

THE PACEMAKER: AMSA'S PREMED NEWSLETTER

In this issue:

- Foreword: Dr. Jeff Koetje
- Meet your premed team!
- AMSA Fall Conference

Dear Pre-health Advisers and AMSA premeds,

Greetings from the national office of the American Medical Student Association ([AMSA](#))! I am pleased to introduce you to AMSA's Premedical Leadership Team, a core group of national leaders within our organization. As the oldest and largest independent, student-led organization representing physicians-in-training, and with a membership of over 40,000 medical and premedical students throughout the U.S. and across the world, AMSA is committed to being a home for future healthcare professionals committed to the highest ideals of the caring professions.

AMSA is an organization focused on both education and advocacy. My "escalator pitch" (which I think is even briefer than an "elevator pitch") about AMSA goes like this: *"AMSA advocates for education, and we educate for advocacy." We understand that it takes more than medical school to make a physician, by which we mean that the development of attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary for people-centered, justice-oriented healthcare requires a diversity of environments and communities for learning that extend beyond the literal and figurative walls of formal premedical and medical education.*

AMSA is, indeed, a [student-governed organization](#). The vision, mission, and strategic priorities are determined by the collective voices of our members, put into action by our 70 national student leaders and hundreds of chapter officers, and operationalized by a full-time staff of about 12 mission-driven professionals. We exist not only as a home for physicians-in-training; we are also a training ground for advocates-in-training, educators-in-training, humanists-in-training, activists-in-training, policy-makers-in-training, or – simply put – leaders-in-training.

AMSA is proud to be an organization with a broad range of educational and advocacy priorities. We are not a single-issue organization, to be sure. AMSA's [nine action committees and three national campaigns](#) offer students the opportunity to strengthen their voice and act upon their values on topics such as health policy; funding for HIV/AIDS research, prevention, and treatment; comprehensive women's healthcare including reproductive care; medical education reform; LGBTQ health; structural racism and health inequalities; student wellness and burnout prevention; global health justice; professionalism and conflicts of interest in medical education and practice; climate change and public health. I could go on and on...

This year's [Premedical Leadership Team](#), building on the success of their predecessors, is excited to engage premedical and pre-health students and pre-health advisers in an important conversation about the social mission of medical education. This team, along with support from other national leaders and the staff, are working on resources and programs that will support the professional and personal identity development of students who have heard the call to serve people and communities through acts of caring. Programs such as the [AMSA Premedical Scholars Program](#), [AMSA PremedFest](#), [AMSA Leadership Institutes](#), the [AMSA Fall Conferences](#) and [Annual Convention](#), and this newsletter have been developed to support the transformation of individual acts of caring into a lifelong commitment to justice, equity, peace, and love.

As a member of AMSA's staff, I have the incredible privilege of working with these energetic, visionary, dedicated students who form the AMSA community. I can say without hesitation, the future of healthcare is now – and it is exactly what we need.

In AMSAlliance,

Jeff Koetje, MD
Director of Experiences
jkoetje@amsa.org

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GET TO KNOW YOUR 2015-16 PREMED TEAM!



Christine

Premedical team chair

Christine Nwoke is a senior at Kennesaw State University in Kennesaw, GA. She is a Psychology major with a minor in Applied Statistics/Data Analysis. For her local AMSA chapter she has served as the fundraising/events chair and secretary. For the 2014-15 year, she served as the premedical leadership chair for national AMSA and continues to hold that position. Aside from AMSA, Christine is a part of other organizations such as her school's undergraduate research club, where she is secretary and a founding member. She is also involved in Phi Sigma Pi honors fraternity, where she held the position of service chair, as well as psychology club. Christine aspires to go to medical school in the hopes of becoming a psychiatrist. In her free time, Christine likes to hike, read, and write short stories. Contact Christine at premed.chair@amsa.org!



Sophie

Premedical education coordinator

Sophie To is a senior at Vanderbilt University. She is double-majoring in Molecular and Cellular Biology and Medicine, Health and Society. Sophie has been a member of AMSA since 2012. For the national chapter she served on the 2014-15 editorial advisory board of The New Physician magazine, and for her local chapter she currently serves as president. Sophie hopes to go to public health school and medical school after she graduates, so that after another half-century of school, she can work as a primary care physician and a public health researcher. When Sophie has free time (only hypothetically. Sophie doesn't actually have free time), she writes satire articles, plays the violin, and annoys her sister.

Contact Sophie at premed.education@amsa.org!



Jai

Premedical professionalism coordinator

Jai Kumar Mediratta is a senior at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, double-majoring in Microbiology and Biology with minors in Spanish and Chemistry. Besides his involvement in AMSA, Jai is currently the Chief Developmental Officer at the Journal of Young Investigators and the Developmental Coordinator for his local Camp Kesem chapter. He is actively involved in education research and reform, and encourages you to register for the AMSA Premedical Scholars Program that is making its debut this year! In this program, premedical students will have an opportunity to learn about the essence of medicine and a rising movement called Beyond Flexner. His goals for the year include finishing his thesis, rewatching the entire seven seasons of Parks and Recreation, and maybe signing up for a half marathon.

Contact Jai at premed.professionalism@amsa.org!

FALL CONFERENCES

The AMSA Fall Conferences are right around the corner! AMSA Fall Conferences are one-day summits bringing together physicians-in-training with expert facilitators for high yield idea-sharing and skills-building strategically focused on a clinically relevant theme. The first conference will be held November 14 in New York hosted by: Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. The theme is “Humanity at the Heart of Health Care.” It is our vision for the future of medicine, starting now. Experience the transformation of healthcare from what it currently is, to what it can be, in the three educational tracks related to the theme: The Sociology of Care: Structural Racism, Health, and Social Justice; Caring for the Whole Person Using the Tools of Narrative Medicine and Medical Humanities; and Ethical and Humanistic Care at the Frontiers of Technology and Innovation.

The next conference is November 21 in Chicago, Illinois hosted by: University of Illinois at Chicago College of Medicine. The theme for this conference is “Communication at the Center of Care.” Communication is the key to good patient care. But this goes far beyond the act of simply listening to what our patients have to say. Communication is looking for that subtle glance, that slight pause, that worried gaze; it is looking for the strengths of team members and understanding the complex ways in which we all come together to provide coordinated, patient-centered care; and it is listening to the aggregate voices of communities, recognizing the needs and barriers they face, and amplifying these public narratives to those in power.

Do not miss this opportunity to network, visit the exhibitor fair, present at the poster session, and participate in clinical workshops and demonstrations!



HUMANITY & COMMUNICATION
THE CORE OF CLINICAL CARE

Would you like to be featured in the next newsletter? Send in your story of your premed experience. Chapter doing big things? Send it in to be in our chapter highlight

Send all submissions to premed.chair@amsa.org