

Student Academy

Overview of the Student Academy and the American Academy of Physician Assistants

The Beginning

The involvement of physician assistant students in the American Academy of Physician Assistants has been valued and encouraged since the Academy was founded in 1968 by several students at Duke University. Since then, students have had an influential voice in the Academy's direction, serving in important leadership positions.

AAPA — A Democratic Organization

AAPA represents the views of graduate and student physician assistants throughout the United States. The Student Academy has its own structure within AAPA, starting with PA students at each PA educational program, whether organized as student societies or student contacts. Each program may be represented at the Assembly of Representatives (AOR), which is the Student Academy's legislative and policy-making body.

The Assembly of Representatives (AOR) and the Student Board of Directors

The AOR is a two-day session held during the first two days of AAPA's annual conference. The AOR establishes Student Academy policy and elects the Student Board of Directors (SBOD). The student officers elected by the student representatives at the AOR direct the Student Academy activities for the year. As part of their responsibilities to the Student board and Academy, student officers perform liaison duties and represent student interests with other governing bodies within and outside AAPA. Assigned SBOD officers sit on the AAPA Board of Directors, Association of Physician Assistant Programs (APAP) Board of Directors, and AAPA Constituent Relations Committee (CRC) and Committee on Diversity (COD). The Student Board of Directors consists of nine officer positions. The president, vice president, director of internal affairs, immediate past president, APAP student member at large, junior director of external affairs, senior director of external affairs, chief delegate, and director of diversity are elected annually. The immediate past president and senior director of external affairs are the second year of two-year terms. Additional positions include five Regional Committee chairs, special projects coordinator, and liaisons to several other PA-related organizations. These positions are all appointed by the SBOD. The AAPA graduate advisor is appointed by the AAPA Board of Directors, the APAP graduate advisor is appointed by the APAP Board of Directors, and the staff advisor is from the AAPA national office. The SBOD officially meets four times during the year to plan Student Academy affairs and conduct business.

Constituent Chapters

The Academy has 57 constituent chapters, representing PAs in every state, the District of Columbia, Guam, and the federal services (Army, Air Force, Navy, Veterans Affairs, and Public Health Service). Forty-three chapters have at least one PA program within their jurisdiction; these chapters provide membership and leadership opportunities to students. The constituent chapter student representative (CCSR) is chosen by a student society to act as liaison between a student society and its constituent chapter and sits on its board of directors in either a voting or non-voting capacity. The CCSR frequently is a voting member of the constituent chapter's board of directors.

House of Delegates

Approximately 234 elected representatives from constituent chapters, officially recognized specialty organizations, the Caucus Congress, and the student HOD representatives and alternates make up the AAPA House of Delegates, the official legislative and policy-making body of the AAPA that meets once a year at the AAPA's annual conference. Student delegates, chosen by their student societies prior to the annual conference, represent the Student Academy during the House of Delegates meeting.

It Begins with YOU!

Active involvement of PA students in the American Academy of Physician Assistants and the Student Academy shapes the future of the profession. And it all begins with you!