

# Mortar Board

National College Senior Honor Society

*Scholars... Chosen for Leadership...United to Serve*



**NEWS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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## **CHRISTINE PAO AWARDED NATIONAL MORTAR BOARD FELLOWSHIP**

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Mortar Board National Foundation Chair Sally Steadman, Ph.D., announced that Christine Pao is the 2011 recipient of the Mortar Board Zelma Patchin-Washington State Fellowship, a \$3,000 award.

Christine graduated from the University of Miami in May 2011, earning a B.S. in neurobiology with minors in chemistry and English. In the fall, she will attend the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine to obtain her M.D. with an interest in neurobiology. Christine is a 2007 graduate of Cooper City High School in Cooper City, Fla.

Christine was initiated into Mortar Board in 2009 and served as president and vice president of the Nu Kappa Tau chapter. Under her leadership, the chapter received three grants for its service projects, doubled its membership and increased its awareness among the student body. She also cosponsored a fundraiser for Alzheimer's disease. In addition to her Mortar Board involvement, Christine held numerous leadership roles on campus, including Relay for Life vice chair, The Volunteer Link secretary, Minority Women in Medicine historian and Alternative Break site research coordinator.

Inspired by two grandparents struggling with Alzheimer's disease, Christine developed her academic interest in neurology through participation in undergraduate research. She examined structural brain changes associated with aging, analyzed a brain imaging database, and studied the aggregation of the amyloid beta peptide, a distinctive characteristic of Alzheimer's disease. A recipient of multiple grants including the Lois Pope Undergraduate Fellowship, Christine performed research for the Evelyn F. McKnight Center for Age Related Memory Loss and the University of Miami Summer Research Program. She also had the opportunity to intern with leading neurosurgeons at the Miller School of Medicine, observing a variety of surgeries. Describing her future goals, Christine stated, "I aspire to contribute meaningful findings to medical research and discover innovative methods of preventing and treating disorders."

This year, the Mortar Board National Foundation awarded a total of \$40,000 in fellowships to 10 exceptional Mortar Board members. Fellowship recipients are chosen based on academic excellence, strong recommendation, scholarly promise, financial need and Mortar Board involvement. Since the establishment of the Mortar Board fellowship program in 1941, more than \$600,000 has been awarded to assist members in pursuing further study in graduate or professional school.

Congratulating this year's Mortar Board fellows, Dr. Steadman remarked, "The Mortar Board National Foundation is honored to recognize these remarkable scholar-leaders and to support them in achieving their future academic and professional goals. This exceptional group truly exemplifies Mortar Board's ideals of scholarship, leadership and service."

Mortar Board is the premier national honor society recognizing college seniors for outstanding achievement in scholarship, leadership and service. Since its founding in 1918, the organization has grown from the four founding chapters to 229 chartered collegiate chapters with nearly a quarter of a million initiated members across the nation.

Mortar Board provides opportunities for continued leadership development, promotes service to colleges and universities and encourages lifelong contributions to the global community. Some notable Mortar Board members include distinguished politician Condoleezza Rice, Super Bowl MVP Drew Brees and Suzy's Zoo creator Suzy Spafford. Learn more about Mortar Board at [www.mortarboard.org](http://www.mortarboard.org).

-30-

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