

TRAUMA ACUTE CARE SURGERY EXTERNSHIP

About the Program

What is the Trauma Acute Care Surgery (TACS) Externship?

This program is designed to teach participants about the spectrum of trauma and acute care surgery. Externs 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 externship can prepare and educate pre-medical students who are interested in the surgical field.

When is the TACS Externship this year?

The 2026 Trauma Externship session will be **Monday, June 1 – Friday, June 12, 2026**. Hours can start as early as 6:30 a.m. but will vary based on your day's activities.

Who should apply?

The 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. You must be enrolled in a college/university with pre-med focus. This

program is not designed for students who have graduated, received a medical degree in another country, are in medical school or nursing school or have completed medical school. The 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. Externs have no physical or verbal participation in the patient's care. 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. Inova does not provide housing.

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

When is the deadline to turn in the application packet?

The entire application packet must be received by **January 31, 2026**. 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: (1) the TACS Externship application online form, (2) one professional character reference, (3) a current resume or C.V., (4) a personal essay, and (5) an official College/University transcript(s). All five elements must be received by the designated date for the application packet to be considered.

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

Yes, the professional character reference must come directly from the writer to us by email. 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 you well in a professional capacity and can speak to your 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 your responsibility to ensure we have received a complete application.

How do I send in my application packet?

We recommend you submit your documents electronically to mamoona.arifrahu@inova.org.

If any portion of your application packet 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

Make sure to notify us if you mail documents.

You are responsible for ensuring all parts of your application are received by January 31, 2026.***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?***

We can only accept 10 externs and 2 alternates. If one of the originally chosen externs cannot participate due to failure to submit additional documentations requested, 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 by **March 31, 2026**. Decisions will be made 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 selected for the externship, you will be notified at the email address you provided with the required next steps and their corresponding deadlines. If you are unable to complete these items in a timely manner, your spot will be offered to an alternate.

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

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 late fall to find out about 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

✉ mamoona.arifrahu@inova.org