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Other Student Advocacy Groups in the US and their Websites

Universities Allied for Essential Medicines (UAEM)

UAEM was founded in 2001 by Yale Law student Amy Kapczynski and other students. Yale owned a patent for an HIV drug, but had granted an exclusive license for the drug to Bristol-Myers Squibb. Kapczynski participated in efforts by Medecins Sans Frontiers (MSF), Yale faculty, and Yale students to push Yale to renegotiate its license with Bristol-Myers Squibb. The result was the first-ever patent concession on an HIV-drug. MSF was allowed to begin treating South African patients with the generic version of the medication at 1/30th the price of the brand name medication. Based on this dramatic win, Kapczynski and her colleagues founded Universities Allied for Essential Medicines (UAEM). UAEM pushes universities to ensure that lifesaving medical products developed in academic laboratories are accessible in developing countries, recognizing that doing so holds universities to the letter and spirit of their own missions, to advance knowledge for the common good.

UAEM's membership now includes hundreds of students at thirty-five universities across North America and Europe. UAEM chapters work with student and faculty groups at their respective institutions to examine and improve the research, licensing, and patenting practices of their institutions. UAEM has constructed model licensing terms and policy documents that universities can use to improve global public health, and is currently working on crafting novel metrics for university technology transfer.

In September 2006 representatives from 35 UAEM chapters ratified the Philadelphia Consensus Statement (PCS). The PCS distilled the mission of UAEM into a single policy document that was submitted as a petition for the support of experts in the fields of science, law, medicine, public health, and social policy. More than four hundred luminaries have signed the PCS, to date, including four Nobel Laureates.

For more information about UAEM and its most recent activities, see the organization's website at: www.essentialmedicine.org

American Medical Student Association (AMSA)

Founded in 1950 the American Medical Student Association (AMSA) currently has a membership of more than 68,000 medical and premedical students, interns, residents and physicians. AMSA focuses on the professional and social concerns of physicians-in-training, including both the quality of medical education and their goals for the nation's health. AMSA's advocacy efforts address four strategic priorities: eliminating health disparities, advocating for diversity in medicine, transforming the culture of medicine (including medical training) and fighting for universal access to health care. AMSA local chapters contribute over one million hours of community service to address community health needs.

AMSA has the following mission statement:

“The American Medical Student Association is committed to improving health care and healthcare delivery to all people; promoting active improvement in medical education; involving its members in the social, moral and ethical obligations of the profession of medicine; assisting in the improvement and understanding of world health problems; contributing to the welfare of medical students, premedical students, interns, residents and post-MD/DO trainees; and advancing the profession of medicine.”

To find out more about AMSA, see their website at: <http://www.amsa.org>

Health Students Taking Action Together (HealthSTAT)

Founded in 2001 by students at the Emory University Medical School, Health Students Taking Action Together (HealthSTAT) is a student coalition that now includes student members from all of the health professions schools in the state of Georgia. At the time this document was prepared, HealthSTAT had three issue areas:

- Health Disparities & Access to Care
- Childhood Obesity Prevention Initiative
- HIV/AIDS Prevention and Policy

HealthSTAT has the following mission statement: “HealthSTAT creates a statewide community of health professional students and engages them in education, activism, and service. By mobilizing students to take action on health issues confronting Georgia, we foster a civic ethic in future leaders that will benefit our state for years to come.” To find out more, see their website at: <http://www.healthstatgeorgia.org>

Context Journal

HealthSTAT created a spin-off in the online journal Context. Context is an entirely student run online peer-reviewed publication which publishes one to two times a year. The mission of Context is to create a publication to highlight the work of health professions students doing community-engaged work. The journal features articles on community-based health program implementation and evaluation, community-based research and research on community level health issues, policy analyses, and editorials. To learn more about the journal, including how to submit an article, how to become a peer reviewer, and how to apply for openings on the journal’s editorial board, please go to the Context website at: www.contextjournal.org