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Steven Walerstein, MD, MACP Advocacy Internship Program

SYLLABUS

2026 New York State Legislative Session

Program Administrator:

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Program Description:

The Steven Walerstein, MD, MACP Advocacy Internship Program is, first and foremost, an educational program designed to introduce medical students and residents to the various ways in which state health policy issues impact the practice of medicine. Interns will be asked to select an issue that is important to them to focus on throughout the duration of their 3–4-week internship. Interns will learn how to research state policies that impact their area of interest, and how to find federal policy guidance influencing state policy decision-making. Using a focus issue as a starting point, interns will research that topic and create an abstract for automatic submission to NYACP's annual poster competition. The abstract will also be shared with NYACP's Health & Public Policy Committee and often published in NYACP's monthly e-newsletter.

Each issue studied by NYACP advocacy interns throughout the 2026 academic year must be distinct from one another and impact internal medicine and primary care patients. As part of their project work, advocacy interns are encouraged to interview and/or survey medical students, residents and/or physicians in order to gather insights and recommendations from practitioners. All advocacy interns must meet weekly with the NYACP program administrator.

During the internship, the NYACP office will engage in various legislative activities. When appropriate and when scheduling permits, interns will be invited to participate in NYACP's Advocacy Day, ACP's Leadership Day in Washington, DC, NYACP's Council/Board meeting, the Chapter's Health and Public Policy Committee meeting, etc. Additionally, as issues arise during

the NYS legislative session, interns will be asked to draft memorandums in support of or opposition to legislation in accordance with NYACP positions on issues.

NYACP's Advocacy Internship Program has transitioned to a 100% virtual format, however, in-person meetings take place when necessary. Leveraging Zoom, Slack and other office technologies, NYACP staff and interns are in constant communication during office hours and meet frequently via Zoom. When in-person meetings are needed, NYACP will pay the cost of travel, lodging, and meals.

Learning Objectives:

At the conclusion of the NYACP advocacy internship, participants will be able to:

- Identify sources of NYS-level policy influence on the practice of medicine;
- Describe how the NYS Legislature influences health policy;
- Describe how NY agencies (e.g.: NYS Department of Health) impact health policy;
- Identify ACP positions on issues of importance to the practice of internal medicine;
- Reach members of the NYS Legislature and identify policy issues they would like to discuss;
- Conduct a meeting with legislative leaders;
- Prepare memorandums in support and/or opposition to health policy proposals;
- Prepare an abstract on a health policy topic of interest and approved by program administrator;
- Conduct health policy research to support topic of interest for abstract prep; and
- Articulate policy positions for decision-making leaders.

Reading/Viewing Materials:

Depending upon the policy topic identified by advocacy program interns and approved by the program administrator, reading and/or video material may be suggested as helpful background sources.

Advocacy interns may also be asked to review and/or monitor legislative bills as identified by the program administrator during their program participation.

Schedule of Program Deliverables:

Weeks 1-4: Work on discrete legislative issues in collaboration with program administrator.

Week 1: (1) Write a 500-word article on expectations of program participation.

(2) Identify a policy issue to focus on throughout the duration and participation in the program. Conduct preliminary research including state and ACP sources relative to the topic identified. Prepare an abstract for automatic submission to

NYACP's poster competition. The abstract should include the following elements:

- Statement of the Issue
- NY Policy Impacting the Issue
- Federal Policy Impacting the Issue (if applicable)
- Policy or Issue Controversy
- Identify Additional Research that can Help Inform the Issue

***NOTE: NYACP's Regulations for the [Submission of Abstracts](#) (most importantly, the **FORMAT**) **MUST Be Followed** Discuss specifics with Loretta Ponesse, NYACP's Executive Director and/or Karen LaBello, NYACP's Director of Education.**

Week 2¹: Conduct a literature review to assist with abstract development.

Week 3: Obtain feedback from your network of colleagues about the subject matter of your project and start drafting your policy abstract.

Week 4: (1) Finalize/submit policy abstract (with references included). The abstract should include:

- Statement of the Issue (Updated/Revised/Clarified from Week 1 Policy Approved Selection)
- NY Policy Impacting the Issue (Updated/Revised/Clarified from Week 1 Policy Approved Selection)
- Federal Policy Impacting the Issue (Updated/Revised/Clarified from Week 1 Policy Approved Selection)
- Controversy (Updated/Revised/Clarified from Week 1 Policy Selection)
- Discussion
- Implications for Internal Medicine Physicians and Primary Care Patients
- Conclusion

(2) Write/submit 500-word exit article on program experience. Did program participation meet your expectation(s)? If so, how? Did it exceed or fail to meet your initial expectation(s)?

(3) If interested, work with NYACP staff to create a podcast to include a discussion about program participation experience.

Engagement Benchmarks

Throughout the course of the internship, participants will have the opportunity to engage with NYACP staff, leaders, and members in a variety of formats. Attachment A is a tracking sheet of engagement opportunities for interns to monitor and complete the program.

Attachment A
Engagement Opportunities for NYACP Advocacy Interns

Tracking Sheet

NYACP Meeting/Program/Event/Resource	Date of Activity
NYACP Leadership Meetings	
Council/Board	
Committee/Task Forces	
Health & Public Policy	
Health Information Technology	
Medical Students	
Member Engagement	
Chapter Awards	
Quality & Patient Safety	
Residents	
Well-Being Committee	
Scientific Meeting Planning	
District Presidents Planning	
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	
Early Career Physicians	
Geriatrics	
NYACP Team Meetings	
Huddles	
Team Meeting	
Sync Meeting	
NYACP Member Meetings	
Virtual Presentations/Webinars	
ACP Programs	
Chapter Coordination Meetings	
Member Webinars	
NY-based Legislative Meetings	
NY-based Executive Agency Meetings	
Statewatch (NY-based Legislative Tracking Software)	
Research Policy Focus Issue	
Review Press Releases & Legislative Weekly Activities	
Monitor Senate & Assembly Committee Agendas	
Health	
Higher Education	
Insurance	
Other	

Write Support and/or Opposition Memo on Legislative Issues as needed	
Travel to Albany on a Day that the Legislature is in Session	
Tour Capitol (advance reservation required)	
Observe NYS Senate in Session	
Observe NYS Assembly in Session	
Attend a Senate & Assembly Committee Meeting	
Deliver NYACP Support/Opposition Memo(s) to NYS Legislative Offices	
Write an Article for NYACP's Monthly e-Newsletter	
Record a Podcast Focused on Your Policy Issue	
Participate in Story Slam	
Attend Weekly Check-in Meetings Regarding Internship with NYACP Staff	
Participate in NYACP's Advocacy Week	
Participate in NYACP's Advocacy Day	
Attend ACP's Leadership Day in Washington DC	