



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 3, 2015

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Potsdam Pharmacist Benjamin J. Gruda Honored for Outstanding Community Service

Washington, DC – The Pharmacists Society of the State of New York (PSSNY) has selected Benjamin J. Gruda as the recipient of the 2015 Bowl of Hygeia Award for outstanding community service. Gruda was presented with the award at the PSSNY 137th Annual Convention on Saturday, May 30. The Bowl of Hygeia is sponsored by the American Pharmacists Association Foundation, the National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations and the American Pharmacists Association with support from Boehringer Ingelheim.

Gruda is an employee of Canton Potsdam Hospital. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Pharmacy from St. John's University in Jamaica, NY. He has been actively involved with the Pharmacists Society of the State of New York for many years and is an advocate for the profession of pharmacy.

Within PSSNY, Gruda has served in a number of leadership roles including president, president-elect, second vice-president, Board of Directors member, chairman, and House of Delegates member and speaker. He also served as president of the Northern New York Pharmacists Society from 1998-1995.

At the national level, he has been involved with the American Pharmacists Association since 1965 in a wide range of leadership roles and with various committees and groups. He has worked with the House of Delegates, Strategic and Tactical Analysis Team on Practice Environment and Quality of Worklife, Academy of Pharmacy Practice and Management, Executive Committee, Administrative Practice Section, and Policy, Nominations, Education, Publications, and Awards Committees. Gruda has also been involved with several advisory groups including the Advisory Group on Workplace Issues, Advisory Group to the Study of Systems-Based Medication Errors in the Outpatient Setting, Advisory Panel for the Handbook of Nonprescription Drugs 10th Edition, and Advisory Board for the Journal of the American Pharmacists Association. He is an adjunct faculty member of the Albany College of Pharmacy and former member of the Externship Committee of the International Pharmaceutical Federation and the American Institute of the History of Pharmacy.

Gruda's community service is extensive. He has volunteered with the St. Lawrence County Public Health Department Advisory Board and Board of Health, and has served as a pharmaceutical consultant and/or representative for numerous organizations including Potsdam State University Drug Studies Program, REACHOUT crisis intervention program, St. Lawrence County Mental Health Clinic, Health Care Issues Advisory Group, New York State Assembly, and AIDS Curriculum Advisory Committee and Drug Education Curriculum Advisory Committee of the Potsdam Central School District. Gruda has been a guest speaker for various drug awareness days and health classes at local elementary and high schools and for drug studies and pre-med programs at the university level. He also works in radio with the St. Lawrence County Radio Amateur Emergency Service and as a county radio officer and emergency coordinator. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus Council #340 and a past Grand Knight.

Established in 1958, the Bowl of Hygeia Award recognizes pharmacists who possess outstanding records of civic leadership in their communities and encourages pharmacists to take active roles in the affairs of their respective communities. The award is presented annually by participating state pharmacist associations, including those in the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. In addition to service through their local, state and national pharmacy associations, award recipients have devoted their time, talent and resources to a wide variety of causes and community service.

The Bowl of Hygeia is the most widely recognized international symbol for the pharmacy profession and is considered one of the profession's most prestigious awards. The Bowl of Hygeia has been associated with the pharmacy profession since as early as 1796 when the symbol was used on a coin minted for the Parisian Society of Pharmacy. The bowl represents a medicinal potion and the snake represents healing. Healing through medicine is precisely why the pharmacy profession has adopted the Bowl of Hygeia symbol.

About the American Pharmacists Association Foundation

The APhA Foundation, a nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C., is a trusted source of research demonstrating how pharmacists can improve health care. The APhA Foundation's mission is to improve people's health through pharmacists' patient care services. The APhA Foundation is affiliated with the American Pharmacists Association, the national professional society of pharmacists in the U.S. For more information, please visit the APhA Foundation website www.aphafoundation.org. Follow the APhA Foundation on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) for the latest updates.

About the National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations

The National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations (NASPA) promotes leadership, sharing, learning, and policy exchange among pharmacy leaders in all 50 states and Washington, DC, and provides education and advocacy to support pharmacists, patients, and communities working together to improve public health. NASPA was founded in 1927 as the National Council of State Pharmacy Association Executives (NCSPA). For more information, please visit the NASPA Web site www.naspa.us.