

DR. JOHN PIEPER

Distinguished UW Alumnus

Dr. John Pieper (B.S. pharmacy '77) is an incredibly successful pharmacist, researcher, professor, administrator and organizational leader. He has progressed steadily through academia—from student on up to the president of a college. It's all due to his hard work, dedication and gregarious nature.

"I'm blessed to be an extrovert like my father," Pieper says. "I get energy from being around people."

Pieper credits the University of Wyoming for setting him on that path. It was the pharmacy faculty's commitment to students that helped him to understand the difference that faculty and administrators can have on students—and made him want to become one himself.

"I learned that students don't care how much you know until they know how much you care," he says.

Pieper grew up in the small town of Calhan, Colo., and earned his bachelor's degree in molecular biology at University of Colorado-Boulder. Upon graduation, he decided he wanted to become a pharmacist, and so he applied to UW. It turned out to be quite a change. He found his experience in Colorado to be impersonal, lost in a crowd, while UW had a close-knit family feeling: "It had a nurturing environment with people who cared about you."

It also piqued his interest in research. Over the course of his career, his area of focus transitioned from pharmacology of cardiovascular drugs to the early development of pharmacogenetics, which studies the genetic basis of drug metabolism. He has more than 100 publications and has mentored many students.

After graduating from UW, Pieper went on to earn his doctor of pharmacy degree and do a postdoc at the State University of New York at Buffalo School of Pharmacy, which was the premier training program in pharmacokinetics, the study of drug adsorption, distribution and excretion.

Pieper then worked his way up in academia. He held positions at the University of Florida, the University of Tennessee Health Science Center and the University of Colorado School of Pharmacy in Denver. While in Denver, he was its first department chair in pharmacy practice. Then he moved his young family to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where his children grew up. He went on to

become dean at the University of New Mexico College of Pharmacy and president of St. Louis College of Pharmacy. In addition to all these positions, he enthusiastically served a multitude of pharmacy organizations at the chair and presidential level, culminating in the position of president of the Academic Pharmacy Section of the International Pharmaceutical Federation.

The Pieper family has moved around a lot for John's very successful career—his mom jokes that he can't keep a job.

Serving higher education is not the only way Pieper gives back. He and his wife have created two endowments that support pharmacy at UW. One is a scholarship for out-of-state students, the Pieper Family Scholarship in Pharmacy, and the other is a leadership fund, the John and Patty Pieper Fund for Leadership in Pharmacy.

Pieper remembers UW with such fondness. It was a great time in his life, and the class of 1977 was particularly close: "It was a special time with a special group of people with special faculty. All of us felt the support and connection, and to this day, we continue to feel that and to support one another."

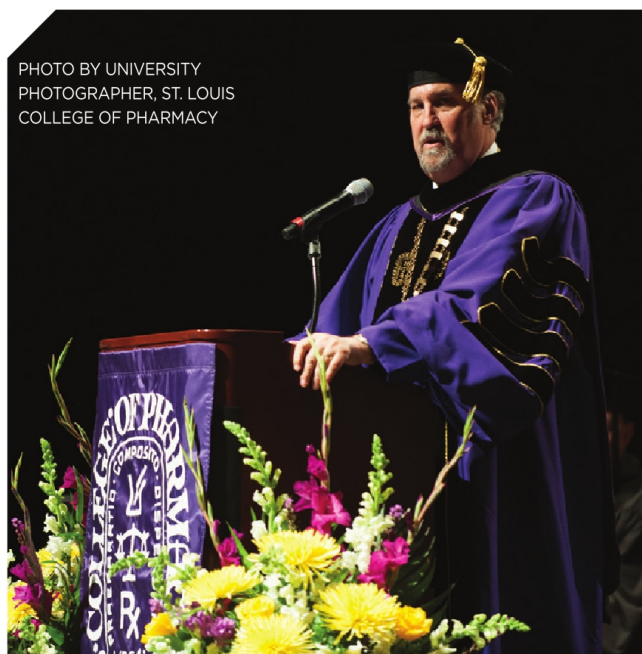


PHOTO BY UNIVERSITY
PHOTOGRAPHER, ST. LOUIS
COLLEGE OF PHARMACY