

In the Spotlight

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College's Savannah Campus Earns Accreditation

The University of Georgia College of Pharmacy's accreditation for its Doctor of Pharmacy program has now been affirmed for its extended Southeast Georgia campus located at the St. Joseph's/Candler Health System in Savannah.

The campus at St. Joseph's/Candler becomes the third accredited location for the college's 2+2 program, where Doctor of Pharmacy students study in Athens for the first two years of pharmacy school and finish their degree requirements with two years of training in one of four geographic areas: Athens or the extended campuses in Savannah, Augusta or Albany.

The Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education granted the program accreditation at its recent meeting.

The Savannah program began in May with a group of 21 fourth-year Doctor of Pharmacy—or Pharm.D.—students who began their final clinical year on the campus. Six third-year students began this August.

"This is a wonderful place to do pharmacy. There are so many advanced training opportunities here. We are looking really forward to this," said Svein Oie, UGA College of Pharmacy Dean.

The program will grow to full implementation over the next several years and is expected to have 30 students in both the third and fourth years of study for a total of 60 students in Savannah, according to Ray Maddox, assistant dean for the Southeast Georgia campus.

The college employs five faculty members and one staff member in Savannah to support the program. Additionally, a number of advanced practice clinical pharmacists are adjunct faculty for the college.

"These Pharm.D. students will receive additional benefit from greater opportunities for interprofessional education collaboration with medical students from Georgia Regents University Medical College of Georgia who have an adjacent campus at St. Joseph's/Candler," Maddox said. "Both (colleges) stress to their students the importance of teamwork and interdisciplinary collaboration in the care of patients. Clinical training



Left to right: Standing: Jessica Marshall (P-3 student), Chris Bland, Ken Duke, Hal Richards and Ray Maddox (faculty), and Joe Angellini and Brooke Jones (P-3 students). Sitting: Tricia Cordray (Administrative Assistant), Dustin Orvin and Chelsea Bryan (P-3 students); and UGA X (Que).

for nursing students and other allied health professionals on the St. Joseph's/Candler campus further strengthens the interdisciplinary delivery of high-quality health care."

Working with higher education to develop medical professionals in Savannah has been a priority for St. Joseph's/Candler in the past few years.

"Georgia's need for pharmacists, doctors and other health care professionals is growing as the demand for health care escalates," said Paul P. Hinchey, president and CEO of St. Joseph's/Candler. "Having these students here is a boon to Savannah, and it gives them a good look at our wonderful community and the modern medical environment we provide. We believe they will want to spend their careers here."

In the 2+2 program, Pharm.D. students make their site selections at the time they are admitted to pharmacy school and are guaranteed placement in that area for their third and fourth years of pharmacy practice experiences. An advantage for students is the ability to plan their housing needs in advance of the final two years of pharmacy school. In addition, the 2+2 program decentralizes students in their third year, giving them more and easier access to patients, more individual time with faculty and more interactions with other health profession students.

The College of Pharmacy and St. Joseph's/Candler have collaborated for many years in the clinical education of pharmacy students. In addition, the college supports eight postgraduate residencies at St. Joseph's/Candler that give advanced clinical training and specialty practice credentials in critical care and emergency medicine for graduates. This program is likely to grow over the coming years, Maddox noted.

The benefits to the Savannah community will also be felt with the housing, sustenance and recreation requirements of up to 60 semi-permanent students and their families, along with the program's accompanying faculty and staff.

"The University of Georgia is proud to be a member of the Savannah community and to actively participate in the care of residents who are patients in its health care facilities," Maddox said.

"Anytime we bring more medical education and healthcare education to this area, it benefits us. The students who are involved here will be involved in our community, that will help our community, and it will help our medical community especially," said Georgia Congressman Buddy Carter.