Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine (VTCSOM)

Statement: Honor Societies
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Alpha Omega Alpha Society
Alpha Omega Alpha (AΩA), founded in 1902, is the national medical honor society. AΩA seeks to promote service and humanism while encouraging academic and community leadership. Election into AΩA is an honor signifying a lasting commitment to scholarship, leadership, professionalism, and service. A lifelong honor, membership in the society confers recognition for a physician’s dedication to the profession and art of healing. Criteria for election into AΩA are detailed in its Constitution. About 3000 students, alumni, housestaff and faculty are elected each year. Since its founding in 1902, more than 150,000 members have been inducted into the society.

VTCSOM is proud to host the Delta Virginia chapter of Alpha Omega Alpha, a student run group committed to upholding the ideals of the national society. Our chapter sponsors VTCSOM students for a variety of fellowships in research, service, and leadership. The Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine chapter was established in 2014.

Up to ten students will be selected for possible nomination based on their overall academic performance and letters of distinction. From this group, up to six students (15% of the class) will be selected for final nomination into AΩA based not only on academic criteria but on leadership activity, research achievements, community service, interprofessionalism, humanism, and clinical performance. Two students will be selected during the third year and the remaining four students will be selected early in the fourth year. More information on our selection process can be obtained by contacting VTCSOM AΩA leadership at VTCSOM.AOA@gmail.com.

Gold Humanism Honor Society
The Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine chapter of the Gold Humanism Honor Society (VTC-GHHS chapter) was established in 2013 with faculty and residents who had been inducted into the society at other institutions. A major goal in establishing this society was to foster a culture in the medical school in which the qualities of humanism and professionalism would be recognized and highly valued.

Students are selected midway through the M3 year and are nominated by peers using a validated questionnaire. The VTC-GHHS chapter then uses the results of this questionnaire to select the six (15% of the class) inductees.

The VTC-GHHS chapter selects a graduating student recipient of the Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Award. The student awardee will be selected by the VTC-GHHS chapter with input from the Deans and Department Chairs from among the six GHHS members in the graduating class. Attributes for the student awardee include:

- consistently demonstrates compassion and empathy in the delivery of care to patients
- illustrates professional and ethical behavior by example
• shows respect for everyone
• demonstrates cultural sensitivity in working with patients and family members of diverse backgrounds
• displays effective communication and listening skills—good rapport with patients
• understands patients’ need for interpretation of complex medical diagnosis and treatment and makes an effort to assure patient comprehension—shows respect for the patients’ viewpoint
• helps to articulate the patients’ concerns to attending physicians and others
• sensitive to the patients’ psychological well-being
• cooperative, easy to work with—engenders trust and confidence
• willing to help others and, when necessary, willing to seek help from others
• displays concern for the general welfare of the community and engages in volunteer activities
• seeks and accepts criticism, using it to improve performance
• committed to reflection and objective self-evaluation of his/her skills
• displays competence in scientific endeavors