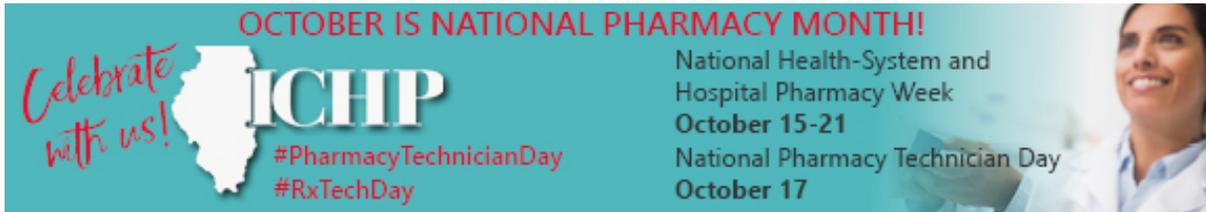




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Presidents Message President's Year End Summary

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by Charlene Hope, PharmD, MS, BCPS, ICHP President

In 1929 Frigyes Karinthy suggested that a chain of "a friend of a friend" statements could be made to connect any two people in a maximum of six steps. It is the basis of the theory of the "six degrees of separation," which is the idea that all living things and everything else in the world are six or fewer steps away from each other. I often recall an interaction from many years ago, early in my career when I attended an ASHP Midyear Meeting in Atlanta, GA. I had run into my former Residency Director on my way to an educational session, and we started catching up on our lives over the last couple of years. He shared with information regarding a pharmacist in another state who he thought I might had known due to a mutual acquaintance that we both knew in Illinois. From what I remember, the information he shared with me about that pharmacist was not exactly positive. As we said our goodbyes, I reflected on the conversation and was fascinated by how connected we are in pharmacy through pharmacy school – our classmates, faculty and preceptors; and through residency training – our co-residents. residency preceptors, and other pharmacy staff members. Through the connections that we make as we navigate different careers or fields of pharmacy, we start developing connections that many of us may totally be unaware of. In pharmacy, and perhaps in part due to my active involvement in professional organizations, it has been long held belief of mine that within the pharmacy profession, it is more like "three degrees of separation" rather than six.

Seth Godin, a well-known marketer, entrepreneur and innovator coined the phrase "the connection economy." The connection economy rewards value created by building relationships and fostering connections, rather than in an industrial economy where the value based on creating products or manufacturing things. This year, we embarked on a year of innovation, a year to focus on bringing new ideas that would increase the value of ICHP and moving those ideas forward to continue to foster the future success of ICHP.

One of those great ideas that came from the attendees of last year's leadership retreat was finding ways to create and market the value of ICHP beyond continuing education (CE) offerings. During one of the brainstorming sessions, many of the attendees spoke to the face-face connections that kept them reminded as to why they became pharmacists and the importance of their ability to give back to profession.

Throughout the year, there grew a need to create a space and foster new group formations within ICHP. The Division of Educational Affairs came together to incorporate new networking sessions into Annual Meeting agenda.

Attending the new networking session was one of the highlights for me of this year's Annual Meeting. This session allowed interested attendees to meet and discuss topics important to them in a few key areas: Leadership, Ambulatory Care, Pharmacy Practice and Medication Safety. I joined the Medication Safety table, which consisted of a diverse group of both pharmacy technicians and pharmacists, senior level managers and newer practitioners/leaders entering this field as front-line pharmacists. It was wonderful to be able to share amongst the group not only challenges but strategies that have worked. Most importantly, I heard from several others after the session that it was good walking away with a feeling that we are not alone in the some of the struggles that we face in our organizations.

To me, the true value of ICHP membership goes beyond the high quality CE offerings. The value of ICHP resides in the abundant volunteer and professional development opportunities. It's coming together to connect and share – the successes, the failures, the lessons learned – and at the end of the day knowing that we are not alone in our journey in providing the best care for our patients. It's the people, the members, many of which, I feel I have “grown up” with professionally. The ones I know that I can call on for advice or direction when I need it. It's about the great feeling you get after catching up with a former colleague who you see every year at the Annual Meeting but have known since the start of your career – and waving goodbye as you yell “See you next year!” across the parking lot.

It was truly an honor and a pleasure to serve as ICHP President over this past year. Thanks to all of you for your support, encouragement, hard work and dedication.

“Never doubt that a **small** group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”

- Margaret Mead

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