Candidate Workshop
February 20-22, 2015

Campaign School
April 15-19, 2015

AMPAC’s Political Education Programs

Every year, physicians facing crises in medical liability, payment, and scope-of-practice realize that involvement in the political process is no longer a luxury. It is a necessity.

Therefore, dozens of physicians and their spouses seek public office or work to help elect other friends of medicine across the country.

While the American Medical Association Political Action Committee (AMPAC) continues to support medicine-friendly candidates on the federal level, we also realize that medicine must cultivate effective advocates from within its own ranks.

Since 1985, therefore, AMPAC has been a pioneer in sponsoring two vital Political Education Programs: the Candidate Workshop and Campaign School.

Graduates include officeholders and advocates across the country at all levels of government, from U.S. Congress to city councils. The courses’ faculty include leading campaign experts from both sides of the aisle.

AMPAC offers these programs as a benefit of AMA membership, covering all costs except transportation. If you’re ready to make a difference for medicine, we encourage you to apply today!

Candidate Workshop
The Candidate Workshop is designed to help you decide if you should run for public office. Over a three day period, you will learn:

★ how to craft a campaign plan and message;
★ the secrets of effective fundraising;
★ how to choose the right media advertising;
★ the use of social and digital media;
★ the role of your spouse and family; and
★ how to become a better public speaker.

Get answers to your questions, and determine if running for public office is for you.

Campaign School
In the Campaign School, participants are put on a “campaign staff” and run a simulated Congressional campaign. Daily instruction prepares you for exercises in these areas:

★ taping a radio commercial;
★ peer-to-peer fundraising pitches;
★ Holding a press conference;
★ building a campaign social media platform; and
★ speaking for your candidate.

Other topics include:
★ vote targeting; and
★ the role of polling and survey research.

During this five day program, you will develop a new understanding of how campaigns are run. As a graduate of the Campaign School, candidates will rely on you to give them advice on strategy, message and campaign plans.
Q. Who can attend the schools?
A. AMA members, their spouses and staff of state medical societies are all eligible to apply.

Q. I am a member of my specialty society, but not the AMA. May I apply?
A. Yes, provided they are AMA members. However, completed applications are submitted to the AMA members, their spouses and staff of state medical society staff to gauge the applicant’s involvement in advocacy and politics. Applicants will be notified if they are accepted; the submission of an application does not guarantee acceptance.

Q. May medical students apply?
A. Yes, provided they are AMA members. However, AMPAC provides only for a limited number of medical student slots in each program, and medical students are therefore asked to submit an additional 500-word essay on why they want to attend the particular program and what they hope to learn from it. The student applicants are ranked and admitted by the AMPAC Board.

Q. Who should apply for each program?
A. The Candidate Workshop is aimed at physicians and other friends of medicine who are seriously considering a run for public office. The goal is to give them the tools they need to make an informed decision about running for office and to build an effective campaign should they choose to do so. The Campaign School is geared towards those who are interested in becoming involved in the political process by helping other medicine-friendly candidates get elected to office. The School provides the resources and experience to make participants expert campaign strategists, who can then help medicine-friendly candidates in future elections.

For both programs, AMPAC seeks out leading campaign strategists and gurus on both sides of the political aisle, in order to create educational programs that are routinely recognized as second to none.

Q. Do these programs qualify for CME?
A. Not at this time.

Q. Is there any free time during the programs?
A. Not generally. Each of the programs is very rigorous, and intentionally so; they are meant to simulate the non-stop nature of a political campaign. Unless otherwise noted, each day lasts until at least 9 p.m., and often longer. The Candidate Workshop usually runs from a Friday late afternoon until Sunday afternoon. Depending upon the specific curriculum, the Campaign School runs from Wednesday early evening through Sunday afternoon, but sometimes allows participants time off for one dinner. However, most meals are working meals.

Q. Where are the schools held?
A. For most of the past decade, AMPAC has hosted each program at the Ritz-Carlton hotel in Pentagon City, Virginia. This hotel is located very close to Reagan National Airport (DCA). As most meals are working meals, allows participants time off for one dinner. However, most meals are working meals.

Q. Can I attend both programs in the same year?
A. Yes, as long as you are not repeating a specific program (see below), but you should consider if each program is right for you. Also, please note that while the programs have different goals and different audiences, there is some overlap in subject matter.

Q. Can I attend a program a second time?
A. Repeat attendance at a specific program is subject to the approval of the AMPAC Board of Directors. Applicants who wish to attend a program again should specify in their application why they should be admitted again.

Q. What is the dress code?
A. For the most part casual dress is fine, but attendees might want business or business casual attire for the public speaking exercises in each school, which are recorded.

Q. How much do the schools cost?
A. Unfortunately, due to campaign finance rules, hotel rooms, meals, faculty and materials are all covered by AMPAC for accepted applicants. Accepted participants only need to pay for their transportation to the Washington, D.C. area. However, please note that AMPAC’s covering of these costs is contingent upon attendees being present for the entire program. AMPAC reserves the right to bill attendees if they are not present for the entirety of the program. Attendees are asked to sign an agreement stipulating these conditions.

Q. How does the application process work?
A. Completed applications are submitted to the Political Education Programs Manager online at www.ampaconline.org/apply. Once an applicant’s (or spouse’s) active AMA membership is confirmed, AMPAC staff contact state medical society staff to gauge the applicant’s involvement in advocacy and politics. Applicants will be notified if they are accepted; the submission of an application does not guarantee acceptance.

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