



## My Legislative Day Experience

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Until recently, I had not known the potential that we have as pharmacy students to impact policy and legislation. To be honest, I was a bit wrapped up in all of my school, work, and home responsibilities. I believe I can speak for most students when I say that it can be difficult to find the time to get involved in additional projects.

That being said, seeing what extracurricular tasks my fellow students take on never ceases to amaze me. Witnessing what other students have the determination to do has been just the push I needed to get involved and take a leadership role in our ICHP student chapter.

As ICHP Student Representative, one of my main responsibilities was planning Legislative Day for our chapter. On March 16th of this year, a group of UIC pharmacy students traveled to Springfield with ICHP and IPhA for Legislative Day. We began the day with an informational lecture on current legislations. We then split up into groups and followed our group leaders to find our legislators and speak to them about the current bills. When our legislators were not at their office, we relayed our issues to their assistants and left an invitation for the legislators to come speak to us at the evening reception.

The Representative for my hometown accepted our invitation and came to the reception, where I was able to have a one-on-one conversation with him about the legislations and the pharmacy point of view on the issues. He agreed with most of the bills, but was unsure about one of them. He has expressed his concern from the consumer perspective, and I was able to provide some insight on the matter from the pharmacist and patient care perspective. This experience has helped me understand the benefit of getting involved with advocacy and policy for the profession of pharmacy. Pharmacists must provide legislators with insight to help them make decisions on policies that directly affect our profession.

As students, we are well aware of the extensive clinical knowledge that pharmacists possess, and of the tremendous impact pharmacists have on patient care. Despite all of this, the reality is that pharmacists are not recognized as providers and are not being reimbursed for cognitive services. We are capable of influencing the advancement of our profession by becoming advocates and working together to support legislation that will positively impact the future of pharmacy. ■

*Above: UIC group at Pharmacy Legislative Day on March 16, 2011.*