems set up that would discourage this from happening. Over winter break, the President and Head of Academic Committees created a contract delineating roles and responsibilities of the committees, which all members were required to read and sign. The Head of Academic Committees led a meeting in the beginning of the spring semester to review the contract with the committees, and this led to a significant improvement in deadline adherence. Furthermore, the contract established a reporting hierarchy for members to voice any concerns. Points of contact included the following individuals, in the listed order: Head Chair 🡪 E-Board Representative 🡪 Head of Academic Committees 🡪 President. A monthly progress log form was developed to standardize the reporting process, which assisted in monitoring the committees’ work. This emphasis on proper communication allowed our leadership team to address issues more quickly and efficiently than we had in the previous semester.

As we look to the future, there are several areas of improvement that the Alpha Eta chapter aims to enhance next year. Firstly, we intend to continue building relationships with other Region II chapters and propose to implement a more formalized regional meeting. We also expect to increase member involvement in community outreach events by requiring that all members participate in at least one social initiative throughout the year (Dance Marathon, RU4Kids hospital visits, blood drives, bake sales, etc.). Additionally, because this year’s blood drives were not as successful as we had hoped, we plan to wear our white coats at future blood drives to increase visibility. Lastly, in terms of academic assistance, our leadership team will hold in-person meetings between the Head Chairs of each committee and the Head of Academic Committees to improve communication and increase member responsibility.

**Other Information**:

The Alpha Eta chapter was honored to receive the Chapter Project Proposal award from the National Office this year. Our members are working to create a video adaptation of an article published in AJHP by Dr. Max Ray entitled “Curbside Conversation about Noblesse Oblige and Moral Commitment”. The article is formatted as an interactive discussion between an older gentleman and a Rho Chi initiate that explores the moral responsibilities that accompany intellectual gifts. With this article adaptation, our chapter aims to spark a conversation among all Rho Chi members about the true meaning of their membership. Once the video is produced, we intend to create a research project to evaluate members’ perceptions of Rho Chi before and after watching the video. We anticipate that the survey we create for this research project will be utilized by other chapters as an opportunity to collaborate and expand the scope of this research. Ideally, the video may also be used by the National Office as a promotional piece to highlight the deeper implications of Rho Chi membership.

This year, our chapter created several academic and social events that were newly implemented within our school, including the Faculty/Staff Appreciation Breakfast, and the Research Slam: EMSOP Faculty Edition. It was from the Region II Skype meeting that we learned of the research roundtable event that several chapters hold within their schools. We saw this as an ideal event to host at Rutgers, and thus adapted this idea to create the Research Slam. We also collaborated with NCPA to host a new blood pressure screening training session to prepare students for future health fairs. These events allowed our members to give back to our school and fellow students, and promote the value of research and patient care as critical components of our pharmacy education.

An additional goal our chapter had this year was to create a greater sense of camaraderie among our members. To achieve this, our officers created a Facebook group for all of the 2016-2017 members. Throughout the year, we posted updates on upcoming events and initiatives via the group, and routinely sent detailed emails to ensure all members were actively aware of our activities. Furthermore, our end-of-year transition dinner with our current officers, incoming offers, and faculty advisor reinforced these friendships. The dinner also set a precedent for improved communication between the two classes as we transition our leadership to a new group of officers for the upcoming school year.

Overall, it has been a highly successful year of improving upon the initiatives that were established by previous Rho Chi officers, while simultaneously creating original events that align with the core vision and ideals that Rho Chi holds.

**Most Improved Chapter Award Submission**

**Name of School/College:** Rutgers University, Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy

**Chapter Name and Region:** Alpha Eta, Region II

**Name of Member Submitting Statement:** Carolyn Zhu

**Name of Chapter Advisor:** Dr. Lucio Volino

During our first executive board meeting in the summer of 2016, our newly elected chapter officers were energized and determined to make significant strides in creating chapter activities that would make a lasting impact. Over the past year, our chapter spearheaded numerous innovative events and initiatives that are closely aligned with the Rho Chi mission.

While our academic committee program has always been a particularly strong asset and focus of our chapter, we made several substantial improvements to the program this year. Firstly, based on our own experience during P1 and P2 years and comments from other students, our officers decided to create two new academic committees to focus on two challenging courses: Introduction to Pharmacology and Introduction to Biopharmaceutics and Pharmacokinetics. These courses are unique because they require a different mindset to master the material, and they present students with a style of learning that they have not yet been exposed to. Rho Chi saw an ideal opportunity to offer new support, and these committees will also be integrated into our program next year.

Furthermore, the creation of the Head of Academic Committees position was a notable addition that streamlined our communication process. Having a centralized person for all 11 Head Chairs to report to was critical in ensuring that each committee uploaded their resources by the deadline, offered tutoring services for every exam, and resolved any issues promptly. In September, the Head of Academic Committees created a survey to assess the helpfulness of Rho Chi materials. Out of the 71 student responses, 82% listed practice questions one of the most useful resources in preparing for exams, and 75% listed our Rho Chi lecture outlines. Based on this data, our 11 committees provided more high-quality practice questions than we had in previous years for nearly all P1 and P2 exams. The Head of Academic Committees also worked closely with the President to write a three-page contract that summarized committee responsibilities and significantly improved deadline adherence in the spring.

The Research Slam that Rho Chi held in April was an original event for Rutgers pharmacy students, which brought together seven faculty members conducting groundbreaking research within a broad range of pharmacy disciplines. Students had the opportunity to hear brief presentations on these professors’ work, and ask questions on how to get involved in research as students. It was a highly innovative and intellectually inspiring event, and we aim to encourage more students to immerse themselves in the research experience while still in school. Additionally, to thank our faculty and staff for investing in our education over the years, Rho Chi hosted a new Appreciation Breakfast in the fall. Over 30 faculty/staff members attended, and many commented on the thoughtfulness and originality of this event. It was the ideal opportunity to connect with professors in a more casual setting, and we aim to make this breakfast an annual Rho Chi tradition.

Ultimately, the Alpha Eta chapter has dedicated itself to setting a precedent of establishing innovative events, strategically addressing areas for improvement, and leading collaborations with other chapters. We look forward to continuing to build upon these initiatives in the years to come.