

# AΩA AT USU

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALPHA OMEGA ALPHA  
MARYLAND GAMMA CHAPTER

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## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

### Welcome to the AΩA Fall Newsletter!

Thank you for taking the time to read about who we are and the initiatives we're pursuing this year. For those of you who are new to AΩA at USU, we are the national medical honors society. Each spring, we select the highest performing students and induct them into our chapter. While becoming a member of AΩA is rewarding in its own right, the opportunities we have to improve the experience of the USU students are far more important to us.

One such upcoming opportunity we are all looking forward to is Specialty Night at USU! Due to the social distancing necessitated by COVID, many of our usual events and activities have been canceled for safety considerations. That said, our Specialty Night Officers 2LT Michael Clarion, 2LT Timothy Binkley, and 2d Lt Laura Barrera, have been working non-stop with Dr. Lopreiato to transform our annual event into a multiday series of virtual panels. Make sure you read below for more information. If you're looking for more advice on how to survive and thrive in medical school, keep your eyes peeled for upcoming events by our Underclass Outreach Officers 2d Lt Ryan Frazier, ENS John Thomas, ENS Laura Kraemer, ENS Erin Parker, and the rest of the Peer Mentoring team.

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT (CONT)

Additionally, we are very excited to announce the development of the new Peer Tutoring Program at USU, spearheaded by our Vice President 2LT Kaitlyn Mullin, Dr. Landoll, and our amazing USU faculty. What was initially a small pilot program implemented this summer to assist remediating learners has exploded in size, reaching more than 60 learners with the help of approximately 40 tutors. We are incredibly hopeful that this initiative will become a fixture of academic success at USU.

Furthermore, 2LT Alex Villahermosa, our AQA Research Coordinator, in combination with Dr. Ottolini and several other USU students, is working on the development of a new peer-to-peer research site, which will provide mentorship and guidance to students seeking to get involved with some of the great science being conducted at USU. Be on the lookout for more information as this develops.

Finally, we are already looking forward into the next few months when we will invite a whole new set of AQA members to join us and take up the responsibilities of the chapter. It's incredible to think that in just a few short months we, the Class of 2021, will be leaving USU to continue the next steps on our journey.

As we all know, this has been a very challenging year. Many of us are stressed, burnt out, and missing out on experiences that we previously took for granted. It is my sincere hope that, in the initiatives below, you will find an opportunity to get involved, make a new connection, or learn something new. The industry, motivation, and innovation of our students has been, and continues to be, the cornerstone for what makes USU great.

A huge shout out to ENS Jessica Miller, our Newsletter Officer, for compiling the achievements of the past six months and sharing them with our community.

Best of luck, and stay healthy!

2LT James Fraley

Class of 2021 AQA President

[james.fraley@usuhs.edu](mailto:james.fraley@usuhs.edu)

## AWARDS

Interested in submitting your work at a national level? Looking for an opportunity to get published? Check out these opportunities provided through both the national and local AΩA communities. For more information about these awards and research opportunities, please look to our website, <http://www.usuaoa.org/> or <https://www.alphaomegaalpha.org/programs.html>. Additionally, keep an eye out for further information from our AΩA Awards Officers, 2LT James Kimball and ENS Stephanie Ha.

### AΩA National Program Deadlines 2021:

- January 1st, 2021: Helen H. Glaser Student Essay Award
- January 5th, 2021: The Pharos Poetry Award
- February 2nd, 2021: Carolyn L. Kuckein Student Research Fellowship
- February 16th, 2021: Medical Student Service Leadership Project Grant/Award
- March 9th, 2021: Fellowship in Leadership Award
- April 2nd, 2021: Robert J. Glaser Distinguished Teacher Award



## PEER RESEARCH

Another AΩA outreach effort currently in motion is the Near Peer Research Mentorship Initiative, spearheaded by Research Coordinator 2LT Alex Villahermosa ([alexander.villahermosa@usuhs.edu](mailto:alexander.villahermosa@usuhs.edu)) and Class of 2021 students 2LT Sarah Walsh and 2LT Sean Young, with the guidance of the Assistant Dean for Student Research and Capstone Program Director, Dr. Martin Ottolini.

The goal of this program is to create a directory of USUHS students with diverse research experience who are willing to assist others in navigating the process, and to make that directory available to junior medical students as well as the broader USUHS community. The first notice to sign on to this program as a mentor has been disseminated, but stay tuned for further information, including ongoing mentorship opportunities or becoming a mentee!

## ELECTION ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the next few weeks, emails will be sent out garnering AΩA nominations for residents, fellows, faculty, and alumni. Those that are nominated will be able to apply through the USU AΩA website. The deadline for nominations is planned for early February, with the announcement of new inductees in March. The student AΩA inductees for the medical student Class of 2022 will also be announced at this time; their applications will likely be distributed in February.

For more information about Resident, Fellow, Faculty and Alumni elections, please contact 2d Lt Kaitlin Beyrau ([kaitlin.beyrau@usuhs.edu](mailto:kaitlin.beyrau@usuhs.edu)), 2LT Molly Lonneman ([molly.lonneman@usuhs.edu](mailto:molly.lonneman@usuhs.edu)), ENS Naina Mangalmurti ([naina.mangalmurti@usuhs.edu](mailto:naina.mangalmurti@usuhs.edu)), or ENS Samuel Shalov ([samuel.shalov@usuhs.edu](mailto:samuel.shalov@usuhs.edu)).

For information regarding student Elections, please contact ENS Amanda Lu ([amanda.lu@usuhs.edu](mailto:amanda.lu@usuhs.edu)), 2d Lt Steven Mowen ([steven.mowen@usuhs.edu](mailto:steven.mowen@usuhs.edu)), 2LT Brianna Murphy ([brianna.murphy@usuhs.edu](mailto:brianna.murphy@usuhs.edu)), or 2d Lt Morgan Wall ([morgan.wall@usuhs.edu](mailto:morgan.wall@usuhs.edu)).

# PEER TUTORING PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

While the pandemic has limited many of our typical volunteering efforts and annual events, it has also provided a unique opportunity for AQA to expand the chapter's footprint within our community. Last year, the chapter launched phenomenal new initiatives with the Peer and Alumni Mentoring Programs, which have fostered relationships across the DoD medical community that we hope to see continue for many years. This year, we built off that momentum and utilized the transition to a virtual environment to launch the new Peer Tutoring Program!

The primary goal of the Peer Tutoring Program is to assist first- and second-year medical students with study skills, practice questions, and tricky concepts during the pre-clerkship modules. Although USUHS faculty are incredible resources who are also extremely generous with their time, peer-to-peer education provides a way for post-clerkship students to pass on everything they have learned – resources, experiences, mnemonics, etc. – to their future colleagues.

The secondary goal is to create opportunities for leadership and teaching experience for our upper-level medical students to hone those skills prior to residency. Our tutors are supported by a fantastic group of faculty mentors who have graciously volunteered their time to assist in identifying resources and improving teaching strategies. In addition, we have partnered with the Center for Health Professions Education so that each of our tutors will complete a series of online modules and graduate with a 9-credit introductory health professions education certificate as evidence of their hard work.

We piloted the program over the summer for our remediating learners with great success! The program has since expanded to assist over 50 students so far in the Foundations, Musculoskeletal, Reproduction & Endocrinology, and Multisystems modules. Over 90% of our learners have elected to stay with their tutors for additional modules. Our tutors are available both for in-person and virtual teaching sessions, and they come from a wide variety of backgrounds – different specialty interests, work and educational experiences prior to medical school, and teaching and learning styles. We are extremely excited about what our tutors – and our learners – have accomplished so far, and we hope to expand this program in the years to come!

Whether you are a pre-clerkship learner seeking tutoring, a faculty member interested in supporting a tutor, or a fourth-year medical student looking for more teaching experience, please do not hesitate to contact our program through 2LT Kaitie Mullin at [kaitlyn.mullin@usuhs.edu](mailto:kaitlyn.mullin@usuhs.edu). We're excited to hear from you!

## SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

Our semi-annual meeting has been canceled this year given in-person gathering limitations due to COVID and the absence of a designated period for the Class of 2021 to come together due to Operation Bushmaster rescheduling. However, chapter meetings are broadly intended to update both members and non-members on current AQA operations. All are welcome to attend! Be sure to check your inboxes and RSVP to the next chapter meeting, which is likely to be scheduled some time in the Spring of 2021.

## SPECIALTY WEEK

This year, USUHS, HPSP, and HSCP students will have the opportunity to explore residency programs from Military Treatment Facilities across the nation via Zoom, in the form of AQA's Virtual Military Medical Specialty Week. This event will take place from November 16th through the 19th, at 1700 to 2000 EST each day. Residency program directors and service specialty leaders will be available to provide details about their respective programs and specialties, and to answer student questions.

Interested parties may access <http://www.usuaoa.org/virtual-specialty-week> regarding the schedule for their specialties of interest, specific program previews, and Zoom links. Please RSVP via the link at the top of the webpage for whichever meeting you plan to attend, and submit any questions you may have in advance. For further information, please reach out to the AQA student leadership who have worked tirelessly with AQA Specialty Night Advisor Dr. Joseph Lopreiato to make this possible: 2d Lt Laura Barrera ([laura.barrera@usuhs.edu](mailto:laura.barrera@usuhs.edu)), 2LT Timothy Binkley ([timothy.binkley@usuhs.edu](mailto:timothy.binkley@usuhs.edu)), or 2LT Michael Clarion ([michael-jeremy.clarion@usuhs.edu](mailto:michael-jeremy.clarion@usuhs.edu)).

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

COVID-19 has amplified the challenges that our community members face on a daily basis. There are plenty of opportunities to volunteer—many of which you can do from your own home. If you are interested in any of the opportunities below, please email the AQA Volunteer Coordinator, 2LT Ava Lynn, at [ava.lynn@usuhs.edu](mailto:ava.lynn@usuhs.edu).

**Rockville Meals on Wheels (RMOW) Friendly Caller Program:** RMOW is looking for volunteers to make social phone calls to clients who have experienced increased isolation due to COVID. After being paired with a client, you would call them once or twice weekly at a mutually agreeable time to have a friendly conversation.

Training: Complete a background check, fill out an interest form (for pairing with a client), review the Friendly Caller Program, and attend a 30-minute online orientation.

Commitment: One to two calls weekly for at least two months.

**The Trevor Project Crisis Counselor:** The Trevor Project provides crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to LGBTQ+ people under the age of 25. As the caseload has nearly doubled since the start of COVID-19, this organization is seeking volunteers for Crisis Counselors.

Training: Fill out an application, complete a background check, and complete the 40-hour online training.

Commitment: One three-hour shift weekly (digital messaging) or two four-hour shifts monthly (telephone) for at least one year.

**The Smithsonian Transcription Center:** Help transcribe historical documents in the Smithsonian archives.

Training: None—just create an account on <https://transcription.si.edu/>, and choose a project that you would like to collaborate on.

Commitment: None.

# CURRENT AQA OFFICERS AT USU

Have questions about AQA and our initiatives? Interested in understanding more about the application or nomination process? Contact our current Class of 2021 Officers at their USUHS emails with your questions or comments!

President: 2LT James Fraley

Vice President: 2LT Kaitlyn Mullin

Treasurer: ENS Andrew Wilsnack

Webmaster: 2LT Dmitriy Treyster

Resident/Faculty/Fellow/Alumni Elections: 2d Lt Kaitlin Beyrau, 2LT Molly Lonneman,

ENS Naina Mangalmurti, ENS Samuel Shalov

Student Elections: ENS Amanda Lu, 2d Lt Steven Mowen, 2LT Brianna Murphy,

2d Lt Morgan Wall

Social Chair: 2LT Nicholas Tannenbaum

Underclass Outreach: 2d Lt Ryan Frazier, ENS Laura Kraemer, ENS Erin Parker,

ENS John Thomas

Awards: ENS Stephanie Ha, 2LT James Kimball

Research Coordinator: 2LT Alex Villahermosa

AQA Banquet: ENS Ryan Craig, 2LT Riley Gebner,

Alumni Outreach: 2LT Emily Ferraro

Specialty Night: 2d Lt Laura Barrera, 2LT Timothy Binkley, 2LT Michael Clarion

Volunteer Coordinator: 2LT Ava Lynn

Newsletter: ENS Jessica Miller