The Rho Chi Society

**History at UMKC:** The Rho Chi Society was founded in 1917 at the University of Michigan. The UMKC Alpha Omega chapter was chartered in 1954.

**Organization’s Philosophy/Mission:** The Society is to encourage and recognize excellence in intellectual achievement and foster fellowship among its members. Further, the Society encourages high standards of conduct and character, and advocates critical inquiry in all aspects of pharmacy.

**Relationship to National Organization:** The University of Missouri-Kansas City chapter is one chapter among many within this National Organization. The chapter at UMKC was the 48th chapter to be chartered, with the designation of Alpha Omega. The local chapter has a close relationship to the national organization and a delegate from the local chapter is sent to attend the annual national meeting.

**Major Advocacy, Leadership or Community Service Activities (within past two years)**

- **Rho Chi Informational Meeting – Ongoing: 9 years (All Campuses):** The Alpha Omega chapter hosted an informational meeting open to all pharmacy students, particularly targeting first year students. The president started with introduction, followed by Dr. Amanda Stahnke giving a brief history on Rho Chi and membership eligibility. We also had Dr. Andrew Smith give a brief presentation on learning strategies and how to be successful in pharmacy school and beyond. To improve the quality of this activity we implemented a “survival guide” made by Rho Chi members specific to each campus that included: places to study, discounts with student ID, food discounts, food trucks commonly on campus, resources available, study tips, and advice from Rho Chi members. After the floor was opened for questions and the Rho Chi members mingled amongst the underclassmen.

- **General Medicine I Rotation Roundtable – Ongoing: 8 years (All Campuses):** The Alpha Omega chapter once again hosted their annual General Medicine I rotation roundtable for P2 students. P3 students have a longitudinal IPPE with one faculty member at various practice sites around their site-specific area. The roundtable gives P3 students the opportunity to discuss a typical day at their site, common disease states seen, their respective patient populations, and what is expected of them on their rotation. As each student spoke, their contact information and their respective preceptor was shown on a PowerPoint slide. A brief question and answer session was held after the conclusion of the presentation. This year we worked very closely with the faculty member in charge of General Medicine I rotation, Dr. Ruehter, to develop a template for those presenting to enhance the content. We also expanded accessibility by recording the roundtable so that students who could not attend the meeting still had the same opportunity to play back the recording to learn more. The P2 students expressed that this roundtable was very helpful in deciding which faculty member to choose for their longitudinal rotation. The new executive committee plans on continuing the tradition.

- **Academic Achievement Ceremony – Ongoing: 9 years (All Campuses):** The Alpha Omega chapter held a reception to recognize P1 students that received a 4.0 GPA after successful completion of the first semester of pharmacy school. The president and vice president recognized each P1 student individually and presented them with a certificate signed by the chapter President and Dean to acknowledge their achievement. Dr. Andrew Smith then said a few words encouraging students to keep up their outstanding academic achievements. After Rho Chi members were available for questions and networking. It is the intention of the new executive committee to continue this event.

- **Study Room – New (Kansas City):** During this year, our Alpha Omega chapter offered a study room once a week during the evening for all pharmacy students. The room was promoted via Facebook and email as a quiet place to study with other pharmacy students, including Rho Chi members who would be available for assistance or advice as needed. Rho Chi members could volunteer for certain days with the goal of a minimum of two members per session in attendance. With this study room we hoped to foster collaboration, encourage intellectual achievement and promote high ethical standards. During finals week we were also able to provide dinner at the study room to students who attended. Overall the feedback from students was positive and the new executive committee plans to continue.

- **Student Mentor Program – New (All campuses):** Alpha Omega chapter members were sent a survey to select which subjects they would be willing to provide assistance in to other pharmacy students. We then promoted
the mentor program to all pharmacy students and faculty. Once a faculty advisor or a student reached out we then paired them with someone based on student needs. The study room (mentioned previously) was often utilized for a meeting place for these students to connect.

- **Finals Support – New** (Kansas City) The Alpha Omega chapter wanted to provide support to pharmacy students during the often-stressful time of finals. Using our funding we provided coffee and donuts one morning of finals week. We were able to provide this both semesters. It was a hit with the students and the incoming officers plan to continue offering a form of finals support each semester.

- **Diversity speaker -New** (Kansas City) The Division of Diversity and Inclusion and Multicultural Student Affairs at the University of Missouri-Kansas City main campus created a Diversity Ambassadors initiative. To foster collaboration, we held a meeting for two of their Diversity Ambassadors, UMKC students trained in diversity peer education, to come to speak to our members about the science of unconscious bias. We were excited to work with a new initiative on campus and hope to continue diversity dialogue sessions in the upcoming semesters.

- **Awards and Accomplishments**: Rho Chi recognizes the outstanding academic achievements of both faculty and students at the annual Rho Chi initiation and awards ceremony. Certificates of recognition are presented to the top performing student(s) in the first and second professional years at the annual Rho Chi ceremony. The faculty member of the year and senior student of the year are also recognized at the ceremony, with plaques given at the senior awards ceremony.
  - **2017-2018 Senior of the Year**: Corey Spriggs
  - **2017-2018 Rho Chi Senior Member of the Year**: Blaire White
  - **2017-2018 Faculty Member of the Year**: Dr. Eric Wombwell

**Advisor(s) and Officers:**

- **President**: Philip Melchert
- **Vice President**: Garrett Matthews
- **Secretary**: Julie Bays
- **Treasurer**: Anna Parker
- **Historian**: Lauren Bell
- **Columbia Liaisons**: Jordyn Williams
- **Springfield Liaisons**: Kayla Copeland

**Advisors**: Andrew Smith, Pharm.D., BCPS (co-advisor)
Amanda Stahnke Pharm.D. BCACP (co-advisor)
Lisa Cillessen, Pharm.D. (co-advisor)
Elizabeth Englin, Pharm.D. (co-advisor)
Erica Ottis, Pharm.D. (co-advisor)

**How to Join**: The following eligibility criteria have to be met:
- Full-time students enrolled in a professional pharmacy program that is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE)
- Completed no less than one-half of the required professional didactic course work as defined for their degree
- Rank in the highest 20 percent of their class
- Have attained a minimum professional grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale
- Have been certified eligible for membership by the Dean of the pharmacy school or the Dean’s designee

Students who meet all of the eligibility criteria are notified at the beginning of the spring semester at which time the student may choose to accept or decline membership in Rho Chi. New members are initiated at an initiation ceremony later in the semester. New officers are elected after this banquet.