

Katie Lamasa

The individual we would like to nominate for the Susan Borinsky Outstanding School-Based Health Center Nurse Clinician Award has been a pediatric nurse practitioner (PNP) with Baltimore Medical System's School-Based Health program for nearly eight years. This PNP works primarily in our health center at Patterson High School in Baltimore City, where she cares for a busy and diverse student population.

This individual is passionate about working in school-based health because she knows the importance of early detection and treating chronic conditions. She cares deeply for her students and has an intuitive sense when it comes to caring for them. She gets to know their lifestyles and who they do and don't trust. She oversees the comprehensive primary care each student receives in school – everything from annual well exams and sports physicals to vaccinations, medication, and treatment of common illnesses. She also counsels students and provides essential education on the many health issues that arise in adolescence, including sex and pregnancy prevention, alcohol and illegal drug use. She develops such trusting relationships that students share personal things that are helpful for her know, in order to provide the most comprehensive care. She advocates for every student in her care and works closely with the mental health clinicians at the school, referring students for evaluation and treatment whenever necessary to ensure they have the support they need to cope with any behavioral health and emotional challenges. She just seems to know what each student needs and does her best to meet their needs.

This PNP is very focused on education and health literacy. She goes above and beyond to make sure her students understand what she is explaining or teaching. Her goal is to help students become stewards of their own healthcare and for them to understand what they need as they transition from adolescence to adulthood. As senior students near graduation, she works closely with them to make sure they are prepared to access health care on their own and guides them through the process of finding a "medical home" to ensure their future care. She even assists with making essential health appointments for the first few months after graduation.

As a clinician, best practices are always at the forefront of her mind. She takes advantage of a variety of professional development opportunities in order to stay current and relevant. She is always available to help other clinicians and school health colleagues. Because she has longevity, she has a great wealth of knowledge regarding the progress of policies over the years.

This individual truly personifies what school-based health care is all about – ensuring each child has access to high-quality and compassionate clinical care in school, and a trusted partner who is invested in their life-long health. She has grown so much in her years at BMS, and her practice has sharpened each year. We are very grateful to have her on our team!