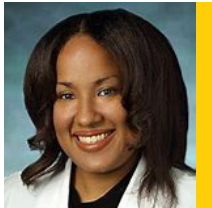


Hispanic Heritage Month Achievers Award Winners



WINNERS



Vivian Altiery De Jesús, MD, MBE
Resident Physician
Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center

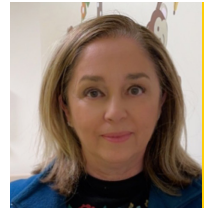
Vivian Altiery De Jesús is a third-year internal medicine resident physician at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center. In her clinic, she takes care of Hispanic/Latinx community members who live close to the Bayview campus and bridges cultural barriers to medical care. Using her cultural insight and fluency in Spanish, she educates her patients about health care and saves lives in the process. Her goals are to empower members of the Hispanic/Latinx community to make their own decisions, and to improve access to health care in a safe environment.

Since her first year of at Johns Hopkins, Dr. De Jesús has participated in the lay health educator volunteer program, in which physicians educate members of local underserved communities about important health matters. Dr. De Jesús, who uses this opportunity to strengthen her connection to the Hispanic/Latinx community, addresses topics ranging from advance directives to cancer prevention.

Her current research involves disparities that the Hispanic/Latinx community faces, and she has presented her works Racial Disparities in Navigating Moral Distress and Childcare as Frontline Worker During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Latinx Community Experience with COVID-19 in Baltimore at national and international conferences, respectively. She is conducting research on race disparities regarding lung cancer genetic testing. Her goals are to create awareness and identify issues and possible solutions that might benefit the Hispanic/Latinx and neighboring community.

Additionally, De Jesús is a gifted photographer who perfected her skill during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of her photos are featured as part of the Office of Well-Being's H.O.P.E. (Honoring Our Pandemic Experiences) initiative and line the Bayview Medical Center walls outside the Carroll Auditorium and the resident workroom in the cardiac progressive unit.

Through her work as a volunteer health educator, researcher of health disparities and a clinician championing the Latinx community, of which she is a member, Dr. De Jesús is highly deserving of an Achievers Award.



Josefa Nuñez
Bilingual Financial Aid Counselor
Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center

Josefa Nuñez transitioned to financial aid counselor at Bayview Medical Center after working many years welcoming patients to the children's medical practice. Throughout her time at the medical center, Nuñez has been a trusted health care liaison for the Latinx community. In addition to facilitating the check-in process, she connected with the patients and family members as individuals. She could often be found looking at photos of newborn babies and pets, handing out diapers and food bags to those in need, or giving a bright-eyed child a brand new book. Physicians and staff members appreciated her help seeing patients efficiently, and Nuñez would let them know when a patient or parent seemed down.

Nuñez volunteers for Centro SOL, and she is often recognized at community events by families that have patients at the medical center. For many Latinx community members who feel isolated, she has been a bridge to resources, support and health care.

Nuñez demonstrates leadership daily by showing younger members of front desk staff how to improve efficiency, and she exemplifies hospitality and provides outstanding customer service. As an immigrant, she represents the rich possibilities of hiring and retaining diverse staff members in our multicultural clinical spaces.

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WINNERS



Omaira Mejía
*Licensed Bilingual Mental Health Therapist
Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center*

Many of Omaira Mejía's patients have experienced trauma in their home countries, during journeys to the U.S. and while in Baltimore. These experiences impact their mental and physical health.

Mejía is always focused on being the best clinician she can be. She is versed in cognitive behavioral therapy, dialectical behavior therapy, eye movement desensitization and reprocessing, and other evidenced based treatment interventions, and she seeks to learn more.

Along with providing superb mental health treatment, Mejía understands that cultural needs must be addressed. Her patients and their family members sometimes have limited understanding of English and their needs in the community go unmet. Mejía routinely provides outreach to schools, medical practitioners, the division of social services, police and attorneys.

Mejía leads a parents support group that is open to anyone in the Latino community. Comprised mostly of mothers, the group meets weekly for an hour and a half. The meetings did not stop due to COVID-19 — they were held virtually.

Mejía is considered one of the kindest therapists at Johns Hopkins, and as a program manager, she always presents information and insights in a collegial manner.



María Reyes
*Inpatient Clerk, JAS
Howard County General Hospital*

Fondly referred to as the “unit mom” for the Joint Academy (JAS), María Reyes lives up to that name by taking employees under her wing to help them advance in their careers and reach their full potential. Reyes is also a tremendous asset to members of the Hispanic/Latinx community who speak limited English. She answers their questions, translates valuable information and helps them find needed resources. In addition, she is a constant source of support to her colleagues.

Reyes has a keen eye for people's strengths and has helped many people in the Hispanic/Latinx local community apply for jobs at Howard County General Hospital. She takes the time to sit through the application process and make sure all their questions are answered.

Reyes constantly seeks ways to help the Hispanic/Latinx community in Howard County. An employee at Howard County General Hospital was moved from the environmental services department to the rehab aid position, and knowing that the employee was worried about her lack of English proficiency, Reyes wrote down for her and translated words that are commonly used in rehab. She also helped organize a fundraiser for the same employee when she lost her house in a fire. Last year, when a Spanish menu at the hospital had a mistranslation, Reyes worked with the dietary department to correct the mistake.

Reyes keeps a close and supportive eye on all members of the Hispanic/Latinx community who go to the JAS unit. When meeting Latino patients, she goes the extra mile to help them, and their families feel welcome. Reyes takes the initiative to contact the therapy, social work and case management teams when families have a concern or if she knows information that can help patients transition home. And she leaves such an impression on patients that they often come back to visit her and to obtain guidance regarding follow-up with their practitioners.

Reyes is incredibly helpful, resourceful, and respectful to everyone she meets. If anyone has a concern on the unit, she's the person who will help find a solution.