Henry Lewis III, Pharm.D., and Marisa A. Lewis, Pharm.D., M.P.H.
Tallahassee, Florida

Chemistry is extremely important in the pharmaceutical field—especially when it’s between two proficient and ambitious pharmacists who are married to one another.

“Working in the same field gives us the opportunity to have discussions on issues impacting what we do each day,” said Henry Lewis III, professor and director in the College of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences at Florida A&M University (FAMU), said of his wife, Dr. Marisa Lewis. “We see things from a different vantage point. It’s been very helpful.”

Today, the two accomplished pharmacists spend their days in a university setting teaching, training and educating students, and then go home to consult with one another. “I am always looking for fresh ideas, and it’s very helpful to get Henry’s perspective on things,” said Marisa Lewis, who is currently the executive director of the Student National Pharmaceutical Association (SNPhA) and an associate professor at FAMU.

After more than 30 years in the pharmaceutical field, Henry Lewis’ experiences have been extensive. Since he began teaching and administration at FAMU in 1974, enrollment in the pharmacy program has increased by over 600 percent, the college has added three new Ph.D. programs, graduated 40 percent of the African American Ph.D. recipients in the pharmaceutical sciences, and produced 25 percent of the nation’s black pharmacists.

One of Henry Lewis’ proudest achievements recently came to fruition—the completion of a new 120,000-square-foot, $35 million state-of-the-art College of Pharmacy building at FAMU. “It’s a dream that has been five years in the making,” Henry Lewis said. “To see the energy of the 1,200 students from more than 35 states in the U.S. as well as foreign countries striking this outstanding training facility is exhilarating.”

He believes his career path has been led by divine intervention. “Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined that all this would happen to me through my career in academia. I was led to pharmacy, and pharmacy has been wonderful to me.”

Like her husband, Marisa Lewis also has spent most of her career in academia. But she believes her previous experiences in retail and hospital pharmacy as well as in corporate America as a medical information specialist have paved the way. “My true love is working with students,” she said. “They motivate me.”

She takes pride in promoting the profession. In 1999 and 2001 she served as auxiliary spokesperson and spokesperson, respectively, for the American Pharmaceutical Association—McNeil Consumer Health Care’s Partnership for Self-Care and Medicine Cabinet Safety campaign. In 2004 she was recognized by the National Pharmaceutical Association with its highest honor for her service to the organization.

If Henry Lewis one day becomes a university president, Marisa Lewis plans to be at his side. They got a taste of that leadership responsibility when he served as interim president of FAMU in 2002. “I want to be supportive of him in every way so that we can complement one another,” she said. “Whatever happens with our careers, we will continue to support each other and mentor students.”

“We are in the business of dream making,” Henry Lewis said. “I believe that you measure success not by your own personal achievement, but by the advancement of people with whom you have the opportunity to come in contact.”

ONE GOAL: To Mentor
“I believe that success is the intersection of where opportunity meets preparation.”
Dr. Henry Lewis III

SUNDAY

2 1955: Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. calls for nonviolent protests. If African Americans are not allowed to register and vote, they will not be allowed to vote.


16 1865: Abraham Lincoln issues Emancipation Proclamation. 1940: Benjamin O. Davis Sr. becomes U.S. Army’s first black general.

23 1864: George Washington Carver, agricultural scientist and inventor, born. 1948: Supreme Court rules blacks have right to live in areas free of racial restrictions.

30 1963: President Kennedy issues Executive Order 11012 banning job discrimination in the federal government.

MONDAY


10 1929: John Henry Johnson, first black astronaut, is born.

17 1964: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is shot to death.

24 1969: Inez Haywood, first black woman to argue a case before the U.S. Supreme Court, is born.

WEDNESDAY

4 1930: Charles A. Lindbergh, aviator, is born.


18 1955: Marian Anderson debuts as first black artist to perform at the Metropolitan Opera.


THURSDAY

5 1940: Elizabeth Eckford is the first African American student to enter Little Rock Central High School.

12 1975: William T. Coleman named secretary of transportation.

19 1961: Leontyne Price, world-renowned opera singer, makes her Metropolitan Opera debut.

26 1981: Linwood Peace, world renowned opera singer, performs at Metropolitan Opera after successful debuting of women’s roles.

FRIDAY

6 1870: Hiram Revels elected first black U.S. senator, replacing Jefferson Davis for the remainder of his term.


20 1990: L. Douglas Wilder inaugurated as Virginia’s first black governor.

27 1971: Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated.

SATURDAY

7 1831: Sojourner Truth addresses first Black political convention. 1973: James Earl Jones becomes first black Broadway actor to win a Tony Award.

14 1949: James Robert Gladden becomes first black to argue a case before the U.S. Supreme Court.

21 1981: William J. Clinton is elected as the 42nd president of the United States.

28 1940: Ruby Bridges is the first black student to enter an all-white elementary school.

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AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY CALENDAR

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