

I am applying for the MC-ACS sponsorship to attend the Leadership and Advocacy Summit because I believe advocacy is essential to providing patients with high quality, affordable, and accessible health care. This scholarship offers me an opportunity to refine my advocacy and leadership skills and gain mentorship in these fields. My interest in health policy and advocacy started during my research year in Rwanda when I was working closely with the Rwandan Ministry of Health's emergency medical services team. I had an opportunity to share in the development of clinical data that was used to create a framework for the national emergency medical service's response team. I returned home with a renewed passion to develop tools to support domestic and global health policies.

This scholarship opportunity will support my career by providing me with a deeper understanding of the development and maintenance of health policies. Last year's presentation topics indicate that the conference offers a unique opportunity to gain insight into successful advocacy efforts from the leaders who know how to navigate the complexities of healthcare policy and reform. The successful repeal of the Sustainable Growth Rate formula and move towards a value-based repayment model represent recent and remarkable examples of the type of sustained and tangible advocacy that I hope to contribute to in the future. Such success requires an established system of mentorship, and this scholarship will allow me to build a network of surgeon advocate mentors.

For me, advocacy and leadership training provides an opportunity to generate and sustain support for important issues including the accessibility, affordability, and quality of health care. Our ability to take care of surgical patients is affected by the availability of resources, the inequitable distribution of such resources, and the timely and safe delivery of the appropriate surgical care. Massachusetts has led by example in the arena of statewide health care reform, and I hope to learn from leaders in the field about the process of developing skills to rally people to a cause and garner momentum for an important issue.

I hope to gain insight into key areas that I believe are priorities to provide high value and high quality surgical care and to share this knowledge with my colleagues and Massachusetts community members. Senior surgeons and junior residents can both contribute to the ongoing conversations about restructuring Graduate Medical Education, investigating the surgeon's role in opioid addiction, and preventing trauma and gun violence. Over the past year, our nation's representatives have put forth legislation that threatened our ability to care for people, particularly low-income and minority patients. Through continued discussions with our patients and calls to representatives, we successfully avoided the dismantling of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. However, recent tax legislation eliminating the individual mandate threatens the sustainability of this critically important bill. The recent developments reaffirm our need for continued advocacy and discussion with our elected officials. It would be an honor to receive this scholarship to support becoming a better leader and surgeon advocate.