

The Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Award Presented by The Arnold P. Gold Foundation Procedures and Criteria

Purpose

The purpose of the **Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Award presented by The Arnold P. Gold Foundation** (“the Gold Foundation”) is to recognize exemplars of humanism in the delivery of care to patients and their families. Participating medical schools (also referred to as “the School”) agree to abide by the following conditions related to the 2026 Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Award program (“Tow Award”).

Agreement

The Gold Foundation, wishing to honor one graduating medical student and one faculty member for exemplifying outstanding humanism in medicine, agrees to present each awardee, selected by the school, a digital award package whose contents are outlined below.

The School agrees to:

- a. Follow the nomination and selection process guidelines outlined below and submit information about awardees through the Tow Interim Report form.
- b. Present the award at the **major awards ceremony or event** for graduating seniors and faculty recognition (such as commencement, senior awards banquet, or faculty award ceremony);
- c. Print awardee names in the graduation program or other ceremony or awards program, as appropriate, citing the award as **The Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Awards presented by The Arnold P. Gold Foundation**;
- c. Announce The Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Awards presented by The Arnold P. Gold Foundation on campus (i.e., via e-mail, promotional materials, social media, etc.), publicize them in school publications and, if possible, local media; and
- d. Submit digital versions of printed programs and any publicity received for this award through the final report form.

The school must sign the 3-year Tow Award Agreement in order to participate: <https://members.gold-foundation.org/page/TowAwardAgreement>

Eligibility

Accredited schools of medicine in the US and Canada are eligible to apply to participate in the Tow Award program. Recipients must be a graduating senior and a faculty member (MD or DO and/or faculty member with substantial clinical teaching responsibilities). Each school selects awardees according to the **criteria** listed at the end of this document.

Note additionally that:

- a. Previous Tow faculty awardees become eligible for selection 5 years after previous award.
- b. House staff and residents are not eligible for the award.
- c. Posthumous awards are not permitted.
- d. Self-nomination is not permitted.

Nomination and Selection Process

Awardees are selected by medical schools participating in the Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Award program. See “Award Package” and “Interim Report” sections below for details about the steps in the award process once awardees are selected by the school.

The school agrees to engage in a fair and impartial process for the nomination and selection of two recipients that draws from a diverse and inclusive pool of candidates from the entire school – one medical school faculty member (MD or DO and/or faculty member with substantial clinical teaching responsibilities) and one graduating senior. Guidelines for a fair process include:

- a. Ensure the invitation for nominations is communicated clearly and broadly to the graduating medical class and includes the detailed award criteria listed below.
- b. If voting is used as part of the process, maximize participation of entire student body to the extent possible.
- c. If a selection committee is used, the Gold Foundation encourages the participation of past recipients.
- d. The student award is specifically for a graduating fourth-year medical student.
- e. Faculty awardees and student awardees who are not currently members of the Gold Humanism Honors Society (GHHS) automatically become members of GHHS.

Gold Humanism Honor Society (GHHS) and the Tow Award

For a school that has a GHHS chapter:

- It is highly likely that the student Tow awardee will be a member of GHHS, since the Tow Award recognizes the premier exemplars of humanism in medicine. However, a fair and equitable nomination and selection process should draw from the *entire* body of graduating medical students, regardless of GHHS membership.
- Faculty Tow awardees are expected to be available to support local GHHS chapter activities.

Revocation

If The Arnold P. Gold Foundation is notified of adverse disciplinary action for an honoree, or an honoree is implicated in an event or series of events of such notoriety or reproach or censure that continued membership and/or award recognition has or may have a negative impact upon the image or reputation of the Gold Foundation and/or its ability to accomplish its purposes, the Gold Foundation reserves the right to revoke the award.

For all Gold Foundation awards designated by an institution (e.g. Medical School) or organization (e.g. Specialty Society) outside the Gold Foundation: if the entity that recommended bestowing the honor identifies an institutional policy violation and conducts a thorough and comprehensive investigation in accordance with their formal institutional processes and requirements, the entity can alert the Gold Foundation to the positive finding and make a recommendation to the Gold Foundation for revocation. The Gold Foundation makes the final decision on revocation.

Award Package

The Gold Foundation will email an electronic award package to the school that contains a digital certificate and award letter for each Tow Award recipient. The school must print the certificate and have it signed by the dean or institutional signatory before presenting the certificate and letter to the recipient. The award letter will contain instructions for the recipient about accessing the Gold Member Portal and any other benefits.

If the awardee is not already a GHHS member, the Gold Foundation will induct the recipient into the Gold Humanism Honor Society with access to engage with other GHHS members through the Gold Member Portal, along with other benefits that aim to foster community with humanistic colleagues.

Report Requirements – Interim Report

In order to receive the award package, the participating medical school agrees to submit a complete Interim Report Form electronically by the date identified on the Interim Report Form or 60 days prior to the ceremony. The form is available at <https://members.gold-foundation.org/page/TowInterimReport>. Please note the following:

- **There is no save feature on the form.** Print or save the form information to your computer's hard drive. A downloadable worksheet (Word document) is available at the top of the form to first gather the information before entering it into the form and submitting.
- Awardee profiles must include a brief biosketch of each awardee **featuring the awardee's humanistic qualifications** and a headshot photo. If you do not have the biosketch and headshot at the time of submission, they both need to be submitted within 30 days to the attention of smorris@gold-foundation.org.
 - **Please note that CVs or MSPE letters are not accepted.**
 - In signing the Tow Award Agreement to participate in the program, note that the school acknowledges that the Gold Foundation may include information about this award, including awardees' biosketches, headshots, and school information, in any public reports or press

releases it may produce, and the school is responsible for obtaining the awardee's permission for the use of the awardee's name, bio, and photo.

- Upon receipt and approval of the Interim Report and awardee profiles, the Gold Foundation will prepare and deliver the award packet to the school via email. The packet includes PDF certificate(s) and award letter(s) with instructions about accessing the Gold Member Portal and any other benefits. **The school will be responsible for printing and presenting the certificates and letters to the student and faculty honorees at the award ceremony.**
 - The school will need to print the certificates on high-quality paper (e.g. medium-weight paper).
 - The certificates need to be signed by the appropriate dean or institutional signatory before being presented to the recipients.

Report Requirements – Final Report

The school agrees to submit a complete Final Report Form electronically no later than thirty (30) days following the presentation of awards. The form is available at <https://www.goldfoundation.org/programs/leonard-tow-humanism-in-medicine-award/leonard-tow-humanism-in-medicineawards-final-report-form/>. Attach copies of electronic materials to this form.

Award Criteria

The Arnold P. Gold Foundation champions humanism in healthcare, which we define as clinically excellent care that is kind, safe, trustworthy.

Nomination and selection reflect the candidate's commitment to humanism and patient-centered care at the time of selection. It is the expectation that following the honorific designation, Gold Foundation honorees will continue to engage with the Gold Foundation and demonstrate this commitment through action and leadership, reflected by their on-going efforts to create a healthcare environment that is kind, safe, and trustworthy.

Graduating Medical Student

- consistently demonstrates compassion and empathy in the delivery of care to patients
- illustrates professional and ethical behavior by example
- shows respect for the viewpoint of others, even when it differs from their own
- demonstrates cultural sensitivity in working with patients and family members of diverse backgrounds
- treats people fairly and justly while creating an environment where people feel valued and respected
- displays effective communication and listening skills—good rapport with patients
- understands patients' need for interpretation of complex medical diagnosis and treatment and makes an effort to assure patient comprehension—shows respect for the patients' viewpoint
- helps to articulate the patients' concerns to attending physicians and others
- sensitive to the patients' psychological well-being
- cooperative, respectful and easy to work with - engenders trust and confidence
- willing to help others and, when necessary, willing to seek help from others
- displays concern for the general welfare of the community and engages in volunteer activities
- seeks and accepts constructive feedback, using it to improve performance
- committed to reflection and objective self-evaluation of his/her skills

Medical School Faculty Member (MD or DO and/or faculty member with substantial clinical teaching responsibilities)

- consistently demonstrates compassion and empathy in the delivery of care to patients
- serves as a role model—illustrates professional behavior by example
- approachable and accessible to students
- welcomes opportunities for teaching and one-on-one mentorships with students
- exhibits enthusiasm and skill in professional and personal interactions with students
- shows respect for the viewpoint of others, even when it differs from their own
- demonstrates cultural sensitivity in working with patients and family members of diverse backgrounds
- treats people fairly and justly while creating an environment where people feel valued and respected
- displays effective communication and listening skills

- understands patients' need for interpretation of complex medical diagnoses and treatments and makes an effort to ensure patient comprehension—shows respect for the patient's viewpoint
- sensitive to the patients' psychological well-being
- effectively identifies emotional concerns of patients and family members
- cooperative, respectful and easy to work with - engenders trust and confidence
- adheres to professional and ethical standards
- committed to reflection and objective self-evaluation of his/her skills

Timeline Overview

