

Interview with Professor Douglas R. Allington
Retiring Faculty Member of the Skaggs School of Pharmacy
Department of Pharmacy Practice
(1981 - 2021)

1. What was your path to becoming a pharmacist?

I was not the most successful high school student, so I had some real doubts as to my ability to pass the tough pre-pharmacy and pharmacy courses. Thanks to the support of my family throughout my academic years and residency, I achieved my goal. While I have certainly benefitted from interactions with all my pharmacy colleagues, I need to give special thanks to Mike Rivey who recruited, befriended and mentored me for over 27 years.

2. What drew you to the University of Montana, and what made you want to stay?

I came to the University of Montana when the School of Pharmacy had some program difficulties with the national accrediting agency so accepting the position was a bit of a gamble. I was very attracted to the split hospital/academic position where I got to be a member of an excellent medical rehabilitation team at Community Medical Center and the faculty at UM. In addition, Missoula felt like home at the first introduction.

3. Do you have any favorite moments or highlights from your teaching experiences at UM?

I cannot limit my highlights to a single moment or event. By my rough estimate there have been approximately 1500 UM pharmacy graduates over the past 31 years. What I have always appreciated has been the day-to-day interactions with our students and watching their professional growth while in school. More amazing to me is their professional post-graduate achievements and the positive impact they have made on the state and regions beyond. I attribute the students' success to their intelligence, work ethic and passion for the profession.

4. What are some of the discoveries you made while conducting research and writing articles?

The biggest personal 'discovery' I have made about writing is summed up in a sentence by Leigh Michaels: "Waiting for inspiration to write is like standing at the airport waiting for a train." I also found being a member of a team of writers led to consistent productivity.

5. How has Collaborative Drug Management evolved while you've been involved with it?

I cannot begin to describe the truly meaningful changes in pharmacy and medicine over the last 30 plus years. Whether in community, hospital or clinic setting, UM pharmacy graduates have acquired expanded roles that have directly improved the health of the community they serve. Case in point: management and staffing of immunization clinics during the COVID pandemic.

6. What will you miss most about the University of Montana?

Again, I cannot limit my selection of what I will miss most to a single item. I will miss both the students and my colleagues. I can't imagine what it would have been like teaching for 31 years if interactions with students was not a source of great reward. Equally so, I will miss all of my friends in the School of Pharmacy and at Community Medical Center who have helped me grow professionally, given sound advice, and offered their friendship. A special recognition goes to Erika Claxton, Shannon Sivertsen, Peggy Griffin, Tim Edwards and Jen Geist-Quigley who

contributed so much to my success as a professor through their support. I also need to thank Lori Morin and Donna Beall who have done a wonderful job as Director of Student Services.

7. Did you receive any special support from your family while you worked at UM?

My wife had her own tremendously successful career as a Certified Nurse Midwife. Managing both of our careers while raising two sons was a challenge, but our deep and abiding friendships at UM, CMC, and Missoula made it possible.

8. What do you plan to do when you retire?

My plan is to do more fishing, fly-tying, gardening, hiking and traveling. I might even spend some additional time in the kitchen. I will also be able to finish the 'Longmire' novels without the accompanying guilt that my efforts should be directed at reviewing current disease state management guidelines.