

# STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS



UCSF School of Pharmacy

ASSP | Summer 2019



## A Note From the Editor:



I, the Therapeutic Window editor, am happy to present to you the 9th issue of the ASSP feature, Student Spotlights. With over 400 students in the School of Pharmacy, it can be difficult to get to know all of our amazing peers. I hope that this quarterly feature will serve as a way for you to get to know your fellow School of Pharmacy classmates. Where are they from? What are their hobbies and interests? Why did they choose pharmacy? What are their interests outside of pharmacy school? Read on to find out!

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—Roy Weng



# P1 Student Spotlight: Sophia Xue



Fresh from the White Coat Ceremony!

## ABOUT Sophia

**Q: Where did you grow up?**

A: I was born and raised in the suburbs of New Jersey with my 3 sisters. I was surrounded by a lot of greenery growing up, so I spent a lot of time playing outdoors with friends and family. This shaped my love for the outdoors and learning to appreciate a more slow-paced environment. Growing up with 3 sisters also shaped my love for having close relationships and helping others. I also got into piano from a young age, and since then I've built a deep appreciation for music and art.

**Q: What is an interesting fact about you?**

A: For a while in high school, I was really interested in animal rescue and welfare. I watched a lot of Animal Cop and Pitbulls and Parolees on Animal Planet and considered being an animal cruelty investigator. This is actually why pitbulls are now one of my favorite dog breeds since they are so misrepresented, and I hope to rescue one in the future.

**Q: Where did you complete your undergraduate education?**

A: I went to UC Berkeley for undergrad and graduated in 2018. I majored in Nutritional Sciences – Toxicology.

## Why PHARMACY?

**Q: Why did you choose pharmacy?**

A: In high school there was an incident involving my dad that really shaped my desire to go into pharmacy. He was on a blood thinner that he didn't know he was supposed to stop taking, and he ended up popping a blood vessel in his neck that caused him to cough up blood. It really scared me and my family, and since then my dad's health has been something that was always on my mind. During this time, I looked up the medication he was taking, side effects, treatments, and even foods that he should avoid while on the medication, and this sparked my interest in learning about medications and going into healthcare.

**Q: What brought you to UCSF?**

A: Other than UCSF being one of the best pharmacy schools, I was really impressed by the culture of the school when I came for interviews. The P1s that I spoke to seemed to genuinely enjoy UCSF and I was surprised at how much school pride they had. I was also intrigued by how UCSF's new curriculum is theme-based and how we learn everything we possibly need to know by organ system. I tend to learn best when I can relate each concept that I'm learning to each other, so I felt like this theme-based learning would be the best for me academically.



## REFLECTIONS

**Q: Is pharmacy school like what you imagined?**

A: Pharmacy school is not what I had originally imagined. I thought pharmacy school would be very overwhelming with a lot of work. But pharmacy school hasn't felt like that (yet), and having a supportive class and faculty really made the transition into pharmacy school a lot easier. I was also surprised by how the curriculum emphasizes cultural sensitivity as an integral part of being a patient-centered healthcare professional. This is something that I deeply care about and to have it integrated into our curriculum was motivating.

**Q: What challenges have you faced throughout pharmacy school so far?**

A: I've faced a few challenges so far since pharmacy school started, from dealing with imposter syndrome to having a not-so-great first day of IPPEs. Through these experiences however, talking with my friends and sister have provided me with the support and level-headedness I need to continue working hard, keeping an open mind, and staying positive.

**Q: What inspires you to move forward/persevere when the going gets tough?**

A: One of the biggest things that inspires me to move forward right now is my older sister and my faith. I lived with my older sister during my gap year and when I was going through a difficult time, she supported and motivated me. I don't think I would be here at UCSF without her encouragement this past year, and I hope I can make her proud. My faith also inspires me to keep moving forward because it keeps me grounded on what's important and to not get stuck on one moment.

## IF NOT PHARMACY...

**Q: If you were not pursuing pharmacy, what would you be doing?**

A: If I weren't pursuing pharmacy, I'd probably be doing something business-related. Both my parents are in business and that would be the easiest choice. Or take a coding bootcamp and go into tech. When I was growing up, I always switched between different careers, but never once considered healthcare. However, the incident with my dad really changed my perspective.

## HOBBIES/ INTERESTS

**Q: What do you like to do during the school year to decompress or destress?**

A: To de-compress and de-stress, I like to take at least a few hours to not think about school. During this time, I like working out, being outside (walks in the park, hikes), watching shows, hanging out with friends, and FaceTiming my sister. One thing that I've been exposed to since starting pharmacy school is going to breweries. I'm not a beer person, but it's starting to grow on me. Another hobby I've picked up is learning Korean. This is just a small side thing, but a few friends have been teaching me here and there and it's pretty fun (and funny).

**Q: What is your favorite book/movie/TV show of the moment?**

A: I'm currently reading *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi and I highly recommend! I also just finished *Always Be My Maybe* on Netflix. Not sure if this



First time in Kauai, HI! (Fun fact: Lilo & Stitch takes place here)

counts as a guilty pleasure, but when I want to destress, I'll re-watch *Friends*.

**Q: Favorite spot(s) to study? Favorite spot on campus?**

A: One of my favorite spots to study is on the 4th floor of the Parnassus library all the way in the back by the large windows. Studying with a view makes me feel less holed up. The S-rooms are also a great place to study and watch movies. One of my favorite spots on campus is Caffe Central on the main floor of the library – their coffee is pretty good and the baristas are very friendly!

**Q: Favorite food or drink spot in SF that you'd like to share for classmates to check out?**

A: Grand Hot Pot Lounge on Geary! AYCE hot pot, drinks, and karaoke. It is a bit pricey, but worth it for a post-summative treat. They usually have a 2-hour limit for karaoke, but when I went with other P1s they didn't charge us for going overtime. We got around 4 hours of singing in!

## P2 Student Spotlight:

## Rachel Mong



Obligatory white coat picture with a hint of yellow stain 24 hours before the ceremony

## ABOUT Rachel

**Q:** Where did you grow up?

**A:** I am from sunny Southern California- born and raised in the Los Angeles County.

**Q:** What is something your classmates/peers would not expect about you?

**A:** Fun facts about me are that 1) I have a lisp and 2) I like to collect postcards from around the world.

**Q:** Where did you complete your graduate degree?

**A:** I graduated UC Irvine (zot zot) with a Pharmaceutical Science degree.

## Why PHARMACY?

**Q:** What brought you to UCSF?

**A:** I really like how UCSF transformed the field of pharmacy by being the birthplace of clinical pharmacy, something I want to pursue long term. But mainly, getting into UCSF was a far-fetched dream that actually became a reality – so this was an opportunity that I could not give up.

**Q:** Is pharmacy school like you imagined?

**A:** Pharmacy school made me realize that I was no longer in undergrad. In undergrad, I just had to ‘pass my class’. However,

now in pharmacy school, on top of making sure that I “pass my class”, I also need to understand the material so I can apply my clinical knowledge to patient cases and real life scenarios.

We are about to deal with real patients now! When someone says professional school feels like drinking water out of a fire hydrant, I understand what that means now. But through it all, I am glad that I have such a great support system to get me through this journey.

## REFLECTIONS

**Q:** What challenges have you faced throughout pharmacy school so far?

**A:** One of the biggest challenges I’ve faced is waking up for the 8am and 9am classes. I thought this was something I could easily transition to (especially since high school and undergrad were 8AM), but I was dead wrong. Living in Mission Bay, I usually have to get up 2 hours before class to make sure that I get there on time. So, waking up when the sky is still dark is quite a challenge.

**Q:** What inspires you to move forward/persevere when the going gets tough?

**A:** I learned to have an “I can” attitude. As cliché as this sounds, everything happens for a reason. Through multiple adversities (rather it be from personal failures, life mistakes, or job rejections), I’ve learned to develop the mentality that anything is possible



if I push myself and believe that I can succeed. No matter how difficult the journey may be, everything in the end will be okay.

## IF NOT PHARMACY...

**Q: If you were not pursuing pharmacy, what would you be doing?**

A: If it wasn't for pharmacy, I would probably pursue something math-related such as Accounting. I love math because I like to work with numbers, so I am really happy that Pharmacy contains SOME component of math.

## HOBBIES/ INTERESTS

**Q: What do you like to do during the school year to decompress or destress?**

A: I like to take naps to get me through the day. I can nap in the library, the shuttle ride to/from campus, practically anywhere. But to de-stress from school, I like to hang out with my friends, work out, grab ice cream in the middle of the night, take night walks around the city, Netflix/Hulu, and attend some concerts here and there.

**Q: Favorite study spots? Favorite Spot on Campus?**

A: My favorite spot to study is the Starbucks in Mission Bay, but on a nice day, I like to study outside in the patio by the Mission Bay gym. My favorite spot on campus

is Moffit Cafeteria – you can always spot me there with the Monday's special or a cup of soup.

**Q: Favorite food or drink spot in SF that you'd like to share for classmates to check out?**

A: I really like the banana cream pie from Mission Pie, but unfortunately, that place is no longer in business :( . Now Garden Creamery is the way to go for those late-night ice cream cravings!

**Q: What is your favorite book/ movie/TV show of the moment? Any guilty pleasures?**

A: My favorite TV shows at the moment is This is Us and Brooklyn Ninety-Nine. Brooklyn Ninety-nine is just hilarious and would 12/10 recommend. This is Us will make you laugh and cry- basically

a hurricane of emotions. When I've exhausted all my Netflix/Hulu options, I always fall back on Grey's Anatomy (I've re-watched Grey's three times already...)

**Q: What do you most like about living in San Francisco?**

A: What's best about living in SF is experiencing the city life. Although it took a majority of my P1 year to adapt, I learned to appreciate the tiny things this city has to offer. Deprived of my car, I learned how to navigate the public transportations and walked from destinations to destinations (only if it is <2 miles). It's also nice being able to live walking distance from the new Chase Center, Oracle Park, Sparks Social, DTSE, Boba Guys, and Philz Coffee.



2019 Orientation: Kick-Off Day w/ some P1s

## P3 Student Spotlight: Jason Chen



Future Pharmacist!

### ABOUT Jason

**Q: Where did you grow up?**

A: I was born and raised in Taiwan and I moved to Temple City, California when I was 12 years old. When I first moved to U.S., I was afraid that I wouldn't have any friends because I didn't know how to speak English at that time. Luckily, I lived close to an Asian American community with many kids who were in the same situation as myself. My fear of not being able to fit in eventually disappeared as I become more comfortable around my community. My experience taught me the importance of being kind

and accepting to others who are new to a community, whether it is a patient coming to a new pharmacy or a student pharmacist starting school in a new city; greeting them with kindness may just take away the invisible boundary separating them with the community you know.

**Q: What is an interesting fact about you?**

A: I have subtle Chinese accent and it only shows when I pronounce certain words like "library", "February", "contemporary", basically any word with "-rary" in the end.

## Why PHARMACY?

**Q: Why did you choose pharmacy?**

A: I decided to pursue pharmacy as a career because of the diverse opportunities that are available for pharmacists. When I was in undergrad, I thought that pharmacists can only work in drug stores and hospitals. However, after working as a medical writer intern and as a pharmacy technician, I learned that there are also many opportunities for pharmacists such as positions in the industry, insurance companies, specialty pharmacies, and even certain digital health startups. Knowing that I will have the opportunity to serve our patients with specific aspects is what made me decide to pursue my career in pharmacy.

**Q: What brought you to UCSF?**

A: I ultimately decided to come to UCSF because I knew I've spent the last decade of my life in SoCal and it's time for me to explore further outside of my comfort zone. Besides, I think I would never think about coming to a big city like San Francisco unless it's for a short-term vacation.

## REFLECTIONS

**Q: Is pharmacy school like what you imagined?**

A: Before starting pharmacy school, I thought that most of my time will be dedicated to schoolwork and internships with very little time for social events. However, I quickly realized that I was wrong. I've never met such a



fun and outgoing group of people that I would call them my classmates. From going to happy hours around the city on a Monday night to getting late night tacos on a Thursday night, almost every week is filled with adventures around the city. Schoolwork and internships can definitely be tough, but if you're willing to work hard you also deserve to play hard as well.

**Q: What challenges have you faced throughout pharmacy school so far?**

A: I think one of the biggest challenges for me is to multitask between schoolwork and extracurricular activities. Like many of my classmates, I also have responsibilities and another set of deadlines to meet outside of class for both of my leadership and internship positions. And sometimes these deadlines just happen to stagger with each other, leaving me with very little time to complete these tasks. This is when I realized that proper planning ahead of time is an essential part of being successful as a student pharmacist.

**Q: What inspires you to move forward/persevere when the going gets tough?**

A: When times get tough, I tell myself that life is too short to be stressed out. Instead of approaching the situation with stress, I try to perceive it as an exciting challenge for me to overcome. In the end, even if the results aren't as what I expected, knowing that I did my best and that I didn't walk away without trying provides me with a peace of mind. Ultimately, it's not the results but the experience of the

process that truly teach the most.

## IF NOT PHARMACY...

**Q: If you were not pursuing pharmacy, what would you be doing?**

A: If pharmacy wasn't an option for me, I would pursue to be a DJ/producer. Back in undergrad I used to make small mixes here and there, and I really enjoyed the vibe I get from people who enjoyed my mixes, even though they were kind of choppy. Regardless if I'm a pharmacist or a DJ/Producer (or both), I think I'll enjoy my job as long as I can bring people joy.

## HOBBIES/ INTERESTS

**Q: What do you like to do during the school year to decompress or destress?**

A: Outside of school and work, I really enjoy exploring around the city with my friends. I feel like sometimes we focus so much on schoolwork and we forgot that we live in a city that others would pay big money to come visit. Going to places in SF that I've never been

before and immersing myself in the community is what I do to destress from school.

**Q: What is your favorite book/movie/TV show of the moment?**

A: I'm currently watching Arthdal Chronical on Netflix. It's essentially a Korean version of GOT and it's really addicting.

**Q: Favorite spot(s) to study?**

A: I like studying at home because the bed is right next to me whenever I need to take a nap. On campus, I really like the S-rooms on the first floor, especially the ones with an overhead projector, because I get to stream Netflix or music on it while studying with friends.

**Q: Favorite food or drink spot in SF that you'd like to share for classmates to check out?**

A: I really like SFO, because when you're there, you're literally only 90 minutes away from SoCal, where all the good food is at. Haha just kidding! I really like the braised short ribs at "Daeho Kalbijjim & Beef Soup" located in Japantown (When you get the braised short ribs, you better be getting the cheese on top unless you are lactose intolerant).



Hotpot with classmates!