

PHARMACY: President and CEO, multiple pharmacies in Eastern Tennessee

EDUCATION: University of Tennessee College of Pharmacy in Memphis, 1977

ONE JOB HIS ENTIRE CAREER: “Early on, I realized that independent community pharmacy was where I wanted to be, and I focused on that goal.” Alan’s passion for independent community pharmacy stems from the fact that he can choose the issues and activities to support or provide in his community, and then just do it without being subject to corporate approval or support. When Alan graduated from pharmacy school, his family bought a community pharmacy. And so, at age 23, with some help from his parents, he was thrust into the role of managing a community pharmacy and has been doing so ever since.

SERVICE EXPANSION: As they grew, Alan moved the pharmacy three times into larger spaces. He then opened an additional pharmacy before purchasing two others. In 1994, while looking for a niche to separate themselves from others, Alan started compliance packaging for local group homes who needed a solution for untrained personnel administering medicines. “That portion of the business grew over the years to the point that we separated the (long-term care) business from the retail pharmacy into its own location in 2009.”

His pharmacies offer walk-in vaccines and have conducted off-site vaccine clinics. “The first year that pharmacists could administer vaccines in Tennessee was 1999, and we have made that an important part of our pharmacy ever since.” The last part of the puzzle was compounding in a more serious way. Simple compounding had always been there, but starting 15 years ago, the pharmacists have made it part of Corley’s core business model.

HELPING THE NEXT GENERATION: Northeast Tennessee suffered from a shortage of pharmacists from the 1980s through the 2000s. Alan, along with local pharmacists and community leaders, explored adding a college of pharmacy to East Tennessee State University.

“In 2005, Gov. Phil Bredesen agreed to opening the college, but did not agree to provide any state funding for the venture. He challenged our local communities to raise \$5 million in 90 days,” he says. The goal was met in just 58 days. The college graduated its first class in 2010, and still retains a focus on community pharmacy.

DOING MORE FOR THE COMMUNITY: “I think the pivotal role that community pharmacies played during the pandemic garnered significant attention about the value of community pharmacies in primary health care, and we need to continue to build on that recognition. We are not just in the pharmacy to make a buck – we are here to support the entire community in many ways.” Alan’s pharmacies are a resource to the community through public programs about important health care concerns and speaking to students about careers. One of their most appreciated meetings helped people understand the Part D program as it rolled out. “More recently, we provided local law enforcement agencies with the first Narcan kits [and training] for their officers before they were freely available. We have also partnered with local volunteer fire departments to provide AEDs to each department.”

ADVOCACY IS KEY: Influenced by NCPA’s Congressional Pharmacy Fly-In, Alan saw how important legislative activities were to his everyday practice and success. “That realization led me to actively participate and seek office in the Tennessee Pharmacists Association to help grow and support its influence on practice in Tennessee.” As president, TPA held their first Legislative Day in 1991. It’s now a successful mid-year meeting focused on board of pharmacy and legislative activities and helps keep pharmacy an important and recognized political player in Tennessee.

Alan also served a term on the Tennessee Board of Pharmacy and participated in rule-making that allowed pharmacists to expand their scope of practice. “It’s important for all pharmacists to participate and have their voices heard in professional associations to keep pharmacy in the forefront of providing quality health care to our patients.”

NCPA IS A VITAL PARTNER: Alan has been a member since he was a pharmacy student, back when NCPA was still known as NARD. He received a loan from the NARD Dargavel Foundation to help pay for his last year of pharmacy school. “NCPA has always been the single national organization that I felt best represented my interests as an independent community pharmacist.”

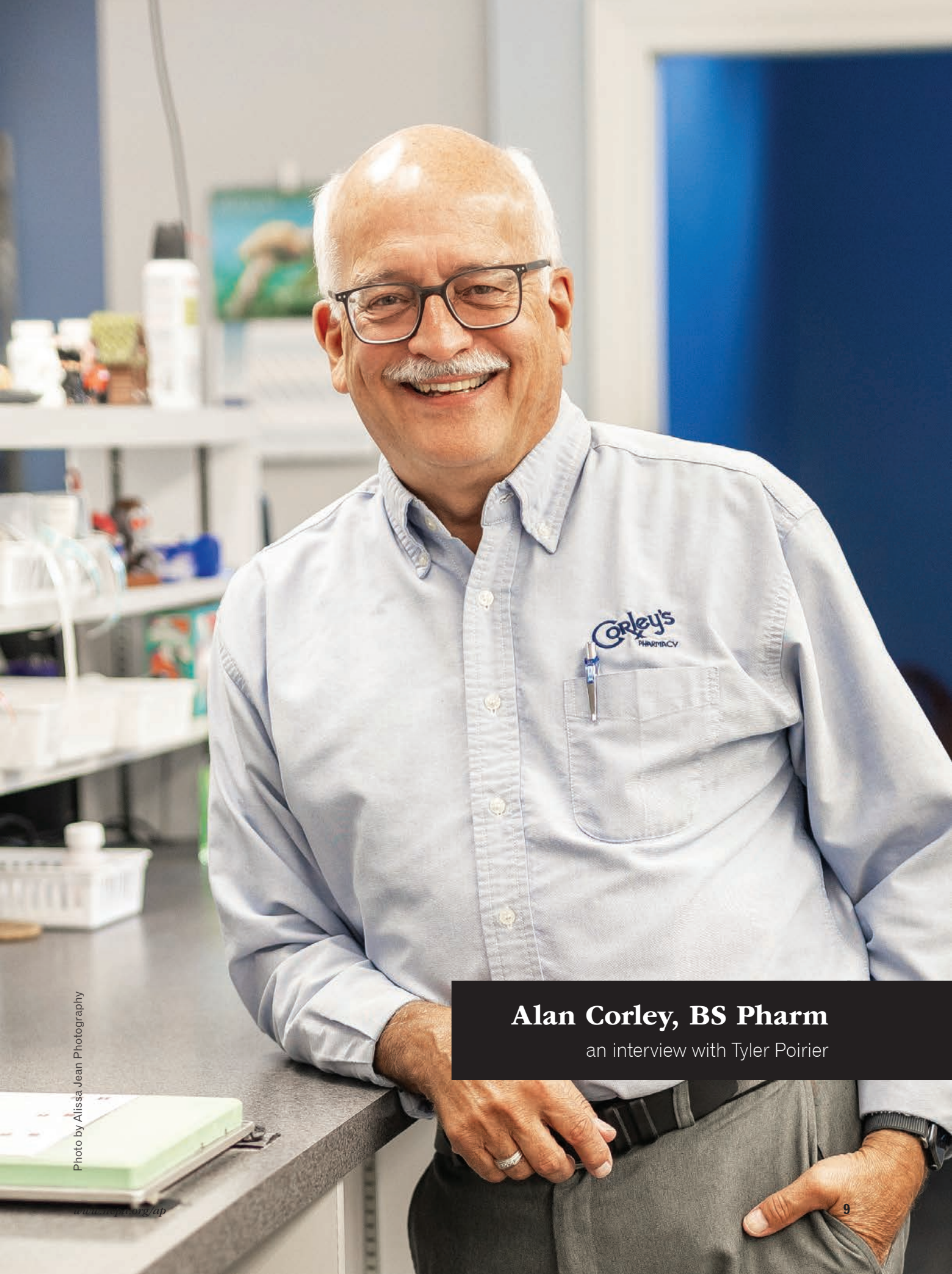


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Alan Corley, BS Pharm
an interview with Tyler Poirier