

2024 Copello Health Advocacy Fellowship



Nicole Damari, MD

Nicole led sexual and gender health initiatives, improving policies on pronoun badges, inclusive spaces, and LGBTQ+ patient care. She addressed legislative barriers with an op-ed on gender-affirming care's mental health benefits. She also chaired DFA's Sexual and Gender Health subcommittee.



Fabrizia Faustinella, MD

Fabrizia advocated for Medicaid expansion in Texas, organizing training, publishing op-eds, and highlighting benefits for care access, equity, and budgets. She also promoted voter engagement as a health equity strategy, linking policy to social determinants like education, jobs, and housing.



Carson Hartlage
Medical Student

As a trans advocate, Carson secured \$1.5M in medical debt relief for 50,000 residents. They led a 500-signature abortion rights campaign, testified against Ohio's gender-affirming care ban, and opposed Medicare Advantage through storytelling. Carson also wrote for DFA's *eGreedgious Newsletter*, exposing healthcare greed to advance justice and equity.



Shriya Veluri
Medical Student

Driven by personal experience with healthcare inequities, Shriya advocated for Medicaid expansion and Medicare reforms with DFA. She led health education sessions on insurance access and authored Texas Medical Association resolutions to expand cancer screening coverage. Nationally, she joined ACR Hill Day, addressing workforce crises and Medicare payment reform.



Jennifer Jones-Vanderleest, MD

To address advocacy training gaps, she piloted a workshop for UW medical students on public narrative and policy. She integrated fellowship content at the Northwest Center for Public Health Practice and led a DFA session on decarceration. She plans to update Underserved Pathways curricula and advocate against policies like the EDUCATE Act.



Temitope Olasehinde, MD

Temitope presented award-winning research how primary language affects IBD outcomes, highlighting disparities among immigrants and minorities and, as a Fight Colorectal Cancer Champion, lobbied for funding and policy reform. She plans to pursue a GI fellowship, join advisory committees, and advocate for health equity in digestive care.



Rajadhar Reddy
Medical Student

Raj, from a South Texas border town and pursuing an MD-MS in health policy, championed care access and drug regulation. He testified to CMS on Medicare pricing, addressed biosimilar patents with the FDA, and shaped Medicaid and immigration policy. A skilled negotiator, he navigates advocacy's evolving landscape with strategic leadership.



Anand Singh
Medical Student

Anand co-chaired DFA's Gun Violence Prevention Subcommittee and created a national coalition of medical students focused on firearm safety. Inspired by tragedies like Uvalde, he organized advocacy events to push for state and national policy change. He also received the 2024 Founders Award for advocacy as a Copello Fellow.



Dominique Rehl
Medical Student

Dominique championed reproductive rights in Ohio, counseling on contraception and leading Medical Students for Choice. As co-chair of DFA's Reproductive Rights Subcommittee, she developed talking points, organized speakers, and co-created a toolkit. She used social media to support Ohio's Issue One and testified on reproductive and gender-affirming care bills.



Polly Wiltz, DO

Polly, an emergency medicine resident, shifted to systemic advocacy post-Roe, collaborating with the Center for American Progress and DFA. She testified on EMTALA's repeal, joined an abortion criminalization panel, and published op-eds. Her work led to a grant-funded study on first-trimester emergency care disparities, shaping policy and patient care.
