We honor the medical school class of 2023 by protecting its future

MAY 11, 2023

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Immediate Past President

Congratulations, graduates! Your time in medical school is unlike any that has come before, and you have been tested in ways I cannot imagine. But you are here. You’ve made it. And your struggle, in a time of incredible disruption for our nation, has made you stronger and more resilient residents—which, in turn, will lead to stronger and more resilient physicians to help us take on the immense challenges still ahead.

To honor you, and all of those who have helped you reach this day, we’ve organized a virtual celebration, the AMA Tribute to the Medical School Class of 2023, on Sunday, May 21. Some of the nation's most prominent names in medicine will join me to share words of advice, encouragement and inspiration for the new graduates. It’s just one way to show the AMA’s commitment to supporting medical students today and protecting your future. I sincerely hope you can attend, and that you take just a moment to soak in the praise and recognition you most definitely deserve.

As I’m sure you know, physicians today have a lot on our shoulders. This has always been true, but it is especially true now with so many external forces working to undermine trust in science, trust in health institutions, and trust in the advice of medical experts. Added to this are many outrageous attempts, through courts and the legislature, to insert government and other third parties into the most intimate of spaces—the exam room; the place where patients, in consultation with their physicians, sometimes have to make difficult decisions about their course of care.

You are key to medicine’s future

Our profession—and the health of our nation—needs your strength, your resilience, and your optimism for the future. We need every ounce of determination you’ve stored over the last four years to help us improve the state of our nation’s health. You’ve got this. And know that the AMA stands with you; today and through every step of your career.
I believe that physicians, and aspiring physicians, remain our best hope to create a future for health care that we all want.

A health system that is efficient and accessible for all who need it.

One that is rooted in science, evidence and the longstanding ethics that guide our profession.

Where patients and physicians, working together, can choose the right course of care free from outside influence.

Health care that is equitable for all patients, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation.

A society in which patients have the insurance coverage they need, and have access to care that can help them enjoy longer and healthier lives.

A health care system in which physicians aren’t burdened by excessive demands and can focus all of our attention on our patients.

A system that values and respects everyone, and in which everyone can achieve their optimal health.

And a health care system that retains its humanity at the center of an increasingly digital world.

This isn’t exactly the health system we work in today, but it is the one the AMA and our allies throughout organized medicine are fighting for. As your powerful ally in patient care, we are with you as you make your transition into residency, and we are focused on protecting your future as a physician.

Protecting your physician career

The AMA Recovery Plan for America’s Physicians that we introduced last year, and that continues to be the focus of our state and federal advocacy efforts, is designed to protect the considerable investment you’ve already made in your career, both your time and your resources. We do this so you can focus on your residency—years that will continue to shape and influence the kind of physician you will ultimately be.

Change is constant in medicine, and in life. And while it’s impossible to predict exactly what health care challenges we’ll face in the years to come, you can be confident in all that will never change: your character, your compassion, your belief in science, and your drive to serve humanity.
The qualities that helped get you through medical school in a time of historic uncertainty are the same qualities that you will lean on for the remainder of your journey.

I know that you will. And I know that our nation, and our profession, will be better for it.