



Dear Class of 2026,

I want to welcome you to the University of Alberta's Doctor of Pharmacy program! It brings me immense joy knowing you can finally reap the fruits of your labour and embark on your path to becoming a clinician. While your undergraduate journey may have been arduous, pharmacy will provide you with a new type of academic rigour that will prove to be quite rewarding. I am excited to see what you make of this program and how the experiences formed here will impact your future as a practising pharmacist.

My name is Raymond Otieno, and I am the president of the Black Pharmacy Students' Association (BPSA). The BPSA is a student group that strives to increase Black representation and engagement in the pharmacy profession and dismantle health inequities the Black community faces. The BPSA has three main goals: representation, advocacy, and mentorship. We wish to increase representation by creating a safe and supportive space for Black pharmacy students, and promoting the profession to Black undergraduate students. We advocate for the faculty to offer structured anti-racism education to both students and preceptors, and to implement a safe reporting process for students experiencing discrimination. Additionally, we advocate for proper inclusion of Black health within the program's curriculum, ensuring that the future pharmacists are able to provide the best care to all patients they interact with. Lastly, we promote mentorship via the BPSA Mentorship Program. This program allows BPSA members to mentor Black undergraduate students interested in pharmacy, and in turn, BPSA mentors are mentored by practising pharmacists. This ensures that a strong and extensive network is created, and that both BPSA members and prospective pharmacy students are equipped with the necessary skills to succeed in their endeavours.

While your main priority in the program may be to focus on your academics, I advise you to immerse yourself in student life by attending events and getting involved with the various student groups the program boasts. These next few years will fly by and it's imperative to connect with your classmates, as they will be your future colleagues. The BPSA hosts numerous events throughout the year for all students to attend so there are multiple opportunities to engage and get involved with the BPSA. Look out for our Let's Talk: Black Mental Health webinar, our Intersectional Literature Nights, and our BPSA Black History Month events this year. For more information on the BPSA, check out our [website](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [Facebook](#)!

Congratulations,

Raymond Otieno (*he/him*), President
Black Pharmacy Students' Association
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