

COMMUNITY

MISSISSAUGA PHARMACIST WINS PROVINCIAL AWARD

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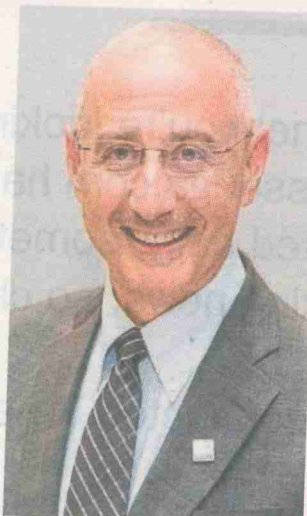
A pharmacist living and working in Mississauga has been recognized for outstanding achievements in his field.

John Girgis was named Pharmacist of the Year by the Ontario Pharmacists Association in June, an award that recognizes leadership, commitment to continued education and the implementation of new services.

Born in Columbus, Ohio, and educated at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Penn., Girgis wrote his pharmacy board exam in Toronto and was licensed as a pharmacist in Ontario in 1991. He opened his first pharmacy in Oakville in 1992.

After working in the U.S. hospitals and big-box drugstore chains like Rite Aid and Grey Drugs, Girgis set his sights on starting a business from the ground up.

With his wife, Susie, acting as his business manager, Girgis now runs four independent pharmacies: two in Mississauga, one in Etobicoke and one in downtown Toronto.



Alex Heidbuechel

The Ontario Pharmacists Association has named Mississauga-based pharmacist John Girgis as their Pharmacist of the Year.

Independent pharmacare, he says, is an opportunity to custom-tailor treatment to each individual in a way that big names don't.

"The independent pharmacist knows you by name, knows your history without even looking it up - many times, he knows your family and knows holistically about each client," he said.

His clients often take advantage of a medical re-

view, where they meet with the pharmacist to create an individualized and holistic approach to their care.

According to Bill Wilson, interim CEO of OPA, it is Girgis's personal touch that makes him such a standout.

"(John) has led the way for his pharmacy colleagues in demonstrating how interprofessional care can improve the health care outcomes of patients," Wilson said. "Whether he is helping his patients manage diabetes, helping them quit smoking or introducing them to new pharmacy technologies, John always puts his patients first."

Girgis has taken an innovative approach to managing time and resources within his pharmacies. He was the first independent pharmacist in Canada to install an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system for his clients and the first in Ontario to install a robot machine in his pharmacy.

In Mississauga, Girgis can be found at Apple-Hills Medical Facility, on Bloor Street East, and Heritage Glen Pharmacy, on Glen Erin Drive.