Mobilize & Activate Advocacy Manual

Student National Medical Association
Health Policy and Legislative Affairs Committee
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To our SNMA family –

The Student National Medical Association (SNMA) is committed to supporting current and future underrepresented minority medical students, addressing the needs of underserved communities, and increasing the number of clinically excellent, culturally competent and socially conscious physicians.

In alliance with its goals, it is the duty of the Student National Medical Association to address national events that cause distress to our society, especially when disproportionately and negatively impacting historically marginalized communities. Furthermore, the SNMA hopes to provide guidance to chapters and regions that are considering organizing or hosting any talks, protests or demonstrations in response to these national events.

The following manual is designed to provide guidance for your chapter or region as you prepare to mobilize your members and advocate for your patients and community. However, we also want to make it clear that our national president, national board of directors, and national committee chairs are available if you have questions or concerns moving forward. Please do not hesitate to let us know if you have concerns that arise, and we look forward to supporting you in your advocacy efforts.

Yours in SNMA,

Eloho E. Akpovi, MS
Justin Anderson
National Health Policy and Legislative Affairs Committee Chairpersons, 2019-2021
Introduction

What is advocacy?

Advocacy is support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy. It can be performed by an individual or group looking to influence political, social or economic institutions. Advocacy can look like different things for different people. You can organize a voter registration drive or protest, write to your elected officials, or use your social media platform to bring light to a specific issue. Everyone can advocate for a cause no matter how small the action may seem!

In this manual, you will find descriptions of different ways you can participate in advocacy work as a pre-medical or medical student member of the SNMA, including explanations of actions we can or cannot take on behalf of the organization. The manual is divided into sections specific to various means of advocacy, so you can find the one that works best for you. We have also included links to connect you with several resources and opportunities. Use this manual to help get you started on your advocacy
journey. You can also check out this introductory video created by members of the Health Policy & Legislative Affairs (HPLA) committee for a brief overview of this manual.

“When the world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful.” - Malala Yousafzai

Malala, Pakistani advocate and activist for female education and the youngest Nobel Prize laureate
SNMA as a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization

What is a 501(c)3 organization?

501(c)3 is an IRS classification that allows SNMA to operate as a tax-exempt charitable organization. The IRS defines 501(c)3 status as an organization that must be organized and operated exclusively for the exempt/charitable purposes and none of its earnings may be held by private shareholders or individuals. Additionally, a 501(c)3 organization cannot be an “action organization,” which means it may not attempt to influence legislation as a substantial part of its activities nor participate in any campaign activity for or against political candidates. The term “substantial part” is not explicitly defined, though the general rule of thumb is 5% of a 501(c)3 organization’s time and resources, though campaigning for or against political candidates and specific legislation is strictly prohibited. Any violation of such restriction can cause SNMA to lose its tax-exempt status.

What political activity is and is not allowed for a 501(c)3 organization?

Despite the limitations in place, there are still many activities that SNMA may engage in politically that are not considered lobbying and carry weight to express the voice of our organization. These include:

1. Organizing non-partisan voter registration drives.

2. Developing policy positions directed on issues as long as said issue is not reduced to a specific piece of legislation.
   Example: The SNMA may issue a policy statement in support of a universal healthcare system but cannot specifically express targeted support for the Medicare for All Act.

3. Testify before a legislative committee at the request of a legislative body

4. Targeting a political executive such as mayor, governor, or president, with concerns so long as they are not explicitly asking the executive to promote, discourage or veto legislation.
   Example: The SNMA may contact the governor in their state concerning smoking rates and the incidence of lung cancer but cannot specifically ask the governor to promote legislation that would raise taxes on cigarettes.

5. Engage in efforts to make an administrative agency of the government change its policies, rules or regulation or adopt new rules.
   Example: SNMA may open discussion with the local government or police department regarding racial discrimination practices, urge reforms and make suggestions to encourage change, but cannot throw its support explicitly behind a political organization working toward similar goals.

6. Distribution of voter education materials is also acceptable, provided the information:
a. It is impartial at stating the position of candidates and does not provide evaluation of their positions
b. It covers a broad range of issues without bias
c. It provides information of ALL candidates’ position in a race regardless of political affiliation

Guidance on how to engage in the aforementioned approved activities are included in this Mobilization and Active Advocacy Manual. A video with demonstration of how to use the manual can be found here.

The aforementioned rules and limitations only apply to a 501(c)3 organization, like SNMA as a whole. **They do not apply to individual actions** taken by SNMA members in their personal advocacy efforts and other political activities. Individuals are encouraged to personally support legislation, candidates, and engage in the political process as they feel necessary so long as they do not claim SNMA membership at the time of action. However, any individual actions taken by SNMA members that fall outside the limitations of 501(c)3 organizations must explicitly state that they do not express the interests of the SNMA as an organization and solely express the intent and interest of the organizer. Visit the government’s page to learn more about exemption requirements for 501(c)3 organizations.
Tools for Effective Advocacy

Problem Identification

The first step of effective advocacy is problem identification. A good way to identify problems include following advocacy pages on social media that deal with issues you’re concerned about such as climate change, health coverage, and police reform. Searching those and similar phrases on social media will link you directly to advocacy content. Another way is subscribing to receive legislative updates from your state representatives or other elected officials. When deciding what online resources to use, think about which organizations could provide expert information and data on the particular subject matter. For example, for problems related to public health, the CDC and your state’s public health department is a great resource. Proper problem identification is important because it allows you to identify the core issue you believe needs to be addressed and why others should care. Be sure to do your research, so you have some context on the history, impact, and potential policies surrounding the issue. Use personal statements, journal articles, websites, and other reputable resources to gain a full understanding of the problem.

Determine Your Target Audience

Once you identify the problem; the next step is to determine who has the power to fix the issue. This is who your advocacy should be targeted to. The audience will oftentimes include more than a single person and could span multiple groups to include policymakers, organizational stakeholders, elected officials, government leaders, and other public servants. Reach out to individuals relevant to your identified problem area to support your stance. For example, if your issue deals with healthcare, reach out to healthcare workers, patients, caregivers, etc. The key objective here is to find people who can make things happen!

Outreach & Communication

Create a compelling message. This will serve as your selling point for gaining followers willing to support the issue. Your message should be clear and concise, stating the problem at hand and asking for support to resolve the issue. When communicating with others through any medium, make sure you are professional. Find ways to maximize your reach and be creative! Social media campaigns, op-eds, letters to the editor, newspaper columns, presentations, posters, and ads are quick and easy ways to get your message across.
*Follow-up & Show Appreciation*

Things might not always go as planned initially, so it is important to follow-up with all contacts in order to evaluate results, exchange information, and refine the message. This can be accomplished through in-person meetings, electronic meetings, phone calls, or emails. The goal here is to track progress and keep the momentum. As time progresses, continue to reach out regularly and keep those involved engaged and informed. Always remember to give thanks following every interaction as a way to show your appreciation for their time.
Legislative Advocacy

**Legislative Branch 101**

The federal government is organized in 3 separate but equal branches: executive, judicial, and legislative. As an advocate, it is important for you to focus your time and energy on the legislative branch, which is made up of the House of Representatives (435 members distributed among the population) and the Senate (2 members from each state). Representatives are elected every 2 years and Senators every 6 years.

Legislation begins with bills and resolutions, which are introduced in either chamber. When researching bills, you will see either HR or S before the bill number, notating where the bill was introduced. Both legislative bodies have many different committees and subcommittees that have jurisdiction over particular topics. Most bills die in committee, so contacting members of committees when the bill is introduced is crucial to its success. Public hearings also occur during this committee phase, allowing experts to testify, which can be incredibly valuable to the success or failure of a bill. After passing through committee, the legislative body then votes on the bill. If passed, the other legislative body then also votes on the bill. If the bill passes both bodies, it proceeds to the office of the President where it is either passed to become law or vetoed back to the legislative bodies where it must receive a ⅔ majority from both bodies. This is a large feat for a bill to complete but does happen on occasion.

To find out who your legislators are:

- [Who is my Representative?](#)
- [Who are my Senators?](#)

**Legislative Language**

- **Appropriations bill** - Proposed legislation that approves government spending for a particular federal program for the upcoming fiscal year. Appropriations are considered only for programs that have been authorized.

- **Authorizing legislation** - Basic legislation to establish or continue a federal program or agency, either indefinitely or for an established period of time; generally a prerequisite for subsequent appropriations.

- **Ballot initiative** - A ballot item by which legislation may be introduced or enacted by a direct vote of the people.
● **Calendar** - The agenda or schedule of business awaiting action by the full House or Senate.

● **Cloture** - Process to end a filibuster other than by unanimous consent in the Senate.

● **Committee report** - Recommendations of a committee on a particular bill.

● **Conference committee** - Members of the House and Senate assigned to resolve the differences between two versions of the same legislation passed by the House and Senate.

● **Continuing resolution** - Provides continued budget authority for federal programs and agencies to continue operations until regular appropriations bills are signed into law.

● **Entitlement programs** - Federal programs such as Medicaid or Medicare that guarantee certain benefits to individuals or entities who meet requirements set by law.

● **Filibuster** - A stalling tactic used in the Senate to delay or prevent a vote. A filibuster can only be stopped by cloture or unanimous consent.

● **Hearings** - Committee sessions at which witnesses testify to provide information relating to a bill.

● **Lobbying** - Influencing the opinions of senators and representatives through meetings, letters and phone calls.

● **Mark up** - Committees may modify, or "markup," a bill by amending, deleting or revising sections of the legislation.

● **Rescission** - An appropriations bill item that cancels budget authority previously appropriated but unspent.

● **Rider** - An amendment to a bill not germane to the content of the bill.

● **Testimony** - Opinions provided to committees or subcommittees with regard to a particular bill.

● **Veto** - Rejection of a congressional bill by the President. Congress can override a veto by a two-thirds majority in each chamber.

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**Getting Information About Bills**

Legislative activists have up to eight opportunities to support or oppose legislation:

1. Introduction of a bill in the House of Representatives
2. Introduction of a bill in the Senate
3. Committee consideration in the House
4. Committee consideration in the Senate
5. General consideration in the House
6. General consideration in the Senate
7. Conference committee between the two chambers
8. Presidential approval or veto

You can get information on bills through various organizations, social media, and websites such as GovTrack.us to track bills and resolutions in both the House and Senate. For the status of bills in committee, visit the Legislative Action portion of Bill Status on the Congress website. More information about the legislative process can also be found on the House and Senate websites, respectively.

How & When to Engage with Your Legislators

If there is a particular piece of legislation that is of interest, you are encouraged to contact your legislator before the voting occurs, and ideally when the legislation is in committee. If there is an area of interest that you believe should become legislation, it can oftentimes be helpful to look for similar bills to have your opinion included in the bill. Identifying yourself as a medical student will provide credibility, especially if the bill is related to healthcare. There are several ways to reach out to your legislators, including:

- **In person**: Visit either legislator’s office in your state. You can either schedule a meeting (preferred) or stop by to see their availability.

- **Over the phone**: You can check your legislator’s webpage for the office phone number. If you are reaching out to a national Senate or House member, you can call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and ask for a specific member of Congress.

- **Via physical or electronic mail**: Legislators can be reached either by written/typed mail or e-mail. It is very important to be professional and polite. Use headers, call them by their title (Honorable Senator/Representative [Full name]), be timely, and politely ask them for their stance on the single issue that you are inquiring about. Addresses can be found on their individual websites.

When speaking with legislators or their assistants, it is important that you know your audience. You will sometimes find data to be useful, but more often you will find that personal stories or experiences will be more persuasive.

Do’s, Don’ts, and Templates

Need help with what to say on your phone call or in your letter? 5calls.org and NLACRC are great places to look for a helpful template. There are a few Dos and DON’Ts of engaging with legislators:

- **DO be polite and respectful.**
• DO address the legislator properly:

**Senate letter header:**
The Honorable [Full Name]  
United States Senate  
(office building address, on Senator’s website)  
Washington, DC 20510  
(Begin letter with “Dear Senator [Last name],”)

**House letter header:**
The Honorable [Full Name]  
United States House of Representatives  
(office building address, on Representative’s website)  
Washington, DC 20510  
(Begin letter with “Dear Representative [Last name],”)

• DO make appointments at least two weeks in advance. Be flexible if asked to reschedule.  
• DO be willing to meet with a staff member if the legislator is not available.  
• DO be prepared. Use facts to support your position and illustrate with personal experiences.  
• DO ask your legislator to do something specific; for example, to vote for or against particular legislation.  
• DO include any pertinent bill number or the popular name of the pending legislation.  
• DO be specific and try to keep your letter to one page.  
• DO ask the legislator for his or her support, as well as his or her position on the issue.  
• DO send a personal letter, either typed or neatly hand-written and always personally signed.  
• DO be sure to write a follow-up letter to thank your legislator for consideration of your position.  
• DO be timely; it is important to contact your representative while action can still be taken.  
• DON’T promise items, such as specific information, which you cannot deliver.  
• DON’T send form letters or petitions.  
• DON’T mix requests. Focus on one topic and one request.  
• DON’T be rude or argumentative.  
• DON’T give answers you are unsure of.  
• DON’T sacrifice future gains for short-term solutions.
Demonstrations & Protests

SNMA Protocol for Organizing and Reporting Advocacy Work

The following questions are important to ask and will assist you as you plan a demonstration event or release a statement to advocate for an issue as an SNMA chapter. Keep in mind that demonstrations may include protests, marches, vigils, walkouts, and boycotts. If you have any questions, contact healthpolicy@snma.org.

Does the SNMA have an official position statement concerning your topic of protest or activism? To check, go to http://www.snma.org/PolicyStatements; position statements are listed on this page as well as in the “Media Advocacy” section of this manual.

- If yes, contact HPLA (healthpolicy@snma.org) and External Affairs (externalaffairs@snma.org) and with the statement or a synopsis of your event at least 3 weeks prior to the proposed statement release or event date.
- If no, consider writing a new position statement to be voted on by the SNMA Board of Directors. (See the Policy Statement section later in this manual for more information). Until then, any protests that are conducted cannot be done in connection with the SNMA.

Is the event a protest? Obtain proper permits at least one week in advance of the event from your local or state agency. Details on this process are outlined in the Obtaining a Demonstration Permit (if needed) section later in this manual.

Is the event public or private?

- If public, contact your state or local law enforcement agency to ensure that you are in compliance with any applicable laws, respectively.
- If private, talk to your local institution about potential security concerns and to assure correct permissions are acquired. If an event is held at your school, talk to school administration to ensure correct permission is acquired and to engage students, staff, and faculty where applicable.

Who are your allies? Consider collaborating with other student or community organizations ONLY if a unified message, in accordance with current SNMA position statements, will be communicated.
Are you considering using any press releases during the protest planning stage? If so, please contact healthpolicy@snma.org, externalaffairs@snma.org, and marketing@snma.org at least 3 weeks in advance of the proposed event to coordinate drafting and releasing of a unifying message that can be disseminated to all media outlets (see the “Media Advocacy” section of this manual for more information).

How to Organize Advocacy Demonstrations

General Rules for Peaceful Demonstrations

Your first obligation is to become knowledgeable of protest laws in your state and locale. Though you have the constitutional right to protest peacefully in a public space (First Amendment), there are certain restrictions on what activities are allowed – i.e., the “time, place, and manner” restrictions. For example, you may need to secure a permit from your city prior to your demonstration. “If city officials withhold the permit or put excessive restrictions on the protest…[call] a lawyer (who will write a complaint, get an affidavit, file the papers, and ask to see a judge immediately) or [go] down to the courthouse and [file] a complaint yourself.”¹ Though most demonstrations do not require a permit, it is important to confirm with your city officials before proceeding. Per the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), some notable exceptions that do require a permit are:

- A march or parade that does not stay on the sidewalk, and other events that require blocking traffic or street closure
- A large rally requiring the use of sound amplifying devices; or
- A rally at certain designated parks or plazas (will be city specific).

It is also critical that you know your rights as a demonstrator. The ACLU provides some guidelines for demonstrations and protests that you should review ahead of organizing or participating in a protest. It is important to note that the SNMA does not condone any violence or damage to property, and this may be viewed as a criminal offense.

A successful demonstration requires a team effort. While familiarizing yourself with the legal aspects of demonstrations, put your team together. You will need designated individuals to support you in carrying out certain roles such as contacting the media, liaising with the police, organizing jail support in the event that participants are arrested, organizing the creation of posters, banners, t-shirts, pamphlets, and

other visual aids to help communicate your concerns to the public, and directing chants during the demonstration, for example. Put your team together based on the needs that you identify for your demonstration. Leveraging your network of individuals who share a similar passion for your issue is the first place to start in putting a team together.

**Obtaining a Demonstration Permit (if needed)**

Thomson Reuters has compiled a directory resource for identifying permit offices by state. Please note that this list is not comprehensive or exhaustive. You will need to contact your local city hall to file an application. Keep in mind that many city ordinances require a permit to obtain at least a week in advance. To file an application, you will need the appropriate information to give to your city office when you file your application:

- An estimate of how many people will be present
- Area where you intend to walk and the route of your path if you are planning a march
- A time frame for when your event may occur
- Pay the application fee as indicated by your city

**Advertising Your Demonstration**

Promote your demonstration by creating flyers that can easily be distributed electronically. Share it via email and social media (e.g., create a Facebook event, design a catchy hashtag for Instagram and Twitter) with your networks and have your team members do the same. Contact other individuals as well as different groups and organizations that may also be interested in the issue. In your communications, be sure to inform all interested participants of any city ordinances and laws surrounding your demonstration that they should be aware of for their safety. For example, blocking traffic, failure to disperse after being ordered to, using a megaphone or loitering may not be allowed. Be sure to emphasize the peaceful nature of your demonstration. If you wish to have it shared with SNMA members at the national level, please contact healthpolicy@snma.org, externalaffairs@snma.org, and marketing@snma.org at least 3 weeks in advance.

Invite the press by sending out a press release prior to your demonstration. The press can include your local newspapers (both print and online), blogs, and other organizations that may write about your issue or issues like it.
On the Day of Your Event

Call your permit officials 1-2 days prior to confirm with the city and to learn of any last-minute changes to your permit. Be sure to carry a copy of your permit with you the day of the event. Once again, inform all in attendance the city ordinances and laws surrounding your demonstration. This will help foster a peaceful demonstration so that your supporters are not breaking any laws and/or committing any violent acts that could deter from your message.

Bring with you only the necessities: a small bag, water, snacks, a face mask, your ID (maybe), your fully-charged phone (maybe), cash, and your protest signs and banners. When it comes to clothing, you might want to wear comfortable, non-identifiable clothing (usually all black) that covers up any tattoos, and of course, comfortable walking shoes. Leave your valuables at home. Let your friends and family know where you are going and when they might expect to be back. Attend the demonstration with a buddy or group, and always be aware of your surroundings.
Organizational & Institutional Advocacy

SNMA as an Advocacy Organization

The national Health Policy & Legislative Affairs communities is the advocacy arm of the SNMA. Our committee has a strong passion for advocacy efforts and is tasked with the important goal of providing educational opportunities focused on health policy and structural competency. To that end, we organize various webinars hosted by strong leaders from other organizations regarding the issues we identify as “hot-topics” that the SNMA should be aware of. We do this through various formats including email (e.g., Advocacy Tip of the Month series), newsletters, social media posts, information videos, webinars, presentations at RMEC and RLI, and official position statements and press releases. To find out more about HPLA’s work in real time, visit our webpage at https://snma.org/hpla.

Regional Political Advocacy Liaisons (PALs)

Each of the 10 regions of SNMA has a PAL. PALs, appointed or elected on a regional basis, coordinate the activities of the regions to further national goals, serve as a resource for regions and chapters, plan regional advocacy efforts, and provide information and instruction on “hot topics” in education and health policy. PALs are responsible for implementing the national political advocacy protocols on the regional and chapter level. Your first point of contact for advocacy work as an SNMA chapter is your regional PAL:

- Region I: region1policy@snma.org
- Region II: region2advocacy@snma.org
- Region III: region3hpl@snma.org
- Region IV: region4pal@snma.org
- Region V: region5advocacy@snma.org
- Region VI: region6advocacy@snma.org
- Region VII: region7advocacy@snma.org
- Region VIII: region8advocacy@snma.org
- Region IX: region9advocacy@snma.org
- Region X: region10advocacy@snma.org

National Advocacy Forum (NAF)

SNMA’s National Advocacy Forum (NAF), which occurs during the fall, is designed to educate, challenge, and build advocacy skills. Through large group and workshop sessions, participants hear from a host of speakers on topics that include an overview of health policy; advocacy for medical student education, medical practice, and policy; communication; community engagement; public health research; diversity in medical education; and much more. Participants will gain a unique opportunity to learn more about how to get involved in the exciting health policy changes at the state, federal, and organizational levels.
Medical Education Advocacy

In the spring and summer months of 2020, as the Black community mourned the wrongful murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Nina Pop, and thousands more, many of our SNMA chapters sprang into action in demanding justice and anti-racist reform from their academic institutions. In order to further support our chapters, HPLA compiled those demands and developed the 2020 SNMA Toolkit: Demanding Institutional Recognition of Anti-Racism, a toolkit designed to help SNMA chapters advocate for justice at their institutions. Inside, you will find templates, examples, and graphics endorsed by the SNMA and its partner organizations that can be used at advocate for change at your institution.

Other Advocacy Organizations

This is a non-exhaustive list of student-governed and professional organizations that engage in advocacy efforts. Many of these organizations are either partners of or have collaborated with the SNMA:

- AcademyHealth
- American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)
- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)
- American College of Physicians (ACP)
- American College of Surgeons (ACS)
- American Medical Association (AMA)
● American Medical Student Association (AMSA)
● American Medical Women's Association (AMWA)
● American Public Health Association (APHA)
● Asian Pacific American Medical Student Association (APAMSA)
● Association of Native American Medical Students (ANAMS)
● Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA)
● Medical Student Pride Alliance (MSPA)
● Medical Students for a Sustainable Future (MS4SF)
● National Health Care for the Homeless Council (NHCHC)
● Physicians for a National Health Program (PNHP) & Students for a National Health Program (SNaHP)
● Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA)
● Universities Allied for Essential Medicines (UAEM)
Civic Advocacy

The SNMA recognizes that ensuring the health of our communities includes empowering individuals to have a say in the policies that impact where they live, work and play. To accomplish this, the SNMA has partnered with #MedOuttheVote and Vot-ER to provide medical and pre-medical students with tools to engage their community in conversations about voting.

Vot-ER

Vot-ER is an organization founded by a former SNMA member and emergency medicine physician, Dr. Alister Martin that provides institution specific health democracy kits for providers and patients to register to vote and request an absentee ballot. In addition to the individual kits, you can also order posters and handouts to have around your institution.

#MedOuttheVote

Med Out the Vote (MOTV) is an initiative by the American Medical Student Association (AMSA) and Citizen Physicians aimed at helping healthcare professionals coordinate voter registration drives to get students, staff and patients registered to vote and out to the polls. Their website includes information on different ways to engage your institution in dialogue about voting and some of the barriers individuals may face when trying to vote.

MOTV Voter Registration Drive Toolkit

SNMA chapters may use the voter registration drive toolkit for materials to help you organize a voter registration drive at your institution. If you are looking for more information regarding registration status, mail-in ballots, or other ways to get involved, please visit these links for more information about our partners.
Getting Started
Congratulations! You are planning a voter registration (VR) drive at your school. An important part of the mission of Med Out the Vote campaign is to ensure that all of your classmates are registered voters and plan to vote, so thank you for doing this work. Here is a how-to guide with some tips, please feel free to distribute it to students at other schools who may be interested in hosting a VR drive of their own. Contact us at voting@medoutthetvote.org and healthpolicy@snma.org with any questions.

A great place to begin is to set reasonable goals and develop a specific plan for your voter registration drive. This will allow you to work strategically and track your progress. Things to consider when discussing your goals include the number of students you want to register and the ideal location for the drive.

What You Will Need
Some things you will need include:

• Table/chairs; help your booth stand out with a simple tablecloth
• Signage (flyers on website or create your own)
• Computer/tablets and power cords
• Envelopes and stamps
• Camera for taking photos; don’t forget to send us a few of your best!
• Paper forms (even if planning to register online), clipboards, pens
• Print-outs with instructions on registration, early voting, dates, etc.
• Goodies (candy, cookies, etc.)
• Med Out the Vote stickers

Rewards, prizes, or gifts may NOT be offered in exchange for registering to vote. Promotional gifts, such as buttons or candy, must be given to anyone who asks, regardless of their eligibility, party preference, or intention to register to vote.

Planning the Drive
Step 1: Pick a place, date, and time for your registration event.
It is best to know your university. Where and when are students most likely to show up, wait in lines, or pass by? Some suggestions include:
• Stand out. Your target audience is students and people just like you. It is strategic to host your drive where there is a lot of traffic, but that you will also be seen.
• Where is there a “captive audience?” People are most likely to register when they are passing time such as in between classes or waiting for peers.

Step 2: Speak with the appropriate people.
Contact other student groups on your campus to help host or promote. Med Out the Vote is an AMSA initiative in partnership with Citizen Physicians. Other student groups cosponsors include: SNMA, SOMA, APSA, SNaHP, MS4C. See the MOTV website for a full list of cosponsors. Notify your school administration about your voter registration drive, and obtain appropriate permissions as needed.

Step 3: Obtain voter registration forms.
Remember to check with your local election officials to see if you need to use a county- or state-specific form (see below). You can often download state voter registration forms from the Secretary of State or local board of elections websites. You can also visit your local board of elections or county registrar office to obtain the forms. Another option is to use the National Mail Voter Registration Form. This form can be downloaded by accessing the Election Assistance Commission website (Note: this form is not accepted in New Hampshire, North Dakota or Wyoming).

Once your drive is complete, you may take the completed registration forms to the local board of elections or county registrar in person. Another option is to mail the forms to the local board of elections, county registrar or Secretary of State’s office.

Please ensure the forms get turned in as quickly as possible. Some states have laws pertaining to how quickly completed forms must be turned in. This information should be researched during the “Getting Started” phase. Be sure to double check all the forms before turning them in. Be mindful of common errors such as lack of signature and putting the current date in the signature date line.

Know Your State’s Rules on Voter Registration: People interested in voter registration drives should review the laws in their area. You should be familiar with your state’s rules for voter registration before planning an event, as well as each volunteer at the voter registration drive. You can look up your state’s voter registration requirements and deadlines by visiting https://www.rockthecvote.org/voting-information/.
If you prefer to visit or contact your local or state elections office directly, these are important questions you may consider asking:

- How long before the election do voters need to be registered to be eligible to vote? (Remember that there are primary and general elections, each with different voter registration deadlines.)
- What is the age requirement for volunteers registering people to vote?
- Do voters need to declare a party affiliation?
- What are the rules for people who have been convicted of a felony?
- How must registration forms be submitted to election officials?
- What is the required length of residency prior to an individual registering to vote?
- Are college students eligible to register to vote in the locality and state where they are enrolled?
- Is there a required training for volunteers to be able to register voters? This is uncommon; reach out if you’re unsure! voting@medoutthevote.org and healthpolicy@snma.org

Which Form Do I Use to Register Voters? The following states require a paper form: AR, ME, MI, MS, MT, NC, NH, NJ, OK, SD, TX, WY. Remember to check with your local election officials to see if you need to use a county- or state-specific form. Forms can be downloaded/printed or requested from your elections office. All state guidelines must be met for registration to be valid. If a certain form is not required, you may use the National Mail Voter Registration Form. This form can be found by accessing the Election Assistance Commission website. Note: this form is not accepted in New Hampshire, North Dakota or Wyoming.)

The following states allow for online registration: AK, AL, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, MN, MO, NE, NM, NV, NY, OH, OR, PA, RI, SC, TN, UT, VA, VT, WA, WI, WV. Many states that have online voter registration may still need a printed form if someone does not have an ID from that state, so it may be easier to also have paper forms for your drive.

Preparing for the Drive

Step 4: Recruit and train your volunteers.

How many volunteers would you need to run a successful event? The more volunteers you have at your table, working a room, canvassing a line, or talking to their friends and colleagues, the more people you potentially have to register.
A place to start is by asking your friends to assist. Educate them about Med Out the Vote, what you are doing, and explain why it is important to you. Another way to recruit volunteers is through social media. Post your event on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. This will help promote your event as well as recruit more volunteers. You can also utilize your university by posting flyers around campus as well as working with your administration to have emails sent out to all students.

Before the voter registration drive occurs, you want to ensure all volunteers are adequately trained to ensure the optimum success of your event.

You can use the goals created to determine how many volunteers you will need and how to go about recruiting. Voter registration drives also have the ability to attract students who are looking for ways to become more involved in medical school or who may not be aware of the numerous ways to become involved with SNMA. Your voter registration drive can recruit volunteers as well as new SNMA members!

Training your volunteers is important. They should feel comfortable registering voters and well educated on the voter registration rules in your community. One way to incorporate the training is to include it as part of an upcoming chapter meeting. The training session may include: reviewing the registration form and rules, discussing messages about the importance of voter registration, and registration role play. Make sure volunteers have plenty of voter registration forms.

Below is a simple suggested guide for training your volunteers.

1. **Introductions.** A small icebreaker is a great opportunity for everyone to get to know each other. You can motivate yourself, each other, and potential registrants by telling them your reason for volunteering.

2. **Present materials:** Give each volunteer a clipboard, voter registration forms, and any additional supplies you have for them.

3. **Completing the registration form:**
   - **Explain** how to complete the voter registration form
   - **Discuss the common mistakes** people make when filling out their form: (1) forgetting to sign the form, (2) entering today’s date and the registrant’s birthday in the wrong place,
and (3) failing to provide a full driver’s license or the last four digits of a Social Security number.

- **Everyone should ask:** “Are you registered to vote at your current address?” If the student answers “Yes”, ask them if they have moved recently and if they are sure they’re registered with their new address.

- **Double check** the form before the student leaves, keeping a close eye on the common errors listed above.

- **Wrap up:** Be sure to thank the student. Let them know when you plan to submit the registration forms. For example, ‘Thank you for registering to vote! We will turn your form in for you tonight. You should be getting a voter card in the mail from your Secretary of State in 4---6 weeks but if you have any questions, you can call your elections office directly.”

4. **Role Play.** Have your volunteers practice by “registering” each other to vote

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**Step 5: Publicize the event.**

The communication and networks you use most often are great places to start. Social media networks such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter will allow you to publicize your event and reach your intended audience. In addition to using your school’s email list serve, additional suggestions include: the campus newspaper, a local newspaper, campus radio station, local radio station, and local news channels. You could even explore the idea of asking a local radio station to broadcast from your registration event. Utilizing the livestream features of Facebook and Instagram are also unique ways to reach your intended audience.

With the age of technology and social media, it is easy to focus only on these networks as a means of publicity. However, do not be afraid to make and print event flyers. Hang the flyers in high traffic areas of your university. You can also consider printing small sizes such as 4x6 in. and handing these out to people in passing. Use the template flyers on the MOTV website and dress it up for your school!

*Executing the Drive*

**The day before the event:**

1. Confirm all logistics for the event with your university.
2. Contact all volunteers to confirm their attendance.
3. Check to make sure you have voter registration forms, as well as any/all supplies and equipment needed.

The day of the event:

1. **Arrive** an hour before the event start time.
   - Volunteers should arrive 30 minutes before the event start time.

2. **Setup**: Aesthetics matter. Lay out your supplies, signs, giveaways, etc. in a presentable manner.

3. **Pledge**: Get students to take the Med Out the Vote pledge by visiting [www.medoutthevote.org/pledge](http://www.medoutthevote.org/pledge).

4. **Register**: Ask if students are registered and where they are registered.
   - If they don’t know their status, check [https://www.vote.org/am-i-registered-to-vote/](https://www.vote.org/am-i-registered-to-vote/). If registered in different area, ask if they’d like to re-register/submit an absentee ballot.
   - Encourage volunteers to move around. Try to avoid simply standing behind the table.
   - Ask everyone to register, not simply those who approach the table.
   - Use multiple clipboards. While someone is filling out a form, the next registrant can be engaged. This will ensure the drive flows well.
   - Check the form twice. Make sure the registrant has signed their name in the appropriate spot and has not mixed up their birth date and the current date.

5. **Voting plan**: Ask students if they have a voting plan.
   - If registered in your area, let them know about early voting dates and polling locations. [https://www.headcount.org/find-your-polling-place/](https://www.headcount.org/find-your-polling-place/).
   - If registered in a different area, ask if they have plans to travel or if they’ve requested their absentee ballot. [https://www.vote.org/absentee-ballot/](https://www.vote.org/absentee-ballot/).

6. **Count**: Keep track of how many students you engage, register, pledge, etc.

7. **Social media**: Take pictures of your event and email us or post them on social media with #MedOuttheVote and tag the national SNMA social media accounts.

*Any media emailed to Med Out the Vote may be used or reproduced in the AMSA, Med Out the Vote, Citizen Physicians, or SNMA materials.*
After the Drive

- **Check:** If you used paper forms, make sure that all applications are complete with a signature according to your state’s guidelines.
- **Thank:** Thank volunteers, celebrate your achievements, debrief and make plans for the next event.
- **Send:** Collect all forms in a large envelope to prevent any forms from getting lost. Turn in paper forms to the appropriate location on your election’s website.
- **Follow up:** Email us to let us know how the drive went. Send us a few photos of you at the drive, and, with permission, your classmates getting registered.
- **Send out reminders:** As Election Day approaches, send out reminders with registration and absentee ballot deadlines, and early voting/election dates.
**Media Advocacy**

Social media advocacy allows one to use their social platform to advocate for the issues they care most about. It starts with a simple hashtag and a call to action. In order to start a successful social media campaign, there are a few things to keep in mind. First, you want to have a clear goal in mind. Decide the intended purpose and goal of the campaign. Common goals include raising awareness, inspiring action or community engagement, and/or requesting donations. The purpose and goals of the social media campaign will provide a basis for all content created. Next, come up with a hashtag that is simple and explains the purpose in the phrase. Keep in mind who the content is intended to target and create concepts that your audience can relate to. Be sure to not only explain the scope of the problem, but also state specific ways your audience can help solve the problem.

Op-eds, known more formally as opinion editorials, are a powerful form of media advocacy specific to print and broadcast outlets. Op-eds are useful in garnering the attention of policymakers and helping to shape public policy and public opinion. Composing an effective op-ed is very similar to creating a successful social media campaign in that you outline the problem using personal stories where available, provide a solution, state your opinion and supporting facts, and call the reader to act.

**Writing and Op-Ed**

“Op-ed” means “opposite the editorial page”. An op-ed is an opinion piece, submitted by someone not on the newspapers staff, that cogently makes the case for an issue. Newspapers publish op-eds solely at the discretion of the newspaper’s editors. It is important, therefore, to make your op-ed stand out. Here is a guide to writing an op-ed.

**Strategy**

- **Set the goal of the op-ed.** What are you trying to achieve? For example, you might want to raise public awareness about the lack of healthcare workers in the developing world.
- **Define the audience.** Are you trying to reach your neighbors, local policy makes, national leadership, or someone else?
- **Identify the appropriate newspaper.** Which local or national paper is most likely to reach your desired audience?
- **Determine the best time for placement.** Ask which hearing, board meetings, or legislative vote will highlight your issue? Is a report being released to which you want to draw attention? Is an
international situation occurring that will limit attention to your issue? For example, immediately after September 11th newspapers were unlikely to publish an op-ed focusing on HIV/AIDS.

- **Identify an original angle.** How can you draw attention to the issue or bring a new perspective? Your thoughts need to be original, creative, fresh, and groundbreaking. For example, a strong angle could be a personal story on how the lack of healthcare workers has impacted your ability to deliver care.

### Content

- **The op-ed must be no longer than 700 to 750 words**, typewritten and double-spaced. Remember, short is better!

- **Sentences should be short and punchy** (10 or 11 words maximum). Address only one main point in the op-ed.

- **Avoid jargon or technical phrases.**

- **Spell all names correctly and be sure all quotations are accurate.**

- **Include an effective structure:**

1. **The attention grabber:** An op-ed should always start with an effective attention getter.
   - **Use humor.** Use an anecdote, joke, or funny euphemism and relate it back to the issue you are discussing.
   - **Talk about people.** Talking about yourself and other specific people helps the readers identify with the author or subject.
   - **Keep it current.** An op-ed must be about a current issue. Talk about something that happened recently concerning the issue you are discussing.

2. **The body of the op-ed, a.k.a. “the chain of evidence”**: After the opener, move immediately to clearly state the issue and where you stand. This basically means writing a few paragraphs that offer arguments in support of the main point. The body of evidence may include:
   - **Statistics:** Easy to explain with clear, numerical analyses—but not too many numbers!
   - **Quotes:** From authorities, especially those who are not your allies.
   - **Agency positions:** The position on the issue of a known governing or respected and impartial agency.
   - **Analogies:** To connect ideas for readers who may not be familiar with the issue
   - **Case studies:** Make the issue concrete for people
3. **The conclusion**: Briefly sum of what your point is in order to make sure that it hasn’t been lost or forgotten after the body of the op-ed. Reinforce your initial point.

4. **The goodbye zinger!** This is a counterpart to the attention grabber and uses the same approach to hammer your message.

*Submitting an op-ed*

- **Submit your op-ed via e-mail to larger newspapers or via fax to smaller papers.** Call first to ascertain which the editors prefer.
- **Follow-up** with a phone call to ensure the paper received the op-ed and to provide any additional information needed by the editor or the newspaper
- **Include your school and affiliation**, day and evening phone numbers, and your e-mail address.

*Working with Media Outlets*

**Identify the media outlets you want to cover the event.** It’s great to start on campus. What is the student newspaper? TV channel? Radio station? Campus blogs? Local newspaper?

**Reach out to them early.** Give yourself at least a week to let them know about your event. If that’s passed, get in touch with them as soon as you can.

**Identify the right person to invite.** At the campus newspaper, ask for the phone number and e-mail address of their Assignment Editor or the News Desk.

At the TV or radio station, ask for the daily News Producer or Station Manager. On blogs, look for a “contact” button at the top or bottom of the page. On Facebook or Instagram, send a message to the user you’re interested in, or on Twitter write them an @reply.

**Be on point when you call.** Here’s a sample script for a phone call:

“Hi, I’m [YOUR NAME] and I’m a [YEAR IN SCHOOL] medical student at [SCHOOL]. I wanted to let your [ASSIGNMENT EDITOR/NEWS PRODUCER/ETC.] know about a Med Out the Vote and SNMA voter registration event I’m hosting to bolster local participation in the upcoming election. Could you direct me to someone who might be interested in covering something like that?”
Here’s a sample script for an email:

“Hi, I’m [YOUR NAME] and I’m a [YEAR IN SCHOOL] medical student at [SCHOOL]. I wanted to let your [ASSIGNMENT EDITOR/NEWS PRODUCER/ETC.] know about a Med Out the Vote and SNMA voter registration event I’m hosting to bolster local participation in the upcoming election. I’ve attached the information about the event and pasted it below. Is there someone I should connect with about this event?”

Remind them the day before the event and provide follow up details the day of the event. Send short email reminders to the point of contact. Be sure to leave your phone number and confirm any key details.

Follow up. Thanks those who attended and offer to confirm details or answer questions. Send a recap/release to anyone who missed the event via email.

National SNMA Protocol for Responding to National Events

It is the duty of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) to address national events that cause distress to our society, especially when disproportionately and negatively impacting historically marginalized communities. When the national or international community is experiencing a crisis, it can be helpful to hear a sympathetic and affirming response from an established and respected organization.

National current events include, but are not limited to, natural environmental disasters, public health crises, or incidences involving law enforcement agents. Such events typically dominate the 24-hour news stations. It is important to note that the SNMA’s response to any event must be impartial with regards to political parties. SNMA is a nonpartisan organization and as such remains impartial no matter the protest or event. Once an event has been identified, an official statement will be shared by the National President or the Health Policy & Legislative Affairs co-chairs via mass listservs, with optional additional outreach via social media accounts such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Such statements will aim to humanize the organization, lend credibility to the voice of those impacted by the event, share information with those who may not be aware and bring unity to those suffering and those hoping to help. This will be accomplished by the following protocol:

- Once an event occurs, initial reports of events will be directed to a designated leader on the Health Policy and Legislative Affairs committee co-chairs by email (healthpolicy@snma.org).
- After initial dissemination of information, the committee designee will vet the event and create a
draft response within 24 hours. The draft should include:
  ○ Information about the event, with sources where possible,
  ○ A segment referencing current SNMA policy statements, and
  ○ A statement about ways to contribute via action.

- The draft will be sent to the Executive Director (execdir@snma.org) and National President (president@snma.org).
- The National President will then have 24-48 hours to ensure correctness of cited facts, edit the language and information as needed, and give final approval.
- Overall, the official statement regarding the event should be shared with the SNMA body within three (3) days of the incident.

In addition to offering condolences and support, it is important that current SNMA leadership helps direct some form of action to provide relief from the tragedy. Where possible, the statement will tie sympathy with action by pointing hopeful students in the direction of current or future SNMA initiatives or other respected campaigns positively assisting those impacted. Examples may include donating to a reputable non-profit, signing a petition, organizing a volunteer effort, or finding other ways to get involved.

**The SNMA Position Statements**

The Student National Medical Association (SNMA) has published position statements on a variety of pertinent issues, from gun violence and police brutality to substance use disorder and smoking prevention. The Health Policy and Legislative Affairs (HPLA) committee also works to actively create and provide position statements on current events that directly impact minority patients, medical education, and relevant public health issues. Position statements can be accessed at the SNMA webpage at [www.snma.org/policystatements](http://www.snma.org/policystatements), which will be updated with new position statements as they are approved. A list of current position statements is provided below:

- Affirmative Action
- Cultural & Structural Competency
- Diversity & Equity
- Drug Schedules
- Environmental Health
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Gun Violence
- HIV & AIDS
- Immigrant Health & Immigration Policy
- LGBTQIA+ Health
- Mass Incarceration
- Medical-Legal Partnerships
- Mental Health
- Minority Tax
- Police Brutality
- Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities
- Racism as a Public Health Issue
- Residency Work Hours
If there is an issue you are very passionate about, but do not see a position statement published on the SNMA website, you can submit your idea to the Health Policy and Legislative Affairs (HPLA) committee at healthpolicy@snma.org. Keep in mind as you draft your statement that it must follow the guidelines mentioned in the SNMA as a 501(c)3 organization section above. Also, if you feel impassioned to grow and develop as an advocate in your medical school career and wish to become more involved with SNMA as a national organization, members are welcome and encouraged to join the national HPLA committee. You can apply online at https://snma.me/joinanc.
Navigating Burnout

While advocating for issues impacting medical education, your patients and communities, it is important to maintain boundaries, so you don’t overextend yourself. Balancing the rigor of medical or pre-medical education with advocacy work can be taxing and ultimately lead to burnout if you aren’t setting aside time for your personal wellness. Burnout is a feeling of exhaustion that is caused by persistent high levels of stress. This can occur when you feel overwhelmed, overworked, and drained mentally and emotionally. Some signs of burnout include:

- Changes in sleep and eating patterns
- Feeling tired and drained all the time
- Loss of motivation
- Lowered sense of satisfaction and accomplishment
- Withdrawal from responsibilities
- Withdrawal from loved ones
- Feelings of helplessness and/or hopelessness
- Cynicism

Burnout is not uncommon in healthcare professionals, including students. Your personal well-being will be essential in ensuring your ability to successfully balance your school and advocacy work. Here are some recommendations for self-care if you find yourself experiencing burnout.

1. Prioritize your responsibilities
2. Take breaks in between projects
3. Set boundaries and say no to taking on new assignments when you are spreading yourself too thin
4. Be intentional about setting time aside for relaxation and self-care
5. Get plenty of rest so you feel recharged each day
6. Seek out support from family, friends, and mental health professionals

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Resources

Resources for Self-Edification

Members of the SNMA may visit the HPLA webpage (snma.org/hpla) to find resources, both internal and external, to learn more about health policy and advocacy. Resources on this page are regularly updated by members of the HPLA committee. Additionally, the official SNMA reading list is a power tool to start with in order to learn more about advocacy theories, anti-racism, and racial healing:

![READING LIST]

- Medical Apartheid by Harriet A. Washington
- Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Paulo Freire
- Stamped from the Beginning by Ibram X. Kendi
- Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? by Beverly Daniel Tatum
- Understanding Race, Ethnicity, Power by Elaine Pinderhughes
- The New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander
- Reproducing Race by Khara Bridges
- The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot
- When & Where I Enter by Paula J. Giddings
- Critical Race Theory by Kimberle Crenshaw
- The Color of Law by Richard Rothstein
- The Inner Work of Racial Justice by Rhonda V. Megee
- Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center by bell hooks
- Fatal Invention by Dorothy Roberts
- Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- Dying of Whiteness by Jonathan Metzl

Annual Health Policy Events

The events and conferences below are a non-exhaustive list that HPLA believes may strengthen the knowledge base and skill set for a medical student interested in advocacy. For more opportunities throughout the year, please check our website (snma.org/hpla) > “External Resources”).

- AcademyHealth Health Policy Orientation
- AcademyHealth National Health Policy Conference
• American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) Family Medicine Congressional Conference
• American Medical Association (AMA) National Advocacy Conference
• American Medical Association (AMA) State Legislative Strategy Conference
• American Medical Student Association (AMSA) Annual Convention and Exposition
• American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting and Expo
• Health Disparities, Education, Awareness, Research & Training Consortium
• Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA) Policy Summit
• Social Medicine Consortium (SMC) Annual Symposium
• Student National Medical Association (SNMA) National Advocacy Forum (NAF)
• Students for a National Health Program (SNaHP) Summit

Internships & Fellowships

The **AMA Government Relations Advocacy Fellow (GRAF)** is a full-time paid member of the AMA's federal advocacy team and serves for one year. The position, based in Washington, D.C., requires that the student take a one-year leave from medical school. The fellow reports to the AMA's Director of the Division of Legislative Counsel and the Director of the Medical Student Section (MSS). The fellowship is not only a unique opportunity for a medical student to become involved in the AMA’s advocacy work, but also an important interface between the organization and medical students. More Information: [https://www.ama-assn.org/member-groups-sections/medical-students/government-relations-advocacy-fellow-duties-criteria](https://www.ama-assn.org/member-groups-sections/medical-students/government-relations-advocacy-fellow-duties-criteria)

**American College of Physicians Health Policy Internship Program:** The American College of Physicians is pleased to offer the Health Policy Internship for Residents/Fellows and Medical Student Members. This internship represents a unique opportunity for one Resident/Fellow Member and one Medical Student Member to develop legislative knowledge and advocacy skills by working directly with ACP's Washington, D.C., staff and participating in ACP’s annual Leadership Day. More Information: [http://www.acponline.org/advocacy/advocacy_in_action/health_policy_internship/](http://www.acponline.org/advocacy/advocacy_in_action/health_policy_internship/)

**American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) Health Policy Internships:** The AANP offers one-to-three-month internships working with a student’s personal legislator at the AANP Office of Health Policy in Washington, DC on health policy issues related to nurse practitioners and their patients. The internship offers no pay and interns are responsible for their own living expenses. Local travel is reimbursed. More Information: [http://www.aanp.org](http://www.aanp.org)

**American Medical Association (AMA) Ethics Group Internship Program:** Student interns work at AMA Headquarters in Chicago and provide support for projects and initiatives in ethics standards. Interns work with legal, medical and ethics literature to research medical ethics issues. Internships are unpaid and are three months long. More Information: [http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/physician-resources/medical-ethics/ethics-group-internship-program.page](http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/physician-resources/medical-ethics/ethics-group-internship-program.page)

**American Medical Student Association (AMSA) Summer Internships** are for pre-medical and medical students interested in health care, public affairs, policy and politics. The interns assist in lobbying, attending coalition meetings, researching current topics and drafting policy statements. The internships are typically four weeks long. More Information: [http://www.amsa.org/AMSA/Homepage/Events/AMSAIntern.aspx](http://www.amsa.org/AMSA/Homepage/Events/AMSAIntern.aspx)


**The Barbara Jordan Health Policy Scholars Program:** Established by the Kaiser Family Foundation, this program brings talented African American, Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander and American Indian/Alaska Native college seniors and recent graduates to Washington, DC, where they work in congressional offices and learn about health policy. The
program is nine weeks, and includes working with legislative procedure, participation in seminars, site visits and a health policy research paper assignment. Scholars receive approximately $7,500 in support.


**Cato Institute Internships:** The Cato Institute is a non-profit policy research organization located in Washington, DC, and is seeking interns for the summer, fall and spring terms. Responsibilities include research assistance to Cato's policy directors, assisting at Cato events, some clerical chores, attendance at Cato events and weekly seminars and readings. Candidates should be undergraduates, regardless of major, recent graduates, or graduate students who have a strong commitment to individual liberty, private property, free markets, peace, toleration, and limited government. The monthly stipend is $700, paid in two monthly installments.


**Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) Internship Program:**
The CBPP works on public policy issues affecting low-income families and individuals. Full and part-time paid internships are available in Health Policy (among other fields). Interns should have research, fact-gathering, writing, analytic and computer skills. The internship involves administrative as well as substantive tasks, and summer internships include weekly educational and social events addressing public policy. The hourly pay for undergraduate students is $8.50/hr.


The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** is a federal agency that fights to protect the health and safety of people. Their website has an extensive list of public health fellowships and internships.


The **Center for the Study of the Presidency**, Office of Former Assistant Surgeon General of the United States, Rear Admiral Susan Blumenthal, M.D., M.P.A., Health Policy Internship. The mission of the Office is to improve health by fostering national and international research, service delivery, and education programs through informed public policy. Dr. Blumenthal currently serves as the Director of the Health and Medicine Program at the Center for the Study of the Presidency (CSP) where she also focuses on global health issues. The Center is a nonpartisan, non-profit organization that seeks to further the understanding and functioning of the American Presidency and its related institutions to apply lessons learned to educate, illuminate, and inspire future leaders and to enhance public policymaking for the next President and Administration.

More Information: [http://www.thepresidency.org/who-we-are/internships](http://www.thepresidency.org/who-we-are/internships)

Internships available year round

The **Charitis Group** is an advisory services firm that provides management consulting and applied research to leading health care organizations. They have been privileged to work with industry leaders including health care providers, other health care organizations such as Life Science companies, venture capital and investment firms, national and regional payers, and integrated data networks and management organizations. Internships offer the flexibility to work in various cities throughout the U.S.


**Congressional Budget Office (CBO) Summer Internship Program** accepts graduate students and exceptionally qualified undergraduate juniors and seniors for a ten-week paid internship in Washington, DC, with limited travel reimbursement. The internship provides the opportunity to observe the budget process and policymaking at the federal level. Interns help with policy research and they participate in educational programming where they learn more about the CBO’s roles.


**David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies** facilitates summer placement of Harvard College students with organizations across South America. In 2013, there will be opportunities available in Argentina, Chile, Cuba, Brazil and Peru. Students are immersed in the local culture, context, and language of the country where they are working, while actively contributing to a project defined by the local organization.

More Information: [http://www.declas.harvard.edu/undergrads](http://www.declas.harvard.edu/undergrads)

Eligibility: Continuing Harvard College students with intermediate Spanish (Spanish 35 or higher). All concentrations welcome

Cost: ~$1000-2000, plus air fare and miscellaneous personal costs.

**Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Administration on Aging** has a Volunteer Internship Program in which students gain professional federal experience with aging services and research programs within the federal government. The internships are unpaid and are generally located in Washington, DC, but are also available in regional offices in Seattle, San Francisco, Denver, Dallas, Chicago, Kansas City, Atlanta, New York City, and Boston. Internships are available throughout the year, including the summers.


**Doctors Without Borders (Medecins Sans Frontieres):** Doctors Without Borders is a non-profit organization that sends physicians into medically underserved areas. Interns gain practical work experience in the development, human resources, communications, executive or program departments, as well as a basic introduction to the field of international medical humanitarian aid and advocacy. All internships will take place in the New York office and are paid at the rate of $10 per hour.
Global Health Corps: The University of Northern Iowa established the Global Health Corps in 1996 as a field-based training program to enhance the professional preparation of post-secondary students in the area of cross-cultural community health. To date, hundreds of students in health promotion, pre-medicine, anthropology, social work, foreign languages, and related fields have conducted community health programs with tens of thousands of underserved clients around the world.

Global Health Delivery Project: A joint project of the Harvard Medical School’s Department of Social Medicine and the Harvard Business School’s Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness. The Global Health Delivery Project is focused on research and educational programs in the design and management of health care delivery systems in resource poor settings. By taking an overall strategic perspective that emphasizes value, the project aims to bridge the gap between known science and the delivery of care in the field. The project seeks to develop rigorous frameworks for understanding and improving health care delivery systems, drawing on a body of field-based case studies supplemented by empirical research.

Harvard Global Health Institute hosts almost 80 summer research internships for Harvard undergraduates in Boston/Cambridge and internationally. Through the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF), Harvard undergraduates can work with faculty on real-world research that contributes to the international dialogue on health. There are more than 30 participating SURF sites, and during the ten-week program participating Harvard undergraduates will hold weekly discussions with global health researchers and practitioners and social events. In the International Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (I-SURF), Harvard undergraduates can take that research abroad, studying the most important issues in global health in-country and with local researchers and practitioners.

Harvard Global Health Institute
http://www.diversityconnection.org/diversityconnection/career-placements

- Participate in projects on malaria, cardiovascular disease, or maternal and child health;
- Conduct research about health systems, health delivery, or ethics in global health;
- Learn about health problems after natural disasters, and in countries experiencing conflict.

Health Career Connection is dedicated to assisting students to make well informed decisions about health care careers and gain practical experience in health care organizations. HCC provides paid internships, career resources and networking opportunities to undergraduates interested in pursuing careers in health care. Summer internships are full time positions that last ten weeks from mid-June through mid-August. Interns are paid an average of $4,000 for the program. Through major sponsors, HCC places interns in prominent health care organizations and provides additional networking and mentoring opportunities. Through an apprenticeship model, preceptors mentor and guide interns, sharing their experience and wisdom. Internships available in California and Boston.

Health Policy Internships at Families USA are geared toward protecting and strengthening Medicaid, welfare, children’s health and Medicare. Interns assist with production of reports and issue briefs on the above topics. Interns are paid $8.25 per hour and include 40 hours of work per week in Washington, DC.

Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation offers summer opportunities in the form of internships and fellowships. They offer a wide variety of summer and school-year positions that may be of interest to you.

Institute for Diversity in Health Management, Summer Enrichment Program (SEP): The Institute for Diversity in Health Management runs a 12-week paid internship program, which is open to ethnically under-represented students. The internship is located in metropolitan areas around the country and provides guidance for students interested in health care management. Interns shadow mentors attend seminars and participate in a real-world management project.

Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation aspires to make available to the world high quality information on population health, its determinants, and the performance of health systems. Their Post-Bachelor Fellowship Program provides a unique opportunity for recent college graduates with strong quantitative skills to train with faculty and senior researchers on a variety of global health projects. The PBF program combines advanced on-the-job training and mentoring and provides the option of pursuing a fully-funded Master of Public Health (MPH).

Institute of Medicine (IOM): The nation turns to the Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academies for science-based advice on
matters of biomedical science, medicine, and health. A non-profit organization specifically created for this purpose as well as an honorific membership organization, the IOM was chartered in 1970 as a component of the National Academy of Sciences.

The Institute provides a vital service by working outside the framework of government to ensure scientifically informed analysis and independent guidance. The IOM's mission is to serve as adviser to the nation to improve health. The Institute provides unbiased, evidence-based, and authoritative information and advice concerning health and science policy to policy-makers, professionals, leaders in every sector of society, and the public at large.

More Information: http://iom.edu/About-IOM.aspx

**Kaiser Media Internships in Urban Health Reporting** are geared toward minority journalists interested in urban public health reporting. Several host news organizations work with the Kaiser Family Foundation to select the interns. The internship includes an initial week-long briefing, located in Washington DC, on urban public health issues and health reporting. The intern then spends ten weeks at their newspaper/TV station base. The program ends with a 3-day meeting and site visits in Boston, MA. Interns get a 12-week stipend and paid travel expenses.


**K.J. Lee Family Public Service Fellowships** provide funding for students who will be involved in public service projects during term time, a leave of absence, or any summer before graduation. There is a strong preference for domestic public service projects.

More Information: http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic3258.files/supp04sec3.htm#SEC3

**The National Academy of Social Insurance (NASI):** Each summer, NASI offers a select number of nationally competitive paid internships for students studying for or interested in careers in social insurance policy. The internships offer students access to NASI’s staff and membership; a group made up of the nation’s leading experts on social insurance policy. NASI is uniquely qualified to provide students with challenging internship opportunities and provides interns with access to information and experience that cannot be found anywhere else in the country. Our internship programs cover a wide array of policy areas including Health and Income Security Policy (Washington Internship), Aging and Long-term Care Policy (Somers Internship), Disability Policy (Eileen Sweeney Internship), and Non-profit Management (Nathan J. Stark Internship). The programs consist of a 12-week summer semester internship that usually spans May to August, depending on the student’s college schedule. Students receive a $3,500 honorarium for their internship experience and academic credit may be arranged through the intern’s college or university. International Students with valid student visas are encouraged to apply and can be placed with non-governmental organizations, if placement projects match their skills and interests.

More Information: http://www.nasi.org/internship-opportunities

The **National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA)** provides an outstanding opportunity for students interested in a semester internship nonprofit program careers in the health care, public health prevention, as well as national advocacy and policy analysis. NHMA focuses on improving the health of Hispanic populations and works closely with its membership and partners - physicians, health professionals, residents, medical students, as well as the Federal government, Congress, and private sector partners which impact health care to our communities. Student travel stipends are provided for those enrolled in a university and obtaining academic credit.


The **National Institutes of Health (NIH)** has an Undergraduate Scholarship Program for students from disadvantaged backgrounds who are committed to careers in biomedical, behavioral, and social science health-related research. The scholarship involves a 10-week summer training internship, and then one year of employment post-graduation. The scholarship provides up to $20,000 tuition assistance for each year it is granted.


The **National Institutes of Health Student Employment Programs** provide a listing of employment options for students who are at all different stages in their educational career. Possibilities include summer internships in biomedical research; training programs out of college; predoctoral and post baccalaureate training programs and fellowships; and scholars programs.


**Rutgers University** offers a research training internship opportunity called Project L/EARN for talented under-represented undergraduates (no seniors) interested in learning more about the social sciences of health research through the Institute for Health, Health Care Policy, and Aging Research at Rutgers. This 10-week intensive summer training program includes one-on-one mentorship by a Rutgers faculty researcher and 3 course credits. Interns are provided a $4,150 stipend, tuition, and room and board.

More Information: http://ihhcpar.rutgers.edu/projectlearn

**ORISE (Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education)** is a U.S. Dept. of Energy (DOE) facility. It is an institute focused on advancing science and education, and it operates research participation programs for DOE, CDC, and other federal agencies.

The Petrie-Flom Center for Health Law Policy, Biotechnology, and Bioethics at Harvard Law School is seeking student interns for the 2012-2013 academic year. Single-term internships may be considered on an individual basis, and internships may also be extended over the summer if there is mutual interest. More Information: http://www.law.harvard.edu/programs/petrie-flom/internship.pdf

The U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) offers three excellent opportunities for students to serve their country while completing or continuing their education. If you are interested in a public health career, we encourage you to apply to the Junior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (JRCOSTEP), Senior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (SRCOSTEP) or FDA/CDER Academic Collaboration Program. All three programs offer excellent benefits and are highly competitive. More Information: http://www.usphs.gov/student/jrcostep.aspx

The RAND Corporation is a non-profit institution that helps improve policy and decision-making through research and analysis. With headquarters in Santa Monica, CA and offices in Washington, DC, Pittsburgh, PA and New York, NY, RAND often has health research assistant openings available for recent college graduates. More Information: http://www.rand.org/

Resources for the Future Summer Internship Program provides paid summer internships for outstanding undergraduate students. RFF is an independent non-profit organization that specializes in research, policy analysis, and public education on environmental, energy, natural resource, and food system issues. The program lasts ten weeks at $350 per week for undergraduates. More Information: http://www.rff.org/about_rff/pages/summerinternshipprogram.aspx

The San Francisco AIDS Foundation provides a wide variety of HIV care, prevention, and information services to people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. These programs include direct support as well as working to broaden access to HIV treatments in the developing world through its international affiliate, the Pangaea Global AIDS Foundation. The organization offers unpaid internships with a minimum three-month commitment, 10-20 hours per week. More Information: http://www.sfaf.org/

The Student Educational Employment Program provides federal employment to students enrolled in universities. The program is comprised of two components: The Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP), and the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP). The first is flexible about area assignments as they relate to the student’s studies, whereas the latter is designed to coincide with future career interests. More Information: http://www.opm.gov/employ/students/

Summer Undergraduate Minority Research Program at the University of Pennsylvania. The SUMR program is an endeavor by the Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics (LDI) and the Health Care Management Department of the Wharton School to provide underrepresented minority undergraduate students, or anyone who is interested in an opportunity to explore the exciting field of health services research. More Information: http://ldi.upenn.edu/sumn

The Wellstone Fellowship is a year-long, full-time, salaried position. The Fellow will be engaged in health care advocacy work in Families USA’s office in Washington, DC, where he or she will learn about Medicare, Medicaid, efforts to achieve universal coverage, and other important health policy issues. Specifically, the fellow will be engaged in Families USA’s outreach to and mobilization of communities of color. At the same time, the Wellstone Fellow will learn about conducting health care campaigns through communication and collaboration with our network of state grassroots advocates and organizations. The ideal candidate will express an interest in social justice work and in working with communities of color. Additionally, we are looking for an individual who displays the potential to continue to contribute to social justice work after their year of hands-on experience. There is no bias in favor of any academic discipline, although we prefer that the fellow have a college degree. The fellowship will last one year, and Fellows will receive a compensation package that includes an annual stipend of $38,000 and excellent health care benefits. More Information: http://www.familiesusa.org/fellowships/wellstone-fellowship.html

University of Maryland College of Behavioral and Social Sciences: Summer Research Initiative is an 8-week program to provide rising juniors and seniors an opportunity to increase their interest in and learn about doctoral-level training and provide basic research skills that can be applied in the social, behavioral and economic science fields. The program has a special emphasis on population groups underrepresented in these fields. Students will be provided a meaningful research experience by working with a faculty mentor in one of their nine academic departments: African American Studies, Anthropology, Criminology & Criminal Justice, Economics, Geography, Government & Politics, Hearing & Speech Sciences, Psychology and Sociology. Students will be provided round-trip airfare, meals, room and board in University on-campus housing and a stipend. More Information: http://www.bsos.umd.edu/diversity/summer-research-initiative.aspx
University of Pennsylvania Summer Undergraduate Minority Research Program: To prepare top candidates to pursue careers in health services research, the Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics (LDI), the Health Care Systems Department of the Wharton School, and the VA Center of Health Equity Research and Promotion (CHERP) are co-sponsoring a summer program for rising undergraduate sophomores, juniors and seniors from underrepresented minority groups, or anyone interested in exploring the field of health services research. The SUMR program provides students with an opportunity to receive a stipend to conduct health services research on a topic of their choice, under the guidance of Penn faculty.

More Information: http://ldi.upenn.edu/sumr

Villers Fellowship for Health Care Justice was created in 2005 by Philippe Villers, Founder and President of Families USA. Villers Fellows work in the health policy department and assist the organization’s efforts to improve access to health coverage for all Americans, especially for low-income and other vulnerable communities. Specifically, Villers Fellows will conduct research on a range of health care policy issues and write and contribute to publications that are relevant to current health policy debates. The Fellowship is a year-long, full-time, salaried position at the office in Washington, DC.


The Vot-ER Civic Health Fellowship is a 10-month leadership development program that aims to support, teach, and train a learning community of Vot-ER users across the country. Through a variety of learning settings, including lectures, small-group sessions, and more, fellows will leave the Vot-ER Civic Health Fellowship with a nuanced understanding of civic engagement, related health equity issues, and community organizing and activation practices.

More Information: https://vot-er.org/civichealthfellowship/

World Health Organization (WHO) Internships: The World Health Organization (WHO) as the leader in global public health issues is committed to building future leaders in public health. WHO’s Internship Programme offers a wide range of opportunities for students to gain insight in the technical and administrative programmes of WHO. The duration of WHO internships is between six weeks to three months. Exceptionally, internships may be extended up to a maximum of 24 weeks depending on your degree requirements. Unfortunately, WHO internships are not paid, and all costs of travel and accommodation are the responsibility of the intern or the sponsoring institution.


Other Advocacy Organizations

The Advisory Board Company is a global research, technology, and consulting firm partnering with 150,000 leaders in 3,700+ organizations across health care and higher education. Through our innovative membership model, we collaborate with executives and their teams to elevate performance and solve their most pressing challenges. We provide strategic guidance, actionable insights, web-based software solutions, and comprehensive implementation and management services.

More Information: http://www.advisory.com/About-Us

Founded in 1985, amfAR, the Foundation for AIDS Research, is dedicated to ending the global AIDS epidemic through innovative research. With the freedom and flexibility to respond quickly to emerging areas of scientific promise, amfAR plays a catalytic role in accelerating the pace of HIV/AIDS research and achieving real breakthroughs. amfAR-funded research has increased our understanding of HIV and has helped lay the groundwork for major advances in the study and treatment of HIV/AIDS. Since 1985, amfAR has invested more than $340 million in its mission and has awarded grants to more than 2,000 research teams worldwide.


AvalereHealth, LLC is a leading strategic advisory firm in the health care field located in Washington, DC. The company provides strategy, research, and educational products to a range of commercial and nonprofit customers with interests in improving the health care system. Avalere Health is based on the premise that business strategy and public policy in health care are integrally linked, and that deep content expertise is necessary to understand and navigate either realm.

More Information: http://www.avalerehealth.net/

The Center for American Progress is dedicated to improving the lives of Americans through progressive ideas and action. Building on the achievements of progressive pioneers such as Teddy Roosevelt and Martin Luther King, our work addresses 21st-century challenges such as energy, national security, economic growth and opportunity, immigration, education, and health care. We develop new policy ideas, critique the policy that stems from conservative values, and challenge the media to cover the issues that truly matter and shape the national debate.


Based in Washington, D.C. the nonpartisan Center for Studying Health System Change (HSC) conducts health policy research and analysis focused on the U.S. health care system to inform the thinking and decisions of policy makers in government and private industry. Additionally, HSC studies contribute more broadly to the body of health
care policy research that enables decision makers to understand the national and local market forces driving changes in the health system.


The Commonwealth Fund, among the first private foundations started by a woman philanthropist—Anna M. Harkness—was established in 1918 with the broad charge to enhance the common good. The mission of The Commonwealth Fund is to promote a high performing health care system that achieves better access, improved quality, and greater efficiency, particularly for society's most vulnerable, including low-income people, the uninsured, minority Americans, young children, and elderly adults. The Fund carries out this mandate by supporting independent research on health care issues and making grants to improve health care practice and policy. An international program in health policy is designed to stimulate innovative policies and practices in the United States and other industrialized countries.


Global Health Strategies provides worldwide communications, advocacy and strategic consulting services to a growing roster of public, private and not-for-profit clients working in global health.


Leerink Swann Strategic Advisors is a Boston- and New York-based consulting group that offers strategic advice to leading life sciences and health care companies. Since 2001, they have provided strategy consulting services for over a hundred clients, including top ten global pharmaceutical companies. They provide high impact, practical solutions and strategies to clients by assessing unique commercial, clinical and scientific information synthesized by their internal team of consultants with backgrounds in business and medicine.


Mathematica Policy Research is dedicated to improving public well-being by bringing the highest standards of quality, objectivity, and excellence to bear on information collection and analysis for our partners and clients. The company has been at the forefront of assessing the effectiveness of policies and programs since 1968. Considered an architect of social policy research, Mathematica conducted the first social policy experiment in the United States, the New Jersey Negative Income Tax Experiment, to test ways of encouraging low-income individuals to work. Today, Mathematica’s capabilities and reach have grown to respond to new public policy challenges and information needs. Our 800+ employees are national leaders in thorough and innovative program evaluation, objective policy research and interpretation, sophisticated survey design and data collection, and comprehensive performance measurement and data management. Mathematica works across the country and around the globe, serving federal agencies, state and local governments, foundations, universities, professional associations, and businesses. Our studies and analysis have yielded information to guide decisions in wide-ranging policy areas, from health, education, early childhood, and family support to nutrition, employment, disability, and international development.


The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) is an international public health agency that works to improve health and living standards of the people of the Americas. It is internationally recognized as part of the United Nations system, serving as the Regional Office for the Americas of the World Health Organization, and as the health organization of the Inter-American System.

More Information: http://new.paho.org/hq

The Public Health Associate Program (PHAP) is a competitive, two-year, paid Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) fellowship. A PHAP associate is assigned to a state, tribal, local or territorial public health agency and works alongside local public health professionals. After completing the program, PHAP graduates will be qualified for future jobs with federal, state, tribal, local and territorial public health agencies, and will be uniquely prepared to pursue an advanced degree in public health.


The Urban Institute: The Urban Institute gathers data, conducts research, evaluates programs, offers technical assistance overseas, and educates Americans on social and economic issues — to foster sound public policy and effective government.

More Information: http://www.urban.org/index.cfm