Inspiration Exchange for the Local Chapter Officer

Inspiration Exchange (often referred to as InEx) is AMSA's members-only social network. But what do you or your chapter need with a social networking site? True, InEx is an excellent way to connect with friends and peers, but it is so much more than that! This innovative new tool serves both as a personal resource and a chapter officer utility for reaching out to your AMSA chapter members. It's a way to create networks with fellow students based on areas of specialty, interests or hobbies. It's a way to share project materials, community event announcements, international health experiences and more. It's a way to communicate directly with your chapter members.

As an **individual**, InEx is where you can:

- **Build your own, personalized profile page** and set your privacy settings to restrict access to all AMSA members, your personal contacts or nobody at all.
- **Search the directory** to find existing friends or new ones you may have met at a local or national event.
- **Create networks** based on areas of specialty or even interests & hobbies. Have you even wondered about aerospace medicine or spinal cord injury? Are you an online gaming junkie or a billiard pro? Utilize your networks to explore with others who share your interests and passions.
- **Join action committees & interest groups** and engage in stimulating email-based community discussions. AMSA has many topic-specific committees with hundreds, and even thousands, of members all sharing research, perspectives, articles, events and more. These communities are a great instrument for collaborating and keeping up to date on current affairs in a particular area.
- **Share resources** such as project guides, articles, presentations, pictures, videos and more in various resource libraries. While you're there, rate the resources you find and add them to Your Favorites.
- **Explore the event calendar** for important AMSA national and local events, webinars and student opportunities (or post your own). They're being uploaded daily!
- **Write your own blog**, follow another blogger & contribute to the AMSA wiki. Perhaps you've completed a successful community service project and you want to blog about the experience. Maybe you've recently finished an internship in Tanzania and have loads to share. Or possibly you have a very strong opinion on a bill being debated in Congress. Your voice matters and others want to know!

As a **chapter leader**, InEx does even more!

- **Easily contact and collaborate with officers** from other medical and premedical chapters. As a local officer, you are automatically a part of the chapter officer leadership community. Fellow leaders are an excellent resource for input and feedback. Contact officers from other chapters in close proximity and plan joint events. See who has already done that AIDS Walk community project and find out what successes they had and what to watch out for. Get fundraising tips and ideas for what local contacts and establishments are the

best for seeking out financial assistance. The possibilities are endless.

- **Enjoy a pre-established chapter community.** Every chapter has its own space on InEx and each member is automatically part of their chapter's community. Through announcements, community discussions, resource libraries, calendaring and event management, the tools you need to successfully communicate and run your local chapter are now at your fingertips.

- **Upload resources and archive files** to your resource library for chapter reference. Documents of all types are easily stored here and allow for comments and rating from your members. They also allow for keyword or topic tagging so that they can easily be located through a search at a later date. Additionally, you can use this library to upload multiple files at once to a single entry, such as a dozen photos from a past event, or 2 Word documents, 3 PDFs and a .BMP file from a recent planning committee meeting.

- **Likewise, find and share local project ideas & materials** from the InEx Project Guide Directory. This online directory allows chapters to upload project materials, such as budgets, planning materials, flyers, event photos, and recap/feedback information. Don't waste time reinventing the wheel; just download and tweak a project to fit your chapter needs. Plus, the directory allows you to add these documents to your favorites, rate them, and provide comments and feedback that you may have after instituting the event in your community.

- **Maintain an online community calendar** specifically for your chapter. As a chapter president, you and fellow administrators for your InEx community are able to upload local events to your community calendar. These can be chapter events, school or local community events you'd like to share with your members. Use the calendar to post deadlines or student opportunities as well.

- **Promote a local event.** In addition to posting events to your community calendar, you can also create a webpage for event details, graphics and even event registration. Have a speaker visiting your school that you'd like to promote? Create a calendar webpage with speaker bio, event details and a variety of resource links. Planning a chapter book discussion with pizza and need to have a head count for materials and food? Have your chapter members register in advance through your community event calendar.

- **Post and follow email-based discussions** specific to your chapter. Share articles and medical community issues. Discuss event planning or specific challenges your chapter is facing.

- **Post blogs to your chapter community** and follow the blogs of your chapter members. When you blog in InEx, you are able to assign it exclusively to a community such as your chapter. Isolating your blog to your defined community can serve as a great benefit. Maybe a professor at your school recently published a book and you've read it would like to share your thoughts. Perhaps there is controversy at your school regarding a particular department or administrative process and you'd like to post a summary and put a call out for comments. Or possibly you've nominated a professor at your school for an AMSA award and would like to extend your admiration of that professor to the full chapter community. Blogs are a great way for reaching out and sharing with your peers.

So, here you have some introductory ideas on how Inspiration Exchange can help you as a chapter officer reach your goals this year. And as you begin to use the tool and find new and innovative ways to utilize its features, we ask that you share those ideas with the rest of the community.

We, at AMSA, have experienced great pride in building out this tool for our members. From the thoughtful naming of the community to appropriately represent its purpose, to the details of integrating the platform seamlessly with our membership database for pre-populated communities and discussion groups, we have kept our members needs at the forefront. We sincerely hope that you, both as an individual and as a chapter leader, are able to put this tool to use to better you and your fellow student members' medical training experience!

http://inspirationexchange.amsa.org