University of Maryland School of Medicine
Office of Student Affairs — Career Advising
655 W. Baltimore St., Suite 1-006, Baltimore, MD 21201
☎ (410) 706-7476 ✉ studentaffairs@som.umaryland.edu

OSA STEPs: Career Advising Newsletter

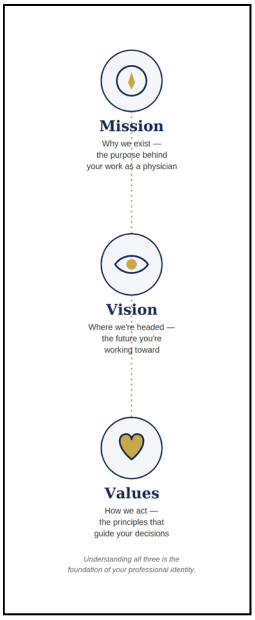
MS1 | 11 2026

FROM THE ADVISOR'S DESK

As you begin medical school, you're starting the lifelong process of becoming a physician—not just learning the science but developing your professional identity. This transformation unfolds gradually, through the mentors you observe, the patients you encounter, and the values you're asked to weigh along the way. The AAMC's Careers in Medicine framework begins with "Understand Yourself" for good reason: before making decisions about specialty or mentorship, you need clarity on your own values, strengths, and motivations.

THIS MONTH'S SPOTLIGHT

Spotlight: Mission, Vision, Values & Your 30-Second Elevator Speech



Your personal brand reflects who you are and the physician you hope to become. Your **mission** (your purpose), **vision** (your aspirations), and **values** (the principles that guide you) help shape your professional identity and guide the opportunities and experiences you pursue throughout medical school.

Considering your Brand **helps you**:

- ✓ **Stay focused** during medical school
- ✓ Guide the **opportunities you choose**
- ✓ Communicate a consistent story

Putting it into Words: Your 30-Second Elevator Speech

A 30-second elevator speech is a brief, authentic introduction that *communicates who you are*, *what matters to you*, and the *kind of physician you hope to become*. It brings mission, vision, values, experiences, and interests together into a meaningful story you can share with faculty, mentors, and future residency programs.

Your story will evolve as you do. Taking small moments to reflect on what motivates you and what resonates with you can help you communicate your story with greater clarity and confidence.

DID YOU KNOW?

It's OK if you don't know your specialty yet.

Exploring career decisions is about **developing self-awareness**, understanding the **breadth of medical specialties**, and **identifying the values and interests** that will guide your professional path.

It's common for medical students to change specialties—AAMC data show that up to **71% of medical students did not stick with their original specialty**!

OFFICE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS
655 W. Baltimore St.
Suite 1-006
Baltimore, MD 21201

☎ (410) 706-7476
✉ studentaffairs@som.umaryland.edu

QUICK LINKS

- **OSA Website**
  medschool.umaryland.edu/osa
- **OSA STEP Advising**
  medschool.umaryland.edu/osa/advising
- **Student Handbook**
  medschool.umaryland.edu/osa/community/academic-handbook

HOW CAN OSA HELP YOU?

Our team is here to support you throughout medical school. Reach out anytime.

Administrative Support
✉ studentaffairs@som.umaryland.edu
- **Caroline Bierly**
  ✉ cbierly@som.umaryland.edu
- **Adam Esselman**
  ✉ aesselman@som.umaryland.edu
- **Bailey Jenkins**
  ✉ bailey.jenkins@som.umaryland.edu
- **Chandler Stafford**
  ✉ cstafford@som.umaryland.edu

Financial Aid & Wellness
✉ SOMFINAID@som.umaryland.edu
- **Sofia Cascio**
- **Juanita Simmons**

Registration
- **Registrar/ Philip Conrad**
  ✉ pconrad@som.umaryland.edu

University of Maryland School of Medicine
Office of Student Affairs — Career Advising
655 W. Baltimore St., Suite 1-006, Baltimore, MD 21201
☎ (410) 706-7476 ✉ studentaffairs@som.umaryland.edu

OSA STEPs: Career Advising Newsletter

MS1 | 11 2026

CAREER BOOSTER

Making the Most of Mentorship

1. Mentorship is one of the strongest predictors of career satisfaction in medicine. Students with mentors report higher well-being, confidence, and sense of belonging in medical school.

2. Early mentorship improves specialty exploration and decision-making. Connecting with mentors early helps students understand the culture, lifestyle, and expectations of different specialties before dedicated clinical time begins.

3. First-year students don't need a "perfect" career mentor yet. At this stage, the most helpful mentors may be near-peer students (MS2–MS4), faculty who can demystify school, and advisors who help with academic navigation. Specialty-specific career mentors often emerge later, naturally, through clinical exposure.

4. Multiple mentors may be more effective than one "ideal" mentor. Research supports building a mentorship network—academic, research, personal, and specialty mentors each serve a different role.

5. Mentorship boosts academic performance and research productivity. Students with structured mentoring are more likely to pursue research, produce scholarly work, and feel prepared for residency applications.

6. Good mentorship reduces burnout risk. Supportive mentors help students develop coping strategies, normalize challenges, and maintain a healthier study–life balance.

7. Mentors accelerate professional identity formation. Mentors model how physicians think, communicate, solve problems, and uphold ethical standards—all critical to a first-year student's growth.

8. Mentoring relationships evolve. Early mentors help with transition and foundational skills; later mentors guide specialty choice, research direction, and residency preparation.

KEY RESOURCES

- Careers in Medicine | aamc.org
- **Mission/Vision:** UMSOM Personal Growth Program
- **Mission/Vision:** My Purpose Statement | depaul.edu
- **Specialty Decision:** CiM | How medical students choose their specialty
- **Specialty Decision:** Medical Specialty Preference Inventory (MSPI)
- **Specialty Decision:** Physician Values in Practice Scale (PVIPS)

OSA DEANS BY HOUSE

Eva Dodge (ED)
Beth Lamos, MD
✉ elamos@som.umaryland.edu

Julius Friedenwald (JF)
John Allen, MD
✉ jallen@som.umaryland.edu

Mario Garcia-Palmieri (MGP)
Marissa Flaherty, MD
✉ mflaherty@som.umaryland.edu

Lois Young-Thomas (LYT)
Kerri Thom, MD, MS
✉ kthom@som.umaryland.edu

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND STUDENT LIFE

Assistant Dean
Tonya Webb, PhD
✉ twebb@som.umaryland.edu

WELLBEING

▶ **UMATTER**
medschool.umaryland.edu/osa/umatter
Head, Medical Student Wellbeing
Missy Ceballos
✉ mceballos@som.umaryland.edu

CAREER ADVISORS

Dr. Lamos (ED)
elamos@som.umaryland.edu
Dr. Wilkerson (ED)
gwilkerson@em.umaryland.edu
Dr. Allen (JF)
john.allen@som.umaryland.edu
Dr. Goetzinger (JF)
kgoetzinger@som.umaryland.edu
Dr. Flaherty (MGP)
mflaherty@som.umaryland.edu
Dr. Tookhan (MGP)
ktookhan@som.umaryland.edu
Dr. Levin (LYT)
rlevin@som.umaryland.edu
Dr. Thom (LYT)
kthom@som.umaryland.edu

University of Maryland School of Medicine
Office of Student Affairs — Career Advising
655 W. Baltimore St., Suite 1-006, Baltimore, MD 21201
☎ (410) 706-7476 ✉ studentaffairs@som.umaryland.edu

OSA STEPs: Career Advising Newsletter



THE OSA INSIDER

A podcast about medical student life and the journey to becoming a physician. Featuring survival tips, wellness strategies, the inside scoop on major milestones of med school, and interviews with inspirational faculty members, residents, and students. Join Dr. Neda Frayha and find out what doctors wish they knew when they were in medical school.

https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-osa-insider/id1202475808

- Episode 101: Adaptive to Maladaptive
- Episode 85: Mentorship Sucess
- Episode 88: Mentorship Pearls
- Episode 72: Mission/Brand

CONNECT WITH US

Want to go further? Schedule some time with your career advisor.

Call Us
410-706-7476

Email Us
studentaffairs@som.umaryland.edu

Visit Us
https://www.medschool.umaryland.edu/osa/
685 W Baltimore St; Suite 150

Your Path. Your Career.