



Leigh Ann Ross, PharmD, BCPS, FASHP, FCCP

Work Hard, Seize Opportunities, and Dream Big

Leigh Ann was drawn to the profession of pharmacy at a young age, working alongside her pharmacist father in a community pharmacy. She assumed she would follow in his path, but fate stepped in during her residency training to steer her down a different path—academia and clinical practice. Once established in her career, Leigh Ann realized she could broaden her impact on the pharmacy profession and on healthcare through volunteer service. She was elected President of her state pharmacists' association, which offered her exposure to the health policy arena and ultimately to serve as a Health Policy Fellow for U.S. Senator Thad Cochran.

Leigh Ann Ross is Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs at the University of Mississippi School of Pharmacy, Professor in the Department of Pharmacy Practice, and Research Professor in the Research Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences. She received her Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and her PharmD from the University of Mississippi and completed a primary care pharmacy residency at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. Leigh Ann is a former President of both the Mississippi Pharmacists Association and the Mississippi Biotechnology Association and a member of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP) Board of Regents. She is an invited member of the National Academies of Practice and Pharmacy Academy as well as a Fellow of ACCP and ASHP.

Leigh Ann's advice is: **Work hard, seize opportunities, and dream big.**



Dear Young Pharmacist,

It seems like yesterday I was in your shoes filled with excitement to embark on a new career, yet somewhat nervous about the future. I encourage you to be excited. As a pharmacy educator, I fully appreciate your dedication and the

hard work necessary to complete your degree and training. You should be proud, celebrate your accomplishments, and look forward to many more achievements in your career. Work hard, seize opportunities, and dream big!

The highlights I share from my career in pharmacy are shaped by my childhood experiences. I am fortunate for many reasons to be the daughter of Louis H. Ramsey, a retired pharmacist. He, along with his business partner Larry Young, owned Ramsey-Young Pharmacy in Pontotoc, Mississippi. I spent many days working in that pharmacy—dusting shelves, arranging the medications, and later helping fill prescriptions and talking with patients while in pharmacy school. I learned many important lessons in that independent pharmacy about our profession and about life. It was evident from watching my dad that he believed each person who walked through the door deserved respect. He, like many of his era, believed in hard work; he demonstrated this belief every day. I watched his impact on people—caring about them, meeting their needs in any way that he could, and cheering them up with a kind word or his sense of humor. I also observed a commitment to service in his community and our profession. Having my dad as an early role model, and the familiarity and relationships I developed growing up in the family business, steered my later decision for a career in pharmacy.

I focused my time as a student on successfully completing the pharmacy program at the University of Mississippi (UM) and believed I would practice in a setting much like my father. As I learned more about the future of pharmacy and other potential career opportunities, I saw value in completing a pharmacy residency program. I came to love the ambulatory care setting, where I had the opportunity to work as part of an interprofessional team of healthcare providers while maintaining that one-on-one, regular contact with patients I enjoyed from the community environment. I joined the faculty at my alma mater and began to teach pharmacy students and residents, in addition to working with colleagues to develop clinical pharmacy services in chronic disease areas. Our team put into play the lesson I learned from early life in the community pharmacy—always work hard. This, coupled with a continued focus on the patients served and a collaborative team approach, provided a rewarding pharmacy practice and excellent learning environment for students and residents.

Service has always been important to our profession. Pharmacists are often key leaders in service in their communities, which contributes to the high regard citizens hold of our profession. It is through professional service that courageous pharmacy leaders have challenged the status quo and moved our profession forward. I had the opportunity to become involved in state professional organizations and to serve in elected offices fairly early in my career. This experience, particularly as President of the Mississippi Pharmacists Association (MPHA), afforded me the