The HOSA JOAG Partnership

In 2009, then LT Samuel Schaffzin was assigned to the Division of the Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps (DCVMRC), and as a JOAG voting member was asked to create a workgroup of officers to begin working with HOSA to develop a mentoring program for these future healthcare leaders.

As HOSA’s official name suggests, HOSA: Future Health Professionals, these students represent the face of healthcare for tomorrow. To help mold these future health professionals, it is imperative that the USPHS tap into this valuable resource by providing mentoring opportunities. The primary focus is to assign the students with junior officer mentors that can provide the students with a greater understanding of the federal health care system, identify opportunities for them to work within the federal government, and peak their interest in careers in the government sector and in public service. This will undoubtedly benefit the nation.

While developing this partnership, HOSA had an identified need and USPHS officers across the nation are already well equipped to assist. Every year HOSA students compete in healthcare related competitions. These competitions require judges, and judges with clinical and public health backgrounds are preferred to judge the clinical skills and other specialized areas evaluated during these competitions. That is where USPHS officers can help. Regional competitions are usually held in the late winter, and with spring come the state competitions. After state competitions, the students prepare to compete during the annual National Leadership Conference, usually held in late June. This conference hosts the best students from across the country, and the best of the best is decided with another round of competitions. During this past year, officers attended these conferences, judged the events, and mentored the students.