

Doctors Back to School

created by the American Medical Association Minority Affairs Consortium

Introduction

Go “back to school” and shape a life

Like many physicians, you may be practicing medicine today because you knew someone who inspired you to follow that path. Now the American Medical Association (AMA) is calling on you to fill a similar role for under-represented minority children in your community by taking part in its Doctors Back to School (DBTS) program.

DBTS sends physicians and medical students into their communities to accomplish two primary goals: to pique young minority students’ interest in medicine by introducing them to “real-life” role models, and to raise awareness of the need for more minority physicians. Taking part in this project, which requires only a small amount of your time, could have lasting benefits for the life of a young person and our medical community. This tool kit provides all of the essentials you will need to participate in this groundbreaking program.

African Americans, Hispanic Americans and Native Americans make up nearly a quarter of the U.S. population today and are expected to make up a third of the population within 30 years—but only 7 percent of physicians and 6 percent of medical school faculty members are from one of these underrepresented groups.

Increasing the number of minority physicians is critical to improving health care delivery throughout the system, and to addressing persistent racial and ethnic disparities in health care. Despite overall improvements in Americans’ health, minority Americans lag behind on nearly every health indicator, including health care coverage, life expectancy and disease rates.

To help raise awareness of the need for more minority physicians, and to sow the seeds of interest for the next generation, we are asking you to set up and conduct a short visit to the school or community organization of your choice. By joining other minority doctors in this program, we can bring a national spotlight to our goal of increasing the number and the influence of minority physicians.

DBTS visits can take place throughout the year. Whether your interaction with students lasts 15 minutes or an hour, your presence will demonstrate that people of color can and do become successful members of the profession.

Use this action kit to help make your experience as easy and rewarding as possible. It includes a checklist, outlines for age-appropriate presentations, and sample forms and letters. “Future Doctor” stickers are available upon request.

Once you have scheduled your DBTS visit, please notify us so we may cite and support your efforts. Contact the AMA at dbts@ama-assn.org or (312) 464-5622. Call or e-mail with any questions you may have about the DBTS program.

On behalf of all the young physicians-to-be, we hope you’ll take this special opportunity to get out of the office and into the community. **Thank you!**



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Contact information

As you move forward in planning your DBTS visit, please feel free to contact AMA staff with any questions or comments. Let us know where you are visiting.

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Check the AMA DBTS Web site at www.ama-assn.org/go/dbts for updates and to download the sample letters and forms.

