



SAINT JOSEPH COLLEGE

CONNECTICUT

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School of Pharmacy Begins Month of Outreach to Help Patients Take Medicines as Directed

HARTFORD, CONN. – This October, students from the School of Pharmacy at Saint Joseph College will kick off community outreach activities in Greater Hartford to raise awareness about the health consequences of poor medication adherence, or not taking medication as prescribed. They will join a national effort to educate patients on the importance of medication adherence. More than one-third of medicine-related hospitalizations and almost 125,000 deaths in the United States each year are due to people not taking their medicine as directed.

The students are supported by the *Script Your Future* campaign, a national coalition of more than 100 public and private organizations, led by the National Consumers League. The campaign provides tools to help patients and health care professionals better communicate about ways to improve medication adherence. The American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy and the National Association of Chain Drug Stores Foundation, both partners of the campaign, are leading efforts to engage the next generation of pharmacists in the campaign.

The campaign's message is of particular importance to those with chronic health conditions. "Non-adherence adds additional risk for serious complications, especially in patients with diabetes, heart disease, and chronic respiratory conditions," said Maria Summa, a professor at the School of Pharmacy. She added, "The prevalence of diabetes in our state has risen in recent years and it is now the eighth leading cause of death in Connecticut. Heart disease mortality rates have decreased in the last decade, but heart disease remains a leading cause of illness and death in our state. Many modifiable risk factors for heart disease are managed by medications, which is why sharing a message about the importance of medication adherence with our patients is a key discussion to have."

The School of Pharmacy, which opened in August, plans a variety of activities in October to promote the *Script Your Future* campaign. Saint Joseph College has a booth at NBC 30's Health & Wellness Festival at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 1 and 2, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Faculty and students will talk to visitors about ways to take medications as prescribed, perform blood pressure screenings, and educate visitors about cardiovascular disease. A full list of campaign-related activities can be found at www.sjc.edu/scriptyourfuture. For more information about the national campaign, go to www.scriptyourfuture.org.

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Saint Joseph College, founded in 1932 by the Sisters of Mercy to provide higher education opportunities for women, is a comprehensive institution serving women from diverse backgrounds and religious traditions. More than 22 majors and six pre-professional programs are available plus accelerated bachelor's to master's degrees. Responsive to the evolving educational needs of the community, the School of Graduate and Professional Studies offers both women and men graduate degree programs including: management, counseling, education, and nursing along with online programs in biology, biochemistry and nutrition. In addition, the undergraduate Weekend Program for Adult Learners, professional certificate programs relevant to today's workforce and other continuing co-educational learning opportunities are available. In the fall of 2011, the Saint Joseph College School of Pharmacy, the first doctoral program in the College's 79-year history, welcomes its first class to Hartford 21 on Trumbull Street in downtown Hartford. View our Web site at www.sjc.edu.

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