

SONPM Update – Section scholarships to 2021 Advocacy Conference

Dear Section Members,

As described in a previous update, the SONPM is committed to developing the advocacy skills of our members. To that end, we will be supporting **10 scholarships** to this year's Advocacy Conference—freshly rebranded from the previous and beloved Legislative Conference or “LegCon”—to be held April 11-13, 2021. You can find information on applying on the AAP Volunteer Network site under [Awards, Grants & Scholarships](#). Scroll down and look for [SONPM Advocacy Conference Scholarships](#). Applications are due **February 12th**.

<https://collaborate.aap.org/AAP-Volunteer-Network/Pages/Awards-Grants-Scholarships.aspx>

Any who have attended LegCon will tell you that it is energizing, inspiring and filled with practical content about an area we rarely cover in our formal training. Attendees to this year's virtual conference will have the opportunity to participate in skills-building workshops, hear from distinguished guest speakers and learn about policy issues impacting children. There will even be live visits scheduled with your own members of congress. There is no better way to start real interactions with your representatives in Washington than under the guidance of the AAP. You will be prepped and practice before these meetings.

It is actually fortunate that we will be meeting virtually this year. We anticipate that many more people will be able to attend without the added time and expense of travel. To be eligible for the section AdvoCon scholarship, you must commit to be available for the full conference duration, including the virtual hill visits on April 13th.

These scholarships are offered with the expectation that awardees will be able to use the skills and savvy gained at AdvoCon in neonatology-focused advocacy following their attendance. Here are some ideas for follow-up contributions:

- Send a follow-up message to a staffer after your virtual hill visits.
- Use the “Take Action” links through the AAP Advocacy Action Center
- Make a state or federal legislative visit/phone call/Zoom on a neonatal-perinatal issue
- Write up your experience at AdvoCon for your chapter or the SONPM newsletter
- Develop and deliver a lecture on advocacy to fellows/faculty/pediatricians
- Write/publish an op-ed on neonatal-perinatal policy issues
- Author an issue brief on a neonatal-perinatal issue in the Biden-Harris Transition Plan
- Participate in or lead an advocacy focus with the SONPM Advocacy Committee
- Serve as a neonatal-perinatal policy advisor to local health policy organizations
- Use the Donor Milk Toolkit for state advocacy
- *This list is just to get you thinking--there are many more ways to advocate!*

We have been pleased to have at least a dozen neonatologists at the last 3 LegCons. Whether you apply for a scholarship and commit to continuing advocacy action, or just want to attend because it is one of the best educational offerings the AAP hosts, we hope to see you there!

(One of the new statues at Itasca AAP headquarters)

Best regards,
Lily

Lily J. Lou, MD, FAAP
Chair, AAP Section on Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine
Co-chair, SONPM Advocacy Committee