

MEDICAL STUDENTS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

20 24

IMPACT REPORT



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Looking Back on 5 Years

Now in its fifth year, Medical Students for a Sustainable Future has grown into the largest group of medical trainee voices in the climate and health movement internationally. It is amazing to look back and realize that such a simple idea, organizing medical students concerned about the health of our planets and our patients, has blossomed into such an incredible national and international voice for change. The impact of MS4SF is continually apparent, not just in our contribution to the climate change and health equity movement, but in the ways in which it has impacted the students it counts as its members. As we approach this milestone, we celebrate the dedication and passion of those who have sustained this group and its mission.



But our work is far from done. Despite the evidence of anthropogenic climate change and its consequences on health, we continue to have to negotiate competing short-term priorities on every level, from our home institutions to capitol hill. The healthcare system continues to be one of the greatest producers of greenhouse gas emissions and waste, though a feasible path forward is much clearer than 5 years prior. Many institutions ignore their contributions to the climate crisis and do not educate their trainees on its consequences. As in years past, we continue to see the devastating impact of climate change on our local communities in the form of hurricanes, landslides, heat waves, and more. And so we continue.

We hope you take a moment to celebrate all we have accomplished and join us as we look ahead to the next 5 years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Natalie Baker".

Natalie Baker
Executive Director, Medical Students for a Sustainable Future





WHO WE ARE

MEDICAL STUDENTS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

MS4SF seeded from the collective worry of a handful of medical students from around the country in 2019. Now, we count almost 1,000 medical students from hundreds of schools across the United States and abroad. We are the first and only group to unify and mobilize medical students recognizing climate change as an urgent threat to health and social justice.

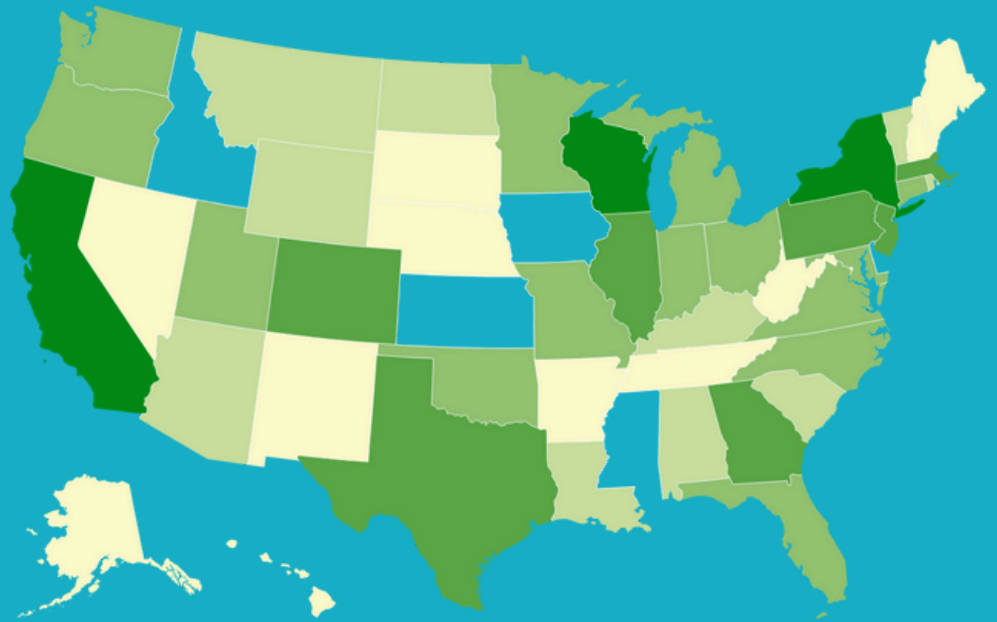
Our growing voice is unique in that it unites the urgency of youth leadership with the health expertise and public trust of medical professionals. Our community organizes both nationally, contributing to efforts in advocacy, curriculum, climate-smart healthcare, and research, as well as within our local communities through our regional system and school chapters.

Membership

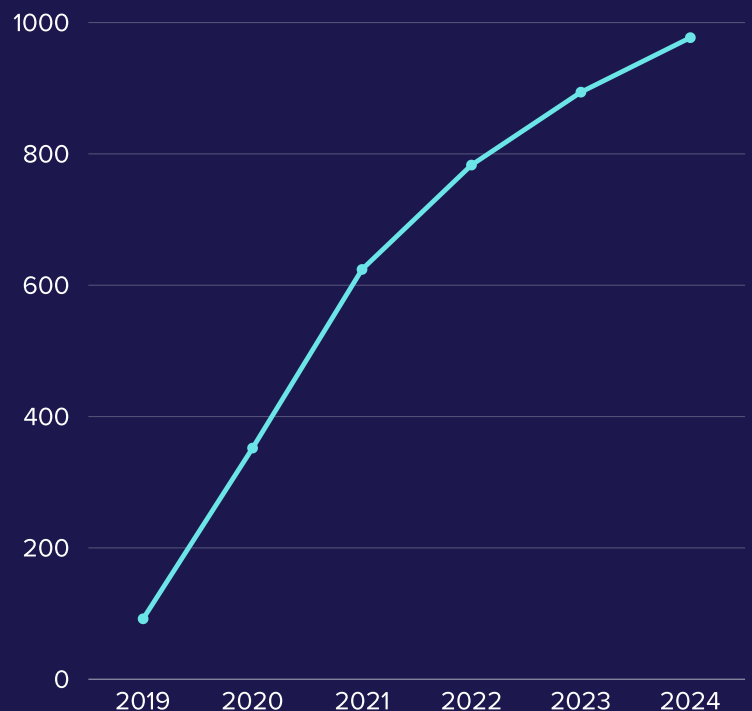
985
MEDICAL STUDENTS
FROM OVER
100
MEDICAL SCHOOLS

Number of Students

■ <3 ■ 3-7 ■ 7-17 ■ 17-34 ■ >34



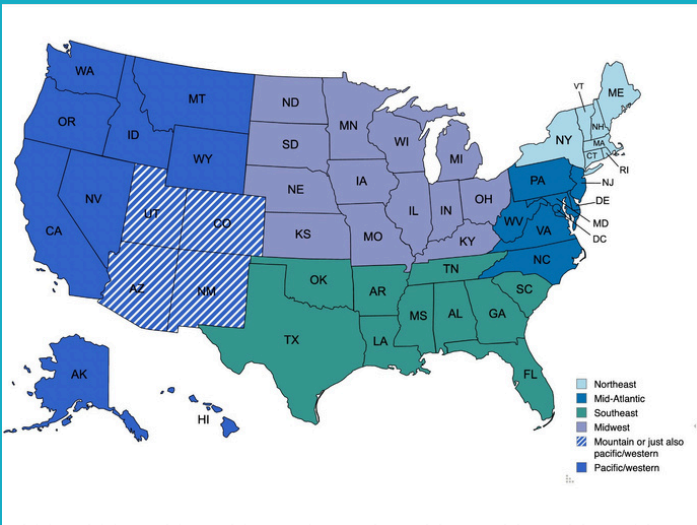
As of November 2024, MS4SF boasts a total of 985 members, of whom 389 are current medical students. We have averaged 120 new members each year over the past three years. Students and schools alike are becoming increasingly aware of the impact our climate has on health and we expect to see continued growth as we expand our reach and pursue new partnerships.



Engagement

This year, our leadership team set out to create regional infrastructure to support our growing membership. This new organizational infrastructure established regional leads and streamlined communication forums.

MS4SF REGIONS AND LOCAL INITIATIVES



All MS4SF affiliated groups now have a direct path to the national leadership board, allowing for increased engagement, support for local initiatives, collaboration between schools regionally. Ultimately, this evolved structure supports a core value of MS4SF: community.

“Keeping up with MS4SF puts into context what's going on at our local medical school. Even as I'm dedicating most of my immediate time and energy to local efforts, it's nice to know how it fits into the bigger picture and movement.”



Members at **Thomas Jefferson** visited a local wildlife refuge (John Heinz in Philadelphia) and helped remove invasive species and plant native flowering plants for pollinators!

This new infrastructure also served as the basis for our MS4SF National Day of service. Using the new channels created to connect neighboring programs, we established a national day of service for our chapters. We are excited to see how our members give back to their communities in the name of MS4SF this year and in the years to come.

Members at **West Virginia University** harvesting green beans from the student-run garden which were donated to Pantry Plus More in Morgantown, WV



Engagement

MS4SF significantly expanded outreach this year as well allowing us to better highlight the work of our members and our partners. Our Instagram follower count is up to 865 and our website received 15,436 views in the last year. We maintained our monthly newsletter with updates for MS4SF members about opportunities and nationwide achievements.



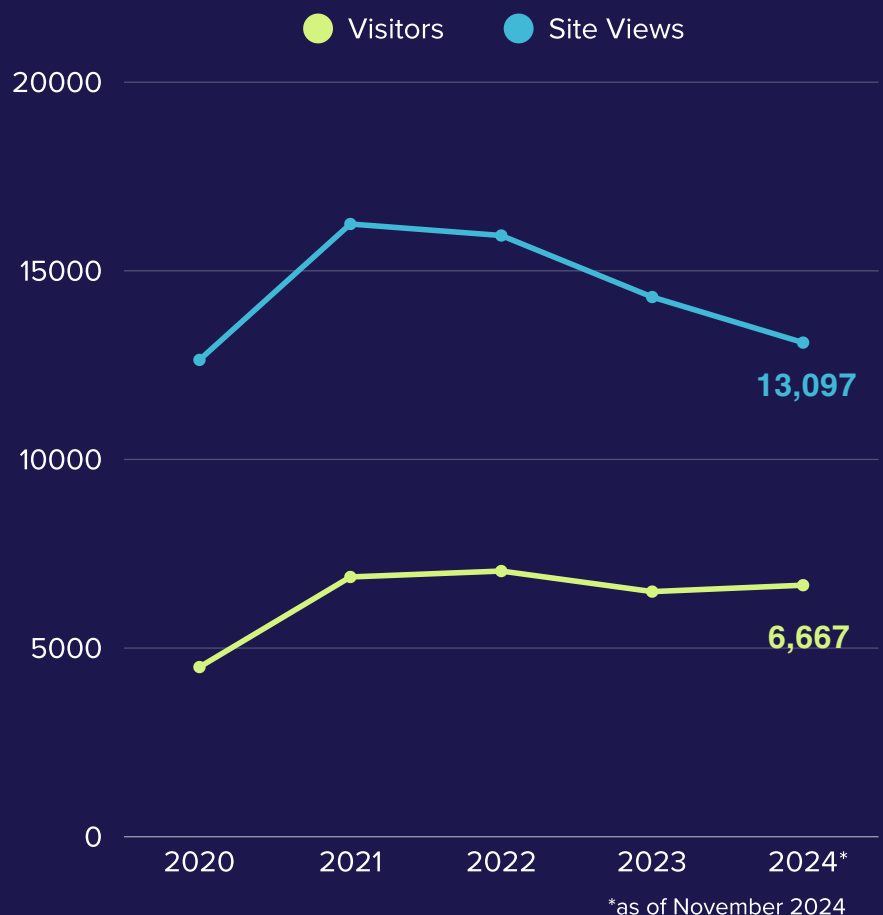
205
FOLLOWERS



150
LISTENS PER
EPISODE



4,000
ALL-TIME LISTENS



Our teams created original content, releasing a [promotional video](#) on Earth Day and publishing new episodes of our podcast, Code Green (available on Spotify). They also coordinated participation in many events including our own Climate and Health Equity Conference and Co-sponsored AMSA's Future Physicians for Change Conference.

Impact

Advocacy is at the core of what we do and we continue to be strong vocal advocates for climate-smart policy on the local and national levels.



Wrote testimony for the Environmental Protection Agency

Signed on to 12 climate-forward policy initiatives alongside our friends at the ALA's Healthy Air Partners

Partnered with the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) to identify top LEED-certified hospitals and healthcare systems

Represented medical student voices in academic medicine at the AAMC conference and on national leadership boards

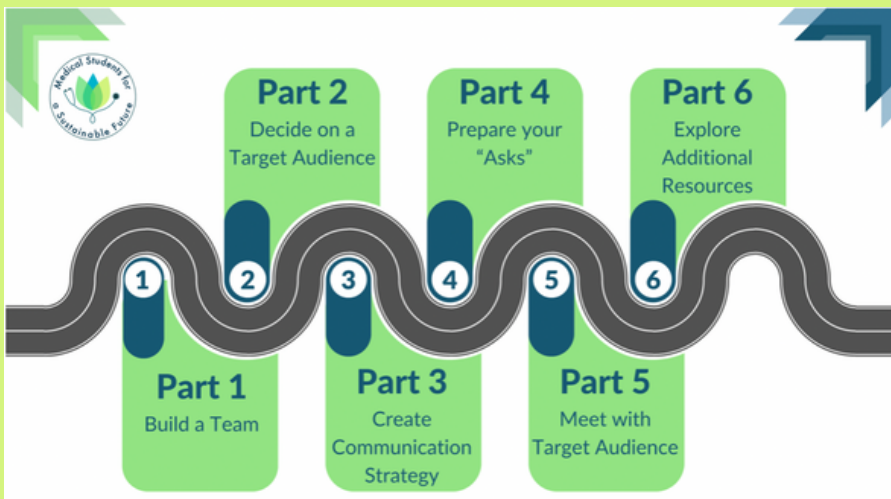
Gave voice to our students and our community through interviews in publications such as Nature and JAMA

Impact

“It has been an extraordinary privilege to be able to work with passionate students across the country to advocate for planetary health in and out of the hospital”

We continue supporting our members on their climate advocate journeys, providing resources and education to help them realize their goals such as

- Created one-page summary of educational resources to assist with climate curriculum integration
- Kick-started coordination and partnership building for a faculty development guide on teaching climate change and health
- Coordinated Q&A sessions for students interested in curriculum integration
- Co-hosted a letter-to-the-editor writing event with physicians for social responsibility
- Provided region-specific initiatives and policy for students to target
- Updated the mentorship database to ensure members have current contact information for local faculty who can support them in research, advocacy, and sustainability initiatives



SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP

This guide serves as a roadmap for medical students to create sustainable change in their affiliated hospital or healthcare system. It provides best practices for engaging administrators in planetary health initiatives, email templates for contacting faculty and administrators, and tips for writing op-eds at an institutional, local, or national level.

2024 Milestones



Climate Health Equity Conference

We hosted our first annual conference with roughly 75 attendees and 12 student research presentations.

PSR Emerging Leaders Award

We were recognized by other leaders for our impact on the field of climate and health



Non-Profit Status

We officially registered as a non-profit allowing for increased growth and new opportunities

Climate Health Equity Conference

We were invited by our partners at the Medical Society Consortium on Climate and health (MSCCH) to host the first-ever health professional student climate conference as part of their 2024 annual meeting. We brought together dozens of students from across the country to discuss the current state of climate and health, present their research and initiatives, and connect with like-minded students.



"It's been great connecting with students at different universities, and seeing the passion for climate health work that exists. And, it's fantastic to be part of an organization that can help channel that passion into meaningful advocacy."

We were also joined by many climate heroes who discussed their roles in the climate crisis and emphasized the importance of our role as future medical providers. Planning is currently underway for the second iteration of this amazing event in March 2025, entitled *Our Patients, Our Planet, Our Future*.



What did our participants love about our first conference?

“

HEARING FROM
PROFESSIONALS
ABOUT THEIR
ADVICE AND
ENCOUNTERS

”

“

THE ORAL
PRESENTATIONS
WERE FANTASTIC

”

“

SEEING WHAT A
BROAD AND
VIBRANT NETWORK
WE HAVE

”

“

FANTASTIC GUEST
SPEAKERS!

”

“

NETWORKING WITH
PHYSICIANS WHO
WORK IN CLIMATE
AND HEALTH

”

“

CONNECTING TO
OTHER STUDENTS
DOING CLIMATE
WORK LEFT ME
FEELING ENERGIZED
FOR MY OWN WORK

”

“

PLENTY OF TIME TO
NETWORK, DISCUSS
CHALLENGES &
SUCCESSES

”

“

HIGHLY IMPACTFUL
RESEARCH
PRESENTATIONS

”

PSR 2024 Emerging Health Heroes Award

“A POWERFUL
FORCE

reshaping medical
education”

— PHYSICIANS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), a national organization known for its commitment to health equity, awarded MS4SF its 2024 Emerging Health Heroes Award in recognition of our efforts to ensure the next generation of healthcare providers not only recognize the impact climate change has on the health of our patients and communities, but are equipped with the skills needed to respond to the climate crisis.

Non-Profit Status

Medical Students for a Sustainable Future completed the process to register as a non-profit this year. This was a huge step forward for us an organization, bringing with it new benefits and opportunities for growth and development.



With our non-profit status, we have been able to create a centralized location for communication and developed a more robust ability to fundraise and build out a sustainable infrastructure to allow this work to continue for years to come. This will allow us to significantly scale up our efforts, providing greater opportunities for our members and expanding our reach to grow our organization.

“Whether it is the MS4SF chapter leads doing cool medical supply recycling programs, or starting new efforts on campus to integrate planetary health into the curriculum, national organizations such as USGBC doing outstanding work to green our nation's buildings, or physician leaders at the state level such as Dr. Lori Byron from Montana Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate and Dr. Samim Atmar from Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action. I am energized by the global efforts and have gained valuable insight from all of these diverse efforts.”

MS4SF in the News



How Medical Education Is Adapting to Climate Change

Educational initiatives are sprouting to help doctors and nurses confront the health threats created by climate change

Think Global Health



Michigan medical students fight to make climate change part of curriculum

Doctors need to understand how climate change plays a role in health, so Michigan medical students are pushing for climate health education in their programs.

Great Lakes Now / Jun 24, 2024



Opinion | The Green Elephant in Medical School Classrooms

Climate change should be woven into the very fabric of health education

mednnetoday / May 8, 2024



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