

SOURCE Champion of the Month
November 2015



Tyler Mains

Johns Hopkins School of Medicine
4th Year Medical Student

“Look for opportunities that provide multiple opportunities to engage with a certain group of people and commit to them. In turn, you’ll have a huge impact.”

What do you do as your community engagement activity?

MERIT (Medical Education Resources Initiative for Teens)

How much time do you spend on service per week/month?

When I’m a full-time student, 15-20 hours per week.

How did you begin to work with your community-based organization (CBO)?

I started MERIT when I was a high school biology teacher in West Baltimore because of the disconcerting inequalities I saw in my classroom. I had one student, Trevor, who began the year without knowing the heart’s function but ended with one of the city’s highest scores on the Maryland Biology High School Assessment and a newfound desire to become a doctor.

Breonna, another student, had Type I Diabetes. She was hospitalized seven times in one year and did not have a primary care pediatrician. These two students sparked an idea. If we could find students like Trevor who are interested in health careers, we could prepare them to become leaders in their own communities to ensure everyone including Breonna has access to high-quality health care.

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What is the community service accomplishment that has affected you and/or your community the most?

MERIT has truly transformed the lives of Scholars and their families. For the past few years, our retention has been 100% and four-year college matriculation rate is 100% (compared to about 20% in Baltimore City overall). Our alumni excel in college. While we're too young to have alumni in graduate school now, several of our juniors in college are preparing for the MCAT and other graduate school admissions tests. They are well on their way to becoming positive change agents in their communities.

Final Comments

We're currently recruiting MERIT mentors! The application is on our website, www.meritbaltimore.org. The final deadline is December 13.



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