Baltimore Action Projects
Student Scholars
2018 -2019
*A partnership between the Bloomberg American Health Initiative, SOURCE, and participating Baltimore City non-profits

Jia Ahmad
Master of Public Health and Doctorate of Medicine candidate, JHSPH & SOM

Jia Ahmad became interested in public health while working at the ACLU on indigent defense reform; there, she witnessed the impact of criminalizing addiction and mental health through the lives of her clients. She is currently an M.D. and M.P.H. candidate at Johns Hopkins, and her primary interests lie at the intersection of racial inequity, substance use, and incarceration. She is thrilled to work with the Baltimore Harm Reduction Coalition on their racial equity project this year!

Working Group: Addiction and Overdose
Community Partner: Baltimore Harm Reduction Coalition
Project: Racial Equity in Combating the Overdose Epidemic

Tania Banerji
Master of Public Health candidate, JHSPH

Tania Banerji is a student in the full-time MPH program, concentrating in Health Systems and Policy. She is interested in studying issues surrounding health equity, quality of care, improving access to healthcare services and applying systems thinking to inform health policy design. Tania received her Bachelor’s degree in Biology at California Institute of Technology and Masters in Environmental Engineering at Johns Hopkins University. She comes to the program from Portland, OR, where she worked on pre-clinical drug development for neuro-degenerative diseases.

Working Group: Environmental Challenges
Community Partner: Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake
Project: Cross-neighborhood Analysis of Housing Conditions as Related to Economic and Public Health Factors
**Abigail Baum**  
*Doctorate of Health and Public Policy candidate, JHPSH*

Abigail Baum is a doctoral student in Health and Public Policy in the department of Health Policy and Management at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Abigail’s research interests include supporting the integration of health into systems and policies in various social sectors and health inequities across neighborhoods. Abigail’s dissertation research is focusing on mechanisms through which people most affected by social welfare policy participate in the decision-making process from design to implementation and evaluation.

Prior to coming to Hopkins, Abigail was a Senior Associate on the Health Impact Project, a collaboration of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts, where she worked on evaluating Health Impact Assessments (HIA), conducting an HIA on federal educational policy, leading an initiative to scale health considerations into non-health care organizational operations. Before joining the Health Impact Project, Baum served as a Research Associate at the Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center at the Urban Institute on projects at the intersection of housing, community, and health, including a national assessment of Native American housing, technical assistance to building evaluation capacity for nonprofits, and an evaluation of supportive housing with families involved in the child welfare system. She holds a MPH and MSW from the Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis in 2012, and a BA from Carleton College in 2008, majoring in American Studies and Educational Studies.

**Working Group:** Environmental Challenges  
**Community Partner:** Maryland Environmental Health Network  
**Project:** Counting the Costs of Inaction

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**Erika Kaneko**  
*Master of Nursing candidate, SON*

Erika Kaneko is an MSN Entry into Nursing Practice student at the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing. She is from California with a prior work experience in corporate retail and a bachelor’s degree in economics. Since moving to Baltimore, she’s become a volunteer for an organization called Thread, and she has been able to join a larger community of people whose goal is to build lasting, genuine relationships with the young people of Baltimore.

Erika’s nursing interests lie in critical care for adults and promoting health through lifestyle changes, such as diet and exercise. Caring for patients at Johns Hopkins Hospital, she has seen how nutrition and diet greatly contributes to patients’ health outcomes. She hopes to use some of her work and nursing experience and knowledge to help serve the women and families at House of Ruth, MD.

**Working Group:** Obesity and the Food System  
**Community Partner:** House of Ruth, Maryland  
**Project:** Reducing Obesity by Addressing Trauma
**Meredith Kerr**  
*Doctorate of Nursing candidate, SON*

Meredith graduated from the JHSON's Master's Entry into Nursing program in 2018, and is currently pursuing her DNP in the FNP primary care track there. She has a focus in substance use disorder nursing, and is currently director of the Nursing Students for Harm Reduction, and president of the Psychiatric & Mental Health Nursing Student Interest Group. She's a longtime Baltimore transplant and second career nurse, with a BFA from Maryland Institute College of Art in Environmental Design.

**Working Group:** Addiction and Overdose  
**Community Partner:** Shepherd’s Clinic  
**Project:** Primary Care Opioid Replacement Therapy

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**Mary Lavery**  
*Master of Nursing candidate, SON*

My name is Mary Lavery and I am a nursing student at Johns Hopkins. I am thrilled to be involved with the Baltimore community through various SOURCE projects and volunteer opportunities. My newest position is as a student intern for the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative. As someone with asthma, I am excited for the opportunity to share what I have learned and help others achieve optimal health.

Before coming to Hopkins, I went to the University of Massachusetts Amherst. There, I earned a dual-degree in Public Health and Spanish, and ran for the track and cross country teams. I also volunteered as an ESL teacher and community health educator for children. As I shift gears into nursing, I look forward learning more and building upon past experiences.

**Working Group:** Environmental Challenges  
**Community Partner:** Green & Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI)  
**Project:** GHHI Asthma Care Management Program
Pragna Shetty  
Master of Public Health candidate, JHSPH

Hi, my name is Pragna Shetty and I’m from Raleigh, North Carolina. I’m currently a MPH student at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. I’m currently between 3rd and 4th year of medical school at UNC Chapel Hill. I went to Wake Forest University for my undergraduate degree where I majored in Biophysics and English. I’m interested in health disparities and health outcomes, as well as minority health. I’m looking forward to working more with the Baltimore community!

**Working Group:** Violence  
**Community Partner:** House of Ruth. Maryland - Highlandtown  
**Project:** Community Accountability & Abuse Intervention Engagement for Abusive Partners who are Latino

*For additional information, please contact SOURCE at SOURCE@jhu.edu or 410-955-3880.*  
[SOURCE.jhu.edu](http://SOURCE.jhu.edu)