Letter from Chair and Vice Chair

Dear School of Pharmacy Researchers and Staff,

As we begin the second week of the Fall 2020 semester, we hope that all is well and that you and your families are safe and healthy. Although we are socially distant, AAPS is committed to students’ continued professional development and we have adjusted our activities to meet the needs of our community.

We are excited to connect with you and present our Moving Targets Newsletter. Over the next five weeks, we will include information for the weekly seminar, our faculty spotlight, and relevant news in immunopharmaceutics. We hope that you continue to engage our virtual content and attend our seminar series over the next five weeks. We look forward to seeing you throughout the semester!

Sincerely,

Sam Garza
AAPS Chair

Min Choi
AAPS Vice Chair
**Nancy Pire-Smerkanich, DRSc, MS**  
Assistant Professor, Department of Regulatory and Quality Sciences  
University of Southern California

*What have you been doing during the stay at home order?*  
Teaching, grading and Zooming A LOT! Our program has courses year round so there was no break between semesters and summer has been busier than usual. I also have been taking daily socially distanced walks to the beach, sewing face masks, trying to master yeast bread dough, watching Netflix (anything Star Wars, Star Trek or British crime mystery related) and reading.

*What resources have you been using to keep updated with COVID news and/or to cope with cabin fever?*  
I rely on my news feeds from main-stream media and professional groups that I am a member of, and of course government websites (eg CDC and FDA) for daily updates. I have been reading a lot – currently finishing *The Great Influenza* by John Barry, *American Spy* by Lauren Wilkinson and *The Library Book* by Susan Orlean.

*Do you think COVID-19 exposed or showcased the pharmaceutical industries ability to act in times of crisis?*  
I do think that the biopharmaceutical industry, along with regulatory authorities, are being showcased in a way that raises awareness about the importance of the research science, clinical development and ethical pillars that are needed to treat and prevent pandemics. It is a time of unparalleled collaboration between academia, industry and governments. The need for leadership and a global, coordinated response is really what is essential and I hope we can rise to the challenge.

*What is one bright point that you have for us during/after this pandemic?*  
I am hopeful that this pandemic has shown us that when we work together as a community, whether that means a neighborhood, a school, or the larger society, with honorable intentions and caring for each other, we can accomplish great things.

*What would you like to be improved upon after this pandemic (as a school, society or yourself)?*  
Through the USC Center for Excellence in Teaching (CET) Online Training Intensive course I intend to become a better, more student-centric instructor and to incorporate the best features of synchronous/asynchronous teaching into my courses.