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Despite notable successes for the osteopathic profession including official statements from major medical associations deeming osteopathic medicine and allopathic medicine equivalent, and osteopathic physicians fulfilling prestigious roles such as White House Physician and NASA Chief Medical Officer, the osteopathic profession is still stigmatized within the general public and other medical professions. Detrimental misinformation about osteopathy is spread by the media and others contributing to these misconceptions. Together, the persistent stigma and misconceptions about osteopathy continue to create challenges and barriers for osteopathic physicians and patients alike. As a current osteopathic student and future osteopathic physician, I believe it is important to advocate for our profession by contributing to the effort to educate others to destigmatize osteopathic medicine.

As a student, I currently advocate for the osteopathic profession in various ways including mentorship and leadership. As a Student Ambassador for Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine, I speak on panels with medical students who are interviewing at AZCOM. During these panels, I educate pre-medical students about the unique aspects of osteopathic medicine and assure students that an osteopathic education is an excellent route to achieve their professional, academic and personal goals. I have also participated in various high school career days as well as panels for undergraduate students with the goal to educate younger, aspiring physicians about osteopathic medicine. In addition, I am currently the National Liaison for Midwestern University's Emergency Medicine Club, and an Executive Committee Member for the Arizona Emergency Medicine Medical Student Counsel. In both of these positions, I collaborate with osteopathic and allopathic students from other medical schools around the country to organize and plan events that benefit students interested in Emergency Medicine. In these positions, I have the opportunity to foster a mutual respect among allopathic and osteopathic students. Combatting stigma about osteopathy begins within the healthcare system itself as many of our colleagues also unfortunately have misconceptions about osteopathic medicine. Therefore, advocating for osteopathic medicine within the healthcare system is also an important part of the advocacy efforts. As future physicians, we will be working alongside one another in our careers, and I hope that such collaborations encourage the next generation of physicians to have mutual respect and admiration of each other.

As a future osteopathic physician, I will undoubtedly interact with pre-medical students. This will provide vital opportunities to continue my passion for mentorship with these students to promote osteopathic medicine as they pursue their medical aspirations. Even if they choose to pursue an allopathic education, these discussions are vital to fostering a relationship of mutual respect among allopathic and osteopathic students and physicians. Furthermore, I intend to continue to promote the osteopathic profession within academics and in leadership by pursuing hospital leadership, such as a Medical Director role, and being involved in teaching during my career. As a future osteopathic physician promoting the osteopathic profession, I can give back by having representation in leadership and by teaching and mentoring the next generation of osteopathic physicians throughout my career.