

Attending the inaugural AUA Summit Conference in Washington DC was overall a very positive experience. It was a great opportunity, granted by the NE Section, for me to continue efforts to learn more about medical advocacy. As a medical student, I was fortunate to be able to attend the Medical College of Georgia's first medical education advocacy day at the Georgia state Capitol. That was my first glimpse into the world of advocacy, and my experience in DC was reminiscent of that day in Atlanta. Back then, I remember learning about how to talk about the complexities of medical training with the congressman's office members. I felt a responsibility to try to help our field and our patients. After this experience as a third year student, I started several urology acting-internships and then began my first years of urology residency. This demanded a narrowed focus on clinical and operative training. I am glad that the AUA conference re-introduced me into another way in which urologists can impact their patients' care. It was a wonderful chance to gain exposure to broader urologic issues at the national level.

Four years have passed since the day at the Georgia Capitol, and I still stand in awe at the process of medical advocacy. It takes patience, a solid understanding of your causes, teamwork, and an ability to communicate with others who can affect change at the policy level. It also requires humility - there is always something new to learn. I felt very fortunate to learn from many different urologists from across the country. The mentorship offered at the Summit was excellent for residents making early strides towards becoming more involved in urology advocacy.

The highlight of my experience was sitting in on meetings with the Vermont offices. It was a unique opportunity to learn from my mentors at the University of Vermont outside of the operating room and clinic. Ultimately, we advocated for our patients, and I loved taking part in the process of improving patient care in a new arena. I saw firsthand that the current national "asks" are pertinent to our patient population in the state of Vermont. It inspired me to learn more about the Vermont congressmen's stance on healthcare issues and to hopefully be able to take action when the opportunity arises.

I hope to incorporate what I learned at the AUA Summit by becoming more involved at the local level. Specifically I am going to focus on Vermont, where I am completing my residency training. First and foremost, this requires attaining more knowledge about the topics presented at the AUA Summit. I began this process by presenting a grand rounds to the other

urology residents and faculty at UVM. I will continue the process of advocating for my patients in my career moving forward.