

As Employers Demand Greater PBM Oversight, ACoBS Awards CPBS Designation to 21 Professionals

New cohort completes specialized training in pharmacy benefit management as employers, brokers, and advisors seek stronger oversight of drug spend and PBM costs

DETROIT, MI, UNITED STATES, March 24, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As employers and benefits advisors face rising drug costs, limited transparency, and growing scrutiny of pharmacy benefit manager performance, the American College of Benefit Specialists ([ACoBS](#)) announced that 21 professionals have earned the Certified Pharmacy Benefits Specialist, or [CPBS](#), designation.

The designation is designed to help benefits professionals, consultants, brokers, TPAs, HR leaders, and finance decision-makers better understand the financial, contractual, and operational mechanics of pharmacy benefit management. At a time when pharmacy benefits remain one of the least understood and least effectively managed areas of employer-sponsored healthcare, the CPBS program aims to prepare professionals to evaluate these arrangements with greater discipline and a fiduciary standard of care.

The newest CPBS designees are:

Toni Bean

Gil Diaz

Joel Diaz

Samaris Diaz

Ria Lei Marie E.



Sandra Guckian
Elizabeth Harvey
Kevin Johnson
Stephen Kalargyros
Matthew Kim
John Lee III (TJ Lee)
Suzanne Levan
Kevin Liu
Paulette Loyola
Elio Megaro
Robin Murphy
Danitza Rodríguez Ramírez
Matthew Rusgis
Brian Sloan
Krystal Soto
Eric Frontera Zayas



ACoBS also recognized Matthew Rusgis for achieving the highest overall score in the cohort, as well as the highest score on the final exam.

“These are the kind of people you want advising your team,” said [Tyrone Squires](#), founder of ACoBS. “They have the self-discipline to work through difficult material, the smarts to understand a complex and often confusing part of the healthcare system, and the curiosity to keep digging past surface-level answers. In pharmacy benefits, those traits matter because employers cannot afford weak oversight or uninformed decision-making.”

Graduate feedback pointed not only to the rigor of the program, but also to its practical business value. John Lee III (TJ Lee) said:

“The CPBS course was certainly intense, but the impact was immediate. I’ve written two new groups since starting, and incorporating what I learned from your program played a direct role in assisting those closes. I’m excited for the future and look forward to staying connected.”

Stephen Kalargyros, AFE, Financial Regulation Specialist at The INS Companies, added:

“This course was truly fantastic. One of, if not the, best course in the pharmacy/insurance field I have taken.”

“Too many decision-makers are expected to oversee pharmacy benefits without ever being taught how the system actually works,” said Tyrone Squires, founder of ACoBS. “That gap has real consequences for employers and plan members. The CPBS designation was created to help

close it.”

Unlike broader health benefits education programs, CPBS focuses specifically on pharmacy benefit management, including plan design, formulary strategy, PBM contract terms, rebate economics, utilization controls, fiduciary oversight, and cost-containment strategies. The program is intended to equip professionals with working knowledge they can apply in real-world benefit decisions.

For employers and advisors looking to improve oversight of pharmacy spend, the designation signals focused training in an area where poor decisions, weak contracts, and misaligned incentives can drive unnecessary cost.

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