



SOURCE

Star of the Month

March 2022

Emma Jagasia
School of Nursing



Congratulations to our Star of the Month for March 2022, Emma Jagasia from the School of Nursing! Emma has been doing amazing work to serve our community by providing direct patient services as a nurse at House of Ruth Maryland and also volunteering with other organizations in Baltimore. We spoke with her about these experiences and why community work is important to her. Read more below!

Tell us a little bit about yourself. What degree program are you enrolled in? What brought you to Hopkins and the School of Nursing?

I am originally from Gatlinburg Tennessee, home of the Great Smoky Mountain National Park and Dolly Parton. I began my career in healthcare as a pediatric critical care nurse in Nashville TN. Through this role I became aware of the barriers to health equity and racial disparities faced by the kiddos and their families. This led me to Baltimore, where I completed my MSN and MPH at the School of Nursing and BSPH. After completing this program, I worked as a consultant for Bloomberg Philanthropies and had the privilege of working with and learning from so many amazing youth serving organizations here in Baltimore City. I am currently enrolled in the Dual Degree DNP, PhD program at the School of Nursing. I hope to utilize my clinical, programmatic, and research foundations to create programs and clinical care guidelines promoting successful transitions into adulthood for youth exposed to violence.

Other fun facts, I am a mom to two beautiful four-legged girls: Libby Lou & Maeberry. I love everything

outdoors and have a 1960 Boler that we tote around the US!

What made you want to get involved with the COMPASS Center at SON? Can you tell us a little bit about the work you are doing?

When I started in the MSN/MPH program I was not working clinically. Additionally, I was new to the area and had not found my "community" yet. I stumbled across the work of Dr. Patty Wilson, and immediately knew I had to work with her! This led me to apply for a job at House of Ruth Maryland (HRM) through what was then called the Center for Community Innovations and Scholarship (COMPASS now). The House of Ruth is such a special place that I will always hold near and dear to my heart. While I hope I have made an impact serving as a nurse in the shelter, the real benefit has been learning from all of the clients. I definitely found my "community" in Baltimore and have loved learning about the history of the city through the eyes of individuals who grew up here.

In my role at HRM, I am involved in providing symptomatic care management, health education, screenings, and implementation of trauma informed programming. I have had the ability to lead "health talks" and discuss topics ranging from the benefits of laughing to how trauma is connected to health. In addition to direct patient services, we work with other COMPASS sites to promote health programming throughout the city and ensure that programs and researchers can learn from our existing partnerships.

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What has your experience been like connecting with community members during the pandemic? Can you tell us about other service opportunities you have participated in?

The pandemic has been hard for us all. There was a two year period where we had zero face to face interaction. Tough at first, but we learned to make it work. I think having a place (google voice number) that the clients we work with know they can reach out to regardless of time of day and someone will respond within 24 hours has been beneficial. Additionally, we have been able to work with clients on their own timeframes and in places that feel comfortable for them. Luckily, we have been back in shelter for the past few months. While things aren't "normal" and probably never will be, we have found our new normal!

Outside of HRM, I am a mentor for HeartSmiles- a local youth serving organization. Adjusting to virtual was a feat. Luckily, our fearless leader Joni has never faced a challenge in which she doesn't succeed! We learned how to be flexible with programming while also reaching out and meeting the needs of all youth "heartbeats". Luckily, there were so many grants available to apply for to ensure Baltimore City youth had access to all things they did pre pandemic.

Being able to work with the clients at HRM and the amazing young leaders through HeartSmiles has taught me so much and helped me grow into the surviving individual I am today.

What service activities do you have planned in the future? Are there any activities where others can get involved?

I plan to continue serving in both roles: community health nurse at HRM & HeartSmiles Mentor. I think if either of these opportunities interest you, we can find a way to get you involved! I think the most important thing about moving to a new city and thinking of service activities is finding that local community doing work that you are passionate about! I would not be where I was today without these two experiences or the wonderful humans I have met along the way.

How does your community work complement what you're learning in your program at the School of Nursing?

I think my community work provides the purpose and drive behind my dissertation and coursework. I do not just want to be a researcher or a clinician. I want to work with communities and clinical populations to address the needs and gaps THEY find important. I talk so much about successful transitions into adulthood, and the most important part of that statement is the successful part. Understanding that we as nurse scientist or clinicians or whatever role we have, do not define success, rather success is defined by the young people or individuals we are working with!

Thank you for all of your incredible service to our Baltimore community!