



AAFP Foundation Board of Directors 2021 Annual Report

AAFP Foundation Board of Directors

Student

Ashten Duncan, MD, MPH, CPH
OU-TU School of Community Medicine
Tulsa, OK
Class of 2021

Student Reflection

The American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) Foundation represents the interests and endeavors of family physicians all throughout our country and enables their action through funding opportunities, operational support, and organized promotion of family medicine as an essential medical specialty. Through its unique emphasis on the many facets that make our specialty a powerful agent of change for our patients and communities, the AAFP Foundation is the heart of the AAFP and its stakeholders. Our AAFP member and corporate donors make it possible for the AAFP Foundation to inspire trainees, mobilize community resources, facilitate scientific progress, and maximize the reach of our practitioners.

Over the past year, the AAFP Foundation Board of Trustees has been working tirelessly to evaluate and refine our vision, mission, objectives, strategies, and tactics in order to optimize our organizational programming and ensure that our aims align with those of our stakeholders. Recently updated, the mission of the AAFP Foundation is to advance “the values of family medicine through humanitarian, educational, and scientific philanthropy dedicated to improving health.” From Family Medicine Discovers Rapid Cycle Scientific Discovery and Innovation to Family Medicine Leads, the Foundation ensures that every program addresses one or more of these pillars to advance the values and goals of family medicine.

Without the generous contributions of people like you, these programs would not be possible to execute. Therefore, I encourage you to visit www.aafpfoundation.org to see what the AAFP Foundation has specifically done and to donate to our organization.

Given my position as the Student Trustee, I would like to give examples of how the Foundation is shaping family medicine for future family physicians:

Family Medicine Leads: Scholarships for the AAFP National Conference

Attending the AAFP National Conference is one of the most impactful experiences medical students can have as they are considering what specialty of medicine to enter. Financial and logistical barriers may discourage some students from attending, which could lead to those trainees not applying to family medicine residency programs down the line. The AAFP Foundation recognizes that this is a preventable issue and offers about 250 scholarships to medical student and resident applicants requiring financial assistance to reap the benefits of such an invigorating and important conference. With the COVID-19

pandemic still limiting massive in-person gatherings, this year's National Conference will be virtual like it was last year. Although we would all love to come together and share the same physical space, our trainees can still engage with others and network through our well-designed virtual platform and use the scholarship to offset the cost of registration.

Family Medicine Leads: Emerging Leader Institute

The AAFP Foundation acknowledges how critical it is to build capacity within family medicine by nurturing the leadership skills of our students and residents. The Emerging Leader Institute is one of the flagship programs of the Foundation and AAFP that pairs promising future family medicine leaders with qualified mentors to identify and carry out a year-long project in one of three leadership tracks: (1.) Policy & Public Health, (2.) Personal & Practice, and (3.) Philanthropic & Mission-Driven. These projects have provided substantial benefits to community partners and agencies and have led to the development of exceptional family physician leaders—several of whom I have personally met. After reviewing applications for this year's Emerging Leader Institute, I can assure you that the quality of our applicants is remarkable and that I am eager to see what comes out of the selected applicants' projects.

Family Medicine Cares USA

Through Family Medicine Cares USA, the AAFP Foundation awards grants to new and existing free clinics seeking financial support for equipment and other necessary practice resources. Many trainees run these clinics, and the vast majority of these clinics operate in areas of the country where health care access is severely limited. On top of the financial support, representatives from the Foundation also advise and collaborate with these clinics to promote evidence-based practices and the optimization and mobilization of available community resources.

Family Medicine Discovers: Rapid Cycle Scientific Discovery and Innovation

While this program is not specifically for trainees, Family Medicine Discovers seeks to cultivate research expertise in practicing family physicians who have limited research experience. The types of project proposals that are submitted represent some of the most creative and critical thinking I have seen in recent medical research. Students and residents should stay abreast of what comes out of this program and should consider ways it could make them stronger physician-researchers in the coming years.

Final Thoughts

This was my first year to serve as Student Trustee on the AAFP Foundation Board of Trustees. This national leadership role has given me the opportunity to meet some amazing family physicians, family medicine stakeholders, and deeply devoted staff who make the Foundation run like clockwork. I was consistently impressed with the insight, innovative thinking, and collegiality of my fellow board members; they truly made this a transformational experience for an aspiring family physician like me. During my time on the Board of Trustees, I offered a student's perspective on issues facing our community and specialty during our board meetings and strategic planning sessions, served on a number of committees, reviewed applications for several of our Foundation's programs, and learned just how awesome our specialty is. From staff members like Kesha Whitley and Heather Palmer to board members like Dr. Dave Smith, the AAFP Foundation Board of Trustees genuinely values the perspective and contributions of students and welcomes open and frank conversations about tough topics.

The AAFP Foundation is a catalyst for innovation in the practice, study, and development of family medicine. To emphasize the point again, all of these efforts are possible because of the generosity of our

donors. If you would like to contribute to the growth and continuation of our Foundation's programming, please check out www.aafpfoundation.org to learn more about what we do and how you can play a part in helping our specialty flourish.

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.