

## Commission on Education: 2023 Annual Report

### Delegates to National Congress

**Resident**

Janet N. Nwaukoni, DO  
Northwestern McGaw FMR Lake Forest  
Lake Forest, IL  
Class of 2024

**Student**

Olivia M. Dhaliwal  
Case Western Reserve University  
Cleveland, OH  
Class of 2024

**Resident**

Moses J. Syldort, MD  
Northwell Health Glen Cove FMR  
Glen Cove, NY  
Class of 2023

**Student**

Tameka Lawrence  
Ross University School of Medicine  
Bridgetown, Barbados  
Class of 2024

**Purpose & Scope of Work**

We represent residents and students at the AAFP Congress of Delegates (COD), which is the academy's primary policy-making body. In addition to Congress duties, we facilitate a caucus process at COD for any residents or students who attend to ensure that their input is maximized. We also attend two meetings per year (one in Kansas City, one virtual) to serve on the AAFP Commission on Education (COE) and two of its subcommittees: the Subcommittee on Resident and Student Issues (SRSI) and the Subcommittee on Graduate Curriculum (SGC). Commission duties include intermittent virtual meetings and assignments which generally require no more than a few hours of work per month.

**AAFP Congress of Delegates**

The COD meets annually to discuss actions the AAFP should adopt to forward the quadruple aim and AAFP strategic objectives. Much like the U.S. Senate, it consists of 2 delegates from each state as well as 2 delegates from each U.S. territory, 6 delegates from National Congress of Constituency Leaders member constituencies (minorities, LGBTQI, women, international medical graduates, military, and new physicians), 2 resident delegates, and 2 student delegates. We have full voting and speaking rights at COD, where we work alongside family physician leaders from around the country to address the problems facing our patients and members. All resolutions approved at the COD immediately become AAFP policy as, according to AAFP bylaws, the control and administration of the AAFP is vested in the COD, subject to the statutory authority of the Board. There are six Reference Committees that review the resolutions for each of the following areas: Advocacy I, Advocacy II, Cross-Topical Issues, Health of the Public and Science, Organization and Finance, and Practice Enhancement.

## **Highlights of the 2022 AAFP Congress of Delegates**

The tone of our meeting was set by inspiring words from our National President, Dr. Tochi Iroku-Malize, who addressed budget neutrality and future strides towards value based funding, the need to protect reproductive rights in our current political climate, recognized the transformative impact of global health in medicine and emphasized the need to address administrative burden in medicine.

Our students and residents representatives engaged in robust dialogue within our caucus and delivered testimony on topics and resolutions that impacted current student and resident training as well as the future of family medicine. In total, 31 new resolutions and 39 extracted resolutions from 2021 were discussed.

Notable resolutions and student/resident perspectives included:

Advocating for New ICD codes for Gender Affirming Care: Speaking on behalf of the student/resident caucus, we testified in support of this resolution on the basis that regardless of whether trainees intend to provide gender affirming care, there should be no dispute of the necessity of scientifically accurate, inclusive, and destigmatized ICD-10 codes for patient care profiles, medical research, and provider reimbursement.

Advocating for the Informed Consent for Access to Transgender Health Care Model: Supported placement and coverage of long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARC) in the Early Postpartum Period. Goals: 1. To improve access to long-acting reversible contraceptive devices for distribution in primary care offices. 2. Work to reduce any administrative burden that increases patient wait time to obtain LARC devices through primary care practices.

Opposing Crisis Pregnancy Center (CPCs) in Residency Training: Student and resident caucuses testified in support of this resolution amid significant opposition from many residency program directors. Rich and respectful debate was had in HOPS and during the Congress. Overwhelmingly, CPCs are staffed with non-medical personnel and are established with the primary goal of deterring women from seeking an abortion (indeed, CPCs were founded with the explicit intention to be Christian, anti-abortion establishments). CPCs therefore should not be utilized for residency training.

Opposing and Eliminating All Types of Restrictive Covenants on the Practice of Family Medicine: As new residents graduate, they are shuttled into the business of medicine. One member provided the perspective of a colleague who recently started at their first outpatient position in NY, no more than 30 miles from his residency. It was ideal for him to continue inpatient medicine at his former institution, however, because due to differing healthcare systems, he was not allowed to have the classic model of inpatient/outpatient in FM. This testimony and others focused on how non-compete agreements impede access to physicians.

## **Highlights of the 2022-2023 Commission on Education**

Our Commission on Education met both in Kansas City and virtually for the Winter and Summer Cluster sessions, respectively; highlights of the meeting included:

### Subcommittee on Resident and Student Issues (SRSI)

- AAFP Policy Revisions
  - Our team worked on several policies, including:
    - Family Medicine's Role in Undergraduate Medical Education where we discussed standardizing exposure to family medicine with guiding curricula on topics to teach.
    - Student Run Clinics highlighting clinic structure, trainee supervision, etc.
- New CBME requirements: Our voices were included and valued in discussions regarding how to best implement these new standards for the benefit of residents.
  - We discussed self directed learning and clearly defining competency based assessment.
- Encouraging student engagement with AAFP
  - Increasing attendance at National Conference
  - Increasing the quantity and quality of FMIG chapters by engaging their leaders and members in AAFP programming
    - We also discussed DO vs MD programs, and the long-standing issue that some organizations require allegiance to one vs another (but the AAFP does not - all are welcome here!). We are trying to be inclusive and not shut student groups out of funding opportunities or mentorship.

### Subcommittee on Graduate Curriculum (SGC)

- Reviewed current curriculum guidelines: "Conditions of the Eye" and "Risk Management and Medical Liability"
- Discussed updating the writing guidelines for the 'Curriculum Guidelines' with the goal of ensuring future writers and reviewers are comprehensive and inclusive, utilizing diverse lenses when creating curricula for future learners.
- Approved the schedule for upcoming curriculum requiring review in 2023, including the newly added, Trauma-Informed Care curriculum.

### Additional Committee Work

- Olivia and Tameka helped to write a Position Paper regarding the role of the Family Physician in the Emergency and Urgent Care settings, highlighting the low numbers in the most recent EM Match and evidence for patient harm and resource wasting when priority is given to staffing midlevel providers in these settings. Of special note is the role of the family physician in the new Rural Emergency Hospital setting.
- Janet is currently in a work group focused on Redefining Diversity in Family Medicine, specifically through the youth pipeline. She is completing a literature review with the expected goal of creating a report on best practice recommendations within this topic.

### **Specific Reflections from Janet N. Nwaukoni, DO**

Serving as Resident Delegate has been an enlightening experience. Understanding the inner workings of the AAFP has shed light on how policy is created and different stakeholders involved in the process. As a medical student, I stumbled across the AAFP curriculum guidelines as a study tool, however, to sit on the other side, ensuring said guidelines are comprehensive, inclusive, and effective is quite humbling. Attending and providing testimony during the Congress of Delegates showed how my voice can make a difference, whether it was in support of my colleagues or advocating for perspectives where initially considered a minority in the room, until I spoke up. I would be remiss not to mention the trailblazers in medicine I have met along this journey including Dr. Ada Stewart, Dr. Kisha Davis, Dr. Marie-Elizabeth Ramas, Dr. Karen Smith, Dr. Lt. Col. Jeanmarie (Gigi) Rey and to have served under the first Nigerian AAFP President, Dr. Tochi Iroku-Malize, a blessing to say the least.

### **Specific Reflections from Moses J. Syldort, MD**

As resident delegate I have learned the importance of staying engaged and showing up. At the national conference 2022 I had the honor of listening and understanding the fierce yet considerate views of our resident and student members at congress. This allowed me to passionately represent you at Congress of Delegates amongst attendings and esteemed colleagues. We have also taken our collective voices to affect AAFP policy at the Commission meetings. As your delegate I have continued to share my experience by holding workshops on leadership and COD at my state chapter. I could not have anticipated the year I have had being a resident delegate. I had only recently learned about the student and resident leadership opportunities website before attending the national conference. I decided to take a chance thanks to the encouragement of my mentors including Dr. Tochi Iroku-malize, Dr. Barbara Keber and Dr. James Mumford. It has truly been an honor to work closely with the AAFP staff members, and these passionate physicians and learners in Family Medicine.

### **Specific Reflections from Olivia M. Dhaliwal**

When I applied to serve as a student delegate to National Congress, I had a very intangible and vague understanding of what it meant to advocate for family medicine. I applied for this position to learn by doing, my favorite way to acquire new skills and knowledge. I am so grateful to the AAFP for taking the time to intentionally create space for students and residents to be involved in issues of importance to practicing family physicians. The Academy truly “walks the walk” by encouraging, uplifting, and prioritizing student voices, not only at National Conference but also at National Congress, in its various commissions and committees, and even on the Board. I am in awe of the ways that students are given a seat at the table. Indeed, I had many “pinch me!” moments this year, particularly at the Commission on Education when I realized I would be attending dinners in the presence of current and past Presidents, and had the opportunity to talk one-on-one about my hopes and dreams in rural family medicine with none other than a former Family Physician of the Year, Dr. Karen Smith. The other students and residents I have had the privilege of working with have become friendships and mentorships that bring me comfort as I navigate difficult decisions regarding residency and what lies ahead. I look forward to continuing to serve the Academy in the future, for this is truly a reciprocal relationship that benefits my mind and spirit as much as it does the future of family medicine.

## **Specific Reflections from Tameka Lawrence**

Applying for the student delegate to the National Congress of Delegates was a very frightening and last minute decision; however, the best choice that I could have made. I am completely grateful for Dr. Dominique Monroe and previous representatives, who encouraged me to apply for this position. The AAFP has prepared a fantastic opportunity to share the voice of students on various topics and issues affecting students all the way to attendings. Sitting at the table and voicing concerns, insights, and ideals to parties actively, engaged, and listening to advocate for change. Opportunities to share with amazing forerunners and innovators in the broadening of family medicine scope and practices. Being a student leader, has provided connections and mentorship unimaginable. I am looking to progressing the agenda and policies of family medicine as my future continues in serving the Academy. In addition, I hope to share this time with my peers and colleagues continuously to navigate this journey. Lastly, forever grateful for the lasting impressions and memories with our current and past Presidents, student/resident leaders, and faculty.

*Note: This report was prepared by the resident or student representative(s) listed and includes their account(s) of the business conducted during their term. This is not an official record of business proceedings from the AAFP or any other entity. To find out more about the business of the AAFP, its congresses, commissions, and current policies visit [aafp.org](http://aafp.org).*