



Dan Pfeifle, MD: Finding ways to be an advocate

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Staff News Writer



The AMA “Members Move Medicine” series profiles a wide variety of doctors, offering a glimpse into the passions of women and men navigating new courses in American medicine.

On the move with: Dan Pfeifle, who is a fourth-year medical student at the University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine and an AMA Medical Student Section Alternate Delegate.

AMA member since: 2015.

What inspired me to pursue a career in medicine: I wanted a career that would combine things I loved about the sciences (such as problem solving, hypothesis generation, etc.) with the connections and social aspects of my humanities classes. Medicine felt like the most natural connection of these realms, with the added benefit of providing care for those in need.

How I move medicine: I move medicine by working with other interested stakeholders to create meaningful policy positions for our AMA. These policies can help the AMA to advocate for new legislation, changes in federal regulations, and better medical education for myself and my colleagues. Additionally, it can provide a better practice environment for our colleagues and provide better care for our patients.

Career highlights: My most notable accomplishment so far is serving as the Alternate Delegate for the Medical Student Section. I have the honor of representing more than 55,000 medical student members to the AMA’s House of Delegates—their views, resolutions, and desires. To be entrusted with this responsibility has been both humbling and uplifting.

Advice I’d give to those interested in pursuing a career in medicine: Those interested in a career in health care should find a way to be an advocate—whether on behalf of their patients, their profession, or both. As we move forward as a society, the medical profession needs to recognize the powerful voice we possess, and work to use that voice in a way that is beneficial.

How I give back to the community: I advocate for patients, physicians, residents and medical students by working to create impactful, meaningful policy through the AMA. I have had the good fortune of working with amazing students and physicians to address areas such as access to care, student and physician burnout, and insurance coverage for people across the spectrum of covered states.

Aspect of my work that means the most: My time with patients is the most meaningful to me. Because I am still training and learning, I can appreciate the extended amount of time that I can spend with patients to really dive deep into their personal lives and how that affects their care.

My hope for the future of medicine: My sincere hope is that the medical community can reach a place where the patient and physician interaction is as minimally affected by outside factors as it



possibly can be, so that the physician's training and judgement, with the patient's input and desires, can create the best outcomes for that patient.

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