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Prestigious Walmart Scholars Program Picks Local Student and Alumna

CEDARVILLE, OHIO -- Jessica Ward, a fourth-year professional pharmacy major from Gallipolis, Ohio, has been accepted into the prestigious Walmart Scholars Program for students considering a career in academic pharmacy.

Ward was selected along with 2018 School of Pharmacy graduate Dr. Laura K. Sjoquist, an Experiential Programs Academic Fellow at the UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy. Both will attend the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy's (ACCP) annual meeting and seminars in Chicago, Illinois, in July.

The Walmart Scholars Program is a collaboration between Walmart and the AACP to provide funding and experience for pharmacy students or pharmacists in postgraduate training who want to pursue a career in academic pharmacy. Each year, 85 candidates were selected from across the country.

"The biggest draw toward academic pharmacy for me were the professors I had the opportunity to learn from in pharmacy school," explained Ward. "Having people guide me to that 'Aha!' moment made me want to help guide others to their 'Aha!' moments and toward gaining a good and operable understanding of the material. Ultimately, it is a meaningful way for me to give back and build upon the investments other educators have made in me."

"I'm excited to help Jessica grow her interest in teaching," expressed Dr. Zachary Jenkins, associate professor of pharmacy practice, who will mentor Ward during the program. "You can observe what academia is like from the classroom, but you don't know what the other side of it is like until you experience it. I am excited to help her learn what that other side is like and to help her see what a role in academia could look like."

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