

Alternate Delegate

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Residency/Fellowship Program: University of Florida General Psychiatry Residency, University of Florida Child and Adolescent

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Specialty: Psychiatry

“If you’re not at the table, then you’re probably on the menu.” (Ann Richards)

The most difficult part of being a resident is seeing marginalized and impoverished people stuck in a cycle struggling to access care. It is also difficult to learn of the strong possibility of political changes including threats to our patients’ reproductive health, threats to patients’ safety, and criminalization of physician’s ability to make shared decisions with patients. These issues leave our hearts feeling heavy and leave us wondering how to even begin to tackle these problems. How do we use our voice as trainees and as physicians to speak up? How can we formally and respectfully get a seat at the table to discuss these issues?

I wondered if I could contribute to efforts surrounding health equity through the AMA- so in 2020, I took a leap into the world of organized medicine through APA (American Psychiatric Association).

Initially, I was completely lost trying to understand what my role was at these meetings. Then the House of Delegates meetings began, and it was a “flip a switch” moment. I saw all the resolutions and policies come to life and saw people passionately testify about issues surrounding gun violence and public health. I witnessed residents share personal experiences with racial discrimination and police brutality. I saw medical students question the rising cost of insulin and other medications and urge the AMA to take a strong stance to protect our patients. At the end of the day, everyone's goal was to create policy that reflected the voice of the House.

It is now clearer than ever to me that there is so much work to be done. Things might not change right away, but the AMA guarantees a civil discussion and consideration of the issues at hand. This is the only way to enact change. RFS has welcomed me thus far, and I want to step into more responsibility. I want to get involved in policy making in whatever capacity I can. I want to represent the resident voice, one which is often overlooked despite being on the frontlines of patient care. I have voiced resident concerns in my program as former PEC representative, and I believe that with my leadership experiences I can help residents have a seat at the table in the larger AMA/HOD.