

HOSA

NEW YEAR

NEW LIMITS

TO MOVE BEYOND

New Year, New Opportunities— Networking and Advocating

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Advocacy is defined as the “public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy.” However, our definition of advocacy is a little deeper: confidently supporting something you are very passionate about. When you are passionate about the specific topic you are discussing, the person in front of you can feel it and your passion spreads to them. You need to always be prepared to advocate for yourself, the people you love, and the organizations you love. In this article, we will focus on how to advocate on behalf of yourself and HOSA - Future Health Professionals.

We always learned to have our elevator pitch ready to go. A simple 30-second speech that tells the person in front of you what you’re talking about, why it’s important to you, why they should care, and the next steps. Let’s break it down in the following example.

What:

HOSA-Future Health Professionals is an international student-led organization with over 250,000 members that serves as a pipeline for students interested in joining the medical field or preparing for the future. Through HOSA students are given the opportunity to advocate, network, and compete in over 60 competitions that allow them to take their “in-class knowledge” and expand on it through hands-on opportunities.

Why it’s important to me:

I joined HOSA when I was still a sophomore in high school and have gained leadership, communication, interpersonal skills, and much more. Through HOSA, I have learned skills that make me a more rounded person and prepare me for the future. On top of all that, I now can experience a second family and a great support system.

Why it’s important to them:

HOSA - Future Health Professionals is preparing the future of our nation and we would love your support in *ADD YOUR ASK* to ensure the success of these individuals.

Next steps:

I would love to chat more with you. Here is my contact information (exchange contact information and/or hand business card).

Try to focus on why it’s important to you because you are proof that this organization makes an impact on each individual’s life. When the person you are speaking to sees how passionate you are, they are more inclined to help you with your request and support you in any way they can. See, advocacy isn’t so bad after all if you just follow those 4 steps!

Once you have figured out *how* to present yourself, you must find *opportunities* to present yourself.

One avenue for discovering opportunities are virtual platforms. By far the largest and most accessible professional virtual networking platform in the world is LinkedIn. Through LinkedIn, you can highlight your accomplishments and experiences and reach out to and follow other professionals in your industries of interest. For more specific tips on setting up a LinkedIn profile, check out page 6 in the **Winter 2021** edition of HOSA-FHP’s eMagazine. A popular platform to find internships and jobs is Handshake. Handshake is a job search platform specifically geared toward students, especially collegiate students. If you are a collegiate member, check to see if your college/university has a partnership with Handshake! HOSA-FHP also has its own **HOSA’s Job Board** for HOSA members and alumni, as well as various internship opportunities that can be found at <https://hosa.org/health-related-internships/>.

Another great way to network is emails. Many professionals, such as researchers, small business owners, and service workers/leaders have their email addresses available to all online. If you find a professional who you would like to work with or learn from, draft an email to them! Be sure to highlight any relevant experience or personal connection to their work, why you believe collaborating would be a valuable experience for both parties, and why you are interested in them specifically. There are many free email templates available online for reaching out to various professionals as well!

One of the most valuable and overlooked networks is your personal network. Family, friends, past teachers and instructors, volunteer coordinators, and so many other people in your life can be vital resources for discovering new opportunities. Be sure to stay connected with past personal connections (LinkedIn is great for this too) and establish new ones!

Lastly, we like to offer a piece of advice that we wish we could have heard when we first started self-advocacy and networking. Remember that all the people you are reaching out to are humans, just like you. No matter how successful, wealthy, or famous they are, they are still simply human beings. So don’t be afraid to ask and to try! The worst that can happen is that they say no, which is the same result as not asking at all. Be confident in your abilities, aim high, and shoot your shot!



Resolutions for a Healthier Future: Tips and Strategies for Staying Healthy in the New Year

Lauren Trygstad, PS/C Board Representative
Sahil Sood, Eastern Region Vice President

The dawn of a new year presents an opportunity for individuals to reflect on their past and set intentions for the future. Oftentimes, these materialize as new year's resolutions. As future health professionals, it is imperative to prioritize our own health and well-being as a means of leading by example. In order to achieve this, it is essential to establish practical goals and strategies to implement in the new year.

Physical Activity

Physical activity is a crucial component of preserving and enhancing overall health and well-being. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that adults engage in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity per week. This can be broken down into smaller goals to engage in regular exercise, such as committing to 30 minutes of moderate-intensity activity five times a week. This physical activity has a plethora of health benefits, including a reduced risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes, as well as helping to maintain a healthy weight. Regular exercise can also improve cardiovascular and respiratory function, increase muscle strength and flexibility, and promote mental well-being. Engaging in regular physical activity can also improve sleep quality and reduce the risk of depression and anxiety.

There are various types of physical activity that can be incorporated into a fitness routine. Aerobic activities, such as walking, jogging, cycling, swimming, and dancing, are great for improving cardiovascular fitness. Resistance training, such as weightlifting, can help to increase muscle strength and improve bone density. Flexibility exercises, such as yoga and Pilates, can improve range of motion and reduce the risk of injury.

Incorporating physical activity into your daily routine can be a challenge, especially with busy schedules and competing demands. However, there are various strategies that can be employed to make it easier to stay active. Setting realistic goals, such as committing to 30 minutes of exercise five times a week, can help to make physical activity a priority. Finding activities that you enjoy, such as dancing, hiking, or swimming, can also make it more likely that you will stick to your exercise routine. Joining a sports team or fitness class can provide a sense of accountability and motivation, while also providing an opportunity to socialize.

Another strategy is to find ways to emphasize physical activity in mundane tasks. For example, taking the stairs instead of the elevator, walking or biking to work, or going for a walk during lunch break. Even small changes, like doing squats while brushing your teeth, can make a difference over time. It's also important to note that physical activity is not just about losing weight or reaching a certain physical appearance but about taking care of yourself and feeling good. It's essential to find something that you enjoy and that fits your lifestyle. It's also essential to remember that it's never too late to start taking care of yourself, and that small changes can make a big difference in the long run.

Balanced Diet

Eating a balanced diet is essential for maintaining good health and well-being. As future health professionals, it is important for members, stakeholders, and friends of HOSA to lead by example and make their health a priority. The new year presents an opportunity to set intentions and establish goals to improve dietary habits. According to the CDC, 80% of adults do not consume the recommended number of fruits and vegetables per day, while 90% of Americans consume more than the recommended number of added sugars. Additionally, a study by the World Health Organization (WHO) found that a diet high in processed foods increases the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and certain types of cancer.

A balanced diet includes a variety of foods from all food groups, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein, and healthy fats. The WHO recommends consuming at least five servings of fruits and vegetables per day, choosing whole grains over refined grains, and limiting intake of processed foods and added sugars. Fruits and vegetables are an important source of vitamins, minerals, and fiber. They are low in calories and high in nutrients, making them an ideal food group to include in a balanced diet. Whole grains, such as oats, quinoa, and brown rice, are a good source of fiber, vitamins, and minerals. They also help to promote feelings of fullness, which can aid in weight management.

(continued on page 5)





Lean proteins, such as fish, chicken, and tofu, provide essential amino acids and are important for building and repairing tissues. Healthy fats, such as those found in nuts, seeds, and avocados, can help to reduce inflammation, and promote heart health. A study by the American Heart Association found that replacing saturated fats with unsaturated fats in a diet can lower the risk of heart disease by up to 30%.

It's also important to limit intake of processed foods, which are often high in added sugars, sodium, and unhealthy fats. These foods can contribute to weight gain and increase the risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. According to the CDC, consuming added sugars in excess can lead to an increased risk of chronic diseases, such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes. By limiting intake of processed foods and added sugars and increasing intake of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein, and healthy fats, individuals can improve their overall health and well-being.

Incorporating a balanced diet into your daily routine can be challenging, especially with busy schedules

and competing demands. However, there are various strategies that can be employed to make it easier to achieve a healthy diet. Meal planning and prepping can help to ensure that healthy food options are readily available and can save time during the week. Shopping for groceries at the farmer's market or a local health food store can also provide access to fresh, whole foods.

Another strategy is to make small changes to your diet. For example, giving up processed snacks for a piece of fruit, or choosing whole wheat bread instead of white bread. These small changes can add up over time and make a significant difference in overall health and well-being. According to the American Heart Association, small changes in diet and physical activity can lead to a significant reduction in the risk of heart disease over time. It's also important to remember that a balanced diet is not about perfection but about balance. It's okay to indulge in your favorite treats occasionally, but it's essential to make sure that the majority of your diet consists of nutrient-dense foods.

Mental Health

Maintaining good mental health is essential for overall well-being. As future health professionals, members and stakeholders of HOSA should prioritize their own mental health, a facet of healthcare frequently overlooked. The new year presents an opportunity to set intentions and establish goals to improve mental well-being. Getting enough sleep is crucial for maintaining good mental health. The National Sleep Foundation recommends that adults aim for 7-9 hours of sleep per night. Chronic sleep deprivation is associated with a variety of health problems, including obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. Additionally, lack of sleep can also increase the risk of depression and anxiety. According to the American Psychological Association, adults who sleep less than 7 hours per night are more likely to suffer from depression and anxiety.

Managing stress is also an important aspect of maintaining good mental health. Chronic stress can take a toll on both physical and mental health, increasing the risk of depression, anxiety, and chronic diseases. Therefore, it's important to practice stress-management techniques such as yoga, meditation, or deep breathing. A study by the American Psychological Association found that mindfulness-based stress reduction techniques, such as meditation and yoga, can reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Taking care of your emotional well-being by seeking support from friends and family or a mental health professional is also essential in maintaining good mental health. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, 1 in 5 adults in the U.S. experiences mental illness in a given year. However, many individuals do not seek treatment due to stigma or lack of access to care. By seeking support, individuals can improve their mental health and well-being. It's also important to maintain a balanced lifestyle, taking care of your physical health and maintaining a healthy diet. A study by the American Psychological Association found that a healthy diet and regular physical activity can reduce the risk of depression and anxiety. Additionally, limiting risky behaviors such as smoking and excessive alcohol consumption can also aid in the reduction of chronic diseases and improve mental health.

Ultimately, as the new year of 2023 approaches, it is important to reflect on the goals you have for this upcoming year, as well as the goals you had last year. Measure your past progress, analyze how well you met your goals, and use that to guide the goals you set for yourself this year. With a new year, you have an opportunity to build a new version of yourself, one that propels you on your path to becoming a future health professional.



Feeling Nervous?

Here's How to Ace Your Next Interview.

Corey He, Secondary Board Representative
Kartik Tyagi, International President

In today's professional world, interviews are ubiquitous. Whether you're applying to college, graduate school, medical school, or your next job, you will most likely receive an email invitation for a quick chat. Some people dread interviews, while others view them as a unique opportunity. In this article, we'll take a deeper dive into the anatomy of a typical interview process and give you some tips to set you up for success.

What is the Point of an Interview?

If you receive an interview invitation, congratulations! — you have likely moved forward beyond the initial round of the application process. Admission officers and employers will typically “weed-out” certain applicants during a preliminary round and “call-back” certain candidates that they would like to learn more about. Being invited to an interview means that you have demonstrated competency in your résumé and other relevant materials, which is a vital step in the right direction.

In general, the goal of an interview is for you, the candidate, to demonstrate that you are a strong fit for the opportunity from a social, personal, professional, and academic standpoint. The interviewer is aware that you are a qualified candidate on paper — now, the priority is to take the words on your résumé and bring them to life — to humanize your achievements and showcase your personality. You should aim to convince your interviewer that you will thrive in that environment and continue to achieve great things.

Certain more competitive or prestigious opportunities may even require multiple rounds of interviews, with each round weeding-out more candidates and shrinking the pool of remaining applicants. However, don't be intimidated: **here are some of our go-to tips that we've utilized in the past to find success in our interview experiences.**

Tip #1: Do Your Homework.

Yes, you have a very important homework assignment prior to your interview. You have to show that you are a passionate, confident, and engaged candidate. This means researching the institution or company to understand their overarching goals and what they look for in applicants. You can also reread the application profile and start establishing that “fit” between you and what you are interviewing for.

There are also a few quick ways to get yourself versed with the actual speaking that you have to do during your interview. You can anticipate being asked certain questions (or certain variations of these questions) at any given interview. We've compiled for you some of the questions that interviewers will *almost always* ask:

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why are you interviewing for/interested in this position?
3. What are your prior experiences, and how do they make you a strong candidate?
4. What is your greatest strength/weakness?
5. What is a conflict you once had with a friend/peer, and how did you resolve it?

An easy way to get familiar with how you want to tackle these questions is to rehearse them in front of a mirror. Pay attention to your facial expressions, vocal cues, and even hand gestures. If you familiarize yourself with these basic questions, you will likely be able to adapt to any unexpected curveballs that may come up on interview day.

Tip #2: Formulate Your Own Unique Story.

Now that you've done your homework and your research, it's time to come up with your compelling “WHY.” Many of today's medical school applicants tell their interviewers that they want to become doctors because they “want to help people,” but such cliches are greatly overused and can get applicants tossed into the *mediocre* pile (an area we all want to avoid).

Therefore, cliches are not a great option: instead, you should aim to incorporate an element of originality to your interview, perhaps something your interviewer has never heard before. Some sort of unique personal experience, poignant memory, or past academic opportunity can form the basis of your backstory and establish why you're applying for this opportunity.

Better yet, since you are sharing your own personal experience, you can emphasize certain important aspects of your story that drive home your passion and enthusiasm. Your personal story should demonstrate why you are a strong fit for what you're applying for, so while it should be meaningful and original, you definitely don't want to make it too dramatic.

(continued on page 9)



Tip #3: Have Some Questions in Your Back Pocket.

For those of you who may be confused by this, yes – the bulk of the interview will be occupied by the interviewer asking YOU questions. However, it is very important to bring 1-2 questions that YOU will ask the interviewer. Why is that?

Interviewers often dedicate a few minutes at the end of an interview to hear any questions you may have. This is another opportunity for you to demonstrate your interest; in fact, asking more specific and niche questions can imply to your interviewer that you have done your homework (*remember tip #1?*).

This is also a key moment for you to inquire about certain details that help in your own decision making process. For instance, you may want to clarify logistics including time commitment, work environment, or even career development options (i.e., typical salaries, academic or professional events, etc.) that may play a role in your decision-making process if you are accepted at the end of this application process.

Tip #4: Relax. Yes. Take a Deep Breath and Relax.

Now that you’ve done all the hard work, it’s time to sit back and slow your heart rate. Maybe it would be of reassurance to understand that your interviewer is on your side – they want to get to know you better on a personal level, and it does them no good to grill you and see you falter in responding to their questions.

But wait – we lied. Before you *completely* relax, there are some *very* minor logistical details to iron out. Make sure to confirm with your interviewer an appropriate time, place, and venue for your interview. On interview day, give yourself plenty of time to get to the meet-up location or get familiar with the meeting application you’re using to prevent delays or technical issues.

Oh, and another thing – lots of first-time interviewees will stress on what to wear. Trust us – unless you have been told specifically about dress code, it’s really not that deep: wear something we often call “business casual,” something somewhat formal for the occasion that conveys that you’re taking this interview seriously. At the same time, it doesn’t need to be something as formal as what one may wear at a wedding, but also don’t dress like you’re about to go to a homecoming football game.

Truth be told, if you’ve done your homework and familiarize yourself with your personal story, you can be confident. Make sure to smile and stay loose; maybe convince yourself that you are talking to a peer or even a friend. Your interviewer will feed off of your energy, so the more relaxed and professional your vibe is, the more engaged your interviewer will likely be.



Some Final FAQs

Here, we’ve compiled a list of the most commonly asked questions about interviews, in case the tips we gave still left you with some lingering questions. And as always, if you ever embark on a new opportunity and have some personal questions about your upcoming interview, our contact information can be found at hosa.org!

1. What if I miss my interview?

Take a deep breath – things happen. Reach out to your interviewer as soon as possible, either through call or email, and sincerely apologize for not showing up. Whether it be because you overslept or got stuck in traffic, be honest and hold yourself accountable. Kindly request an opportunity to postpone or reschedule the interview – interviewers are usually understanding of these situations and will often give you a second chance (and if they do, be sure to thank them). It may be scary in the moment, but don’t panic – it is not the end of the world, and in the unfortunate event that they don’t give you a second chance, still thank them for their time and keep the door open for a future opportunity.

2. What if my interviewer is a bit cold or intimidating?

Be confident! You prepared for this interview, and you shouldn’t feel intimidated by the interviewer’s demeanor. Oftentimes, an interviewer is simply trying to do their job, or conduct interview after interview. See this as an opportunity to stand out and be yourself! If you do all of the above, there is no doubt the interviewer will see and recognize how passionate you are, and the potential value you would bring to the organization or entity to which you are in process of applying for. Do not be afraid to say what you mean and mean what you say! Additionally, before you respond to questions, do not feel pressured or rushed to answer immediately. Feel free to slow down! Take a deep breath. Then, after thinking about the question, feel free to respond. Do not feel the need to rush through the interview, or not ask questions at the end. Still try to get the most from the interview!

3. What if my interviewer is late or doesn’t show up?

First thing’s first: double check that YOU showed up at the right time and place! If it is, in fact, the interviewer that is late or doesn’t show up, don’t worry! It is not your fault or on you, so do not stress about it! Things happen – even for interviewers! If after about 10 or 15 minutes your interviewer still is not where they said they’d meet you, be sure to contact your interviewer either by leaving a message or sending an email. Be sure to let them know you are happy to reschedule or postpone the interview but be sure to stick around for a few more minutes in case they show up! After around 25 minutes, it is safe to leave. Be sure to check your messages before you leave in case your interviewer responded to your initial message!

4. What if, even after all of my preparation, I get asked a totally unexpected question?

First: do NOT panic – your interviewer will notice if you panic. Give yourself a few seconds to pause as you try to formulate the details to your response before you speak. If you’re still stuck, kindly ask the interviewer to repeat the question to buy some more time. Above all, make sure to stay true to yourself: think about why the interviewer might be asking this question, and how you can tie this question back to your personal motivations, goals, and morals. Often, all applicants get asked the same questions, so if you’re having trouble with a question, you probably aren’t alone. That being said, if you’re able to come up with something meaningful for this tricky question, it can definitely set you apart from the rest.

Discover the rewarding opportunities of a **CAREER IN SIGHT.**



Become an Ophthalmic Professional

Ophthalmology is the practice of medicine concerned with the anatomy, diseases, and treatments of the eye. High school graduates and college students can discover a career working in Ophthalmology practices as part of the eye care team. Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOP) are highly skilled, specialty medical assisting professionals who are qualified by didactic and clinical ophthalmic training to perform ophthalmic procedures under the direction of a licensed ophthalmologist. They often perform a patient's initial exam, including evaluating eye muscle movements, and gathering information about a patient's health history. Some AOP are responsible for administering eye medications and assisting ophthalmologists in surgical settings.

AOP work in varied workplace settings and for organizations of all sizes, including private practices, medical centers, hospitals, and university clinics alongside ophthalmologists who provide medical and surgical treatment of eye conditions. They have a variety of responsibilities and work with patients of all ages, from babies and children to adults and the elderly. People who are compassionate, empathetic, respectful, and professional, with strong communication skills have the important characteristics of eye care team members.

There are two ways to enter the ophthalmic career field:

- 1 Attend an accredited academic educational program.
- 2 Begin working for an ophthalmologist now and learn the necessary skills through experience achieved under their supervision. Then take an approved independent study course.

Choose your path

Either path can prepare you for a career in ophthalmology. You will learn the skills needed to work with people who need spectacles or contact lenses, and those who have a variety of eye disorders such as cataracts, glaucoma, and diabetic eye disease.

4.2 MILLION

Americans ages 40 and older are visually impaired

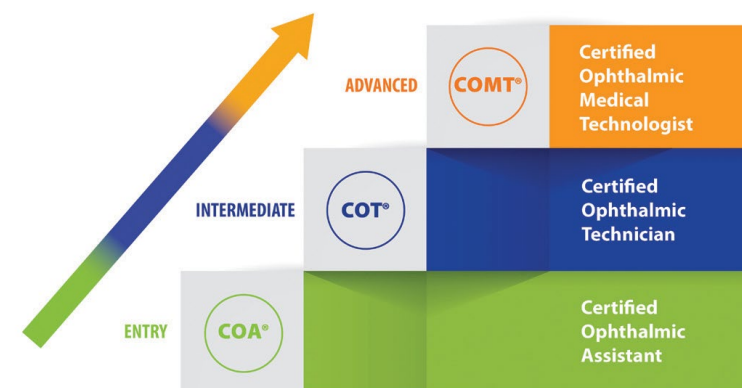
Source: <https://nei.nih.gov/nehep/lvam>, 3/2018

Certification and Professional Development

After completing training, AOP qualify to take the International Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology's (IJCAHPO) Certified Ophthalmic Assistant (COA) certification examination. Certification increases employment opportunities and earning potential, demonstrates mastery of specific skills, and promotes career advancement.

IJCAHPO offers a variety of certifications recognized worldwide for AOP:

- *Certified Ophthalmic Assistant (COA®)*
- *Certified Ophthalmic Technician (COT®)*
- *Certified Ophthalmic Medical Technologist (COMT®)*
- *Ophthalmic Surgical Assistant (OSA®)*
- *Registered Ophthalmic Ultrasound Biometrist (ROUB®)*
- *Certified Diagnostic Ophthalmic Sonographer (CDOS®)*
- *Corporate Certified Ophthalmic Assistant (CCOA®)*
- *Ophthalmic Scribe (OSC®)*



AOP lifelong learning is essential and is accomplished through continuing education and professional development. IJCAHPO offers educational opportunities through a wide range of programs and activities, including annual and regional meetings, lectures, workshops, distance and online learning opportunities, and independent programs approved for credit.

Factors That Determine Allied Ophthalmic Personnel Salaries

- Level of Training
- Experience
- Level of IJCAHPO Certification
- Location
- Supervisory Responsibilities

According to IJCAHPO's *International Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOP) Salary and Benefits Study*, average hourly wages for an Ophthalmic Medical Technician per level of training:



INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION ON ALLIED HEALTH PERSONNEL IN OPHTHALMOLOGY®

2025 Woodlane Drive, St Paul, MN 55125

How Do I Write a Personal Statement?

Application Essay Advice

Vivian On, Postsecondary Collegiate Vice President
Anna Feng, President-Elect

Step 1: Understand the Prompt

Before your fingers even touch the keyboard, there is an essential step that needs to be completed. Taking the time to closely read the writing prompt of the essay is oftentimes overlooked in its importance. However, it is arguably the most important step you need to take to ensure your essay is well received. Confirming that you completely understand what is being asked of you will set you up on the right path towards a successful piece of writing. The prompt is your guiding light, your foundation, your home base that you should constantly refer to during your writing process to prevent yourself from getting off topic.

Step 2: Brainstorm and Outline

Now that you have a clear idea of what direction you should be heading in, it's time to tap into your creativity powers. Create a list of ideas to answer the prompt. Travel back in time and sort through your past experiences to pull meaningful lessons you could explain in your essay. If you must, look online for inspiration—but don't fall into the dangerous temptation of plagiarizing or copying ideas. Remember, your integrity will show through your writing, so make sure you are honest about your experiences. Once your mind has emptied all your ideas onto the list, start formulating the backbone of your essay. Curate sections and place points under each that would support your argument. Structure your points so that they build upon each other and flow smoothly. A tip to avoid choppiness in your work is to think of it as one long path towards a cohesive message at the end. Each experience you write about needs to lead into each other and demonstrate personal growth and progression. The end of your outline should be a glimpse into the potential of your bright future, and how the institution you are applying to can be a bridge towards that future.

Step 3: Overcoming Writer's Block

The outline in the previous step should be helpful in averting the crisis of writer's block, but if you are still confronted with the barrier of starting your draft, there are a couple of things you can do to remedy the issue. The first measure you can take is just to write down anything that comes to mind. Forget about structure and comprehensibility for a moment. Let your thoughts run free. Think of this practice as a warmup for the marathon of writing your essay. If that doesn't work, don't be afraid to step back and take a break. Sometimes it is better to begin your essay with fresh eyes and a refueled brain than relentlessly trying to force it. Either way, don't be too fazed if the hurdle of writer's block comes up—you will overcome it!

Step 4: Make a First Draft

As Ernest Hemingway once succinctly said: "The first draft of anything is garbage." Approaching a first draft often involves staring blankly at a blinking cursor on an empty page, unable to move past the first few sentences. However, if you find yourself typing and retyping these first sentences, it can be helpful to remind yourself of the purpose of first drafts: written simply to exist, rather than written to perfection. A first draft only serves to place words and thoughts onto a page, regardless of how scattered they may be. As such, despite your meticulous planning and outlining, the mark of a successful first draft remains unchanged: words on paper. In other words, don't worry about making the content perfect – a "perfect" first draft is one that is done. That being said, if organization helps your writing process, it can be helpful to adhere to the structure or sequence of ideas/events that you preplanned in an outline – elements like structure and flow of ideas can be more difficult to edit later.

Step 5: Peer Review and Edit

Once you have your first draft, you can begin the real work behind a personal statement/essay – editing it. Final drafts are the product of edits and re-edits of the first draft, to the point where you may not even remember the draft you started with. You can go about the process of editing in any way you'd prefer, depending on what is comfortable for you. However, it can be incredibly helpful to ask peers or trusted individuals to review your essay, adding in comments and grammatical edits. As your essay will be read by a third-party, peer review can be invaluable to highlighting areas for improvement that you may not have noticed when writing. For instance, while your description of a feeling or thought may seem crystal clear to you, an outsider may have difficulty understanding what you mean. As such, it is important to seek outside advice and feedback when editing, both from those who know you well and those who do not. However, keep in mind that the essay or personal statement is ultimately meant to be yours – your words, ideas, thoughts, and experience. Though peer review is incredibly helpful, approach your reception of feedback as advice and suggestions, rather than necessary changes. You have the final say in all edits and revisions, so don't be afraid to keep pieces of the essay you like or omit changes you disagree with.

While editing, a very important tip to remember is that every word/sentence is valuable, especially if your writing has a limited word count. Each sentence should be something that only you can write, and no two sentences should convey the same message (aside from concluding remarks that tie back to content). Another tip is to change your perspective when editing and rereading your essay. If you're writing an application essay, the person reading it will have no idea who you are and are reading your essay to get to know you better. To that end, your essay will be your introduction to that reader. When editing, read the essay as if you were a stranger. At the end, ask yourself: do I like this person? Is this impression I want to give off? Remember that the people reading your essay are real people and try to imagine how you'd perceive the essay as a third party.

Step 6: Final Draft

The last step to writing a personal statement or essay is to recognize when it's done! Once you've completed all your edits and re-edits, incorporating feedback from outside sources, it is important to understand that there is a point where an essay is complete, and no further edits can be made. If you're not completely satisfied with your final product, even after laboring over its content forever, understand that it's normal to feel that way, and strive for *your* best work rather than perfection. Remember to be proud of your hard work and effort and send your essay off!

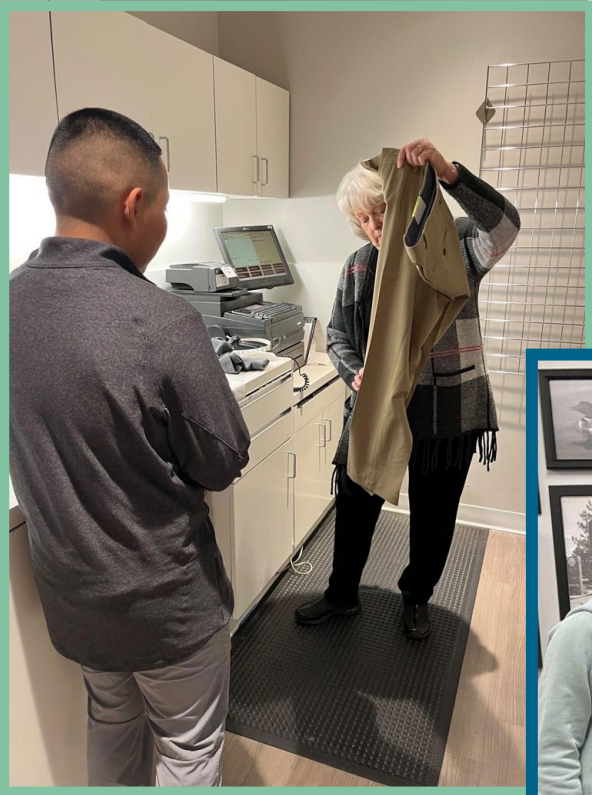
ALABAMA HOSA MEMBERS VISIT BE THE MATCH AND EXPERIENCE MACY'S DAY

By Fayette County HOSA

On Thursday, Dec. 8, HOSA members from Fayette County in Alabama toured the biorepository at Be The Match. The biorepository is where Be The Match stores millions of potential marrow donor samples. After seeing the biorepository, we toured the headquarters at Be The Match. What an outstanding firsthand experience with HOSA's Service Project.

Friday we were placed with a personal stylist at Macy's and were given a \$150 gift card to purchase clothes. It was called *Macy's HOSA Dress for Success!* We were also given armbands to explore the Nickelodeon amusement park inside the Mall of America. It was a wonderful experience!

Fayette County HOSA was one of five (5) high schools chosen to participate and only three (3) students from each school could attend. Stacey Chase was our contact person at Be The Match. She was wonderful! When we returned home we learned that while we were gone one of our teachers at FCHS received a call that he was a potential match! It's so exciting!



Paving the Way for Inclusive Future Health Professionals

by Tristen Rothrum
Minnesota HOSA

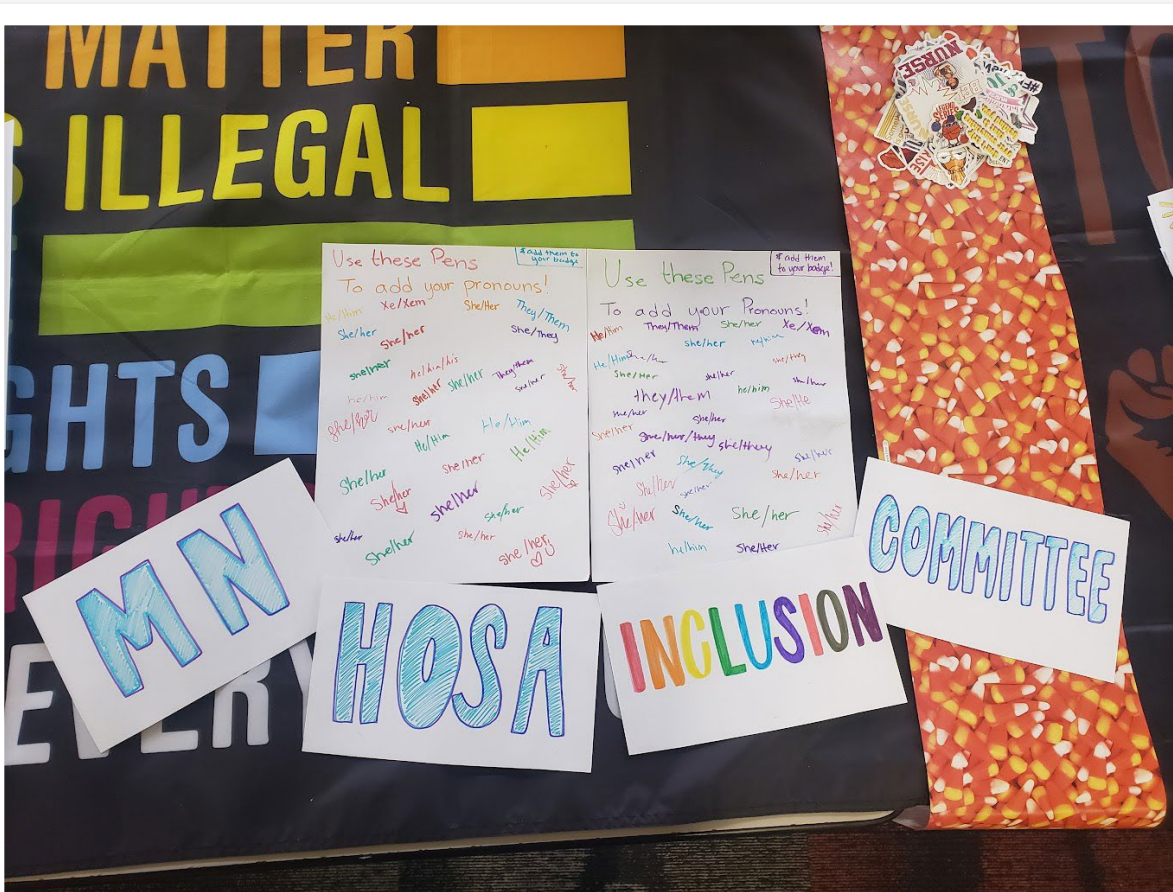
Minnesota HOSA has been embracing the new year with new limits to move beyond the traditional values of healthcare by creating a committee to do just that. Inspired by our increasingly diverse world and our need to adapt as healthcare professionals, the MN HOSA inclusion committee was created with a vision to be a platform for MN HOSA members to become advocates for marginalized groups in healthcare through education, support, and leadership. Led by Coon Rapids High School senior Ash Cocchiarella and Anoka

High School senior Ingrid Norquist, the MN HOSA Inclusion Committee is entirely student-led, with 13 other committee members from high schools all across Minnesota. Their goal: to prepare our MN HOSA members to become inclusive future health professionals.

One of the ways they are achieving this goal is by providing members with an abundance of opportunities to explore different avenues in healthcare and to educate themselves on topics that are not talked about enough, such as transgender healthcare. Currently, in the United States, transgender individuals face disproportionately higher healthcare disparities due to a lack of providers who are sufficiently knowledgeable about transgender healthcare. To begin educating members and erasing any stigma related to transgender healthcare, the MN HOSA Inclusion Committee has created countless resources for our members to engage with to learn more about transgender healthcare.

The MN HOSA Inclusion Committee has also been aiming to make a positive impact in the community by supporting groups that advocate for women’s reproductive rights, Indigenous healthcare, and community medicine. They have even made great strides in providing inclusive accommodations for our HOSA members here in Minnesota. For instance, our State Leadership Conference (SLC) falls on the dates of Ramadan. To encourage members who celebrate Ramadan to attend SLC, the MN HOSA Inclusion Committee is setting up a prayer room for those members to have a quiet place to pray during SLC.

As the Minnesota HOSA Inclusion Committee continues to go *Beyond All Limits*, they encourage our MN HOSA members to bring in the new year by educating themselves on healthcare disparities to reach new limits and move beyond as inclusive future health professionals!



RISING TO THE MOMENT

A MONTHLY MESSAGE FROM
HOSA'S INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT



International President **Kartik Tyagi**

“Say what you mean and mean what you say...” is International President Kartik Tyagi’s challenge in his last 2022 edition of Rising to the Moment – a series of monthly messages to our HOSA family. Check out all the blog posts at hosa.org – and be on the lookout for future posts every month!

Friends,

Growing up, I always enjoyed the holiday season...

Over time, though, the holidays (and the break from classes) looked different – from traveling with family some years, to enjoying time and celebrating at home, to now just being able to take a breather from final exams season (whew!), the holidays and holiday break always bring something new – especially when it snows... something we don’t get too often in North Carolina!

But regardless of how and with whom I spend the holiday season each year, the spirit of the holidays has remained the same for me, as well as for our family: the holidays have always been and continue to be an opportunity to truly take the time to appreciate each other – to value each other – to think back and reflect on the year – to relax – and, yes, to plan for what’s next in the year to come. The holidays have always been a great time to enjoy the company of loved ones. And in our family, the holidays also mean delicious foods and desserts. :)

It is my true hope that you have had a joyous and restful holiday season, and that you are ready for a prosperous New Year 2023 ahead that will encourage us all to move forward *“beyond all limits.”* After all, we’ve had to traverse uncertainty after uncertainty in the past few years. Here’s to a new year filled with joy – with challenges, yes – but with rewards too.

I know that, alongside each of you, HOSA-Future Health Professionals is bound to continue its growth and meet its goal of empowering hundreds of thousands of active members to become leaders in the global health community. There is no doubt that 2023 will be a year filled with success for HOSA members globally, and your International Executive Council cannot wait to celebrate each of you at the 2023 International Leadership Conference in Dallas, Texas.

Until then, as we begin the new year, it is my hope that you are able to appreciate the joys of living in the moment, reflect on the challenges you face, while recognizing the impact that those close to you have had on your ambitions – your aspirations – and your achievements.

I hope you do so because you mean a lot to a whole lot of people. Never forget that. You belong – not the version of yourself you think people want to see or be around – but *you* – the genuine, authentic you.

It was this very fact I shared with the International Executive Council in our last meeting of 2022. Before we began the meeting, each of us went around and shared what we admired about each other – as teammates, as friends, and as people.

From Lauren’s artistic talent and creative ability to Corey’s passion, dedication, and magic skills, Youstina’s positivity and energy, Sahil’s intelligence and humility, Rachael’s kindness and confidence, Vivian’s ability to listen and be compassionate, and Anna’s empathy and calm aura, I admire each and every one of our team members. They bring diverse skillsets, perspectives, backgrounds, lived experiences – and it is, truly, an honor and privilege to serve alongside each of them.

It is my hope that each of you, in the months ahead, whether it be with a friend or two, classmates, teammates, family, or loved ones – share what you appreciate about each other – what you love about each other.

We think it – but, oftentimes, we fail to say it.

I was reminded of this as I received an unbelievably kind note from a HOSA member prior to the holiday season. The member shared with me that HOSA has changed their life – HOSA gave this member a renewed outlook on what they can do in the future. Through our organization, they gained confidence to believe that they can positively contribute to our world and make a difference.

For me personally, it was a reminder of why we do what we do at HOSA-Future Health Professionals. At the end of the day, it is an honor and privilege to lead HOSA-Future Health Professionals not because of the conferences or the opportunities, but because of the members. Because of you – each of you.

I appreciate you.

And so I hope you appreciate what HOSA has, can, and will continue to do for you along your journey.

In the new year, I challenge you to say what you mean and mean what you say. It’s not enough to sit on the sidelines for the challenges we face. Together, I know we can move forward *“beyond all limits!”*

Happy New Year 2023, HOSA family! Here’s to another year full of memories...

With love – today, tomorrow, and always,
Kartik

Kartik Tyagi
International President
HOSA-Future Health Professionals



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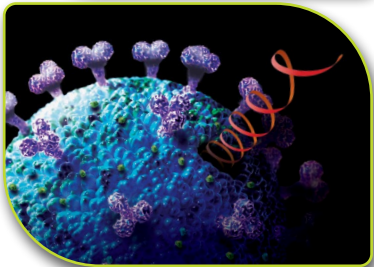
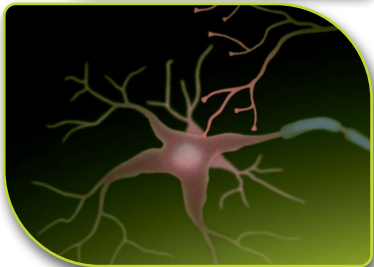
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“To save lives of those struggling with blood cancer, the best we can do is spread the message of Be The Match, solicit donations and try to recruit registry members.”

—Hazel, right, with friend at Be The Match Coordinating Center

HOSA member Hazel Lakhani’s not waiting to become a health professional before making a difference in patients’ lives.

In September, Hazel’s team from Oakmont High School joined four other top HOSA high school chapters at the Be The Match® Coordinating Center in Minneapolis, Minn.

Hazel set up a Be The Match fundraising page and started spreading the word. She started off with barely any donations and woke up the next day with \$500. She shared on social media, had someone in her family get their company to match donations and even made fliers with a QR code and distributed them at a local college fair. She’s been crushing her fundraising goal ever since—so far raising almost \$1,000!



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