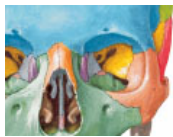


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## Our Mission

AMSA fosters a community of future physicians through education and advocacy.

## About AMSA



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### Who Are We?

The American Medical Student Association (AMSA), with a half-century history of medical student activism, is the oldest and largest independent association of physicians-in-training in the United States.

Today, AMSA is a student-governed, national organization committed to representing the concerns of physicians-in-training. AMSA members are medical students, premedical students, interns, residents and practicing physicians. Founded in 1950, AMSA continues its commitment to improving medical training and the nation's health.

How is AMSA different from other organizations? When you join AMSA, you become part of a vital force of future physicians who believe that patients and health professionals are partners in the management of health care and that access to high-quality health care is a right and not a privilege. At AMSA, activism is a way of life. Student idealism is transformed into meaningful public service, innovation and institutional change.

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## What Are We All About?

Medical school will likely be the most difficult life challenge you have faced. From the rigorous studying to the pressure of fulfilling your roles as student, family member and friend, you need all the help you can get to succeed.

AMSA is committed to improving the lives of medical students like you, in big ways and small. Our benefits will make your life just a little easier, and our magazine, *The New Physician*, will give you the information you need to enrich your medical training and launch your career as a physician.

AMSA is about more than just improving medical student lives. We live in the richest country in the world, yet many have no health insurance. Research shows that health disparities are rampant in America. AMSA's role in these issues is extremely important, because our strength is giving power to medical students to take action and create change about issues that they care about. It's the presence of visionary medical students and our energy that makes AMSA such a powerful organization.

## Our History

The American Medical Student Association (AMSA) was founded in 1950, as the Student American Medical Association (SAMA), under the auspices of the American Medical Association (AMA). The main purpose of the organization was to provide medical students a chance to participate in organized medicine.

The late 1960's saw dramatic changes in the organization's objectives and philosophy and in 1967 SAMA cut ties from the AMA and became independent and student-governed. The organization began to take a stand on more socio-medical issues, such as civil rights, universal health care and Vietnam.

SAMA quickly became a leader in medical education reform. In 1968, the SAMA Joint Commission on Medical Education, made up of students and medical educators, proposed numerous reforms and model curricula to make medical education more responsive to community needs. SAMA also helped to introduce the original Family Practice Act of 1970 and testified in support of legislation establishing and later expanding the National Health Service Corps.

In 1975, the organization changed its name to the American Medical Student Association (AMSA), in order to clarify its separation from the AMA. It also saw the election of the first woman president.

In 1977, AMSA and the AMSA Foundation, the programming arm of the organization were reorganized under the leadership of its now emeritus executive director, Paul R. Wright. The same year, national president became a full-time elected position. In 1978, the organization moved the national office to Washington, D.C. and later appointed its first full-time legislative affairs director in order to strengthen their leadership in the health care field.

The AMSA HEAL Deal, introduced by the AMSA Foundation in 1986, was the first discounted Health Education Assistance Loan program available to medical students on a national basis. This led to competition for student loans and a rapid decrease in

AMSA has long been committed to training primary care physicians. Starting with the Appalachian Health Project in the 1970's and continuing with the Generalist Physicians in Training program (GPIT) in 1992, AMSA focused on developing a community-responsive physician work force and increasing the number of medical school graduates entering primary care fields. At its peak, GPIT had more than 9,000 students participating.

AMSA has developed strong international health interests as well. In the 1970's, AMSA led study tours to Cuba and China. In 1986, with the help of the Pew Memorial Trust and the "We are the World" Save Africa Rock Group effort, AMSA developed the first international consortium of medical schools for exchanging and training physicians in Nigeria, Ghana, Colombia and Mexico.

In 1995, AMSA helped convince the National Resident Matching Program to change the Match algorithm in favor of students. In addition, AMSA succeeded in calling for full contract disclosure from residency programs before signing students on to the Match, and in calling for additional student representation on the NRMP Board of Directors.

For more than 60 years, AMSA has represented the voice of physicians-in-training in their efforts to best serve the public. There are four aspirations that AMSA members focus their activism: advocating for quality, affordable health care for all, global health equality, enriching medicine through diversity, and professional integrity, development and student well-being. AMSA's action committees and interest groups expose students to information on subjects not generally covered in traditional curricula.

AMSA remains a leader in the campaign for resident work hour reform—authoring the Patient and Physician Safety and Protection Act of 2003, introduced by Senator Jon Corzine (S. 952) and Representative John Conyers (H.R. 1228).


In 2002, AMSA launched the PharmFree Campaign to educate and train our members to professionally and ethically interact with the pharmaceutical industry. It encourages medical schools and academic medical centers to develop policies that limit the access of pharmaceutical company representatives to their campuses and prohibit medical students and physicians from accepting gifts of any kind from these representatives. In May 2007, AMSA released its first PharmFree Scorecard, which was a first-of-its-kind ranking of medical schools according to their pharmaceutical influence policies. The PharmFree momentum continues to build as institutions across the country are announcing policy that limits pharmaceutical representatives from their campuses. Updated versions of the Scorecard were issued in 2008, 2009 and 2010.

AMSA became the U.S. member organization of the International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA) in 2008. The merger put AMSA members at the epicenter of the international medical student community, providing U.S. medical students the opportunity to participate in international exchanges and expand AMSA's programs throughout the globe.

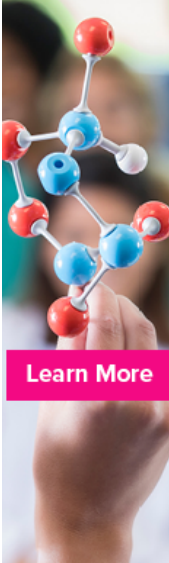
AMSA local chapters continue to reach out to serve the health needs of their communities. Annually, local chapters contribute over one million hours of community service. The AMSA annual convention is the largest gathering of medical students and regularly draws an attendance of more than 1,500 physicians-in-training, medical educators and health policy innovators. AMSA continues to search for new and innovative ways to improve health care, health-care delivery and medical education.

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[Read more about AMSA's contributions through history >](#)



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