

Report on AAFP Student National Congress at FUTURE, Kansas City, MO

Ohio Student Delegate: Abigail Schwenk, MSII at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED)

Attending FUTURE as the Ohio Student Delegate was nothing short of inspiring. It was a space filled with passion, purpose, and people who truly believe in the power of family medicine. Collaborating with medical students from Ohio and across the country to write and debate AAFP policy resolutions was eye-opening. It gave me a clearer sense of what matters most to my peers, and the many ways we can collectively shape the future of healthcare.

The congress sessions themselves gave me insight into the structured, intentional process of medical advocacy, and allowed me an opportunity to dust off some parliamentary procedure skills I hadn't used since my high school FFA days. On Saturday, August 2, 2025, the AAFP National Student Congress met to review, discuss, and take action on 22 resolutions that were submitted by medical students nationwide. I'm proud to have helped pass several meaningful resolutions on topics ranging from the domestic relevance and reciprocal value global health to enhancing family medicine education curriculum.

With this experience, I gained an understanding of how student voices can meaningfully influence policy within organized medicine. It was empowering to know that even as students, we can initiate real change by coming together with shared purpose and using structured channels like the AAFP Student Congress.

Beyond the congress sessions, I was moved by the energy of FUTURE. I had many meaningful conversations with residents, faculty, and other students, especially during the residency fair and the FMIG Leadership Summit. It was also an honor to be present for the recognition of our NEOMED AAFP-FMIG student organization as a Program of Excellence. Our school's chapter tries to be intentional about our commitment to fostering interest in family medicine and connection with family medicine physicians with creative ideas like "Fireside Chats," small group sessions often hosted at a physician's home to talk about family medicine, and procedural workshops to educate students on the broad scope of family medicine practice. It was rewarding to see the NEOMED AAFP-FMIG honored for all the students' hard work in preparing these events.

At FUTURE, I was reminded of the deep sense of community that exists within family medicine. Everyone I met, from students to seasoned physicians, shared a genuine passion for people and for the relationships that define this work. Being surrounded by that energy was grounding and reassuring, and it made me excited to pursue a career in family medicine. I cannot thank the OAFP enough for all their support throughout this experience.