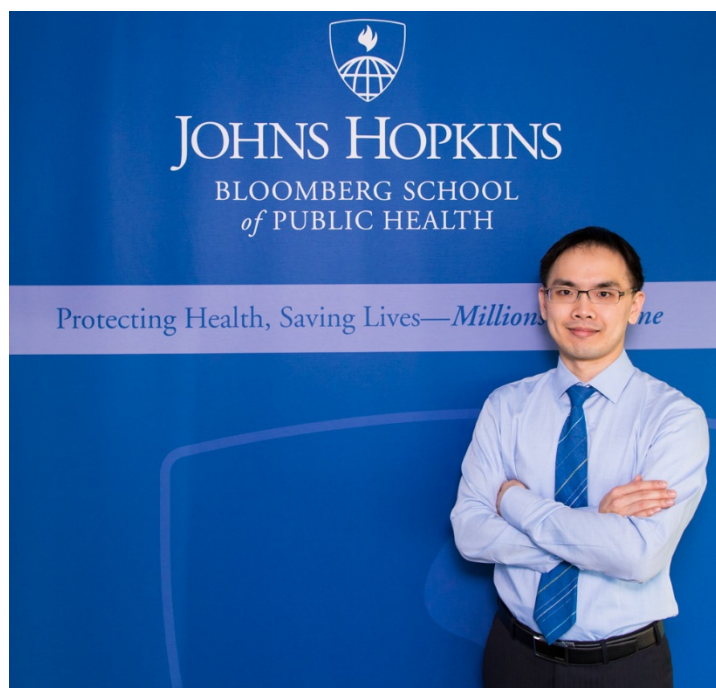


SOURCE Champion of the Month
June 2017



Joseph Shen

Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of
Public Health
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"I encourage prospective students to discover their strength and weakness before getting involved in community service"

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

I applied to the SOURCE HIV Testing and Counseling Program during my first year as a master student. HIV counseling work helped me understand the medical and public health needs in Baltimore neighborhoods. I also volunteered as a Clinic Navigator for the Identity Clinic, a collaborative program with the Living Classrooms Foundation and SOURCE. I assisted with the launch of the program to help people get their Maryland ID cards, birth certificates, and social security cards.

What do you enjoy about or gain through community service?

I enjoy helping people and creating a platform to allow them to get their official documents at the Identity Clinic. I also enjoy providing sexual education and HIV prevention at Harriet Lane Clinic.

How do you find time for service in your busy schedule?

I will usually take Friday off so that I can have free time to work in community-oriented service. Thus, I ensure my academics and research work is completed before the end of the week.

Besides finding the time, what barriers related to your service have you had to overcome?

Helping patients or clients to trust my recommendation was something I have worked hard to overcome.

How has your training in Hopkins influenced the way you approach service?

Hopkins' training allowed me to learn appropriate ways to interact with local communities, and Hopkins has also provided courses to enable me to recognize the public health needs in Baltimore.

How does your service shape your development as a health care professional?

My services helped me develop my clinical skills, including articulating open-ended questions to understand patients' backgrounds and needs, reflecting their concerns, and working with them to develop solutions.

What advice do you have for prospective students who are interested in community service?

I encourage prospective students to discover their strength and weakness before getting involved in community service because you need to know what skills can benefit the community you serve and how your strength can make the community better. On the other hand, you also need to know your limitation in service so that you will not burn out.

What would you say to someone who is unsure of the impact his/her service would have on a community?

As Hopkins' students, we should work with communities and wait until the change becomes more visible.

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

The Identity Clinic has provided service to help more than 300 clients to get their official documents, including birth certificate, Maryland State ID, and social security cards.

Any final comments or plugs to promote volunteerism? Feel free to plug an opportunity with your community engagement experience and how to get involved.

When you see the community struggles, you may come up with some ideas to help the community overcome their difficulties. Work on those ideas and collaborate with local groups or Hopkins students to implement those ideas. While working at Harriet Lane Clinic, some of the adolescent patients' stories I heard enlightened me about the impact of mass incarceration in Baltimore communities. This in turn inspired me to launch the Identity Clinic and create access to official documents for people recently released from jail. Now, the clinic needs more volunteers to help more people get their official documents, including students, immigrants, and elderly populations. I hope there will be more Hopkins students joining the clinic service so that the Identity Clinic can expand to other communities in Baltimore.



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