

***Clinical Pearls of Las Vegas***  
*(Taken from Dr. Brouse's Convocation 9-25-09)*

**I. Pre-Las Vegas**

- A) Organization- ASHP is very busy and can be overwhelming; it is best to be prepared before stepping off the plane.
- a) What type of program are you interested in? Look online to get an idea of what you want. You can search the ASHP website online residency directory by specialty and state. Each listing identifies numbers of residents per program and other key info.
  - b) Make a list of things you HAVE to have in a residency and things you are willing to bend on- this will help you determine which programs to apply to.
  - c) Know yourself (short and long term goals so you really know what programs to apply to). Want to make sure the Program's strengths match your goals as well as their style/method of mentoring residents versus what you may desire (autonomy, topic discussions, meetings to discuss patients daily/weekly, etc.)
  - d) Plan- Determine which booths you would like visit in the Residency Showcase and use the ASHP map to find the location and booth number. (Don't forget to find out what day the program will be participating in the showcase—each program only showcases either Monday PM, Tuesday AM, or Tuesday PM)
  - e) Research your programs of interest and prepare a list of questions
  - f) Don't forget to consider programs that have early commitment for a 2<sup>nd</sup> year specialty residency after your first year in that program. Early commitment prevents you from having to apply for your second year of residency and guarantees your spot in October instead of having to wait.
  - g) If you are planning on applying for a residency this year- start asking for recommendation letters in October. Good people to ask for letters of recommendation from are faculty mentors, preceptors, instructors you have spent significant time with (such as working within a professional organization, research lab, writing a paper), employers—people who know you better than the average faculty member.
    - a. Once you know which programs you are applying to, give the people writing letters of recommendation for you the following: 1) copy of your CV, 2) contact information for each program (complete address & contact individual (& credentials) to mail the letter to, 3) due dates for each program/letter, 4) 1-2 sentences of why you like that program so they can tailor the letter, 5) if a non-faculty member, consider providing stamps or pre-addressed envelopes (faculty have secretaries/supplies to help with this but non-faculty preceptors or individuals may not & it's a nice gesture). Do not wait until December 23<sup>rd</sup> to give them this information—ideally by mid-December will ensure your letters are written & mailed before the holidays. Your application may be delayed if not all the elements are there—this may cause you not to get a particular interview you desire.
  - h) CVs- Bring at least 25 CVs printed on formal resume paper (this is not as important for P3s); make sure your CV has been proofread by others before printing
    - 1) You can submit your CV online and have it reviewed at ASHP (deadline to submit CV is **November 1<sup>st</sup>**)
  - i) Pack comfy shoes- will be doing LOTS of walking

## II. Las Vegas

- a) Be **CONFIDENT** and do not compare yourself to others, everyone is nervous!!!
- b) Be honest and upfront
- c) Be open to going to different booths
- d) P3s- Respect the fact that you are a P3! Maybe stop by the booths that are less busy-good to chance to learn about different ideas and practice talking
  - 1) On the positive side of being a P3 if you do find a program you really like consider doing a **P4 elective** with them- this will help you decide if you want to apply to their residency program next year. \*\*\*Best to bring you CV for this.
- e) Bring a pad and pen to write down notes in order to keep a record of each program and who you talked to (helpful when it comes down to determining which program you would like to apply to and writing thank you notes). At the showcase, avoid jotting down notes while talking to programs (booths are usually too crowded) but pause inbetween booths to jot down notes. It is perfectly fine during PPS interviews to jot notes as the interview progresses, because there is a table to write on.
- f) Get business cards to help when writing thank you notes!
- g) Ask questions!!! Make sure not to ask questions that can be answered by looking at the programs webpage.
- h) LISTEN!!!
- i) Ask the current residents how they feel about the program
- j) Be on your best behavior!!! People will recognize you and can tell if you have had too much to drink!!!! This applies especially to after hours—there are 25,000 pharmacists lurking around and traversing the main strip so you may not realize who is watching you

## III. Important Questions to ask the Program

- a) How much teaching is required during the residency? Does the program have a teaching certificate program (if interested in getting some formal experience with this)
- b) How can I prepare for the interview- for example: does the program require completion of therapeutic patient case (SOAP) or prepare a presentation for the interview??

## IV. PPS Vs. Showcase- which one should I attend or should I go to both?

- a) PPS is additional fee and the showcase is FREE
- b) Early PPS deadline is October 21<sup>st</sup> (\$60) & database opens for searching October 22<sup>nd</sup>
- c) Not all programs are going to be in PPS but all will be in the Showcase. You can email the program prior to determine if they are going to be a part of PPS; PPS is crucial for PGY2 programs & Pharmacotherapy residencies & optional for PGY1s
- d) Once you sign up for PPS, search the database to find programs of interest. Contact these programs in October/November by email to pre-schedule an appointment for Midyear. Most of your interviews should be scheduled prior to going on-site (particularly this year, because it is the first year of all-electronic PPS—no paper mailboxes anymore). Some programs will contact you as well. Review the info on their websites to see if they are interesting enough to you to interview with.
- e) Since PPS is now wireless, it is a good idea to bring your computer to Midyear (at least to your hotel) so you can communicate with programs on-site if needed; there are some free computers at the convention center but not enough; remember to bring PPS login information with you to Midyear
- f) PPS is a great way to look at programs in depth; each appointment is 30 minutes and must be scheduled. PPS also allows you to contact the program prior and during ASHP

via your assigned mailbox. When you register for PPS you upload your CV and categorize yourself so programs can contact you based on your category.

- g) Showcase is more for residencies you are familiar with because you are going to be talking with others around you and you do not get as much personal attention. If opting for the showcase-only route, and you are REALLY interested in a particular program, consider returning to the showcase booth later in the showcase time (ex. 8:30am, then return at 10:30am)—some programs rotate people and you might get to meet other individuals involved with the program. If the same people are still there, avoid this.
- h) Another option is setting up a meeting with your residency program of interest outside the showcase or PPS, like for lunch/dinner.

**V. Post Vegas**

- a) Send Thank You notes- even to those you do not plan on applying to
  - 1) Important to write “thank you, but I am pursuing other opportunities” so the programs know you are not applying (pharmacy is a small world)
  - 2) Important to write “thank you, and I will be applying to your residency program” to alert the programs of your impending application, to remind them they spoke with you at Midyear, and to make a favorable impression
- b) Apply- most applications are due in January- realistic number to apply is 4-6 programs MAX due to limitations on professional leave during Rotation 6 & 7
- c) Don't forget to register for the match with the National Matching Service; usual deadline is 3<sup>rd</sup> week of January and must do this to match with all ASHP-accredited programs

**VI. Websites/Resources**

- a) TTUHSC-SOP residency page!!! Lots of great resources (including a month by month residency application timeline and examples of CVs): [www.ttuhscc.edu/sop/residencies](http://www.ttuhscc.edu/sop/residencies)
- b) ASHP: [www.ashp.org](http://www.ashp.org) & “Resident Information”
- c) Professors and Mentors can answer lots of questions and help you prepare