

LETTERS

Where Are the Postgraduate Programs for Tomorrow's Education Administrative Leaders?

To the Editor. The study by Knapp and colleagues in the August issue of the *Journal* provides hope to competing pharmacy graduates wishing to pursue a postgraduate residency or fellowship program. The study projected a 58% increase in the number of residents and fellows, sponsored by pharmacy colleges and schools from 2010 to 2015 based on extrapolated data from a survey sent to pharmacy deans.¹ As postgraduate programs continue to expand, I ask today's education administrative leaders: "Where are the postgraduate programs for tomorrow's education administrative leaders?"

As the Pharmacy Education Administration fellow at Touro University California College of Pharmacy, I am concerned by the lack of postgraduate programs in pharmacy education administration. Pharmacy school administration plays a vital role in the production of quality pharmacy graduates yet is not included among emerging career opportunities.² Administrative leaders are responsible for "ensuring effective development, delivery, and improvement of the curriculum."³ They prepare pharmacy graduates to become compassionate, competent, and effective health care providers. To the best of my knowledge, I am the only pharmacy education administration fellow or equivalent in the nation, yet I am confident that there are others who share my passion of becoming one of tomorrow's leaders in pharmacy education.

In the Accreditation Standards and Guidelines for the Professional Program in Pharmacy leading to the Doctor of Pharmacy Degree by the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education, administrative leaders "must have credentials and experience that prepare them for their respective roles."³ Moreover, according to a survey of deans, future administrators need to acquire a skill set to include "fiscal management, governance, decision-making, strategic planning and fundraising."⁴ However, at the time of this letter, there are no postgraduate programs solely in pharmacy

education administration; only one fellowship exists. Yet, during 2009-2010, the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy reported a 6.9% vacancy in administrative positions,⁵ an increase from 5.2% in 2008-2009.⁶ In addition, a lack of qualified candidates contributed to 33% of vacancies remaining vacant.⁵ The time has come to create formal postgraduate training programs for emerging leaders to be qualified to fill administrative vacancies.

I strongly encourage today's pharmacy educational administrators to include a residency or fellowship program in pharmacy education administration in their postgraduate program expansion in order to help shape tomorrow's leaders. In the meantime, as a fellow of Touro and a trailblazer in this field, I will continue to pave a viable pathway for aspiring pharmacy education administrators nationwide.

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