

# Meet a New ASP Member

ASP continues to welcome many new members to the Society throughout the year. We are pleased to feature one of Dr. Norman Farnsworth's last graduate students at the University of Illinois, Chicago, (UIC) College of Pharmacy, Ms. Kimberly Bean. In addition to her interesting doctoral work, Ms. Bean participates in some colorful hobbies. We are grateful to her for taking time from her busy schedule to give us the opportunity to get more acquainted with her, and for sharing some of her time with Norm.

By Dr. Amy Keller



Ms. Bean eating her first lobster at the ASP Meeting in Portland, Maine, 2007.

## How did you hear about the ASP?

Although I have had an interest in botanical medicine since high school, I had never heard of pharmacognosy or knew what it was until I came to interview for the program at UIC. Dr. Farnsworth took me to lunch and convinced me I had to become a "pharmacognosist". It still took me a couple years to quite understand what it was I was studying to become and have yet to learn much about what it means to be a pharmacognosist. I think it was Dr. Geoff Cordell who sponsored my first ASP conference in Portland, Maine. ASP has motivated my research ever since.

## Why did you join ASP?

As Dr. Farnsworth would say "all pharmacognosy students should be members of ASP." I just finally paid my dues in honor of Dr. Farnsworth as he had insisted for the past five years! He asked me to dye my hair red and I finally did this, too.

## Do you belong to any other scientific societies?

I have a membership to the American Associate for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and several nominations to honorary societies, but in general I do not like

to join organizations partially because I do not like dues (who does?), and partly out of a deep seated ideal to remain starkly independent and neutral of any political associations of which I am not actively involved. I am sure my ideals will change when I eventually join the job market.

## What are your current research interests in pharmacognosy?

I am interested in standardization of botanicals, especially verification of the authenticity of raw plant materials by traditional and modern techniques. I would like to continue to develop new methods for determining the authenticity of plant extracts on a species level.

## What is your scientific background?

I have a Bachelors of Science in Botany with emphasis in ethnobotany from The University of Georgia. I am a current recipient of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) and have completed five years of study toward a Ph.D.

## What would you like to achieve through your membership?

I would like to gain insight from and share my perspectives with other members in the field. I aspire to be politically active with ASP once I finish my degree and through my membership continue to foster progress in pharmacognosy research.

## What do you like doing in your spare time?

I dance, both ballroom and social styles, and have created my own style of dancing with hula-hoops. I recently was invited to perform on stage alongside a dj at a Chicago theater for an audience of 1,200 people. Before I became interested in botanical medicine at around 13 years old, I was a gymnast and wanted to study to be a professional circus performer. It is fun to visit this long-seated interest as a hobby, and dancing is great stress-relief.



Dr. Hong, Farnsworth, and Ms. Bean, 2009.

MS. ANGELA BEAN

## What are you currently reading?

I recently inherited a small collection of Dr. Farnsworth's books, including pharmacopeias from around the world in various languages. In my spare time I read through the books paying special attention to his footnotes on plants he found of interest.

## How did Norm influence your career thus far?

I first heard of Dr. Farnsworth when I was finishing high school and working full-time in an herbal pharmacy. I read his article about NAPRALERT printed in one of the books for sale on the shelf and was inspired by the man who dedicated his life to disseminating purely scientific information on botanicals. This happened to be in 1994 when the DSHEA regulations were being proposed and I recall thinking "this is going to be a big step in the right direction and I want to be involved." After completing my degree, I came to UIC to work with Dr. Farnsworth who was my thesis advisor for the last five years until his retirement on August 31<sup>st</sup> of this year. He has been the greatest mentor of my life so far, and I have much yet to learn from the lessons he shared with me.