

BUILDING

Our
Tomorrow

Wisconsin Pharmacy
Foundation

Up Front: Building Our Tomorrow with the Wisconsin Pharmacy Foundation

by Chris Decker, RPh

The Wisconsin Pharmacy Foundation, or the Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin (PSW) Foundation, is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization that supports and pursues professional education and research programs to advance the science and practice of pharmacy. Working in coordination with PSW, the Foundation supports unique educational opportunities and leadership development for Wisconsin pharmacists and student pharmacists and pursues practice-based research projects. The Foundation also pursues fundraising efforts through gifts from PSW members, research grants, and other charitable gifts to enable PSW to contract for services and pursue its programs.

This Wisconsin Pharmacy Foundation has not always been as active. Shortly after starting my position with the then Wisconsin

Pharmacists Association (WPhA) in 1990, I was working late and poking around the office. Imagine my surprise when I found that WPhA had a safe. Not just any safe; this was one of those large, old, very heavy safes that led the observer to believe there must be a great deal of value behind the door. As I sifted through old documents and bank statements, I found an old bankbook (remember those?!) that belonged to the Foundation. The bankbook detailed that the foundation had \$10,000 in their account. A remarkable find given neither I nor any of our Board members at the time even knew that WPhA had a Foundation!

The discovery of this Foundation seed would later give rise to an exciting Building for the Future campaign held in conjunction with PSW building a new home at 701 Heartland Trail to support the organization's One Voice. One Vision. With the leadership of several visionaries, the Foundation grew through generous contributions and now, after years of stewardship has a fund balance of more than \$1,000,000.

Now, the Foundation is in active partnership with PSW to

support initiatives, promote leadership, and provide educational opportunities within the organization and beyond. We are building an efficient workplace to bring together members in pursuit of something bigger and better, connecting all sectors of pharmacy practice in Wisconsin through PSW. We are investing in new technology, including state-of-the-art video conferencing to enable members to interact with one another more than ever. A strategic investment decision made by the PSW Board of Directors and the Foundation.

The Foundation is responsible for supporting the Leadership Pharmacy Conference every year. The Leadership Pharmacy Conference, a new practitioner leadership conference, combines professional and social functions over three days and provides an unequalled opportunity for pharmacists relatively new to their profession to develop skills which enable both personal and professional growth. Participants network with fellow selected pharmacists (10 from Wisconsin and 10 from Iowa) as well as the presidential officers and staff leaders of the Iowa Pharmacy Association and Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin while engaging in programming, recreational activities, and professional discussions.

In addition to the leadership conference, the Foundation receives research and practice-based grants that are then used to fund PSW projects. For example, the Foundation received two large grants in 2018. The Expanding Immunization Access in Wisconsin grant was awarded through the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin (AHW) Endowment to the Wisconsin Pharmacy Foundation in partnership with the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) to expand immunization access across Wisconsin. The other grant the Foundation received was the Community

Management of Medication Complexity (CCMC) grant from the Center for Health Care Strategies, funded by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. This work aims to address barriers to Medication Therapy Management Services provision in order to help low-income patients reduce medication complexity and safely self-manage their medication regimens. While the grant funding was provided to the Foundation these projects are managed by the PSW staff and partners.

Now, as PSW celebrates 20 years, the Foundation has embarked on a new campaign to raise funds to continue to advance the goals of the Foundation. The “Building our Tomorrow” campaign recognizes the donors from 20 years ago while looking to the future by continuing to support the important initiatives of PSW and Wisconsin pharmacy. The donors from the original campaign and this new campaign will be recognized on the “new” donor wall in conjunction with the PSW building remodel. This will serve as a thank you to those before who provided PSW the foundation, our building, on which to start the amazing work that we have accomplished and will continue to accomplish with the donations of the current campaign. A grand opening of the updated PSW building will occur in June of 2019.

The Wisconsin Pharmacy Foundation has taught us, that from the dust of forgotten bankbooks, one can rise to become a successful organization. At PSW, we strive for success and we are blessed with members, volunteer leaders, and staff who both uphold and demonstrate the Foundation’s values.

Chris Decker is the Executive Vice President & CEO of the Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin in Madison, WI.

Ways to Donate to the “Building Our Tomorrow” Campaign

Donate Online: www.pswi.org/Building-Our-Tomorrow
Call the PSW office at 608-827-9200

By Mail

Checks should be made payable to “Wisconsin Pharmacy Foundation” and mailed to PSW.
Please put “BOT Campaign” in the memo line of your check.