On Saturday, 25 October 2014, the School’s 50th anniversary celebrations were held at the BALUARTE Congress Center. Yolanda Barcina, the President of the Regional Government of Navarre, attended the ceremony in her capacity as a graduate of the School.

“At the University of Navarra School of Pharmacy I was taught by outstanding faculty members who instilled in me key values such as hard work and excellence”, Barcina said in her address.

The ceremony was presided over by Alfonso Sánchez Taberner, the President of the University of Navarra, and Adela López de Cienfuegos, the Dean of the School of Pharmacy. Those attending included former faculty members, such as Joaquín Giráldez, and current and former students.

Over 500 of the School’s alumni came from all over Spain to celebrate the anniversary. Leading locals included Alberto Catalán, the President of the Parliament of Navarre; Pilar García, the President of the Pharmacists’ Association of Navarre; and Ana Aliaga, the General Secretary of the General Council of Pharmacists’ Associations.
Over the course of this academic year, the School, its faculty members and students have made the news on many different occasions. This section contains a brief selection of the most significant articles.

50FAR

School of Pharmacy: Constantly Innovating

In the last 50 years, 6,889 students have graduated from our School. They will be joined by the 814 students who are currently undertaking degree and postgraduate studies.

As befits the fifth school of pharmacy to be set up in Spain, the University of Navarra School of Pharmacy has dealt with the changes facing the profession of pharmacist by focusing on pioneering research, teaching and international development activities in the pharmaceutical industry. It was one of the first to establish close research ties with industry, build its own pharmaceutical technology facility for drug development, its own teaching lab, and to offer a double degree in Pharmacy and Nutrition. The latter degree complements its two degree programs and four diploma programs, which include the new Pharmaceutical Management program that ran for the first time this academic year.

Some 475 doctoral candidates have defended their theses at the School, while a total of 628 postgraduates have enrolled on its master’s programs and the specialist program in Industrial Pharmacy and Drug Design. Examples of its pioneering research projects include the application of nanotechnology for drug delivery and the development of new treatments for cancer and neuropsychiatric pathologies such as Alzheimer’s and depression. Moreover, our graduates also work at several research centers on the Pamplona campus, including the Center for Nutrition Research, CIMA (the Center for Applied Medical Research), the Institute of Tropical Health and the Drug Development Unit.

Around 92% of our graduates enter employment after leaving the School, while last academic year our students undertook 328 internships at companies, hospitals and pharmacies. A further 58 took advantage of the opportunity to go on an international exchange.

Our Identity in Print

To celebrate its 50th anniversary, the School of Pharmacy is publishing a book, which, in the words of coordinator José Antonio Fernández, “aims to provide insight into our present while shining a light on our future”. The book features contributions from all of the School’s deans, from Félix Álvarez de la Vega through to current dean Adela López de Cerain, along with legendary faculty members and professionals such as Maruja López, Pilar Ygartua and Don Primi. It also looks back at the most outstanding moments in the School’s history, such as the creation of the pilot plant, the specialist program in Industrial Pharmacy and Drug Design, continuing education programs for pharmacists, the Clínica Universidad de Navarra’s Pharmacy Service and the Center for Research in Applied Pharmacology.

However, what really makes this book stand out are the photographs by Manuel Navia. According to Fernández, “They are a photographic journey through space and time and make it a book you’ll go back to again and again, whether flicking through its pages or reading it from cover to cover.

Interview with José Antonio Fernández
(Pharm. ’85, PhD ’89), Project Coordinator

How did the idea come about? It’s normal to celebrate an institution’s 50th anniversary by publishing a book. That’s why I told the School five years ago that if they wanted to do it, they’d have to start right away, because it’s the kind of publication that requires a lot of documentation, corrections, interviews with the people who were there at the very beginning, and so on. My suggestion led to an offer to prepare the book, and I accepted the challenge!

What was the objective? There were two. First, we wanted to offer alumni a visual record of the School’s first 50 years by including numerous photos, plus interviews with deans, faculty members and other well-known faces. Also, and this is the unique part, we wanted to offer a portfolio of photos taken by José Manuel Navia, a professional photographer with a unique eye – plus he’s a university man from head to toe. Through his photos, alumni can relive their experiences of the School, the University and Pamplona.

Do you have any interesting stories to tell? When we began the project, José Manuel told us that he’d been given more advance notice for this assignment than any other project in his professional career. Regarding the faculty members, the interview with Jesús Larralde was more like a chat; he told us so many stories – it was all classic Jesús! I also recall my conversation with Félix with particular fondness.
Five New Full Professors at School of Pharmacy

The University of Navarra has appointed five new Full Professors to the School of Pharmacy, meaning the School now boasts 16 full professors amongst its faculty members.

The new professors are María Javier Ramírez, the current Associate Dean of Research, from the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology; Amelia Martí del Moral and María Jesús Moreno, both from the Department of Food Science and Physiology; and José Ignacio Fernández de Tocóniz and María Blanco, both from the Department of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Technology.

Permanent Seminar Begins on Pharmaceutical Humanities

The School of Pharmacy has begun its Permanent Seminar on Pharmaceutical Humanities, a lecture series organized by the Area of Pharmaceutical Humanities that aims to address ethical, legal and social issues in the pharmaceutical profession.

The lectures are aimed at students, faculty members and people with an interest in the humanistic aspects of pharmaceutical activity. “The idea is to give participants insight into current issues in the profession by adopting a broad perspective and showing them that professional excellence is not achieved through technique alone, although it is an essential starting point,” explained José López Guzmán, the seminar coordinator.

“The idea for the seminar came out of the desire to bolster the all-round academic training of pharmacists, who require continuous education that goes beyond the technical and takes ethical and legal issues into consideration”, López Guzmán added.

José López Guzmán Publishes Book on Applied Pharmaceutical Ethics, Wins Prize for Book on Integrity in the Field of Professional Healthcare

José López Guzmán, a School of Pharmacy faculty member specializing in Pharmaceutical Humanities, has written a book, Deontología Farmacéutica Aplicada (Applied Pharmaceutical Ethics), published by Formación Alcalá in 2014.

The book is aimed at the general public and contends that a pharmacist’s ethics are inherent to the profession. It uses practical cases to illustrate the argument and place the reader in the shoes of a pharmacist dealing with real dilemmas. These include the rational use of medicines, unfair competition, the use of contraceptives, conscientious objection, the medical use of cannabis and the phenomenon of “medicalization”.

Additionally, López Guzmán was awarded a prize by the Royal Academy of Medicine for his book Integridad en el ámbito profesional sanitaria (Integrity in the Field of Professional Healthcare, published by Comares in 2013). In this study, he analyses the concept of integrity in relation to the working environment and personal identity, and as a key to good practice in institutional, healthcare, scientific and research environments.

STUDENTS

Three School of Pharmacy Students Attend MIT Global Startup Workshop

School of Pharmacy students Amaia Ortiz de Salazar, Álvaro San Juan and Gabriela Retana travelled to Morocco for the 2014 edition of the MIT Global Startup Workshop (GSW), one of the world’s leading business-development events. The students, who are members of the University’s Entrepreneurs’ Club, spent three days in Marrakech attending lectures and taking part in an “elevator pitch” competition.

“Thanks to the Entrepreneurs’ Club, we were able to embrace this entrepreneurial spirit and attend the MIT GSW, where we acquired knowledge from the best and gained insight into the world of enterprise. The experience opened our minds and allowed us to set ourselves big challenges for the near future”, said Ortiz de Salazar.

Teresa Simón (Pharm., ’08) and Marta Fernández-Galilea (Biology, ’07 / Biochemistry, ’07) Win Special Doctorate Awards for 2014-2015

The School of Pharmacy has rewarded the superb quality of the research work carried out by Teresa Simón and Marta Fernández-Galilea. Simón’s thesis focuses on the search for systems to free the active molecules involved in the regeneration of heart tissue following myocardial infarction, while Fernández-Galilea has demonstrated the capacity of the antioxidant α-lipoic acid to modulate lipid metabolism in white adipocytes in mice and humans.

Both students were thrilled to receive the award. “It’s a fantastic reward for a project in which we’ve invested so much enthusiasm and effort”, said Fernández-Galilea. “For me, it’s an incentive to continue working towards my future as a scientist”, added Simón.

Spanish Association Against Cancer Backs Project Led by Researcher María Blanco

María Blanco, a Full Professor at the School of Pharmacy, was awarded one of the grants offered by the Scientific Foundation of the Spanish Association Against Cancer (AECC) at a ceremony presided over by Queen Letizia. Her project focuses exclusively on cancer in children and was the only initiative of its type to be awarded a Bhavnani Grant, valued at €150,000.

Dr. Blanco is leading a research project that aims to develop new, orally administered therapeutic nanosystems that can effectively treat pediatric osteosarcoma, which is the main cause of death in Spanish youngsters aged from 0-14.

José López Guzmán Publishes Book on Applied Pharmaceutical Ethics, Wins Prize for Book on Integrity in the Field of Professional Healthcare

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Two Sports Nutrition Students Get a Taste of Their Future by Advising Sportspeople

Edurne Ibáñez and María Moreno are in their third year of the Diploma in Sports Nutrition program. This pioneering program, which is one of a kind in Spain and run in conjunction with the Spanish Olympic Committee, trains students to become dietician-nutritionists specializing in sports nutrition.

Throughout this academic year, Ibáñez and Moreno have been providing nutritional advice to sportspeople as part of the Sports Talent program, which aims to help students continue their university studies while practicing sports to a high level.

“It was a very positive experience and we’ve learnt a great deal,” the students said. “Helping sportspeople achieve the goals set for them is a real challenge,” Ibáñez continued. “For me, the challenge was to approach the sportspeople in the right way, with the corresponding report and diet in a presentable form, and to know how to tell them what they have to do and what sort of condition they're in,” added Moreno.
Eduardo Elorz, Global Marketing Communications (Oncology) at Lilly

How did a pharmacist end up working in marketing at a large company?

Pharmacists are amongst the most versatile professionals I’ve ever come across in my career. We currently occupy positions in almost every area of the pharmaceutical industry: from record-keeping, clinical trials and sales, to manufacturing and medical departments. Often you can also find us in management posts. In my case, I started working for Lilly as a coordinator of clinical trials. In order to take my career in a more commercial direction, I studied for an Executive MBA at IESE, which helped me complement my pharmaceutical knowledge by adding expertise in finance and commercial strategies. After two years of the MBA and a period in the marketing department of Lilly’s Spanish subsidiary, I had the opportunity to move with my family to the company’s headquarters in the United States, where I became part of the global marketing team for the oncology section.

How did you acquire the skills and competencies to achieve this position?

Pharmacy provides you with a very diverse range of knowledge in the biomedical field and equips you to add value to society from a variety of different perspectives, so my degree in Pharmacy was the starting point for acquiring those skills and competencies. Afterwards, the MBA enabled me to acquire new skills, and from then on the key has been to maintain a mentality of constant learning. In a single week, I can attend an international conference on oncology in order to learn about the latest medical advances and take part in a course on management skills in order to improve communication with my team. Another skill this position requires is mobility: in the last 30 days, I’ve had meetings in San Francisco, Amsterdam and Florence, for which I need to be able to work with international teams and be flexible enough to work anywhere in the world.

How did studying at the University of Navarra’s School of Pharmacy change your view of the world?

My five years of studying Pharmacy at the University of Navarra were vital to both my personal development and professional training. At the University, I could see the passion in how the faculty members tried each day to make us better people as well as outstanding pharmacists. I learnt how, as pharmacists, we have the duty to give the best of ourselves in order to help society. I try to apply the values I learnt at the School in everything I do in my professional life.

What’s your next professional project?

We’re currently getting ready to provide support to all the company’s subsidiaries around the world, so they can answer questions regarding Lilly’s new oncology medications. This requires a coordinated global effort involving dozens of countries, so as you can see, there’s no lack of professional opportunities and challenges for us pharmacists!

When you think about pharmacy, think about what it means in the 21st century: management of human and material resources, new technologies, marketing, personalized and patient-centered advice, and more. Below is one of the profiles featured in the new guide to professional careers released this academic year by the School of Pharmacy. The guide contains useful comments from graduates regarding their professional experiences after leaving University.