

**HOSA-FUTURE HEALTH PROFESSIONALS**

# eMAGAZINE

**DARE TO EXPERIENCE**

**HOSA CONFERENCES & BEYOND**



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### THE BEST YEAR EVER

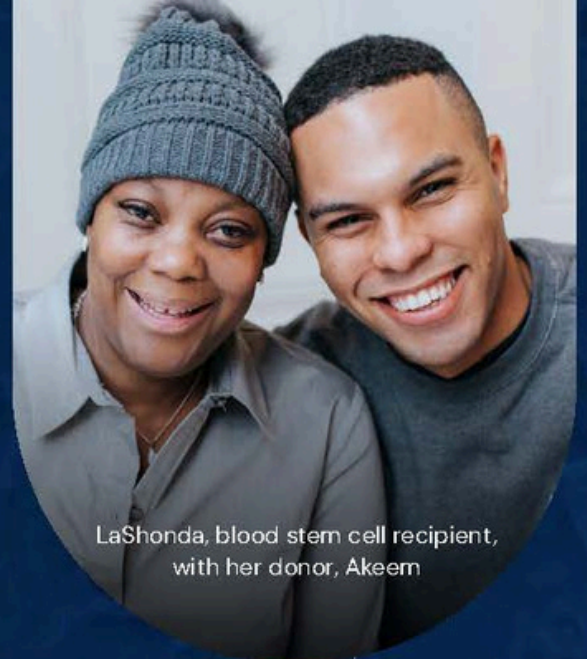
Since 2020, HOSA has made remarkable strides to help save more lives. Together, we have achieved milestones that are worth celebrating. Here's to the best year yet and to many more!

## Get involved

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LaShonda, blood stem cell recipient,  
with her donor, Akeem

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**5,000+ MEMBERS**  
added to the NMDP Registry<sup>SM</sup>

the

# Buzz

of conference season





The Nebraska HOSA State Officer Team began the year with a goal of improving the production value of the Nebraska State Leadership Conference and increasing conference attendance. The team successfully implemented a large-scale A/V system and hosted over over 600 members at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska. Above that, each state officer shined during the SLC, interacting with members, assisting advisors, and leading the conference with grace and poise. Ansh Mishra, the 2023-2024 Nebraska HOSA Vice President, says, “My favorite part of the Nebraska HOSA State Leadership Conference was undoubtedly the chance to meet numerous new people. Having the opportunity to interact with and befriend a community of hundreds of motivated future healthcare professionals was a truly unique and impactful experience. Standing at the forefront of this event as a state officer was a transformative experience to say the least. As a state officer I set out to memorize all of the conference attendees' names and fulfilling that goal was such a fun challenge, but also a rewarding accomplishment.”

### The Buzz of Conference Season

After a year of dedicated work, chapter meetings, and anticipation, State Leadership Conference season has commenced for Chartered Associations worldwide. From the thrill of opening session to the nerves of at awards, there is no doubt that the SLC is the highlight of the HOSA year for many members, and just a preview to the annual HOSA International Leadership Conference.

An integral part in hosting State Leadership Conferences are the state officers that work with the state staff to lead each Chartered association. State officers have the ability to create new initiatives, forge new connections, and advance HOSA’s mission and grow the organization as a whole.

This year, International Executive Council members attended several State Leadership Conferences as ambassadors to assist with events, host workshops, and provide remarks. As a result, IEC members witnessed the hard work and dedication state officer teams commit for the growth of their Chartered Association.

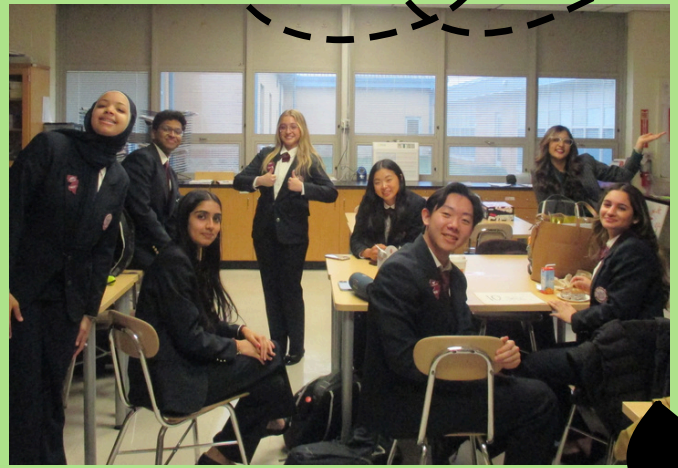
As conference season continues to shine as a highlight of member’s and state officers' HOSA experience, we wanted to share a few testimonies to serve as an inspiration to members in the year to come!



# PENNSYLVANIA

From engaging workshops, to powerful speeches and lively members, PENN HOSA's SLC was

bustling with energy. With membership growth goal for the year, PENN HOSA had a record-breaking 1,800 in attendance at their SLC. Kaylynn Kerecher, 2023-2024 PENN HOSA Secretary shares, "My favorite experience at this year's state leadership conference was meeting all the members of PENN HOSA, engaging with board representatives and advisors, and talking to inspiring medical professionals. I loved the pre-conference season, being able to work with my officer team everyday towards the same goal; to ensure our members had a successful and fun state leadership conference! It was truly the best experience of my life!" When asked about a memory that this conference gave her, she says, "One moment that will resonate with me is a member who came up to me and asked to take a photo with me. She had then told me how proud she was of me and that me speaking on stage inspired her; it truly showed me that this position gave me the ability to inspire leaders in healthcare, just by being myself."



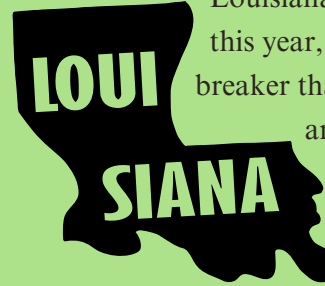
# NEW JERSEY

New Jersey HOSA had over 1,300 in attendance at their SLC this year, and it was a weekend full of hard work, fun, and spontaneity. Over the year, their goal was to show members how to "discover their why," in addition to mental health awareness, strengthening the PS/C division, and creating more opportunities for members to network with each other. Not only were they able to add Mental Health Promotion as an official event, but they also piloted an initiative known as the NJ HOSA Chapter Standards of Excellence. At their SLC, members networked with each other, danced away the anticipation before awards, and celebrated the community that is NJ HOSA. Bhavesh Manne, NJ HOSA 2023-2024 Member-At-Large, wrote, "I experienced my first ever in-person SLC in March of 2023. After a wonderful experience, I was pretty confident that no experience could ever beat the radiance, joy, and sheer happiness that was brought by that event. For a year, I was absolutely right, but then came the 2024 New Jersey HOSA State Leadership Conference. It was a wonderful weekend all in all, and I will forever cherish the moments I got to experience with the amazing NJ HOSA members, and staff. In addition to hosting workshops and engaging with members, my favorite memory will be reconnecting with my greatest mentors, Deepa, Akash, and Ahdaf, and dancing on stage with them and the vibrant members to everything from Cupid Shuffle to Naatu Naatu. It makes me so happy to think about the community that I'm surrounded by, and the passion for healthcare that unites us all."



Arkansas HOSA's SLC was gearing up to be one of their best yet. From the start, the state officer team and state advisor, Matt Burns, took time to make sure their membership not only learned, but had a blast while engaging in exciting competition. Hosting a healthcare expo featuring health science universities and medical schools in Arkansas as well as a plethora of exciting health science certification and volunteer opportunities, AR HOSA went above and beyond to get students involved in their select fields of interest. AR HOSA state officers continued to serve their membership through engaging leadership sessions, speakers, and member involvement, having students always at the edge of their seat. Rounding it off with a disco dance party, the state officer team brought the excitement that HOSA is all about. But perhaps the most memorable moments are when members get to shine through competition. Jyothika Arunkumar, 2023-2024 Arkansas HOSA State President, discussed some of her most significant SLC memories: *"I decided to volunteer for the second round physical therapy competitive event. I've always competed in leadership events so watching physical therapy was a new experience for me. Seeing members perform their skills helped me understand how diverse HOSA is. I loved helping and learning about aspects of HOSA that I have never experienced!"*

**ARKAN  
SAS**



Louisiana HOSA came out with a bang this year, starting off their SLC with an ice breaker that was heartwarming indeed: the annual ribbon trading ceremony.

As members traded their unique ribbons and learned about their fellow peers, the themes of community and excitement did not go amiss. Right along this vein was the incredible dancing through the decades party that had everyone popping out in their best decades fits! From neon leggings, to iconic 90's baggy jeans, to polka dotted 50's skirts, it was clear that beyond our HOSA blues, HOSA members dress to impress! Noting their largest conference attendance to date, Shirlene Bender, state advisor, and the state officer team put forth incredibly entertaining sessions for their members as they enthusiastically engaged in diverse conversations, encouraged members to lead within LA HOSA, and took initiatives to go above and beyond to help their members. Aiswarya Nair, 2024-2025 Louisiana HOSA State President noted "SLC this year was a blast! It was my first time on the executive board, and I got a taste of what it'll be like as the state president next year. Learning to make quick decisions and handle surprises was key, which I learned through our state officer workshop, a scavenger hunt that my team put together through collaboration and insight from the DECA state officers who we invited. This workshop really brought us together and taught me the importance of teamwork. I can't wait to meet more people and make lasting connections next year!"



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## **Discover your Future!**

Becoming an occupational therapy practitioner (OTP) is a rewarding career choice that involves helping individuals improve their ability to perform daily activities and regain independence.

The logo for the National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM), consisting of the letters "NASM" in a bold, white, sans-serif font inside a dark blue square.The word "ACADEMIC" in a bold, white, sans-serif font inside a yellow rectangular box.A photograph of a gym setting. In the foreground, a man in a grey t-shirt and blue pants is leaning over a barbell, pointing towards a woman in a red long-sleeve shirt who is also leaning over. To the right, a man in a blue long-sleeve shirt and green shorts is performing a squat with his arms raised. In the background, two women are standing and watching. The gym is filled with various pieces of equipment like treadmills and weight racks.

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CREATING YOUR

# IMPACT

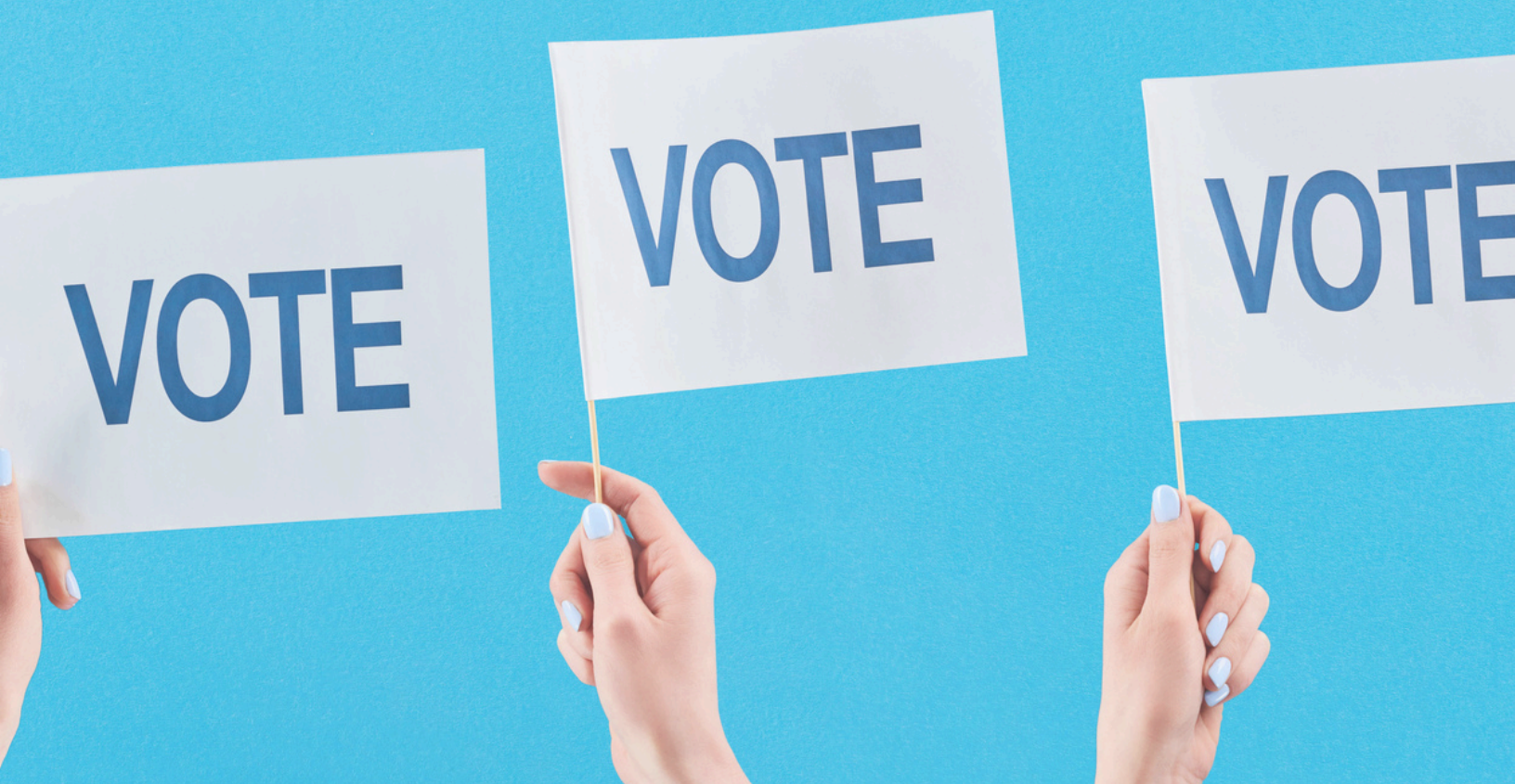
## YOUR VOICE AS A HOSA VOTING DELEGATE

**Nick Ballard, President-Elect and Aashna Ravi, Postsecondary/Collegiate Board Representative**

### What is a Voting Delegate?

As a student-led organization, HOSA prides itself on ensuring the voices of its members are expressed and heard – especially as it pertains to the election of leadership at the local, regional, chartered association and international levels. Voting Delegates at the international level possess a great responsibility with direct impact on HOSA's future leaders. This responsibility goes beyond the act of casting a ballot; together, Voting Delegates are charged to represent over a quarter million voices each year.

The ILC provides members with the opportunity to connect with Voting Delegates from all over the world on a mission to select the next team of international officers who will lead HOSA into the future. With each ballot cast, Voting Delegates contribute to the organization's foundation that will guide HOSA's initiatives, foster innovation, and advocate for the advancement of healthcare education and career pathways. Through informed decision-making, your HOSA experience, and a commitment to the organization's mission, you have the opportunity to make an informed choice that emphasizes the core values that define HOSA.



## How can you become a Voting Delegate

HOSA chartered associations are eligible to exercise their voting privileges through voting delegates. The number of voting delegates permitted for each chartered association is dependent on division membership in accordance with HOSA's Bylaws. To become a voting delegate at this year's HOSA International Leadership Conference, members are encouraged to express interest to their chapter advisor as soon as possible; every year, chartered associations are responsible for identifying a few students to serve as voting delegates, which often occurs in coordination with the chartered association's State Advisor or Executive Director.

## Voting Delegate Responsibilities

An important component of the annual International Leadership Conference is the election and installation of the new International Executive Council. Representing an active membership of over a quarter million, voting delegates possess the critical responsibility of advocating for HOSA's future and ensuring longevity of the organization. The process will involve attending multiple events on-site in Houston, Texas; therefore, delegates are not permitted to participate in competitive events while attending ILC. To orient voting delegates on the process, delegates attend the Voting Delegate Orientation, where they will learn more about their responsibilities and meet the slate of candidates.

As echoed by many former HOSA Voting Delegates, serving in this unique role at the International Leadership Conference is an incredibly rewarding experience. If you have a knack for hearing what others have to say, reflecting on the needs of your chartered association members, and deliberating with fellow students to identify the next team of international student leaders, serving as a Voting Delegate could be the right opportunity for you!

## Your Impact Stories

Postsecondary/Collegiate Board Representative Aashna Ravi, served as a Voting Delegate for four years. "Throughout the years, I enjoyed witnessing the process of campaigning and elections. The skills and knowledge learned during the voting delegate process helped me become a better leader and IEC candidate. I encourage you to take the opportunity to serve as a Voting Delegate, as it truly opens your perspective to a different side of the organization," said Aashna.

"I enjoyed the impact I was making and being able to meet other members of HOSA. I recommend Voting Delegates take [their role] seriously and make the most of the time you have at the ILC. For Voting Delegates, you get out of it what you put into it," said Grace Hains, from South Carolina HOSA.

Aditya Arora, of Washington HOSA, said he learned how to network better by meeting other state officers serving as Voting Delegates as well as what it takes to be a great leader from meeting the IEC candidates. "Most of all I learned that I have an impact on HOSA-FHP," said Aditya. His advice to future Voting Delegates, was to "bring some energy and get ready to meet some awesome people!"

Genesis Jones, South Carolina HOSA, said she enjoyed the candidate speeches the most: "I think its a good way to get to know the candidate's HOSA story!" Genesis also advised Voting Delegates to be attentive because their vote matters!

Before serving as a Voting Delegate, Meredith Stewart of South Carolina HOSA, said she wanted to learn how apply the skills learned could be used throughout the duration of her time in HOSA. "I learned that a resume isn't the only thing that makes a leader. It's the compassion, determination, and personality that a person demonstrates that people want to follow." Her advice to Voting Delegates is to "be open to meeting everyone! Every state's leadership team is structured differently and you can make lifelong relationships that can help you in the future."

# Be prepared

## A “Survival Guide” for the ILC

Jocelyn Auxier, Western Region Vice President, and  
Ahdaf Zaman, Eastern Region Vice President

Attending the ILC is an unparalleled opportunity for HOSA members to immerse themselves in a dynamic environment, where they can engage with like-minded peers, gain valuable insights from industry experts, and showcase their skills through various competitive events.

Attending the ILC with over 12,000 delegates in one of the biggest cities in world can be daunting, but fear not! We have created this article as a guide to ensure you make the most out of your ILC experience, from pre-conference preparation to maximizing your participation during the event.

We asked HOSA members to share their ILC experiences with us. So, let's dive in and explore how you can best prepare for the 2024 International Leadership Conference in Houston this year!

Adam Pham, Oklahoma HOSA, said his “favorite ILC memory was getting HOSA members to dance. It is a bit silly, but seeing members break out of their shell for something as funny as dancing brings out a lot of confidence that they normally wouldn’t have.”

As one of HOSA’s most popular networking opportunities, members are encouraged to attend the HOSA Expo and connect with industry partners and valuable healthcare related exhibitors. We also urge all members to stop by and learn something new at one of our many educational workshops, where you can learn first-hand from professionals in the field.

Maria Vazquez-Coria, Washington HOSA, is “eagerly anticipating the opportunity to immerse myself in thought-provoking discussions, forge meaningful connections with

diverse individuals, and gain fresh insights into pressing global issues.” While Arene LeBlanc, Nevada HOSA, is looking forward to pin trading with HOSA members from different chartered associations!

“For first-time attendees, I recommend actively participating in sessions, initiating conversations with people from different backgrounds, and embracing the opportunity to learn,” advised Maria Vazquez-Coria.

Beyond the conference walls, don’t be afraid to take some time to relax at the ample greenspace surrounding the George R. Brown Convention Center or join us for HOSA day at the “Hurricane Harbour” amusement park!

Luckily, Houston has a lot to offer, and there’s something for everyone!

Brayden Yates from Arkansas HOSA says, “expect to be overwhelmed, but make sure to savor every moment, step out of your comfort zone, make new friends, and take as many pictures as you can.”

One way to be prepared before the ILC is to download the conference app (available in early June!) to view all available opportunities and create a personalized schedule!

Lily Kazemi, Nevada HOSA, promises that “the opportunity to interact with like minded individuals and industry professionals from all over the world is an invaluable opportunity you can’t find anywhere else!”

In order to make the most of all the opportunities at the ILC, you’ll want to be sure you are packed and ready to go! First and foremost, don’t forget your essential documents such as and ID, travel tickets, and conference registration details. Most importantly, don’t forget to pack your official HOSA Uniform or professional business attire for conference sessions. The dress code is strictly enforced at the ILC!

Packing a pair of comfortable shoes and casual clothing is also recommended for informal events and explorations during free time.

Arene LeBlanc, Nevada HOSA, recommends bringing a backpack that can carry everything you’ll need throughout the day. “I like to have with me a small first aid/sewing kit, water, snacks, pins, my event materials, and anything else I may need!”

Don't forget to include necessary electronic devices like laptops, tablets, and chargers for accessing conference materials and staying connected.

“A must-have for me at ILC is my trusty notebook and pen, essential tools for capturing valuable insights, jotting down ideas, and exchanging contact information with newfound acquaintances,” says Maria Vazquez-Coria, Washington HOSA.

The IEC is excited to see you in Houston, June 26 - June 29! More importantly, the team is ready to guide and support you as you prepare for the ILC. If you have questions or need advice, don’t be shy to reach out via email or social media.

Make sure to follow @hosafhp on Instagram to stay up-to-date on all things HOSA and let us know how we can make sure you have the best ILC experience!

# HELLO from texas

As they say, everything is bigger in Texas, including our hospitality. We are thrilled to host the largest gathering of future health professionals in the United States.

On behalf of the Texas HOSA State Officer team, it is our pleasure to host you at the 2024 HOSA International Leadership Conference in Houston, Texas!

Houston is where the world comes for treatment. The Texas Medical Center is the largest life sciences destination in the world, with 106,000 employees, 61 institutions, and thousands of volunteers and patient visits. Over 160,000 people visit Texas Medical Center each day. Known for its diverse culture, world-class dining, and vibrant arts scene, Houston offers many experiences to explore during your stay. From the iconic Space Center Houston to the stunning Museum District, there is something for everyone to enjoy. Don't forget to try our famous Tex-Mex cuisine and experience the warmth of Texas hospitality.

We are excited to see you in Houston and witness your passion for healthcare and leadership. If y'all need anything at all during your time here, give us a holler! We're happy to help make your Texas experience as smooth as a country two-step! See y'all in Houston!

The Texas HOSA State Officer Team

# WE ♥ HOUSTON

WHILE YOU'RE IN

# HOUSTON

## Things To Do



Look for help planning your visit

## Attractions



Enjoy an endless array of places to see and things to do

## Restaurants



Dine like a local and taste global culinary cuisine

## Experiences



Book tickets to the city's best tours, attractions, and experiences



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Campers will engage in hands-on lab demonstrations, participate in unique service projects, gain essential patient assessment skills and tour local health care facilities and pharmacies.

**The cost to attend this camp is \$550, which includes room, meals, snacks, supplies and all camp activities.**

*A limited number of scholarships will be available for the camp fees*



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# “ REINVIGORATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE AND HOSA-FUTURE HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Authors:

CAPT Skip Payne, MSPH, REHS/RS, CPH, APSCP, CHEP

CAPT (retired) Rob Tosatto, RPh, MPH, MBA

*This article was originally published in the Commissioned Officers Association's (COA) newsletter Frontline in March 2024.*



“LT Schuyler Price (foreground) and CAPT Mehran Massoudi (background) presenting the Public Health and Medical Reserve Corps awards at the 2023 HOSA International Leadership Conference.”

The Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service (COA) and the PHS Commissioned Officers Foundation (COF) are proudly working with HOSA-Future Health Professionals (HOSA) to engage and support students and provide pathways to public health information and careers. We have also engaged with the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General (OSG) to ensure alignment with U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps activities.

HOSA is a student-led global organization that provides a distinctive program of leadership development, motivation, and recognition for middle school, secondary, postsecondary, and collegiate students enrolled in health and biomedical science programs. The rapidly changing health industry needs dedicated workers who, in addition to their technical skills, are people oriented and capable of being a leader and a member of a clinical or non-clinical health team.

HOSA recognizes the importance of providing students with instruction beyond the technical skills required for entry into a health career and uniquely prepares students for higher education and entry-level certification. HOSA provides opportunities for students to develop, practice and refine their technical, leadership, and teamwork skills to transition seamlessly from education to a healthcare or public health career.

OSG began its relationship with HOSA in 2006 after then Deputy Surgeon General Kenneth Moritsugu was the keynote speaker at the HOSA National Leadership Conference. RADM Moritsugu was excited about the potential of these future health leaders, and asked Captain Rob Tosatto, then Director of the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Program (which was housed in the OSG), to explore a partnership opportunity.

For over a decade, that partnership grew and expanded to include other aspects of the USPHS and other agencies within the Department of Health and Human Services. For example

- MRC units and HOSA chapters were encouraged to partner at the local level to promote youth engagement in public health, preparedness and response activities;
- HOSA created several public health-related competitive events (public health, MRC partnership, epidemiology, healthy lifestyles);
- COA branches worked with HOSA leaders to provide judges for state-level competitive events;
- The MRC program office created and sponsored national-level week-long “experiences” for HOSA members and advisors; and
- USPHS officers from various agencies served as speakers, exhibitors and judges at HOSA International Leadership Conferences.

Engagement between the USPHS and HOSA decreased over the past few years as the initial “champions” either retired or moved to other positions. This is unfortunate as HOSA’s mission is especially critical now, considering the acute shortages of qualified medical and public health workers nationwide. Furthermore, the importance of engaging future health professionals in public health has been amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic. Current HOSA members are also, potentially, future Public Health Service active and reserve officers and leaders.

In early 2023, the COF and COA began to examine how they could help further the relationship between USPHS and HOSA. Last March, the COF Board approved a proposal to support youth engagement and will fund HOSA for scholarships and sponsorship of their Public Health competitive event.

In addition, a USPHS-HOSA workgroup was established. Active and retired USPHS members include: RDML Paul Reed, retired RDML Pam Schweitzer, CAPTs Skip Payne and David Lau, retired CAPT Rob Tosatto, CDRs Colleen Scott and Margie Mahool, LCDRs Stephanie Chiang, Sophie Yang, Trisha Chandler, Trey Draude, and Bryan Wilson. HOSA representatives are: Dr. Rahma Mkuu (Alum), Elizabeth Carnesi-Hudson (Alum and state advisor), and Aashna Ravi (executive committee member).

The workgroup has developed a work plan with two main goals:

1. Reinvigorate and enhance the relationship between the USPHS and HOSA at all levels
2. Provide opportunities for HOSA members to learn about public health and public health careers (including the USPHS Commissioned Corps), and increase the number of HOSA members interested in public health careers

To meet these goals, the workgroup is exploring a variety of activities to be conducted over the coming years. In the meantime, we would appreciate hearing from USPHS active, reserve and retired officers (email [robtoatto@yahoo.com](mailto:robtoatto@yahoo.com)) who:

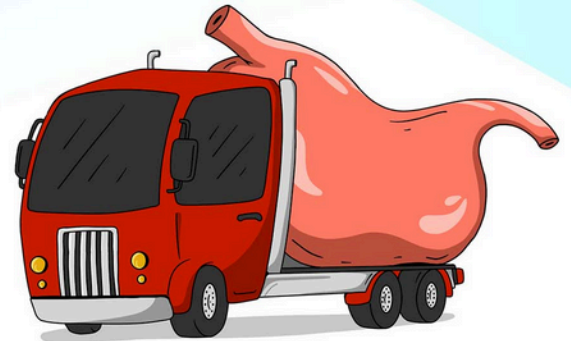
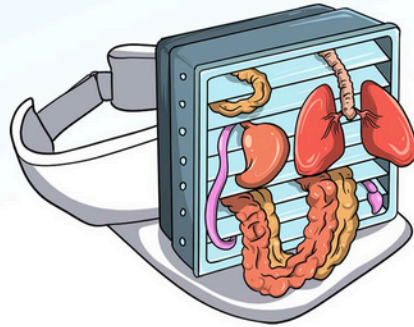
- are a HOSA alum,
- have participated in past activities between USPHS and HOSA,
- are interested in future activities between USPHS and HOSA, or
- are interested in supporting the activities of the workgroup

There is an extraordinary and crucial need to guide, support, and grow future health and public health professionals. The partnership between the USPHS and HOSA is a direct path to building such a legacy relationship. We hope all officers will support it.



# Dean Vaughn

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# POP

[whatispop.org](https://whatispop.org)



**WhatIsPOP**, a career awareness initiative from the American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics & Pedorthics, was created to help students find their POP career path. **Connect with WhatIsPOP at HOSA's 2024 International Leadership Conference** or visit **WhatIsPOP.org** to learn more about career opportunities in the profession and hear why professionals chose a career in POP.



## Meet Ahmad

Ahmad started studying science and engineering after moving to the U.S. from Afghanistan. He wasn't sure about his career path until his professor asked, "If your goal is to help others, what career would you choose?" Inspired by his father's work in the Red Cross, Ahmad was drawn to POP after learning how his background in engineering could help others. Ahmad is now a certified prosthetic orthotic assistant and certified prosthetic technician, working to design, 3D print, shape and fit patients with custom prosthetic and orthotic devices.



**"Nothing beats seeing someone stand up for the first time on a prosthesis that I helped design and build."**

*- Ahmad Najwa - CPOA, CTP*

## Meet Adrienne

With a master's degree in health administration and a bachelor's degree in physics, Adrienne saw herself working at the intersection of traditional care while embracing advancements in technology. Coming from a family with several people living with limb loss, Adrienne wanted to help families like hers. After becoming a certified prosthetist orthotist, Adrienne worked as a POP clinic manager before becoming the program director for Kennesaw State University's Master of Science in Prosthetics & Orthotics program.



**"Seeing a patient smile because of a device I provided them is the most satisfying part of my job."**

*- Adrienne Hill, CPO*



# Your Guide to Careers in Prosthetics, Orthotics and Pedorthics

By: The American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics & Pedorthics

"What do you want to be when you grow up?" It's an age-old question you've likely been asked. Choosing a career is no small task, which is why WhatIsPOP is here to share one of the world's best professions.

Career paths are rarely a straight line. While some students already have their entire careers planned out, others might need more time to discover where they see themselves. In either case, careers in POP have something for everyone.

Working in POP gives you the freedom to explore a range of opportunities while developing your passions. POP careers are flexible and let you experience everything the profession has to offer including helping patients recover, designing custom devices and combining traditional care with new technology.

POP careers rank among the best jobs in the United States and employment in POP professions is expected to increase 17% in the next decade. Hear what POP professionals have to say about why they chose POP.

## Meet Delaney

After earning her bachelor's degree in physical therapy, Delaney realized PT wasn't the career path for her and started exploring different opportunities. After working at an engineering company and shadowing at a POP clinic, Delaney had her "lightbulb moment" and realized what was missing. Working in a profession that combines her passion for helping others with her newfound love of engineering was where she saw herself. Delaney is a second-year orthotics and prosthetics master's student completing her prosthetic residency.



**"With so many opportunities, working in POP is a unique and exciting world!"**

*- Delaney Schavey, POP Student*

## Meet Chris

Fascinated by how the body and brain work together, Chris studied kinesiology and exercise science as an undergrad. After discovering POP and how it lets you tap into your passions to help others, Chris knew this was the path for him. Chris is now a certified prosthetist orthotist and manages a POP clinic with his wife where they help patients recovering from strokes and other neurological conditions. One of Chris's favorite patient memories is helping a young mom with mobility issues get back to playing with her son, running and even snowboarding.



**"You're not just shaping plaster, working in POP lets you shape and improve lives!"**

*- Chris Stokesbary, CPO*

# TURNING PASTA INTO POSSIBILITIES

## How One Chapter Leveraged Fundraising to Attend the ILC

Tristen Rothrum, Central Region Vice President  
Anna Feng, HOSA President

Kingsland High School HOSA, nestled in Spring Valley, Minnesota, faced the common hurdle of funding their members' attendance at the 2023 International Leadership Conference in Dallas, Texas. Despite financial challenges, their unwavering determination drove them to launch a creative fundraising campaign, ultimately securing over \$5,000. Their remarkable journey serves as a beacon of inspiration for HOSA chapters worldwide, demonstrating the power of dedication and innovation in turning dreams into reality.

Fundraising for the ILC started with a spaghetti dinner, said Haleigh Hyde, Kingsland High School HOSA Publicist. "We organized a spaghetti dinner, raising \$1,799, and then successfully advocated to our school board for additional funds, rounding [our total up to] \$2,000."

From there, Haleigh Hyde and her chapter's President, spent countless hours reaching



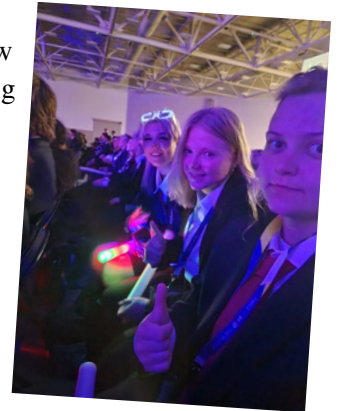
out to local businesses for donations. Haleigh said, "dedication was key" in their relentless perseverance reaching out to the community. "At first, contacting businesses was daunting, but we crafted a script to effectively convey our message, overcoming initial communication barriers." In addition to face-to-face meetings, the chapter also utilized emails, social media and phone calls to promote their fundraising efforts and engage their community.

"Fundraising and attending ILC enhanced our community's awareness of HOSA's mission, fostering a deeper sense of unity and engagement."

Another key factor was collaboration among HOSA Chapter members. "Our HOSA Members played a pivotal role, spearheading most events with our advisor's guidance. Their enthusiasm and dedication were instrumental in our fundraising success."

Haleigh said, "the euphoria of securing funds from the school board was unforgettable" perhaps second best to the vibrant atmosphere at the ILC's general sessions!

Haleigh also emphasized how attending the ILC and getting to network enriched the chapter members' understanding of HOSA events and created connections with peers from around the world.



Kingsland's fundraising journey exemplifies resilience, collaboration, and the transformative power of dedication. Surpassing their target, they not only secured ILC attendance but also strengthened their chapter's culture and community ties. Their triumph underscores the importance of perseverance and creativity in achieving ambitious goals.

As we look ahead, let Kingsland HOSA's story inspire HOSA chapters worldwide to embark on their own fundraising journeys, joining the vibrant community at the 47th Annual International Leadership Conference in Houston, Texas.

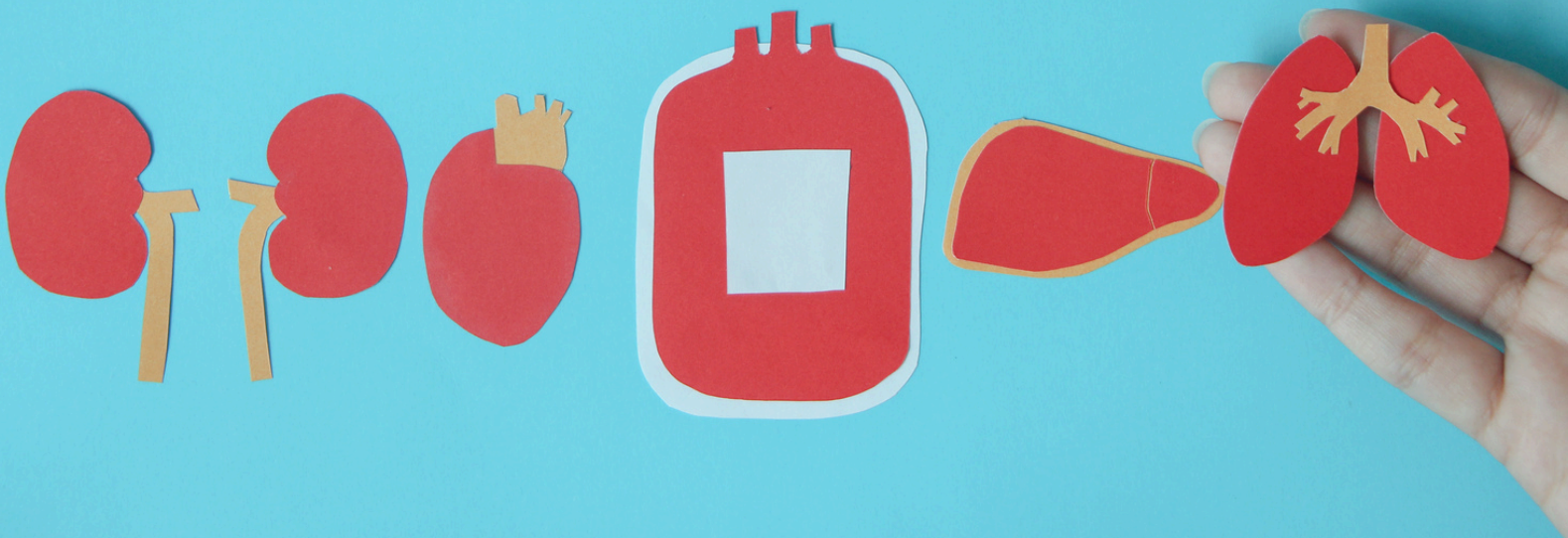
# ***From Stranger to Lifesaver: My Journey as a Kidney Donor***

By: Taylor O'Shaughnessy, MPH, MCHES  
Kentucky HOSA Alumni

As I settled into my new home in Cincinnati in January 2022, little did I know that a chance encounter with a yard sign would lead me on a life-changing journey. It all started with those simple signs scattered around town, boldly declaring "kidney donor" alongside a name and phone number. Initially, I barely registered them, just another part of the neighborhood landscape. But fate had other plans.

In November 2023, as I exited Aldi one ordinary day, one of those signs caught my eye, prompting a spontaneous decision to make the call. Little did I realize then that this impulsive act would set in motion a chain of events that would forever alter my life and a stranger's life.

The voice on the other end belonged to a kidney transplant coordinator at Christ Hospital. Leaving a voicemail, I embarked on a journey of uncertainty and hope. While waiting for a response, I found myself drawn to the stranger's story, shared by his wife on social media. Scott and Tina, their names etched in my mind, became more than just names on a sign; they became real people with hopes, dreams, and a family they longed to see grow.



The pivotal moment came when I learned of Scott's desire to become a grandfather. Memories of my beloved grandfather flooded my mind, and in that instant, I knew I had to do whatever I could to help him realize that dream.

After hearing back from the hospital, undergoing blood tests, and discovering I was a match, the donation process began earnestly. Meeting Scott in person just a month before surgery was surreal yet comforting, knowing that our lives were about to intersect in a profound way.

On April 2, we underwent surgery, and as we now convalesce in our respective homes, the impact of our shared journey reverberates. Scott's joy at the prospect of welcoming his first grandchild later this year fills us all with immense happiness. A new kidney, a new life, and a new family bond forged through the selfless act of organ donation.



Reflecting on this extraordinary experience, I am grateful for the opportunity to make a difference in someone else's life. My journey has taught me invaluable lessons about compassion, resilience, and the power of human connection. And if my story can inspire even one person to pick up the phone and inquire about organ donation, then it will have been worth sharing.

I invite anyone who shares my curiosity or desire to make a difference to reach out. Together, we can spread hope and healing, one selfless act at a time.



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**-JOHN TORTORELLA**