

SOURCE Champion of the Month  
September 2016



**Melissa Lavoie**

Johns Hopkins School of Medicine  
2<sup>nd</sup> Year Medical Student

*"...volunteering helps me feel more focused as I go about the day-to-day tasks of medical school."*

**What do you do as your community engagement activity?**

I am a member of the SOURCE Student Governing Board, and I volunteer with Knitting Behind Bars, Baltimore Student Harm Reduction Coalition, and Commodore John Rodgers School. I am also about to start volunteering with the Public Justice Center's Prisoners' Rights project.

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

Around 8 hours per week

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

I found out about most of my volunteer experiences through word of mouth. One exception is the Public Justice Center, which I learned about through the community partner list on the SOURCE website.



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

This is a tough one! On Saturday mornings, I help lead a knitting group in a prison (Knitting Behind Bars), which I enjoy because it's an opportunity to share an activity I love with others. Another thing I appreciate about Knitting Behind Bars is that it is an experience in presence. Some of my volunteer and work experiences focus on problem solving, but with Knitting Behind Bars, I instead find myself fully present in the moment. I can't fix the whole prison system, but I can try to make those two hours of our group a wonderful experience for our knitters.

**Final Comments**

I could go on and on about how much volunteerism has enriched my life, and I hope all students can find service opportunities that they are just as passionate about. If you are not sure where to start, reach out to SOURCE!



[SOURCE@jhu.edu](mailto:SOURCE@jhu.edu)

[SOURCE.jhu.edu](http://SOURCE.jhu.edu)