

## Member Spotlight

### Jenni Seifert, R.Ph., MS, BCGP

*Garrett Lambert, R.Ph., PharmD and Sarah Jones, R.Ph., PharmD*



“I’ve come to believe over my career that our most important role as pharmacists is to advocate for our patients. Advocate to legislators, community leaders, and members of your patient’s healthcare team. Then, take it one step further and educate future generations of pharmacists to be advocates too.” These are words of wisdom from

longtime OPA member and Executive Director of the Charitable Pharmacy of Central Ohio, Jennifer Seifert.

An OPA Member since 1991, Jenni got her first taste of pharmacy when she was 16-years-old and working in a community pharmacy in Jackson, Ohio. Her first mentor, Don Brown, was very active in their small town. Jenni was able to appreciate the ways in which Don would manage a pharmacy, counsel his patients, and generally be available to “shoot the breeze” with people patronizing his pharmacy. Watching Don develop relationships, Jenni soon knew she wanted to become a community pharmacist, so she began pharmacy school at Ohio Northern University. While at ONU, she was the OPA student liaison which laid the groundwork for a deep appreciation of state association impact on pharmacy practice.

After graduation from ONU, Jenni began her career with Kroger Pharmacy, where she met someone who would become a friend and lifelong mentor, Marialice Bennett. Marialice was conducting a community practice-based project in 1993, assembling a team of pharmacists to interview patients with hypertension and identify barriers to adherence. The Kroger team of pharmacists provided one-on-one monthly consultations including blood pressure measurement, adherence assessment and a complete medication review. Looking back, Jenni is pleased to have been part of the beginning concept of community-based residency programs envisioned by Marialice. And, as often is the case in pharmacy, this has come full circle as Jenni now also serves as the PGY-1 Community-based Residency Program Director at The Ohio



**Jenni Seifert, second from right, working with student pharmacists at Charitable Pharmacy of Central Ohio.**

State University, following Marialice who became an Emeritus Professor.

Jenni describes her practice passion as “providing access to medications and pharmacy services for our neighbors who would otherwise go without these critical medications and services.” She sees her life experiences as having built toward this practice focus. Her desire to ensure that every patient has the medication that he/she needs is drawn from the experiences of some of her own family members in the West Virginia/Appalachia area, who did not have access to hospice services or other medical necessities. Volunteering at Grace Clinic in Delaware, Ohio, further opened her eyes to many patients who were going without healthcare, including critically needed medication.

“An important part of my current role is advocating for patients and being a voice for patients going without their medicines due to cost or access. OPA is a great partner in this mission. OPA has engaged legislators, the media, and community leaders and explained this issue in easy to understand language, which can be challenging. The spotlight that OPA has shown on the high cost of medication and the factors leading to patients’ barriers to access is incredible. I’m so excited to see that the news media and our leaders really grasp the issues facing community pharmacy and patient access to a pharmacist and to their medications,” Jenni says.

Jenni regularly testifies before Columbus City Council and the Franklin County Commissioners, and has successfully engaged them as partners in the Charitable Pharmacy’s mission. Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown’s office has also demonstrated a shared interest in these aspects of healthcare, and his office has visited the pharmacy three times during Jenni’s tenure. Since opening in February of 2010, the Charitable Pharmacy of Central Ohio has dispensed \$34 million in medication, provided over 60,000 one-on-one clinical consultations, and has published results demonstrating a reduction in

hospitalizations and a stabilization in healthcare security for patients of the pharmacy. The pharmacy team has precepted over 330 APPE interns and 10 PGY-1 Community-based resident pharmacists, partnering in the care of underserved Franklin County residents.

Charitable Pharmacy of Central Ohio has been recognized by the Pharmacy Quality Alliance and Community Pharmacy Foundation with its inaugural Community Pharmacy Innovations in Quality Award. This award is for an innovative community pharmacy practice that results in improvements in quality of care, medication optimization and patient outcomes. Charitable was also recognized by The Ohio State University's 2018 Excellence in Community Partnership Award from the Office of Outreach and Engagement. Jenni has been named a Distinguished Alumni by The Ohio State University College of Pharmacy and has received the Clinical Site of the Year award.

Jenni points out that the creation of this unique community-based practice at Charitable

Pharmacy, keeps patients out of the hospital, provides excellent patient care, and engages pharmacists, students, residents, and volunteers together in service of patients most in need of care. This is a community effort and one that she is proud to lead. One of her favorite phrases, learned from her mentor Marialice Bennett, is "A community-based pharmacist practitioner serves patients where they work, live, play, and pray." With this as guiding wisdom, Jenni works every day to promote equal opportunity for all patients to work, live, play, and pray at full health, working in the heart of Columbus' urban neighborhoods.

In her free time, Jenni loves walking her two Labrador Retrievers. In Jenni's own words, "My self talk is – exercise is important for both mental and physical health – that helps me get out there, that and the sweet dog who loves to walk." She also enjoys spending time with her husband of 25 years, Jeff, and her children Joseph, 18 and a freshman at OSU, and Jacqueline, 16 and a junior at Olentangy Berlin High School.