

In the Spotlight



Interview Name: Audrey T. Nakamura
Title: Pharmacy Manager of Surgical Services
Work Location: UCLA Medical Center at Westwood

Her Story:

After receiving degrees in both Chemistry and Biochemistry at the University of Washington in Seattle, Audrey earned her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Michigan in 2003. After graduation, she completed a General Pharmacy Practice Residency at the University of California, San Francisco and then went on to finish an Administration Specialty Residency at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. After this residency, Audrey assumed the role of Program Coordinator for the Department of Pharmacy at Cedars. She moved to UCLA in August of 2007 and is currently the Pharmacy Manager of Surgical Services.

The Facility:

Ronald Reagan Medical Center, a tertiary academic teaching hospital, is licensed for 450 beds and has a pharmacy staff of over 170. The Medical Center is part of UCLA Health System which also includes a progressive community hospital [Santa Monica UCLA Medical Center & Orthopaedic Hospital] and the Resnick Neuropsychiatric Hospital. The Health System has 834 acute inpatient beds and 11 rehabilitation beds.

UCLA Health System has consistently been ranked among the highest quality healthcare organizations in the United States. Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center, its faculty and programs are repeatedly identified by US News and World Report as being in the top 3 healthcare facilities nationwide. The mission of the organization, to support the training and research needs of the David Geffen School of Medicine while providing excellent patient care, speaks to the strengths of a premiere academic healthcare system.

Significant Projects:

Within the past year at UCLA, Audrey has been fortunate to have been involved in the process and preparation of moving into the new Ronald Reagan Medical Center. Now that they have settled into their new surroundings, she is currently focused on developing new clinical rotations for the residency program and is currently the primary preceptor for neurosurgery. She is also involved in expanding UCLA's outreach programs to the undergraduate pre-pharmacy students and volunteer program.

Advice for New Managers:

Know yourself and be true to yourself. As UCLA Coach John Wooden once said, "Ability may get you to the top, but it takes character to keep you there." You should never do things just because they are "cheap, easy, or popular." Do it because it is the right thing to do and then do it right. Always think in terms of what is best for the patient, the profession, the medical center and the department. If you know who you are and what you believe in then it is easy for you to make the right decision. Persevere and "follow your heart."

Value of ASHP:

Audrey believes it is important to take advantage of all the opportunities that are available to pharmacists especially within professional organizations. Professional organizations, such as ASHP, give pharmacists the opportunity to meet and network with people who share our common values and principles. They allow pharmacists to fulfill and strengthen as a community and become a part of something larger than our individual selves.

Audrey served on the ASHP Programming Committee for the past two years as she coordinated programs and became involved with the Management Pearls session at Midyear. This year she's been invited to serve as a member on the SPPM Advisory group on Communication and Publications. She considers it a privilege to serve on this committee because she feels it will improve communication at a national level as well as on

an institutional level by enabling her peers to share and present pharmacy journals and articles with the staff and the medical center that demonstrate the knowledge and value of our profession.

Audrey feels fortunate to have started on this path early in her career, and she looks forward to many more years of professional development and involvement with ASHP. She would like to personally thank the people at ASHP for their continued guidance and support.