

## Employer Partnerships

If you're an employer seeking ways to improve employee skills, partner with us! The Online POP Graduate Program Employee Partnership Program offers tuition discounts to employers sending multiple individuals for distance education. Contact [Heather Steingraber](#).

## Current Partners

We currently offer the following member benefits\*:



Members receive **50% off** their first and last course.



Members receive **50% off** their first and last course.



Earn **six credit** hours toward the program upon completion of ASHP Foundation's Pharmacy Leadership Academy.

\*M.S. program only



Parastoo Rezai, Pharm.D., M.S., BCPS  
National Health Outcomes  
GSK

## Alumni Interview: Parastoo Rezai, Pharm.D., M.S., BCPS

In this issue of POP Topics, we interview Parastoo Rezai, Pharm.D., M.S., BCPS. She graduated in May 2018 from the Applied Pharmacoeconomics track of the online Pharmaceutical Outcomes and Policy program. While in the program, she received a promotion, and soon after she graduated, Parastoo was hired on as a National Health Outcomes Liason at GSK and currently resides in San Diego, California..

## Alumni Interview with Parastoo Rezai, Pharm.D., M.S., BCPS

### Job held while in the program:

Health Outcomes Liaison, Sanofi

### Current job title:

National Health Outcomes Liaison, GSK

### 3 words would you use to describe the Online POP Program:

Timely, relevant, beneficial

### Why did you choose this program?

I was a clinical pharmacist working directly with patients for over three years when I moved to industry as an MSL. That's when I began interacting with physicians and other providers, noticing a shift in how my role influenced how health care is delivered. I wanted to understand this and expand my "field of vision," and I recognized that I needed additional education to help me understand the importance of costs, cost-effectiveness, population health, and value in healthcare. I needed new and different tools in my toolbox.

I looked at multiple programs based on what their focus was and the ability to balance my work, family with two young children and a husband who was often on call (he's a physician), and a program that didn't require me to be on campus. UF offered the quality of education and the flexibility I needed. When I was exploring the program, I noticed there were several other students with similar backgrounds to mine, and that gave me even more confidence that this was the right program.

Lastly, I learned that I could take up to seven years to complete the program. It gave me a degree of comfort that – should I need a break due to work or family – I could take it and remain in the program. I completed it in fewer than two years, but it was great to have the option to take longer if needed.

When I finished, I was able to explore and secure a position with GSK. I absolutely believe that this degree helped me get promoted even before graduating. When I finished and was looking to move companies, I was able to secure a director-level position with a higher salary. I moved from a regional Health Outcomes Liaison position with my previous employer to a National Health Outcomes Liaison with GSK.



Parastoo pictured in Dubrovnik, Croatia

**“UF offered the quality of education and the flexibility I needed.”**

— Parastoo Rezai, Pharm.D., M.S., BCPS

### Favorite class:

Pharmaceutical Health Economics. It was very informative and I learned a lot about the challenges in health care delivery and factors impacting price, utilization, and other services.

### Most challenging class:

Pharma Data Analysis. I found the data input and evaluation of the information difficult. I had never directly worked with data input or used software to develop models.





Parastoo with her family on a trip to Italy, husband Kamyar Afshar, son Aideen Afshar and daughter Yasameen Afshar

## Alumni Interview with Parastoo Rezai, Pharm.D., M.S., BCPS (cont.)

### Can students really balance work, life, graduate school?

I felt that the UF POP program was the right amount of work while continuing to hold down a demanding job, even with two small children. I was able to manage all of my responsibilities and found the flexibility of classes practical. The workload during the week was very doable.

### What stands out about professors?

They were all very seasoned and had a depth and breadth of work experience that helped explain concepts beyond what could be taught in the text. Not only did I enjoy learning from the assigned material, but also the dialogue around their personal experiences in health care in the U.S. and abroad.

### What stands out about fellow students?

I connected with many students who were working in similar positions at other pharma companies. Although it was an online program, I am now working at the same company as one of my former classmates and recently had a conversation about a position another classmate was seeking my advice about. This industry is very small and the ability to meet and network in this sphere via this master's program was invaluable.

### Any other parting words or thoughts?

I believe that the pharma industry is a dynamic and challenging arena. Although I have been in the Medical Affairs division in various roles for over 12 years, I believe my role has evolved year to year to meet the ever-changing needs of payers, the government, and the manufacturers. In order to be effective in my role, I need to keep abreast of all areas of change on a regular basis. This program definitely helped provide insight and resources for me to become successful in this endeavor.

“This industry is very small, and the ability to meet and network in this sphere via this master's program was invaluable.”

— Parastoo Rezai, Pharm.D., M.S., BCPS



**Newsletter from the University of Florida Online**

Pharmaceutical Outcomes & Policy Program

## Specialty tracks:

**Applied Pharmacoeconomics**

**Managed Care Pharmacy Systems**

**Patient Safety in Medication Use**

**Pharmaceutical Regulation**



**“Academic rigor with  
real-world application.”**



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