

Trauma Acute Care Surgery Externship FAQ

About the Program

What is the trauma externship?

This program is designed to teach participants about the spectrum of trauma care. Participants observe pre-hospital care, patient arrival at the hospital, surgery, inpatient care, and rehabilitation. Externs learn about follow-up care and trauma survivor support groups. The trauma externship can prepare and educate pre-medical students who are interested in the surgical field.

When is the externship this year?

The 2019 Trauma Acute Care Surgery (ACS) Externship session will be Monday, June 3 – Friday, June 14, 2019. Hours can start as early as 6:30 a.m. but will vary based on your day's activities (e.g. the day of the EMS ride-along, the shift may last until 9 p.m.)

Who should apply?

The trauma externship is designed for pre-medical students, specifically rising sophomores, juniors, or seniors seeking a career in surgery. You must be 18 years old to participate. This program is not designed for students who have received a medical degree in another country, are in medical school or nursing school, or have completed medical school. The trauma externship does not lead to residency.

I live outside of the DC metro area; can I still apply?

The externship does not limit applicants based on their place of residence. However, participants are responsible for their own lodging, food, transportation, and other expenses. We do not maintain or provide a list of preferred providers.

Do I get credit for participating?

There is no clinical credit awarded for participation. The externship is not hands-on; it is strictly an observership. This program does not lead to residency.

Will I get paid for the externship?

No. This is an educational experience in which many medical professionals are donating their time and expertise in order to help participants learn more about the medical field and how it relates to trauma.

Where should I stay?

Most of the externship will be spent at Inova Fairfax Medical Campus so we suggest finding a nearby place to stay.

I don't have a car. Is public transportation a good option for getting to and from the externship?

Externs who do not have personal transportation will have trouble getting to and from the off-site locations. This could make participation difficult.

The Application Packet

What is the deadline to turn in the application packet?

The entire application packet must be received electronically by the 31st of January. No late entries will be considered for the program.

What do I need to send in order to apply?

The application packet consists of five elements: the Trauma ACS Externship application form, one professional character reference, a current resume or C.V., an essay, and an official transcript from each college and/or university attended. All five elements must be received by the designated date for the application packet to be considered.

Can I just print off a copy of my unofficial transcript?

No. We must receive an official transcript from each college and/or university attended. Transcripts may be sent electronically or mailed using the address below. Transcripts must be submitted directly to the Inova Trauma Center from the school. Transcripts must be received by the deadline.

My professional character reference wants to send their letter directly to you. Is that OK?

Yes, the professional character reference can be emailed or mailed directly to us using the address below. The reference must be received by the deadline.

Who should write my professional character reference?

Professional character references should be written by someone who knows the applicant well in a professional capacity and can speak to their level of responsibility and reliability. We want to know what makes one candidate stand out from the others. The reference should be well-written and reflect a high level of professionalism.

What if I forget to send in one part of the application packet or the person I asked for the recommendation doesn't get it in on time?

Only complete applications will be considered. All five elements must arrive by the deadline. It is each applicant's responsibility to ensure we have received a complete application.

How do I send in my application packet?

Submit applications to colleen.brooks@inova.org.

If a transcript or reference needs to be mailed, the mailing address is:

Inova Trauma Center
ATTN: Inova Trauma ACS Externship
3300 Gallows Road
2nd Fl, Original Bldg
Falls Church, VA 22042

Are there any secrets that will help my application stand out?

No. This is a highly sought-after opportunity. Every aspect of the application should reflect who you are as a candidate.

Who Gets Accepted?

How many externs will be chosen?

While we generally receive over 100 applications, we can only take 10 externs. There will be 2 alternates chosen. If one of the originally chosen externs cannot participate due to failure to submit documentation or for reasons beyond their control, one of the alternates will be offered the opportunity to participate.

Who chooses the externs?

Externs are selected by a multidisciplinary panel after careful review of each application packet.

How will I find out if I have been accepted?

Final decisions will be made in mid-March. Decisions will be communicated by email. Please ensure your contact information is correct. If you are offered a spot in the externship but fail to communicate your acceptance by the identified deadline, your spot will be given to one of the alternates.

What happens if I get accepted?

If you are chosen for the externship, you will be notified of the required next-steps and their respective deadlines. If you are unable to complete these items in a timely manner, your space will be offered to one of the alternates.

I just found out about the externship and really want to participate but the deadline has passed. Can you find space for me to squeeze in?

We are not able to consider candidates after the deadline. We carefully select our externs through a rigorous and time-consuming vetting process. Please return to our webpage in the late fall to find out about the next year's externship dates and deadlines.

Whom do I contact if I have more questions?

If you still have questions once you have carefully reviewed the above information, please email colleen.brooks@Inova.org or call 703-776-2274.