Welcome to SOMA!

On behalf of National SOMA, welcome to the osteopathic family – we are a tight-knit group! You are beginning a four-year journey that will take you through some challenges and some amazing rewards. In the end, achieving the designation of D.O. will make it all worthwhile.

Congratulations on your decision to join the National Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA). I know you are faced with many decisions during your orientation and it is hard to know which organization(s) to join. I was faced with the same uncertainty three years ago. I can say without a doubt that joining SOMA was the single best decision I have made in medical school. National SOMA is the world’s largest student osteopathic medical association and serves as the student affiliate organization of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA). In coordination with the AOA, SOMA’s purpose is to promote osteopathic ideals and unity within the profession, to educate future osteopathic physicians, and to establish and to maintain lines of communication among healthcare professionals in an ongoing effort to improve the quality of healthcare.

So what does this mean to you? In short, SOMA is here to serve and represent each and every osteopathic student on a local and national level. Each College of Osteopathic Medicine has a SOMA Executive Board, which provides the link between individual chapters and National SOMA. While we, as medical students, are very busy with school, work, family, and friends, I strongly urge you to consider getting involved with SOMA at the chapter level and/or nationally. The time commitments and other sacrifices I have made for National SOMA are continually rewarded with friendships, networking opportunities, and the privilege to be involved with the advancement of our profession. Whether your interest lies in international medicine, political affairs, or osteopathic manipulative medicine, SOMA has over 20 National Board positions designated to promote specific issues. Additionally, there are several benefits with your SOMA membership, such as affordable health insurance, a loan consolidation analysis, merchandise discounts, and scholarship opportunities. In fact, one scholarship is specifically designated for new members.

Please utilize the National SOMA website as a resource: www.studentdo.com.

This membership packet includes brief reports from members of the SOMA National Board and Board of Trustees. I invite you to read through the packet so that you understand what SOMA is all about. Do not hesitate to contact me personally if you have any questions about the organization. I hope to meet many of you in San Diego for the National SOMA Fall Convention.

Sincerely,

Alan Shahtaji, OMS IV
National SOMA President, 2007-08
Alan.Shahtaji@mwumail.midwestern.edu

P.S. - As we develop skills to treat the whole patient, remember that each of us needs to have a balanced lifestyle to be happy and do well in school. Take time out from your studies to do what you are passionate about! 😊
Welcome to SOMA everyone! As the National Vice President, I work closely with the President to help organize, develop, and delegate responsibilities held by the Board of Trustees and National Board. I serve as the Speaker of the House during session of the House of Delegates, directing and controlling the floor so that efficient and informative meetings are held. I am responsible for reporting the progress of standing committees, subcommittees, and task forces. In the absence of the National President, the Vice President acts as Interim-President to perform the duties of that office. I also keep and maintain SOMA’s Constitution & Bylaws, the SOMA Process, and the Code of Ethics in their most current form. If you have any questions, ideas, or concerns about National SOMA, please feel free to contact me. I look forward to working with all of you this year!

National SOMA Foundation Chairperson
Matthew Ralph
Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine – Class of 2008
Matthew.Ralph@mwumail.midwestern.edu

Congratulations on choosing SOMA! As a member, you will have access to many resources, discounts, scholarships, and grants. I am the Chairman of the SOMA Foundation. The Foundation is the philanthropic body of SOMA that initiates fundraising for the organization in addition to maintaining a rapport with SOMA’s benefactors nationwide. As you may already know, SOMA is the principal osteopathic professional organization that represents thousands of osteopathic students across the nation. The main focus of the Foundation is to educate society, preserve the posterity of osteopathic medicine, and to improve health care in the United States and worldwide.

Through the efforts of the Foundation, SOMA has implemented valuable outreach programs related to osteopathic principles and practice, rural medicine, international health, preventative medicine, osteopathic outreach, and other community-centered activities. In addition, the Foundation funds grants for local SOMA chapters to outreach in the communities and also awards scholarships annually to SOMA members to help defray the increasing costs of medical education.

The 2007-2008 SOMA Foundation includes:
- Matthew Ralph, Foundation Chairman
- Maria Batraki, Foundation Director
- Melissa Bunnell, Associate Director of Grants
- Mathew Levine, Associate Director of Financial Affairs
- John Litchfield, Associate Director of Scholarships
- Collin Lovitt, Humanism in Medicine Director

SOMA functions solely on the support of corporations, medical associations & institutions, and individual sponsors who comprise the membership of the SOMA Foundation. Additionally, the advice and guidance of the Foundation members is extremely beneficial to the direction of SOMA. Membership in the SOMA Foundation positively impacts you, the future of the profession.

I look forward to meeting many of you this year during the SOMA conventions and encourage you to apply for the many grants and scholarships available. I invite all of you to the Foundation Reception, which is held in conjunction with the Fall SOMA convention, held this year in San Diego, California. I hope to see you all there! If you have any questions or would like additional information about the Foundation, feel free to contact me.
Hello Incoming Medical Students! Congratulations on your acceptance to medical school and (most of all) on your decision to become a new SOMA member. My name is Maria Batraki, and I am a fourth year student at NYCOM. Also serving as the National SOMA Foundation Director, my job is to bill the SOMA Foundation members in the Fall and Spring. This year, I hope to bring back and encourage some of the previous Foundation members to give to our cause. I also diligently write thank you notes to all currently contributing Foundation members to show SOMA’s gratitude for their donations. My other responsibilities include activities such as planning the Annual Foundation Reception for the SOMA Fall Convention with the other members of the SOMA Foundation board. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the Foundation, please contact me. Thank you and good luck!

As SOMA Treasurer, I oversee SOMA’s financial interests. I manage the budgeting and accounting for National SOMA and work with the SOMA Foundation. In addition, I am available to assist any of the local chapters’ treasurers with their jobs as well. I look forward to working with all of you throughout the next year! If you ever have any questions about SOMA, feel free to send me an email!

The Member at Large is a National Board member who is elected by his/her fellow National Board members to hold a seat on the Board of Trustees – acting as their representative. Thus, the Member at Large is a liaison between the National Board and the Board of Trustees. Essentially, I am an extra hand, ear, and voice on the Board of Trustees, and I serve as a voting member as well.

Congratulations on becoming a new member of SOMA and joining our osteopathic student family! We currently are comprised of over eight thousand osteopathic student physicians, and we strive to increase our membership every year. We endeavor to keep our members involved and encourage each of you to get involved at the local level and national level as well. As a member of SOMA, you are eligible for scholarships and special benefits that you will find listed at www.studentDO.com. You will also receive information regarding upcoming SOMA events, conventions, and conference through email and updated daily on the website calendar. As of 2007, the position of Membership Coordinator became a new addition to the National SOMA Board of Trustees. I am prepared to assist you with all of your membership and general SOMA needs. Please contact me any time. Once again, welcome to SOMA, and congratulations on your great accomplishment of becoming an osteopathic student physician. Best of luck!!
National SOMA Region Trustees

Regional Trustees are elected each year at the SOMA Fall Convention. Their responsibilities are: to hold regional meetings at both Fall and Spring conventions, to assist each chapter in his/her region with ongoing activities, to address membership issues and funding concerns, and last but not least, to play an active role as a voting member on the National SOMA Board of Trustees (BOT). If questions or concerns arise during the school year, you should contact your Region Trustee to discuss these issues. Your Trustee will know best where to direct your questions and will assist in finding you the answers. These individuals want to help their chapters. Please make them aware if they are needed!

Region I Trustee
Lynda Tang
Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine – Class of 2009
ltang@vcom.vt.edu

Region I: Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM); New York College of Osteopathic Medicine of the New York Institute of Technology (NYCOM/NYIT); Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM); Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine – New York (TOUROCOM); University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey School of Osteopathic Medicine (UMDNJ-SOM); University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine (UNECOM); Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM)

Region II Trustee
Tommie Albright
Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine – Class of 2008
tommie.l.albright@dmu.edu

Region II: A. T. Still University Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine (ATSU/KCOM); Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine (CCOM); Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine (DMUCOM); Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine (MSUCOM); Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine (OUCOM); West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine (WVSOM)

Region III Trustee
Kristina Manion
Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences – Class of 2009
kmanion@kcumb.edu

Region III: A. T. Still University College of Osteopathic Medicine – Mesa (ATSU/COM-Mesa); Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine of Midwestern University (AZCOM); Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences (KCUMB-COM); Touro University College of Osteopathic Medicine (TUCOM-CA); Touro University College of Osteopathic Medicine – Nevada (TUCOM-NV); Western University of Health Sciences – College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific (WesternU/COMP)

Region IV Trustee
Johnny Dias
Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine – Georgia – Class of 2009
jdias7@gmail.com

Region IV: Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine – Bradenton (LECOM-Bradenton); Lincoln Memorial University DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine (LMU-DCOM); Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine (NSUCOM); Oklahoma State University College of Osteopathic Medicine (OSUCOM); Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine – Atlanta (PCOM-GA); Pikeville College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCSOM); University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine (UNTHSC/TCOM)
Welcome to SOMA!

**Clinical Clerkship Coordinator**

Vivien Fongué  
*Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences – Class of 2008*  
[vfongue@kcumb.edu](mailto:vfongue@kcumb.edu)

This position is designed to meet the needs of the upperclassmen of SOMA. As this is a relatively new position, my mission is dynamic. Current projects include the creation of a database detailing available elective rotations in states all over the country. Also, I will attempt to create worthwhile programs at national conventions that will intrigue our more senior members to attend, such as a CV workshop or classes that give advice regarding interviewing and writing personal statements. In addition, I am creating a database of the previous SOMA National Board members with their current training status so that we may learn from those who have taken our chosen paths before us. As Clinical Clerkship Coordinator, I also plan to work closely with other national board officers to coordinate joint events and programs. This includes, but is not limited to, working with the Director of Professional Development to help our members shine through their rotations.

**Convention Coordinator**

Kerri Kulovitz  
*Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine – Class of 2009*  
[kerri.kulovitz@mwumail.midwestern.edu](mailto:kerri.kulovitz@mwumail.midwestern.edu)

As convention coordinator, I have the pleasure of helping to plan each SOMA convention. Each convention is held in conjunction with the AOA convention and is a wonderful time to learn more about the Osteopathic profession. I have the opportunity to put together the convention booklets and plan all of the fun and exciting events for the evenings. After a long day of important meetings, it is time to get out on the town and socialize with fellow students! You really have the chance to see that medical students are fun!!! The booklet contains the schedule for the weekend and information on positions that you, yourself, can get involved in. It also includes updates on what different schools are doing in their SOMA chapters. I urge you to attend these wonderful conventions. You will have the opportunity to meet medical students and D.O.’s from all around the country! Hope to see you soon!

**Director of Political Affairs**

Travis Snyder  
*Touro University Nevada College of Osteopathic Medicine – Class of 2009*  
[travishsnyder@gmail.com](mailto:travishsnyder@gmail.com)

Welcome to SOMA! As SOMA National Director of Political Affairs, my job is basically to generate student interest and early involvement in the political goings-on pertinent to the osteopathic profession! Part of that responsibility is staying updated on current legislative issues pertaining to SOMA, osteopathic medical students, the osteopathic profession, and our patients…and informing all osteopathic medical students on those issues. Osteopathic physicians have been incredibly involved in legislative processes since the inception of our profession. Fundamentally, this involvement has granted us recognition and practice rights within the United States and across the globe!

As the National Director of Political Affairs, I also have the privilege of helping coordinate the annual D.O. Day on the Hill event, which is held every spring in Washington, D.C. D.O. Day on the Hill gives osteopathic medical students an awesome opportunity to experience democracy first-hand… and to explore the nation’s beautiful Capitol! Encouraging peer participation in “politics,” be it at the local, state, or national level, is inherent to my position. Becoming involved is really simple, and not as intimidating as it might seem! It can be as easy as signing up for GOAL (Grassroots Osteopathic Action Link), being a member of OPAC (Osteopathic Political Action Committee), participating in D.O. Day on the Hill, or writing a letter to a political figurehead. WE have a very exciting obligation to forge the future of healthcare in America. The earlier we become involved, the more experienced and prepared we will be when our patients and our profession turn to us to improve their health! 😊

If you are interested in learning more or if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please feel free to contact me anytime! I can be reached via email. Also, if you hear of something interesting going on in local politics or would like to work on a local political initiative, let me know. I can also put you in contact with local SOMA chapter Political Affairs officers. I’m here to help you in any way that I can!
Welcome to YOUR professional osteopathic organization! My goals and responsibilities for the next year are to facilitate the professional development of all SOMA members and help prepare you to be terrific, well-rounded physicians! To achieve this, I am creating and organizing a variety of professional development events on the national and local levels. I plan to inform you of the latest technological advances and helpful business tips that can be incorporated into the practice of medicine, as well as CV and essay writing assistance. I will help SOMA focus on the importance of networking among students, young physicians, and practicing physicians. To achieve this, I will work with the AOA representative for the Committee on Professional Development in addition to being the contact for SOMA with other student organizations to collaborate on opportunities and ideas in the area of professional development. I will promote the use of the local chapter constitution, recommend chapters keep their own updated, and offer advisory support in forming a local chapter constitution to student representatives from the new campuses. I also am charged with educating SOMA membership about writing, proposing, and reviewing new resolutions for our national constitution. In addition, I will aid in the update of the National SOMA Constitution as needed. If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to email me. I look forward to working with you over the next year and hope I can be of assistance with your own professional development!

Director of Programs for the Medically Underserved
Merkeza Mamo
Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine – Class of 2009
merkezama@pcom.edu

This position was created in the face of the continual disparity between the privileged and the poor, and between those who have access to the finest healthcare in the world and those who have not. Through our efforts here at SOMA, we hope to encourage students to immerse themselves into the lives of the underprivileged by taking elective rotations in medically underserved areas. Thanks to the Ed and Melissa Loniewski scholarship, we are able to fund these students. We hope that these experiences will carry over into a lifetime of dedication. Additionally, I help coordinate the “Cover the Uninsured Week” program efforts in Osteopathic schools across the country and cooperate with the Preventative Medicine Chair to plan the philanthropy project at the Fall convention in San Diego! I look forward to working with you all to pull off these projects! ☺

Executive Liaison Task Force Director
Jenny Curry
Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine – Class of 2008
jcurry@lecom.edu

The Executive National Liaison is entrusted with the task of ensuring SOMA’s thoughts and position are heard outside of the infrastructure of SOMA. The Executive National Liaison Officer’s main responsibility is to communicate with outside organizations: to offer SOMA’s stance on issues important to osteopathic students and, when appropriate, to lend support to organizations working toward the same goals as SOMA. Partnerships among other professional and student medical associations promote collaborative efforts, increase awareness of osteopathic medicine, and encourage participation in objectives that are important to osteopathic medical students.
Welcome to SOMA

Foundation Associate Director of Grants
Melissa Bunnell
Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine – Class of 2008
cheeses@vcom.vt.edu

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA), along with other groups such as the American Osteopathic Foundation (AOF) and the Auxiliary to the American Osteopathic Association (AAOA), offer many different grant programs to SOMA chapters. These grants range from $650 to $2500, each with its own specific purpose. My responsibility is to coordinate these grants and ensure that SOMA chapters are utilizing them to their full potential. I also have responsibilities to the NB/BOT and SOMA Foundation team. Please feel free to contact me at any time with any project ideas that you would like to implement or need help developing to keep promoting osteopathic medicine in your communities.

Foundation Associate Director of Financial Affairs
Mathew Levine
Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine – Class of 2009
mlevine@nova.edu

Hello incoming medical students and welcome to your new journey. My name is Mathew Levine and I’m a 3rd year at Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine. The SOMA Foundation serves as an entity to provide funding for our members and their worthwhile causes. Through the support of corporations, medical associations, institutions, as well as individual sponsors, the Foundation is able to provide funding for grants and scholarships. It is important to recognize that the resources we have are redistributed solely back into programs and services for our student members.

By becoming a member of the Foundation, you receive email updates as well as a special invitation to our Foundation reception among other things. As a student, you can help too. How? By becoming a Student Member. This is a relatively new category of membership. For a nominal fee of $10, you will receive the same benefits given to all other members. The SOMA Foundation is always looking for individuals or companies that are willing to give financial support. If you know of anyone who is willing to become a member, please do not hesitate to contact me. Also, keep in mind to work hard and play hard.

Foundation Associate Director of Scholarships
John Litchfield
West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine – Class of 2009
jlitchfield@wvsom.edu

Welcome to SOMA! The Foundation Associate Director of Scholarships is responsible for organizing and allocating various scholarships for SOMA members. Scholarships are available for a wide variety of applicants, including new SOMA members, students pursuing a career in a specialty field of medicine, students completing elective rotations in medically underserved areas, and international rotations. Each year, SOMA awards thousands of dollars to deserving osteopathic students from across the country. We encourage you to apply for the many scholarships that are offered through SOMA.

Greatness Fund Steering Committee Liaison
Nima Alipour
Touro University College of Osteopathic Medicine – Nevada – Class of 2009
nimaalipour@gmail.com
Humanism in Medicine Director  
Collin Lovitt  
Touro University College of Osteopathic Medicine – Class of 2009  
cjmacgirl@yahoo.com

Many members of the Osteopathic community have gone above and beyond the realms of the Osteopathic philosophy to provide superior care to patients and serve as inspiration to all Osteopathic physicians and medical students. These members of the Osteopathic family embrace and define the very essence of humanism. Tragically, on October 19, 2004 in Kirksville, Missouri, several members of the Osteopathic community who embraced humanism perished in the airplane crash of Flight 5966. This scholarship was established to honor the lost members of the Osteopathic family and recognize Osteopathic medical students who uphold the tradition of humanism in medicine and exemplify compassionate healthcare providers. All third and fourth year Osteopathic medical students are eligible to apply for the scholarship that is awarded at the annual fall convention. A memorial luncheon is held during the fall convention and awardees are recognized while also taking a moment to remember those lost in the plane crash. As director of the scholarship, I oversee the selection committee, plan the memorial luncheon, oversee fundraising, and am currently working on the scholarship web page that will be a link on the SOMA scholarship page. Please contact me with any questions.

International Health Programs Director  
Arta Bakshandeh, MA  
Touro University College of Osteopathic Medicine – Class of 2008  
SOMAIH@gmail.com

The role of the International Health Programs Director is a diverse one. The primary ongoing project is managing the list of international sites available for student rotations (www.studentdo.com/international-health.htm). At the beginning of the year, the IHP director will make contact with each school’s president and NLO who will designate one person to serve as their chapter’s local IHP contact person. National SOMA has graciously committed an annual amount of $1000 towards International Health Programs Scholarships. I select a group of students to serve on a committee to aid in the selection of the award winners. It is from the pool of each school’s IH Representatives that the committee should be selected. Currently the scholarships are being awarded during the spring convention. The other major job of the IHP Director is to coordinate the annual World Health Organization’s World Health Day service projects. Each chapter’s IHP officer is responsible for their individual chapter’s project. My role as the National Director is to facilitate and assist each chapter to design a project that is best. Each year World Health Day is held in the beginning of April. It is strongly encouraged that the IHP Director collaborates with other members of SOMA National Board to develop these projects.

Minority Affairs Director  
Raul Alexander Mirza  
Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine – Class of 2010  
rmirza@vcom.vt.edu

Welcome to the most innovative and progressive student medical organization of your osteopathic career. You have made a tremendous choice in your osteopathic adventures by becoming a member of SOMA. The Student Osteopathic Medical Association is a remarkable organization led by enthusiastic students such as you. It is an organization that supports its members by education and provides a network of medical professionals and students to disseminate information and ideas to one another. Take every opportunity you can to make the most of your SOMA experiences. Get to know your colleagues from other osteopathic institutions and forge professional relationships that will enrich your education.

The Minority Affairs initiative is an evolving process. The national position was established in 2006 with the realization that the need for cultural diversity and awareness is a facet of medicine that cannot go unrecognized. Topics of ethnicity, race, and gender will not only impact our professional lives but are a driving force for the multitude of global issues that surround us today. While it is not only imperative to respect the variation in our communities, an adjunct of knowledge is key to bridging social divides. SOMA has a longstanding reputation intended to serve the health needs of underserved communities. In addition, SOMA’s minority affairs division is committed to ensuring that medical services and education are culturally sensitive to the needs of diverse populations.

I look forward to meeting you at our semi-annual meetings. Welcome once more to a fantastic organization and best wishes in your medical endeavors.
Welcome new members, and congratulations on joining the osteopathic family at SOMA!!! You have joined an amazing profession that will teach you wonderful skills and make you unique in the practice of medicine. We are blessed to have the ability to diagnose and treat with our hands, and hopefully you will embrace the philosophies and modalities of osteopathic medicine and learn to integrate them in your future practice as a physician.

As the SOMA Osteopathic Principles and Practice Director, my job is to help promote and educate people about Osteopathic Medicine. I help in increasing the awareness and understanding of the osteopathic profession while also facilitating your clinical competency and enhancing SOMA’s relationship with affiliated organizations, such as UAAO. Ways in which SOMA and I will help to accomplish these goals are to sponsor OMT workshops at both Fall and Spring national conventions. Please plan on attending these workshops, as we will have some phenomenal osteopathic professionals teaching you new and great techniques to enhance your osteopathic training. This year we are planning on having specialists in fields such as Family Practice, Sports Medicine, Emergency Medicine, and Pediatrics to demonstrate how they integrate OMT in their practices. We are also developing a resource guide so that you can easily find physicians who utilize OMT for further learning, and we also plan on creating a video documentary that will allow you and your student chapters to educate the general public about what an Osteopath is. Additionally, each year SOMA’s OP&P program awards A.T. Still Memorial Scholarships to students. This year the parameters of the scholarship are changing to recognize students who apply the osteopathic philosophy and treatment in patient care, so make sure to apply!!! To learn more about these scholarship opportunities and a myriad of additional SOMA resources, visit www.studentdo.co. I think you will find that SOMA truly is your voice! If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at SOMAOPPCoordinator@hotmail.com.

Pre-SOMA Director
Michelle Barbosa
Touro University College of Osteopathic Medicine – Class of 2009
Pre_SOMA@hotmail.com

I’m happy to report that Pre-SOMA saw a huge increase in membership last year with many new chapters forming across the U.S. This year we will be continuing our expansion while striving to improve resources and member benefits. With this goal in mind, we are encouraging current SOMA chapters to help foster activities for Pre-SOMA involvement on their campuses. Several Pre-SOMA programs were successfully launched last year, but each will require the cooperation and initiative of our SOMA members in order to progress and improve. Events, such as medical-student panels, campus visits, and individual mentorships are only a few of the opportunities that your chapter can offer to our undergraduate counterparts in Pre-SOMA. Activities such as these can be rewarding, fun, and easy to plan. It is our initial goal this year to establish good communication between SOMA and local Pre-SOMA members in order to facilitate these relationships and create successful collaborations. We have recently added our entire Pre-SOMA membership to the National SOMA list serve in order to improve access and communication to Pre-SOMA members. We hope that each of you will get involved to help us make this another great year for Pre-SOMA!

Preventive Medicine Director
Clarice Sinn
Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine – Class of 2009
cs292305@ohio.edu

Hi! My name is Clarice Sinn, and I am the Director of Preventive Medicine for SOMA. I keep in touch with each chapter’s contact for preventive medicine and inform them of upcoming programs and events. I also help provide information about preventive medicine programs and activities that National SOMA is involved in. The four divisions of the preventive medicine coordinator include AIDS awareness, domestic violence, minority affairs, and “other,” which include any concept related to preventive medicine. This year, the featured project will take place in San Diego at the Fall SOMA conference. I hope to see you there. Please email me with any questions.
As a SOMA member, you have the opportunity to indulge in many exclusive benefits, including:

- **Student Loan Management** through Graduate Leverage (www.graduateleverage.com). Graduate Leverage is a unique loan management and advisory service that I highly recommend you check out! Hopefully, you will hear their presentation on your campus soon!

- **Physician Loans** provides home mortgages specifically for graduating medical students with excellent rates and zero down payment!

- **15% discount with Choice Hotels**, which includes: Comfort Inn, Comfort Suites, Quality, Sleep Inn, Clarion, Cambria Suites, Mainstay Suites, Suburban, EconoLodge, and Rodeway Inn. Just call 1.800.258.2847 and give them the SOMA discount code: #00802016

- **Car Rental Discounts** with:
  - Alamo ID#233443 Phone 800.354.2322
  - Avis AWD#B451900 Phone 800.698.5685
  - Budget ID#T503500 Phone 800.455.2848
  - Hertz CDP#76057 Phone 800.654.2200
  - National ID#5708406 Phone 800.227.7368

- **SOMA Health Insurance** with excellent rates (www.somainsurance.com)

- **Car insurance discount with Geico**. Call 1.800.368.2734 and tell them you are a SOMA member.

- **PDA programs discount through Skyscape** (www.skyscape.com/soma)

- **Book discounts at the SOMA Bookstore** (www.somabookstore.com)

- **Have your personal statement professionally edited with EssayEdge and ResumeEdge**. Go to essayedge.com or resumeedge.com and enter SOMA as the coupon code to receive a 20% discount.

- **STA Travel and the ISIC Card**: If you are traveling internationally anytime soon, make sure to purchase an ISIC card for $22, which will save you so much more money around the world on transportation, hostels, museums, and many more services. Check them out! (www.statravel.com)

It is best to follow up on the link on the SOMA website, www.studentdo.com/benefits, often to keep up to date with the most recent programs and benefits. These are all excellent companies that offer us great discounts, and I strongly advise you to keep these web addresses handy! Some of these companies even provide some revenue back to SOMA so that we can offer our students more scholarships and program opportunities!

Another role of the Programs and Benefits Coordinator is to organize the Chapter of the Year award and Officer of the Year award. You will have the opportunity to nominate a SOMA officer and/or your chapter in the spring. Watch for emails.
Hi and welcome new SOMA members. My name is Alissa Cohen and I am the National SOMA Research and Development Director. Currently, I am a fourth year student at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. As the Research and Development Director, I will be updating the online quarterly journal club for SOMA members on the SOMA website, as well as organizing the Annual SOMA Research Symposium Poster Competition, which will be held this October in San Diego, California! Additionally, with the generous support of the Osteopathic Research Center and the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation, SOMA will again be awarding Summer Research Fellowships. Five prizes of $2000 each will be granted to students interested in completing osteopathic-related research projects. Applications and research proposals will be requested in the winter months, so watch your email. If you have any questions about the poster competition, fellowship award, or research in general, feel free to contact me. Congratulations on your acceptance to Osteopathic Medical School and welcome to the SOMA family!

SOMA Newsletter Editor
Pamela Tipler
Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine – Class of 2009
pamelati@pcom.edu

Hello everyone! As the SOMA Newsletter Editor, it is my job to keep you updated with all of the very best SOMA has to offer. The Student DOctor is published on behalf of National SOMA and incorporates news from all chapters and other relevant sources to keep you in the know. In addition to my responsibilities as Editor, I am also in charge of the annual photo contest held each spring. If you want to publish an article, submit an idea, or update everyone on an event at your chapter, please contact me. I look forward to working with everyone from SOMA this upcoming year.

Unity Campaign Task Force Director
Nicole Daver
Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine – Class of 2009
NicoleDa@pcom.edu

Welcome to SOMA! As Unity Campaign Task Director, my job is to create a volunteer project over winter break that brings SOMA members together. Each year, from December 26-30th, DO students from across the country come together to aid those in need and learn from one another. It’s a great way to make new friends and create lasting memories while doing something worthy with your winter break (not to mention that you won’t have to study for a change!). Previous projects have included Hurricane Katrina Disaster Relief and working with disabled children at the Give Kids the World Village in Orlando, Florida. This year’s project promises to be just as exciting and memorable. Welcome to SOMA and I hope to see you in December!