



# The JOURNAL of Phi Rho Sigma

Volume 119

Summer 2024

## Phi Rho Sigma Elect New Officers at Atlanta Grand Council Meeting



Dr. Sheryl Mascarenhas, a Rheumatologist from Sylvania, OH, was elected as the National President at the Grand Council meeting in Atlanta. She was initiated into Alpha Upsilon chapter at Wright State University.

Dr. Mascarenhas has been active in our society ever since her graduation serving on our Executive Council in a several different positions.

Other officers elected to serve the next biennium are Vice-President - Dr. Gary LeRoy, Alpha Upsilon, Secretary/Treasurer - Dr. Gabriel Cuka, Iota, Historian - Dr. Christy Benson, Mu and Editor - Dr. Joseph Wheeler, Iota.

Elected as Student Delegates to the Grand Council were Grace Tolan - Eta Tau, Hilary Kleppel - Alpha Upsilon, Logan McLennon - Alpha, and Paulina Piwowarczyk - Alpha. Alternate Delegates elected were Bria Foley - Eta and Lavayna Uppala - Eta,

### NOMINATIONS NEEDED

Phi Rho Sigma is now calling for nominations for the Society's gold medals which are to be presented at the June 2025 meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The Irving S. Cutter medal is presented to a member of Phi Rho Sigma who has made an outstanding contribution to medicine during his/her medical career.

Our second award, the Jessie Ansley Griffin medal, is given to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to Phi Rho Sigma Medical Society.

Nominations for the Cutter and Griffin medals are due in the National Office by November 15th. Please send your information via email at [www.phirhosigma.org](http://www.phirhosigma.org).

Appointed as Committee Chairs were Worth Holt, M.D. - Advisory, Wade Swenson, M.D. - McClain Research Award, Elisabeth Righter, M.D. - Succession Planning, Joseph Wheeler, M.D. - Social Media, Milly Willy, M.D. - Advocacy, Theresa Thomas, M.D. - National Research Symposium, John Freeman, M.D. - Student Recruitment, and Julie Best, M.D. - Education.

### Phi Rho Sigma in Search of New Central Office Administrator

Every organization has a glue that holds it together. For over 30 years, Harriet Rodenberg has been that glue for Phi Rho Sigma. In her role as the Central Office Administrator, Harriet has helped keep Phi Rho a strong and growing organization. Now, as Harriet looks to retire, we are in search of someone to fill her shoes. This is a unique opportunity for an individual looking to contribute to a national organization that supports medical students.

Some of the key tasks the Central Office does include creating and distributing our Journal and dues letters, maintaining our member database, maintaining communication with the chapters and alumni, coordinating initiation items like certificates and pins, helping provide updates for our website, and planning our conventions. The Central Office is in regular communication with members of the Executive Council including the Treasurer and the President.

The individual interested in this position should be someone who is organized, responsive, can work independently to complete goals and tasks, and is able to develop new processes to achieve these things. The position would be considered part time work and includes a monthly stipend and expenses paid during the national convention. If you know of anyone, a co-worker, a family member, a friend, or a business professional who may be interested, please have them send their resume to [phirhosigma@gmail.com](mailto:phirhosigma@gmail.com).

## Editors Recap of 2024 Grand Council Meeting

Once again, we have successfully closed the books on another biennial meeting. While always a joy to reconnect with old colleagues and to meet new members there was much business to be had. To start the conference, students from the various chapters of Phi Rho Sigma presented their chapter reports with focus on membership, educational activities and philanthropy work. The national officers then provided their reports to the Grand Chapter and the members at the meeting.

In addition to the reports, several presentations directed at expanding educational knowledge were also provided. Topics ranged from wilderness medicine, student loan forgiveness and community service. It was Dr. Sheryl Mascarenhas who started off the presentations with her discussion on “Embracing the Spirit of Volunteerism in Medicine”, highlighting the importance of volunteering and how we should all incorporate it into our daily lives. This was followed by a talk demonstrating a great example of volunteerism; “International Medical Service Mission Volunteering: How to prepare-What to Expect” by Dr. William Forgey. This not only outlined a few of his prior international service trips but also the surprises and struggles he faced on the way.

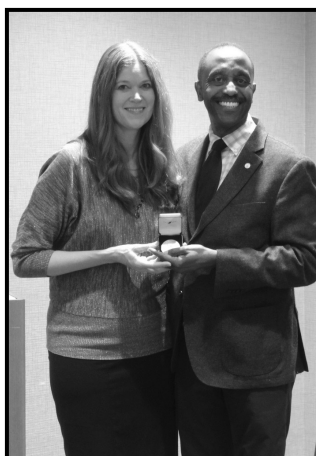
I, Joseph Wheeler, opened the second day with a discussion on student loans and information related to the Student Loan Forgiveness program. The day continued with two other additional talks “Opioid Updates and Benzodiazepines” by Dr. Gabriel Cuka and “Gender Bias/ Harassment in Medicine Requires Systemic Change. What Do We Know? How Do We Get There?” by Dr. Millie Willy. These presentations highlighted critical issues that are being faced in the world of medicine.

In addition to the topics covered above, we also heard from this year’s Phi Rho Sigma award winners as well. The winner of the Paul McClain Student Research Award,

Student Doctor Isabel Hsu presented on “Evidence for a Case-Based Module in the Low-Resource Setting to Teach Ectopic Pregnancy Management”. Following which, we then had a recap of the years of service and the phenomenal contributions of Harriet Rodenberg to Phi Rho Sigma. The Grand Chapter, with great joy, provided her with an honorary membership to the organization and awarded her the Jesse Ansley Griffin Medal for the work she has done. The final presentation of the conference came from our Irving S Cutter Medal winner – Dr. Gary LeRoy. Who lead us through his talk “The 23 Four Letter Words Best used in the 21st Century Medicine”. This presentation was just a small sneak into his work as not only a physician but also an author. I am sure many participants walked away with interest in his book “Quotes From the Edge of Nowhere: The Art of Noticing Unnoticed Wisdom”.

To conclude, there was no shortage of topics to learn from and it was a privilege to hear from each of our speakers.

**Joe Wheeler, MD**



National President, Dr. Julie Best, MD and Dr. Gary LeRoy, MD



Isabel Hsu and National President, Dr. Julie Best, MD

<p>The Journal of Phi Rho Sigma</p> <p>(ISSN: 0022-3581)</p> <p>Volume 119-Summer 2024</p>	<p>Published By: Phi Rho Sigma Medical Society P. O. Box 890756 Oklahoma City, OK 73189</p> <p>Distributed without charge to every member.</p>	<p>World Wide Web: <a href="http://www.phirhosigma.org">www.phirhosigma.org</a></p>
--	--	---

<p><b>Editor:</b> JOSEPH WHEELER M.D.</p> <p>Address all correspondence concerning the society to: Gabriel Cuka, M.D. Secretary-Treasurer P.O. Box 890756 Oklahoma City, OK 73189</p>
---

## Introducing our President, Sheryl Mascarenhas



Sheryl Mascarenhas, MD, is Adjunct Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine at Ohio University. As a rheumatologist, she has a clinical focus in inflammatory arthropathies and applications of musculoskeletal ultrasound for both diagnostic and therapeutic uses. She helped develop and grow the ultrasound clinics at Ohio State University. Dr. Mascarenhas has lectured on musculoskeletal ultrasound at several national and regional meetings. Her research has primarily focused inflammatory arthropathies with several clinical trials in rheumatoid arthritis, as well as investigations regarding ultrasound for diagnosis and classification of arthritis.

She has a strong dedication to medical education. She directed the rheumatology rotations for 4th year medical students and geriatric fellows, and has served in various roles within the rheumatology fellowship at Ohio State University, including Fellowship Program Director. Dr. Mascarenhas has been recognized with the Courage to Teach Award, Lead Serve Inspire Award for directing the Clinical Site of Year Award for medical student education at Ohio State and has

been given the Most Outstanding Teaching Award as voted on by rheumatology medical students.

Dr. Mascarenhas's has served as the Clinic Director for Rheumatology and Nephrology and the Director of Clinical Operations for Rheumatology. In these roles she helped with the planning and expansion of the rheumatology division footprint across central Ohio and helped in developing subspecialty clinics within the division. Some of the quality improvement projects she worked on included developing processes to aide in clinic pharmacy handling for high risk medications and developing a COVID-19 website for rheumatology specific protocols and updated medical information during the pandemic.

Dr. Mascarenhas received her medical degree from Wright State University. She completed her residency in Internal Medicine at Indiana University and then went on to complete her fellowship in Rheumatology at The Ohio State University. She has been a long serving member of Phi Rho Sigma Medical Society. She was elected a national undergraduate delegate while in medical school then named Chair of Community Service. She has served as the Journal editor, National Vice President, and now serves as the National President.

## Alumni Spotlight

Enjoying a well deserved retirement is James William Hopkins, Alpha '57 of Des Moines, IA. He was the first pediatric surgeon in Des Moines and only the second one in the state. In addition to his medical practice, he was active in many professional organizations and the recipient of many awards. He also made several surgical and teaching trips to Kosovo, Viet Nam and Snigda Tanzania throughout the years.

Kenneth Zoucha, Iota '88, is a recognized leader for Addiction Management in the state of Nebraska. and serves as Director of Addiction Medicine for the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Nebraska. After a twenty-year career in Pediatrics, he now specializes in the treatment of addiction in adolescents.

Retired from the US Navy is Hugh Beatty, Alpha Pi. where he served as a submarine medical officer. He resides in Oak Harbor, WA.

Erik Jansson, Mu '72 lives in McKinleyville, Ca where he owns and operates Health SPORT, a health club. He writes that " At the time of his medical class reunion he and his fellow Phi Rho brothers, Bill Dull and Nathen Dappen, poked their

heads inside the chapter house. A panoply of reminiscence made the trip complete."

A past president of the Oregon Academy of Family Physicians, Carl Erling, Theta Tau '64 is retired and living in Boise, ID. He is enjoying woodworking and sailing now that he has extra time.

Zeta chapter member, Douglas Wrung '72 is a family physician at the Mid Valley Community Clinic in Sunnyside, WA. A man of many interests he enjoys travel, hunting, fishing, farming and gardening.

George Steven Hammond, Alpha Nu '83 resides in Everett, WA. He has had a varied medical career beginning with his practice of 16 years in Internal Medicine/ Endocrinology. He has done administrative work for the state of Washington Medicaid the Washington Department of Corrections. Now he practices one-fourth time at a community health center and is a self-employed legal consultant.

## Spirit of Phi Rho Sigma Awards

Phi Rho Sigma awarded the first ever Spirit of Phi Rho Sigma Awards in May 2024. The Spirit of Phi Rho Sigma Award, is aimed to recognize students who are well rounded individuals who exemplify the ideals of Phi Rho Sigma. These include students who have demonstrated excellence in the medical profession, promoted the concept of medicine as a profession of service to society, and promoted good fellowship among the medical community. Students were nominated by their peers and each chapter could submit 1-2 finalists. They were asked to write a short essay on how being in Phi Rho Sigma contributed to their medical school experience. There were 4 winners, Grace Tolan, Logan McLennan, Nansea Ji, and Grace Kelly. Below are the award winners and their essays.

### **Grace Tolan** Eta Tau Chapter Creighton Phoenix

Phi Rho Sigma has impacted my medical school experience in ways I had never anticipated. Because our chapter is new, I have had the privilege of starting something new on our campus. Our school already has a club for everything, so something really special about our chapter is that we can use it to fill in the gaps where the other organization might fall short. Furthermore, in attempt to uphold the pillars of Phi Rho Sigma, we have been able to become more aware of the needs of our community so we can help and become involved in any way possible. Phi Rho Sigma has also been able to provide networking connections for career advancement. It has also provided the opportunities to collaborate with members of all medical school classes and provide a space where students can relax from the stressors of medical school. Attending the national conference allowed me to see all of the great experiences other chapters have and I am excited to be able to bring those to Eta Tau. In just a short time Phi Rho Sigma has positively impacted my medical school experience through its diverse nature and flexibility which has allowed me to enhance my collaboration with both students, alumni, and faculty.

### **Nansea Ji** Eta Creighton University School of Medicine

Phi Rho Sigma has been a significant part of my medical school experience. By joining, I have been able to form lasting relationships with like-minded individuals and challenge myself to grow into a better leader and team member. I was given the opportunity to practice and learn vital skills for physicians that cannot be obtained in the classroom alone. Phi Rho Sigma has provided me with the support and resources I needed to complement my medical education and showed me the strength of community.

### **Logan McLennan** Alpha Chapter Northwestern Feinberg School of Medicine

I am proud to be a part of our Alpha Chapter's community. We are very tight-knit, and we have built a space which connects students from all classes. I have received mentorship from students with more experience than me, and they have shaped my approach to navigating medical school here. I also enjoy taking advantage of opportunities to collaborate with other philanthropy-focused student groups on campus.

### **Grace Kelly** Iota chapter University of Nebraska Medical Center

After serving as Phi Rho Sigma president and treasurer I have learned many things regarding leadership and serving others. However, I believe the most valuable lessons I have learned from Phi Rho Sigma have come from mentorship, humanism, and professionalism. When I started medical school back in 2021, I did not know anyone in my class. One of the first events I went to during orientation week was the Phi Rho picnic. I was greeted with friendly faces left and right, and because of the environment that was fostered, I met some of my best friends. Phi Rho creates a place for students to be themselves and to truly connect with each other as humans. It was friendship and genuine kindness that encouraged me to become a member of Phi Rho Sigma, especially during the hardships of medical school. I was eager to keep this welcoming environment alive, which is why I ran for president as a second year. I hoped to show the new students and potential new members that there was a place for them at our table where they would feel welcome and heard, regardless of their background. I believe I accomplished this goal by the fact that our membership increased from 29 to 58 new members under my term as president. I would not have been able to recruit students had I not been welcomed with open arms the year before. Phi Rho Sigma allowed me to be myself while progressing towards my career as a physician. It taught me to be myself, professionally. The best of both worlds. Through the mentorship of students before me and the network of alumni physicians in the area, I was able to create a unique service project for our chapter last December where we provided basic needs as well as holiday gifts for two unhoused individuals in the Omaha area. With the radiant force that Phi Rho has behind it, we had funds left over to buy 8 families Christmas dinner as well. That is something you do not see in every other organization or club, that is something you see in Phi Rho Sigma. Phi Rho means so much more to me than an organization I am involved in. To me it is an organization that gave me the confidence to lead as an underclassman and a place where I could develop into a student doctor while I embraced who I was. To me, Phi Rho Sigma is family.