

Rachel Lowe, OMS II – AZCOM

When applying to medical school a few years ago I kept coming back to the idea of what makes an osteopathic physician different from any other health professional. I came to the realization that osteopathic physicians have the ability to decipher key cultural elements and daily practices within patients lives that impact their health. I realized I could take this a step further and ask myself what elements in society, on a local and federal level, impact patients' health and cause them to present in our healthcare system. Perhaps our current policies and practices as a society cause certain diseases to manifest in specific populations more than others, as a future osteopathic physician I aim to fight for these disadvantaged populations so that they are not hindered by their health. Having a bigger picture view on what causes illness allows me to advocate for individual and population health.

Throughout my past two years at Midwestern University, I have held the positions of Student Legislative Affairs Representative in both AOMA and Student Government. I had the unique opportunity to use the knowledge I gained from these positions at DO Day at the State Legislature when I advocated for osteopathic physicians by voting against State Bill 1271. I have learned from these positions that as a future healthcare provider I am responsible for advocating for patient health on many different levels. There are upstream factors that impact individual and population health such as access to public transit or grocery stores that may not obviously seem like it could impact one's health. Further, I have applied, and am waiting to hear, if I have been accepted as an AACOM Health Policy Intern where I would work in Washington, D.C. advocating for osteopathic medicine. This is done by securing more funding and ensuring residency spots for osteopathic medical students. These experiences in medical school have cemented my desire to pursue policy after I graduate. My goal is to one day run a dual practice where I spend half my time working with patients and the other half advocating for patients via policy reform. I will do this by continuing to be involved in local and federal organizations like AACOM and AOMA and perhaps one day run for office on a local level.

I believe osteopathic medicine has the potential to heal some of the most daunting issues in our current healthcare system through its approach to mind, body, and spirit. By advocating for osteopathic principles, I believe one day we can migrate towards a system that not only treats illness but also produces health within our population. This scholarship will allow me to continue to pursue advocacy while lightening the financial burden of medical school tuition.