Message from the President

Greetings from the University of Washington Chapter of Alpha Omega Alpha! We are pleased to share with you several of our completed and ongoing projects that embody AΩA’s values of leadership, service, and scholarship. Our chapter is exceptionally engaged in service and we take pride in the positive impact our efforts have had on the student body, School of Medicine (SOM) at large, and our local community.

We maintained our long-standing officer positions of President, Vice President, and Secretary to oversee administrative tasks, continued several projects begun by previous AΩA cadre, and created new projects in support of service to our community and the SOM. Each project was headed by one or two leaders to facilitate a clear vision for the project, to delegate tasks, and to provide a clear line of responsibility for project accomplishment. Project leaders volunteered to head projects based on their personal strengths and interests; our project leaders truly embodied the AΩA ideals of leadership, service, and scholarship. This system proved highly effective and allowed for sustained participation among many UW AΩA members.

Ongoing projects from previous AΩA students were continued and expanded. The leaders of the Clerkship and Electives Fair saw a tremendous student turnout. The AΩA Pearls of Wisdom team oversaw a revision and refinement of this useful tool. The Turkey Book underwent a detailed revision that included numerous updates and improvements, as well as increased sales both regionally and nationally. AΩA collaborated with Gold Humanism Society members to support a local school’s dissection lab with great results. The AΩA mentorship program increased in scope, and numerous AΩA members served as mentors for first, second, and third year medical students. Finally, some of our MD-PhD students made tremendous strides in creating a research mentorship structure, as well as supporting the winner (a UW first year medical student!) of the national Carolyn Kuckein Student Research Fellowship.

Two new projects were undertaken by this year’s AΩA chapter: a project intended to support the creation of a longitudinal professionalism curriculum for the SOM, and a project that began to look into areas of diversity within the SOM and AΩA. The professionalism team partnered with Dr. Molly Blackley-Jackson, head of the SOM Continuous Professionalism Improvement Committee, to synchronize and integrate efforts. The team created a concept for a longitudinal curriculum that begins upon entry to the SOM, continues through the pre-clinical and clinical years, and culminates at capstone immediately prior to graduation. The diversity team delved deeply into areas of underrepresentation and unequal outcomes for minorities in both AΩA and the SOM, receiving tremendous support from the administration in their efforts to conduct a root cause analysis, as well as to develop programs that support underrepresented students in order to optimize their potential.

Lastly, our year was concluded with a service project at a local park and a wonderful banquet honoring the new inductees. Our banquet featured an inspiring speech from Dr.
Maxine Papadakis, our ΑΩΑ Visiting Professor and a nationally recognized expert in the field of medical professionalism.

We sincerely thank you for your support of our chapter and for making possible many of our efforts, including our wonderful visit by Dr. Papadakis. We are confident that our junior inductees will carry forward our history of meaningful service and collaborative spirit, and we enthusiastically welcome them to membership in this tremendous organization.

Chad Ulrich, UW ΑΩΑ President

**UW ΑΩΑ Chapter**

**Chapter Counselor:** Douglas Paauw, MD  
**President:** Chad Ulrich  
**Vice President:** Alina Plavsky  
**Secretary:** Brianne H. Rowan  
**Members:** Eric Basler, Lauren Benson, Russell Berg, Jessica Blumhagen, Jessica Brice, Joshua Calvert, Jacob Caylor, Erin Cravez, Zoe Cross, Katherine DeJong, Deanna Glassman, Katherine Grunzweig, Courtney Gwinn, Ryan Hall, Kirsten Hansen Day, Angene Johnson, Mark Lisowski, Yusha “Katie” Liu, Daniel Low, Caitlin Mase, Varvara Mazina, Kelli McEntee, Natalie Melin, Samantha Moen, Benjamin Perin, Alina Plavsky, Andrea Rea, David Roach, Brianne H. Rowan, Brittany Sellers, Mary Shickich, Michael Tan, and Chad Ulrich

**Congratulations to the Spring 2016 “Junior” inductees:** Daniel Bechtold, Emily Bulley, Chris Erley, Anna Greer, Lauren Jacobson, Sophie Miller, Caitlin Milligan, Anna Shamitoff.

**Project Updates**

**ΑΩΑ Turkey Book**  
The UW Turkey Book is a wonderful compendium of useful facts, key concepts, and practical tips and advice for the core clerkships of third and fourth year. This has been a rich tradition of our chapter; the book is now in its 32nd year! The Turkey Book has traditionally been sold as a paperback booklet, but two years ago the ΑΩΑ class made the transition to a phone application, available on both iPhone and Android devices. This was done with the help of AgileMD, a mobile app company based in San Francisco. The applications have been very successful, not only at selling to UW students, but to the medical student community at large.

With the Turkey Book available in smart phone format, it is easier to access and review on the fly during clerkships. This year, AgildMD did a sales analysis and based on their recommendations for increasing our revenue, we lowered the price from $18.99 to $14.99 for the general public and increased the price from $7.99 to $9.99 for UW students. The prices will be monitored and adjusted accordingly over the next year. The Turkey Book
sales are up 71% over the past 6 months; availability as an application is making the Turkey Book accessible to all those that desire the incredible resource. Each section of the document was updated for continued changes in the field by current AΩA members this year.

Clerkship and Electives Fair
As medical students make the transition from their didactic to clinical education at the end of second year two common questions on most medical students minds are:
- How do I make the transition to the wards?
- What specialty is a right fit for me?
In an effort to help rising medical students adjust to the change from classroom to patient room, AΩA organizes the annual Clerkship and Elective Fair. Nearly 25 MS4 students (both AΩA and non-AΩA members) planning to match in a number of specialties volunteered to make themselves available to answer questions regarding their chosen field and helped to update a Specialty Tips sheet. These sheets are brief specialty-specific documents meant to give some guidance about how MS1s and MS2s can plan their clinical experiences and their application to residency programs. For specialties that are not represented by the current AΩA group, the project coordinators reached out to other MS4s such as interest group leaders to help develop the Specialty Tips. Questions covered by the documents include reasons to consider a career in that specialty; which electives to take/away rotations/sub internships; how to plan your schedule for that specialty; advice for ERAS and interview; as well as what to look for in residency programs. The documents were used as talking points for the AΩA clerkships and electives fair and were made available to the entire MS2 and MS3 classes, with contact information for the AΩA members that were available for additional communication and support regarding their specialty. Additionally a link to the AΩA Pearls of Wisdom was provided on each tips sheet and sent out to the class. This year over 100 MS1 and MS2 students attended this two-hour event in the A300 Lobby.

Pearls of Wisdom
UW AΩA has long overseen an important resource for second- and third-years as they transition to their clinical clerkships and residency applications: the AΩA Pearls of Wisdom document. This resource compiles advice from current AΩA members on how best to learn and succeed on various clerkships, such as efficient pre-rounding, which resources to consult, how to practice effective time management, and how to create study plans for end-of-clerkship exams. Included is our advice on preparing for Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS.

We concentrated the knowledge gained after completing our ERAS applications, scheduling and successfully navigating travels for most our interviews. We decided to survey the graduating MS4 AΩA members and some of our strong applicant colleagues about applying to residency in their chosen specialty. In this edition of Pearls, we expanded the different specialties represented in the section on applying to residency as well as the section on choosing a medical specialty.

Finally, the most notable change in the 2016 edition of AΩA Pearls of Wisdom is the
representation of our words of advice in an efficient and visual depiction where the most important and frequent words of wisdom are the most prominent. We hope that our efforts in streamlining Pearls will allow students to utilize this resource more readily.

**AΩA Mentors Program**

We were excited and honored to continue our mentoring program, offering mentorship to MS1 through MS3 students. Over twenty AΩA members were paired with sixty-five MS1 through MS3 students who desired mentorship from a senior AΩA student. This year, we also updated the outreach survey to make it more concise and relevant. Information that we collected in order to best match students with mentors included career and research interests, concurrent degree, and service learning desires. MS1 through MS3 students were subsequently matched as closely as possible to an AΩA member of similar background and personal interests. Our members came from a variety of career interests and experiences, allowing them to share their knowledge of a wide range of topics. Students received one-on-one peer mentoring from senior students in a variety of modalities from email, to telephone, to in person meetings. Mentees were able to select the frequency and type of mentoring they received, allowing the mentee to engage in the mentoring relationship as much or as little as he or she felt necessary. As we welcome our new members this spring, we look forward to again offering mentorship to students of all years.

**Health & Science Education Outreach**

This year the University of Washington AΩA chapter continued its partnership with a local middle school, Eckstein. We worked with Ms. Desler’s 7th grade class for their Human Body Curriculum by having volunteers attend the three days of rat dissection lab. Each day of the lab focused on a specific anatomical dissection, including musculature, abdominal and thoracic contents, and brain anatomy. Three to four medical students volunteered for each time slot, and were able to provide skills and knowledge specific to their own fields of interest throughout the dissections. Because many AΩA students were in clerkships during the day, we recruited many MS1 and MS2 students to fill in the gaps, as they had more daytime availability. Over 50 middle school students were involved in the dissections. Students asked many questions about medical school experiences and past experiences with human surgery and dissection. This was a great hands-on opportunity for volunteers and Ms. Desler voiced her appreciation of our help and how much her students enjoyed having medical students around.
New this year was a broadening of our partnership with Eckstein Middle School to include help with their annual Science and Engineering Fair on May 26, 2016. For the first time, medical students participated in providing scientific demonstration and helping judge student projects. Again, AΩA members enlisted the help of MS1s and MS2s to assist in identifying suitable projects. This year, the use of real pig lungs to demonstrate lung anatomy and simulated smoker's lungs to demonstrate the harms of tobacco were used in conjunction with volunteers from the UW's Tar Wars program. The event was greatly enjoyed by middle school students and medical students alike, and we hope to continue our participation in years to come.

Carolyn L Kuckein Student Research Fellowship

The Carolyn L Kuckein Student Research Fellowship is a research grant administered by the national AΩA office in honor of longtime administrator and honorary society member, Carolyn Kuckein. It provides $5,000 to support medical student research and first, second and third year medical students from schools with active AΩA chapters are eligible to apply. Each AΩA chapter may nominate one applicant to the national selection round. This year, we received a record number of seven applications from University of Washington Medical Students. With the help of our review committee, including David Roach, Kiki Mase, Jessica Blumhagen, Katie Liu and Russell Berg, Christina Tull’s application, titled, "Determining the effects of retinoic acid treatment on immune cell response against growth of IDH1-mutated glioma in novel mouse model" was named as the University of Washington nominee. In very exciting news, it was recently announced that Christina, a UWSOM MS1, will be receiving the 2016 Carolyn L Kuckein Student Research Fellowship to support her research. Christina’s research can be summarized as follows:

“Glioma is most common type of brain tumor and arise from glial cells, non-neuronal cells that provide support and protection for neurons, as well as maintain homeostasis in the central and peripheral nervous system. The cause of gliomas is complex, and the current standard of care for gliomas is surgery followed by radiation and chemotherapy, with survival correlated to grade. Those with glioblastoma multiforme, the most common and aggressive glioma, survive an average of 12 months after diagnosis. The Holland lab recently developed a novel mutant IDH1-expressing glioma mouse model, and preliminary data shows lowered immune migration to mutant IDH1-expressing gliomas compared to wild-type IDH1 (wtIDH1) gliomas. We postulate that this immune invasion may be critical for tumor survival and suggest that increased host immune cell activation, invasion, and migration to the tumor cells will suppress tumor growth. In this study we will intraperitoneally inject glioma-bearing mice with retinoic acid, a metabolite critical for growth, development and activation of immune cells, and measure survival between mice with mutant-IDH1 gliomas to those with wild-type IDH1 gliomas. We hypothesize that intraperitoneal retinoic acid treatment will stimulate and recruit more immune cells to the site of mutant IDH1-expressing gliomas, which will inhibit tumor growth and in turn increase survival.”

Congratulations to Christina Tull, and we wish her luck in her upcoming study. We wish to
also thank Dr. Douglas Paauw and Emily Slager for support in the nomination of Christina’s application.

**Pharos Essay & Poetry Contest**

Each year the National AOA Organization offers opportunities for medical students to take part in multiple competitions. This year, UWSOM had a record number of submissions. We had nine University of Washington medical students submitting works of art to the AOA Pharos Poetry and Helen H. Glaser Student Essay competitions. These two competitions are encouraged by the National AOA organization as a forum to foster creativity in medicine. The competition is strong, and while none of our UWSOM students won, we will continue to encourage this creative avenue of expression. In Spring of 2014, UWSOM student (and current AOA member) Benji Perin wrote the poem "Elegy" that was published in Pharos. His poem can be found below:

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At first I enjoyed telling my friends about dissection, and they were eager to listen about our first cut
how his chest was like a great white ghost and
how we held our scalpels aloft like kites, swaying in the wind.
But the deeper we went—the lungs, the heart, the face—
the more my friends’ gaze shifted,
their fingers fiddled.
It was around that time I began to see secrets written on the body.
how her back must’ve ached with the impossible arc of scoliosis
how the tumors ate his breath away,
and how the pathologist said of the triplet placenta,
‘yes, all of the specimens came from autopsy, unfortunately.”
What lonesome wisdom anatomy brings us
of tragedy best left unmentioned to the neighbors and children,
of seeing through the skin of our loved ones.
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**Professionalism Initiative**

We are excited to have introduced a new project focusing on professionalism this year. This project evolved out of a desire for AΩA involvement in work the school of medicine Continuous Professionalism Improvement Committee is doing to develop a more integrated and complete professionalism curriculum. In coordination with the committee lead, Dr. Molly Blackley-Jackson, AΩA students met multiple times throughout the year to discuss possible avenues for developing professionalism in new students.

The team created a concept for a longitudinal curriculum that begins upon entry to the SOM, continues through the pre-clinical and clinical years, and culminates at capstone immediately prior to graduation. It was quickly determined that the qualities that we wanted to uphold as part of the curriculum were very similar to those upheld by AΩA: respect, responsibility, excellence, compassion, integrity/trust and leadership. Several aspects of this that are currently in development, including a “Welcome to the Profession” statement, integration of professional values and the code of ethics with the Hippocratic
oath session during orientation, video clips to be used throughout the curriculum, and clinical vignettes for use in clerkships. The most progress this year was made with the “Welcome to the Profession” statement, which will be made to all entering students by one of the deans, and which outlines the professionalism expectations. Clinical vignettes have also been collected from AΩA members and will be edited for future use in clerkships. We are excited to see the early aspects of this curriculum begin for the 2016-2017 entering class and to continue forming it as it develops in the next several years.

Diversity Project

Our second new project this year came after noticing that most inductees to AOA this year were white. Several students were concerned about the possibility of racial bias affecting student performance. With support from UWSOM administration, 5 AOA members have investigated this issue by examining data from the last several years at UWSOM, looking at clerkship grades, induction to AOA and Step 1 exam scores as it pertains to race. We also administered a survey to all UWSOM students, asking about their experience thus far at the school. Statistical analysis was clear: there are significant disparities between white and non-white students as measured by multiple performance indicators. This information was presented to the Dean of Student Affairs and Chief Diversity Officer with the aim of assembling an administratively-driven task force to eliminate racial disparities within UWSOM.

Community Service

At the end of the 2015-2016 academic year, the AOA Chapter decided to complete one last community service project as a way to mark the end of their year together. AOA students volunteered at a local Seattle park named Carkeek Park, where we maintained and cleared trails so that the park can continue to be a natural oasis within the city. The project involved 15 students getting together on a rainy Saturday morning at the end of May, prior to graduation.

Volunteer Clinical Faculty Award

Volunteer clinical faculty members are often inadequately appreciated and rarely recognized. Alpha Omega Alpha's Volunteer Clinical Faculty Award is presented annually to recognize a community physician who contributes with distinction to the education and training of clinical students. AΩA members were instructed to nominate physicians who effectively and generously donate their time, skill, and experience to teach clinical skills. This year’s recipient is Dr. Sarah Hufbauer. Dr. Hufbauer is a Family Medicine physician at Country Doctor Community Clinic here in Seattle. Dr. Hufbauer embodies the values of AOA in her longstanding commitment to the local Seattle community through her role as both a physician, a clinician, and a teacher. She is a model to so many students who rotate through her clinic and we are so thankful for her service. Dr. Hufbauer was presented with her award at our chapter’s Annual Banquet on May 23rd.
Visiting Professorship Program

Our chapter invited Dr. Maxine Papadakis, the Associate Dean of Student Affairs at UCSF. Dr. Papadakis has been deeply involved in teaching both undergraduate medical students and residents for many years, and she is the recipient of many teaching awards. She is also the recipient of the John P. Hubbard Award, given by the NBME, which is given to an individual who has made outstanding contributions to the pursuit of excellence in the field of evaluation in medicine. She received this award specifically for her academic research on medical school policies, student professionalism, and evaluating professional attributes of physicians. Her research has led to identifying what professional behaviors look like and remediating when unprofessional behaviors occur. This work in the field of assessing and addressing medical student professionalism has been recognized on a national level, and she truly is a leader of this field. Dr. Papadakis gave the keynote address at our chapter’s Annual Banquet on May 23rd. The next day, she met with AOA students for breakfast and then with our chapter’s councilor. In the afternoon, she met with an engaged group of students and faculty who were eager to discuss how to integrate Professionalism into our UWSOM curriculum.

UW Chapter AΩA Annual Banquet

At the end of every academic year, the UW Chapter of AΩA hosts a banquet during which new members are recognized and celebrated. The banquet is always a much anticipated social gathering of AΩA members and faculty mentors. This year’s banquet was held on Monday, May 23rd at The University Club on the UW main campus. A keynote address was given by visiting professor Dr. Maxine Papadakis, and all of the graduating seniors received their AΩA cords to wear at graduation.

Each year, current members nominate faculty, residents, and alumni who are thought to meet AΩA membership criteria. At the banquet, we welcomed and introduced the chapter’s newest inductees:

**Faculty:** Dr. Adeyinka Adedipe, Dr. Heather Bane, Dr. Thomas Lendvay, Dr. Lily Lo, & Dr. Karen Nilsen

**Residents:** Dr. Sarah Camellia Baldridge, Dr. Bridgid Crowley, Dr. Fonda Jiang, Dr. Lucas McIntyre, Dr. Michael Morcos, Dr. Jennifer Wax

**Alumnus:** Dr. Tomas Strizich, UWSOM ‘97
Graduating MS4’s at Annual Banquet

Our Chapter Administrator receiving an AOA Administrative Recognition Award

**Donations**
If you have never donated to the UW AΩA, please consider doing so! If you have donated in the past, please continue to support our members and the incredible work that they do. Checks can be made out to “UW AOA” and sent to: Emily Slager, Student Affairs, University of Washington School of Medicine, 1959 NE Pacific St, Box 356340, Seattle, WA 98195. The chapter is grateful for financial support from our AΩA alumni and all money goes towards supporting our outreach projects.

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