



SOURCE

Star of the Month

April 2022

Kevin Li

Bloomberg School of Public Health



Congratulations to our Star of the Month for April 2022, Kevin Li from the Bloomberg School of Public Health! Kevin is a SOURCE Service Scholar working with our partners at the Pride Center of Maryland to improve education on HIV risk prevention. Read more below about Kevin's experience serving our Baltimore community!

What degree program are you enrolled in? What brought you to Hopkins and Public Health?

I'm currently a 1st year Social and Behavioral Interventions MSPH student in the department of International Health. Coming from a cell biology background, I'm interested in looking at how individual and community-level behaviors can be leveraged to complement or bridge gaps in biomedical HIV interventions. I came to Hopkins because of its abundance of research opportunities and for the opportunity to connect with really amazing people!

What made you want to get involved with Pride Center of Maryland and the SOURCE Service Scholars program? Can you tell us a little bit about the work you are doing?

I've always been very passionate about LGBTQ health and advocacy and have developed a strong interest in HIV prevention research in my time here. So, when I came across the SOURCE Service Scholars program and read the Pride Center of Maryland's project proposal, I jumped at the chance to be a part of it! I've been working with volunteers and my community partner to develop an educational program for Black same-gender-loving men in Baltimore. Using the Critical Thinking and Cultural Affirmation framework, the program is meant to improve self-concept and knowledge of HIV risk prevention through an intersectional approach.

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

The pandemic has made it a lot more difficult to engage with community members. When trying to foster emotional self-reflection and the discussion of sensitive topics, a zoom call isn't really the most inviting space. My community supervisors, Diquayla and Kairi, have been so helpful in developing solutions, and hopefully these challenges can lead to great improvement if the program is implemented in the future! Currently, I'm also a hospice volunteer at the Gilchrist Center in Baltimore and continue to provide virtual peer support to queer students at my undergraduate institution.

What service activities do you have planned in the future? How others get involved?

I'm not sure what the summer or the next year will hold for me, but I hope to continue engaging with the Pride Center of Maryland in any capacity! If anyone is interested in volunteering with the Pride Center of Maryland or Black Men's Xchange, you're welcome to reach out to me (kli77@jhmi.edu) and I'll do my best to connect you to someone!

How does your community work complement what you're learning in the classroom at the School of Public Health?

Much of my coursework is centered around community participatory methods and qualitative research in public health. While my degree focuses on a global context, I think that a lot of what I'm learning can be applied to my project, especially around uplifting and centering community perspectives. It's important to be cognizant of Hopkins' historical and current impact on the city, and I hope to convey my respect and deference to local voices.

What advice would you give to other students looking to engage in service-learning?

Starting with SOURCE, especially the Service Scholars program, is a really great way to get involved and to engage with the pedagogy of community service! Beyond this, homing in on specific interest and doing some thorough research online for relevant opportunities can help you find something that's perfect tailored to your goals.

Thank you for your service to our community!