

# 2026 AMA Medical Student Advocacy Conference Agenda

March 5–6 | Hilton Washington DC National Mall The Wharf

For the latest conference agenda and updates, please visit [ama-assn.org/mac](http://ama-assn.org/mac).  
Times are Eastern and subject to change.

Thursday, March 5		
1-2:45 p.m.	<b>Conference check-in/casual networking and welcome</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference badge and materials pick-up (ID required for check-in)</li> <li>• Networking and welcome:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enjoy coffee, meet students and explore offerings from AMA partners</li> <li>- Get a professional photo headshot (or sign up for a later time slot)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Archives Lounge and Archives</b>
2:45 p.m.	<b>Ballroom doors open</b>	<b>L'Enfant Ballroom</b>
2:55-3 p.m.	<b>Kick-off: 2026 AMA Medical Student Advocacy Conference</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joshua Hartley, AMA Government Relations Advocacy Fellow and your conference host, delivers opening remarks.</li> </ul>	<b>L'Enfant Ballroom</b>
3-3:15 p.m.	<b>Welcome address</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John Whyte, MD, MPH CEO and Executive Vice President, AMA</li> </ul>	<b>L'Enfant Ballroom</b>
3:15-3:30 p.m.	<b>AMA Board of Trustees address</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• David H. Aizuss, MD Chair, Board of Trustees, AMA</li> </ul>	<b>L'Enfant Ballroom</b>
3:30-4 p.m.	<b>Congressional perspective: U.S. Sen. John Barrasso, MD, (R-Wyo.)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sen. John Barrasso, MD, has represented Wyoming in the U.S. Senate since 2007 and is currently the Senate Republican whip. A former orthopedic surgeon known as “Wyoming’s Doctor,” he draws on his extensive medical experience to champion improved health care and advocate tirelessly on behalf of patients nationwide.</li> </ul>	<b>L'Enfant Ballroom</b>
4-4:15 p.m.	<b>Understanding the new vaccine schedule: What changed and why it matters</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexis Pierce, JD, senior attorney, Division of Legislative Counsel, AMA, and Philip Lynch, JD, attorney, Division of Legislative Counsel, AMA, will provide an overview of recent changes to the federal immunization schedule, including how it affects insurance coverage. Students will hear what these differences mean for patient care, public trust and clinical advocacy.</li> </ul>	<b>L'Enfant Ballroom</b>
4:15-4:45 p.m.	<b>Congressional perspective</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaker, TBD</li> </ul>	<b>L'Enfant Ballroom</b>
4:45-5:15 p.m.	<b>Advocacy in 2026</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• David Thomas and Sage Eastman, who are bipartisan partners at Mehlman Consulting, will provide an overview of the politics and policy landscape surrounding President Donald Trump and preview some of the changes and opportunities that lie ahead.</li> </ul>	<b>L'Enfant Ballroom</b>

5:15–5:30 p.m.	<b>Break</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refreshments provided</li> <li>Following the break, all students will transition to the table assigned to the state they are representing.</li> </ul>	<b>L’Enfant Ballroom Foyer</b>
5:30–5:55 p.m.	<b>Education session: Graduate medical education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alexis Pierce, JD, senior attorney, Division of Legislative Counsel, AMA, and Robert Redding, assistant director, Congressional Affairs, AMA, will provide background on graduate medical education (GME), outline key elements of the Resident Education Deferred Interest (REDI) Act, and prepare students to articulate their loan experiences and recent policy changes in support of our urgent legislative ask.</li> </ul>	<b>L’Enfant Ballroom</b>
5:55–6:10 p.m.	<b>Advocacy training: Lobbying and advocacy 101</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dana Lichtenberg, assistant director, Congressional Affairs, AMA, and Joshua Hartley, AMA Government Relations Advocacy Fellow, will lead a training session on how to prepare for and conduct an effective meeting with legislators and staffers.</li> </ul>	<b>L’Enfant Ballroom</b>
6:10–6:50 p.m.	<b>Education session: PBM reform and NIH funding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dana Lichtenberg, assistant director, Congressional Affairs, AMA, Robert Redding, assistant director, Congressional Affairs, AMA, and Joshua Hartley, AMA Government Relations Advocacy Fellow, will provide background information on pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs), the reforms needed to improve patient access and affordability, and an overview of the congressional appropriations process, including the importance of a timely National Institutes of Health funding increase for patients and trainees.</li> </ul>	<b>L’Enfant Ballroom</b>
6:50–7 p.m.	<b>Interstate ice breaker</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will meet at their state tables and get to know at least one peer they have not previously met. During the reception, students should introduce their new connection to another attendee.</li> </ul>	<b>L’Enfant Ballroom</b>
7–7:30 p.m.	<b>Keynote speaker: Paul Tran, MD</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul Tran, MD, is known for his platform <b>Alimentary School</b> (@alimentaryschool), using humor and storytelling to empower and encourage the next generation of physicians.</li> </ul> <p>Dr. Tran will take the stage to share insights on developing resiliency, thriving in training and using your collective voice for positive change—a must-hear for anyone looking to make an impact in their own space.</p>	<b>L’Enfant Ballroom</b>
7:30–9:30 p.m.	<b>Networking reception</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network with hundreds of medical students. Drinks and heavy appetizers will be served.</li> </ul>	<b>Solarium</b>

## Friday, March 6

7–8 a.m.	<b>Breakfast</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fuel up for your day on Capitol Hill with a selection of continental breakfast favorites, plus freshly brewed coffee, tea and more!</li> </ul>	<b>Solarium and L’Enfant Ballroom Foyer</b>
7–8 a.m.	<b>Hotel check-out and luggage drop-off</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Last chance! Get your professional photo headshot.</li> <li>All stored luggage must be picked up by 5:30 p.m.</li> </ul>	<b>Dupont</b>

8-8:05 a.m.	<b>Welcome and Hill visit preparation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joshua Hartley, AMA Government Relations Advocacy Fellow, will welcome students and kick off the day's programming.</li> </ul>	<b>L'Enfant Ballroom</b>
8:05-8:15 a.m.	<b>AMPAC student presentation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likhit Agrawal, student member, AMPAC Board of Directors, will discuss the importance of AMPAC and student involvement.</li> </ul>	<b>L'Enfant Ballroom</b>
8:15-8:40 a.m.	<b>Advocacy as a tool: Legislative advocacy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tripti Kataria, MD, MPH, MBA, chair, AMA Council on Legislation, will lead a presentation about her experience in organized medicine and becoming an effective advocate for physicians and patients.</li> <li>Brianna Ma, AMA Medical Student Section vice chair and past AMA digital fellow, will discuss leveraging social media. Learn how to spread your advocacy to peers and how to amplify those messages.</li> </ul>	<b>L'Enfant Ballroom</b>
8:40-9:10 a.m.	<b>Soapbox presentation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Luke Gilner, Soapbox Consulting, and Joshua Hartley, AMA Government Relations Advocacy Fellow, will introduce Hill visit resources, worksheets, issue briefs, etc., and explain how to use them to frame a successful meeting.</li> </ul>	<b>L'Enfant Ballroom</b>
9:10-9:20 a.m.	<b>Closing remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programming concludes; students will reconvene with their state/region to review and practice talking points, etc., before being released to board the buses.</li> </ul>	<b>L'Enfant Ballroom</b>
9:20 a.m.	<b>Board buses for Capitol Hill</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charter buses depart promptly at 9:30 a.m.</li> <li><b>Don't forget to bring your white coat!</b></li> </ul>	<b>Hilton lobby</b>
10 a.m.	<b>Group photo at U.S. Capitol steps</b>	<b>U.S. Capitol Building</b>
10:30 a.m.-5 p.m.	<b>Capitol Hill visits</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for the future of medicine by meeting with your legislators and their staffers to discuss pressing health policy issues and request the actions needed to address these important topics.</li> <li>Charter buses will run <b>1-5:30 p.m.</b> from the Capitol drop-off/pick-up area back to the Hilton Washington DC National Mall The Wharf.</li> </ul>	<b>U.S. Capitol Building</b>
5:30 p.m.	<b>The last charter bus departs Capitol drop-off/pick-up area back to the Hilton hotel.</b>	<b>U.S. Capitol Building</b>