

Black History Achievers Award



WINNERS



Kellee Brown
*Medical Office
Coordinator,
Wound Clinic
Johns Hopkins
University School of
Medicine*

Kellee serves as medical office coordinator for the Diabetic Foot Wound Center and the Foot Wound Clinic (DFWC), and hers is often the first friendly, kind voice patients hear when they call the office. She helps triage patient calls and arranges for appointments, records and transportation. With Kellee's assistance, the team is able to serve patients who have diabetes-related foot wounds, many of whom are Black. Kellee is a vital part of the center's mission, working to prevent limb amputation and the morbidities and mortalities related to diabetes. Kellee works with vascular surgery patients in coordinating their care/appointments, while attentively answering questions and concerns. She works closely with the African American patients in the DFWC, helping them understand their plan of care, coordinating wound care supplies and explaining clinical notes.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, Kellee has been volunteering once a week at her church's food pantry, packing and distributing food for a predominately African American community. Kellee and a small team of volunteers serve between 25 and 75 families per week in the food pantry, which is sponsored by the Maryland Food Bank. Kellee helps to pack food pantry participants' cars to ensure they have food for their entire family, including special snacks for children. Kellee keeps blessing bags in her car, and when she sees homeless people she hands them out. The owner of a 501c3 named Own Your Pretty, Kellee plans to host and coordinate a period-supply drive in January–March 2021,

with the intention of donating feminine care products to a group home for girls and teen mothers. In November, Kellee co-organized a surgery department gift/clothing drive for homeless people in the community. A member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. and The Tabernacle at Greater Bethlehem Temple, Kellee works to improve the lives of African Americans on local and national levels.

Kellee's compassion for people of all backgrounds exemplifies the core value of Diversity and Inclusion, as well as the other values, in her personal and professional life.



Edwina Kisanga
*Medical Student
Johns Hopkins
University School of
Medicine*

While still in the preclinical years of training, Edwina Kisanga (they/them) has dedicated significant labor and time to improving the lives of not only their future patients, but also the future patients of fellow classmates. Edwina co-directs the preclinical student curriculum review process, which has led to the incorporation of lecture time on racism in genetic medicine and the history of medicine, inclusion of patient-centered language throughout lectures, and an increased preclinical focus on equity in access to health care. Additionally, Edwina has dedicated efforts to increasing recruitment, test-taking, and success of Black premedical students from local colleges. As president of the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine Student National Medical Association (JHUSOM SNMA) chapter, Edwina has led and supported fellow medical students through several initiatives that provide resources and opportunities to students from historically excluded backgrounds. Most notably, Edwina spearheaded the Regional Medical

Education Conference hosted by JHUSOM SNMA this November titled, "A Seat at the Table: Intersectional Approaches to Health Justice." This conference educated premedical and medical student attendees in ways that prioritized the voices of marginalized communities and challenged attendees to center advocacy and justice in their future practices.

Outside of their studies, Edwina contributes to the lives of community members by using their role as a medical student to listen to, work with and live within the community they hope to serve. Through collaborations with the organization BRACE: The Baltimore Redevelopment Action Coalition for Empowerment, Edwina has supported grassroots efforts for affordable housing and created opportunities for open conversation between medical students and community members impacted by the ongoing history of medical racism in Baltimore. By building relationships between community members and future physicians, Edwina is minimizing future damage these physicians may create within their communities.

Edwina exemplifies a future physician who will practice medicine with a greater understanding of the roles that intersectionality, structural racism, ableism and xenophobia play in patients' lives, and has taught their medical school class what dedication to health justice looks like. By advocating for a more structurally competent medical education, Edwina is strengthening the institution from within and advancing the training of future generations of health care professionals. The strength Edwina demonstrated throughout this year in and out of the classroom exemplifies the integrity and leadership declared as JHM core values.

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Jessica Queen, M.D.
*Clinical Fellow,
Infectious Diseases
Johns Hopkins
University School of
Medicine*

As a Black female physician, Jessica believes it is critical to serve as a liaison to communities that traditionally experience disparities in access to health care, providing culturally competent public health education and serving as a trusted resource. She has engaged with her local church to provide guidance to its predominantly African American congregation during the COVID-19 pandemic, while also advising her local pastor and the leadership of her national church organization on policies and procedures for responding to the pandemic, including church closure and distribution of public health recommendations to church members. Along with sharing her knowledge of infectious diseases, Jessica has presented to her church congregation on several occasions to provide education about topics such as vaccination and women's health.

Jessica wields social media tools such as Twitter to highlight issues around systemic racism, health disparities, and diversity and inclusion in medicine and science. In July 2020, she participated in a podcast episode sponsored by the Infectious Diseases Society of America titled, "COVID-19 Faces of Disparity: Addressing Systemic Racism in the Midst of Pandemic."

Jessica values education as a key tool for achieving equity for African Americans. She strives to serve as a visible role model for Black youth, and she has shown long-term commitment to mentorship and advocacy for underrepresented minorities, particularly African Americans, in science and medicine.

Volunteering her time and energy each week to mentor African American and other underrepresented undergraduate, medical and graduate students, Jessica has longitudinal mentoring relationships with three individuals with whom she regularly meets to advise on career advancement, coursework and application to medical and graduate programs; she has additionally facilitated clinical shadowing experiences for these students. For the past two years, Jessica has volunteered as a facilitator for a Saturday Leadership Program sponsored by the Greater Baltimore Urban League; this is a monthly, virtual mentorship program aimed at preparing Baltimore high school students for college and professional careers by teaching them about interviewing, networking, professional ethics, leadership skills and political engagement. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, she additionally served as a literacy tutor at a Baltimore City elementary school.

Jessica exemplifies excellence in patient care, scientific discovery, and promotion of diversity and inclusion in science and medicine. She is an outstanding leader among her peers and a respected and well-liked colleague. Jessica is a dedicated and enthusiastic physician-scientist who has shown genuine longstanding commitment to the promotion of diversity in her field and advocating for equity and opportunity for the Black community.



Dany Westerbands, M.D.
*Trauma Director
Suburban Hospital*

In an intense-pressure profession, Dany Westerbands radiates life, compassion and hope in and out of the trauma bay. As the trauma director, Dany touches the lives of trauma patients with the same care and concern that he does with his staff. The person on the stretcher is not just a "trauma patient"; they are human with many concerns. He is meticulous in all phases of care, even taking the time to follow up on nonsurgical issues such as untreated hypertension and diabetes. He is never too busy to help a staff member in need, and serves as a role model for the entire hospital. If a staff member is struggling personally, Dany listens and gives insight. He is a member of the Resilience in Stressful Events (RISE) Team, which supports victims who were emotionally impacted by a stressful patient-related or unanticipated event. Outside of his responsibilities at Suburban, Dany has a special interest to improve the lives of those in the African American community, often taking medical missions to Haiti to perform surgery for that nation's underserved.

When it comes to leadership and staff education, Dany is known for doing the right thing, always with the best interest of the patient in mind while expecting the same of his team. He embraces and welcomes all staff and infuses them with the confidence to be their best. He sits on a number of hospital committees, encourages excellence in every department and mentors minority colleagues. Dany exemplifies all the core values of Johns Hopkins Medicine.

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FINALISTS



Michael Brockington
*Patient Service
Coordinator III,
Cardiology
Johns Hopkins
Outpatient Center*

Michael “Mike” Brockington is a patient service coordinator III in cardiology at the Johns Hopkins Outpatient Center (JHOC). Mike helps every patient he encounters navigate their visit to the hospital. Mike is known for his big smile, his warmth and his earnestness.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Mike has been ready to serve in any capacity, assisting in the command center, helping to answer calls from Spanish-speaking patients and gladly filling in wherever there are gaps. Mike improves the experience of African American patients at JHOC just by being himself — respectful, professional and compassionate. Mike is always looking for opportunities to learn and serve patients and to promote access to care and collegiality. Mike exemplifies the best of Johns Hopkins, and he embodies the values at the core of integrity.

Mike is active in his diverse East Baltimore faith community — composed of African American Baltimoreans, Latino immigrants and other groups — helping to support vulnerable members during the pandemic. Mike’s skills and beliefs make him a true cultural crossover. He switches with ease between English and Spanish, understanding the intricacies of different cultures and experiences. Mike grew up in East Baltimore, less than a mile from JHOC, and is the first person in his family to graduate from high school and work for Johns Hopkins. Mike contributes to the African American community through direct volunteer service and by empowering others around him to see

opportunity and approach the world with openness, the way he does.

Mike is a true gem at Johns Hopkins. Mike does all the right things when no one is watching — his integrity and embrace of others comes effortlessly. Colleagues, managers and patients gravitate to Mike for his attunement to others and their needs and for his wonderfully dynamic style. educates community members about the importance of health care. He strives to cultivate diverse audiences and influencers to help spread educational health care messages throughout the city. Waters also serves as a mentor for students of color and encourages his mentees at his alma mater, Morgan State University, to pursue careers in health care journalism and communications. He also volunteers on a committee working to create a pipeline program for Historically Black Colleges and Universities to improve representation and equity and inclusion in science communications nationwide. Waters’ other volunteer commitments include the Christian Memorial Church Food Pantry and the social media and video production teams at his church, The Church of the Redeemed of the Lord in Baltimore. Waters’ leadership within the community has had an impact on the community and his workplace.



Paula Bullard
*R.N. Clinical Manager
Johns Hopkins All
Children’s Hospital*

Paula Bullard is a member of the Diversity, Inclusion and Health Equity Committee at Johns Hopkins All Children’s Hospital, and she facilitates important conversation to bring awareness to the issues people of color are facing. Paula is highly respected, as she is able to connect with Brown and Black families on a deeper level. They confide in Paula and trust her to uphold

the hospital’s diversity and inclusion values. Paula exudes what it means to be all-inclusive, and is a true leader at Johns Hopkins All Children’s.

Paula mentors young, pregnant teens at South County high schools, which have high poverty levels. She organized a drive to donate to the Lakewood High School pantry, where students can come in before and after school to get clothing, toiletry and food items. She has influenced many young lives and encourages everyone to do the same. Everyone is lucky to have such a kind, supportive and dedicated mentor in their corner.

Paula exemplifies all the core values at Johns Hopkins All Children’s in everything she does. She demonstrates Excellence and Discovery by consistently bringing issues to the forefront. She thinks outside the box and always has a solution, no matter the situation. Paula demonstrates Leadership and Integrity by consistently being a true leader her co-workers look up to: strong, determined and successful. Paula demonstrates Diversity and Inclusion by facilitating the Diversity, Inclusion and Health Equity Committee and by unconditionally supporting people from different backgrounds and beliefs. This is who she is at her core. Paula demonstrates Respect and Collegiality by always learning from others. She embodies the core values each and every day, and is a role model for everyone.



Cherilyn Hall, M.D.
*Physician, Med/Peds,
Johns Hopkins
Community Physicians*

Cherilyn Hall is the Johns Hopkins Community Physicians (JHCP) Provider Quality Champion, taking the lead in helping providers and staff improve health outcomes for patients. She is facilitating JHCP White Marsh’s participation in a

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multisite hypertension trial to help increase the proportion of patients whose blood pressure readings are controlled, and to help narrow the gap in disparities between Black and white patients. She is also taking the lead in diabetic retinopathy screening at JHCP White Marsh. These medical conditions disproportionately affect African Americans, and adequate control of these health issues can have tremendous impact down the road in terms of preventing morbidity and mortality.

Cherilyn has been one of the protagonists leading an initiative at JHCP White Marsh to increase awareness of issues of racial injustice. When there were setbacks to having clinicwide dialogue on racial injustice issues, she helped to lead an educational campaign to facilitate understanding of racial disparities in health care and the history of systemic racism in health care institutions. Addressing issues of diversity and racial equity within the health care system will help to ensure more empathetic and culturally competent care, and lead to the implementation of systems that will help to narrow racial disparities in health care.

Cherilyn demonstrates the highest level of JHM core values in her work. She is one of only a handful of providers who precept medical students at JHCP White Marsh. When faced with inflammatory rhetoric, she engages the individual in a calm and respectful dialogue. She reaches out to many individuals to seek their input and collaboration in quality-improvement efforts, inviting them to become active participants rather than leading from a top-down fashion, and communicates with team members in a way that helps them perform better.