



**PRESS RELEASE: Ferris Professor Gives High School Students Look at Pharmacy Profession**

**Betsy L Musolf** to: Archive

01/02/2013 04:26 PM

Here is a press release about Ferris State University Pharmacy professor Tracey Boncher's efforts to provide potential pharmacists with hands-on work and research experience. Any questions about this release can be directed to Sandy Gholston, News Services and Social Media Manager.



Boncher Pharmacy.doc

View the release online here: <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/archive/2013/january/boncher.htm>



**UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT AND MARKETING**

420 Oak Street, Prakken 101, Big Rapids, MI 49307

Phone: (231) 591-2021 Fax: (231) 591-2985

[www.ferris.edu/news](http://www.ferris.edu/news)

For Immediate Release  
Jan. 2, 2013

Sandy Gholston  
News Services and Social Media Manager  
Ferris State University  
University Advancement and  
Marketing  
[sandygholston@ferris.edu](mailto:sandygholston@ferris.edu), (231)

591-2021

**Ferris Professor Gives High School Students Look at Pharmacy Profession**

BIG RAPIDS – A Ferris State University professor is continuing efforts to provide potential pharmacists with hands-on work and research experience.

This will mark the 10th year that Tracey Boncher, an associate professor of medicinal chemistry, will work with high school students on a six-week summer internship through a partnership with CVS Pharmacy.

“I want to inspire students to follow their passion and be someone who can help guide a student to be who they want to be,” said Boncher, who started the program in 2003. “I’ve wanted to create a program such as this since I was in high school.”

Students undergo a rigorous application process that includes a letter explaining why they want to participate in the program, three recommendation letters and their high school transcript. Applicants are interviewed by Boncher and a CVS Pharmacy manager. Eight to 10 students are selected each year, she said.

Last summer, nine students from Big Rapids, Comstock Park and Rockford worked alongside CVS pharmacists in various locations. For four weeks, students learned about different medications, including interaction and dispensing, patient counseling and insurance. The final two weeks were spent doing research with Boncher at the College of Pharmacy on Ferris' Big Rapids campus.

“The goal of the program is to allow the students to get hands-on experience with community pharmacy, research and clinical practices,” said Boncher, who enjoys working with the students. “A high school student has an open mind – one you can inspire. They have an interest in learning as much as possible with no set standards.”

In addition to exposure to research methods, students discovered how Boncher is working to advance treatment for type 2 diabetes. (Her research findings are included in the January edition of *Bioorganic & Medicinal Chemistry Letters*, a scientific research journal. View it online here: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0960894X12015120>.)

At the end of the program, students formally present what they have learned to Ferris faculty, CVS representatives and other invited guests.

Boncher said she is pleased by the program's success. Many participants have chosen to pursue pharmacy degrees after graduation, including several at Ferris.

“Some of the students were really inspired from the research side of things,” Boncher said.

One program participant graduated last spring from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore and is pursuing a doctorate in nanotechnology. Another participant enrolled at Ferris to study pharmacy but was drawn to diagnosis.

“He stayed in my research group after he came to Ferris, and I wrote him a letter of recommendation that helped him get a full ride to medical school where he is now,” she said.

Applications for summer will be accepted through early March and notifications mailed in April. For further details on the program or for application information, email Boncher at [bonchert@ferris.edu](mailto:bonchert@ferris.edu).

--30--

Betsy Musolf  
News Services Communications Specialist  
Ferris State University  
Advancement and Marketing  
420 Oak St., Prakken 108  
Big Rapids, MI 49307  
Phone: (231) 591-2991