

# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

**DR. JOHN DORSEY**

Dear Friends of Horseshoe Farm,

Relationships are the glue that holds Horseshoe Farm together. I often mention to our Fellows that if a drug company developed a prescription that delivered all of the benefits of supportive, caring, and consistent relationships, it would be one of the biggest blockbuster drugs ever. This would be especially true for the seniors, adults living with mental illness, adults living in isolation or turmoil, and children that Horseshoe Farm serves.

In 2019, Nellie Bowles wrote an insightful piece in the New York Times entitled, "Human Contact is Now a Luxury Good." She argued that while screens and technology increasingly are being thrust into the lives of the poor, often as a cheaper substitute for real relationships, people who have the means are increasingly choosing to spend money to avoid technology in favor of real human contact for themselves, their families, and their children.

Providing stable, supportive, consistent, and caring relationships, especially to those who need these relationships most, is at the heart of all of Horseshoe Farm's programs. A prime example is our "Health Partners" program. In the program, each of our Fellows volunteers with approximately 6-10 seniors, adults living with mental illness, or other vulnerable or isolated adults. Fellows provide home visits, take their "partners" for walks and encourage healthier behaviors, give rides and accompany their partners to their local doctor's visits, and provide personal support and care in other ways.

At the end of each year, I ask our "health partners" whether working with the Fellows made a difference in their lives, and almost universally hear a resounding "yes!" When I ask them what was valuable or important about working with their Fellow, they consistently say that the Fellow "listened and cared." I then follow up asking whether they think their Fellow is going to be a good doctor, and again, "yes!" I ask why, and again, "because they listen and they care."

In addition to their work with health partners, Fellows volunteer at local nursing homes and supported housing programs where they provide extra relationship-based support to the seniors, adults living with mental illness, and other residents in these communities. They provide volunteer support at local community centers, helping create a place of belonging and social connection for many individuals who would otherwise be alone or have no place to go during the day. Finally, they provide extra relationship-based support to small groups of children in elementary school classrooms to help give the extra individual attention that is so important to each child's development and wellbeing.

By focusing on supportive, caring, and consistent relationships with our vulnerable neighbors, we believe we are offering one of the most valuable things any of us can offer to another human being. We also believe that this focus is what is most needed to help others, strengthen communities, and prepare the next generation of future leaders for lives of service grounded in human relationships.

Thank you very much for your ongoing support of and care for Horseshoe Farm. We are grateful for the leadership and teaching by our Site Directors and the commitment to volunteer service and learning by our Fellows. I hope you enjoy the attached newsletter that highlights some of our work from the past year and gives a glimpse into the relationships that are at the heart of all of Horseshoe Farm's work.

Sincerely,

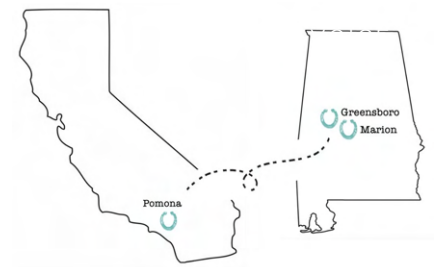


**John Dorsey, M.D.**  
Founder and Executive Director



# 2021 NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1, 2021



## OUR 2020-2021 FELLOWS CLASS



## WELCOMING OUR 2021-2022 FELLOWS CLASS



### POMONA, CA

Catherine Gross - Tufts University  
John Lee - Vanderbilt University  
Lucía Diaz - Scripps College  
Lindsey Trinh - Scripps College  
Priya George - University of Minnesota Twin Cities  
Shilpa Rajagopal - University of Texas at Austin  
Atnasia Mekonnen (Senior Fellow) - Occidental College



### MARION, AL

Amreena Singh - Tulane University  
Clare Hartman - University of Notre Dame  
Ellie Janitz - Vassar College  
Janay Nixon (Not Pictured) - University of North Carolina Chapel Hill  
Kendal Marston - University of Notre Dame  
Libby Pinto - University of Pittsburgh  
Nikita Gupta - Johns Hopkins University  
Tykira Fisher - Duke University

Site Director, Josh Oriez



### GREENSBORO, AL

Abena Boateng - Washington University in St. Louis  
Bess Renjilian - Brown University  
Carlye Goldenberg - University of Michigan  
Catherine Chen - Northwestern University  
Diana Omeng - Texas A&M University  
Ellie Hough - Gonzaga University  
Emily Guo - University of Michigan  
Nazaneen Saleh - University of Virginia  
Sydney Williams - University of Virginia

Abigail LeCates (Senior Fellow) - Amherst College  
Johanna Mercurio (Senior Fellow) - University of Georgia  
Maggie Rosenthal (Senior Fellow) - Stanford University

Site Director, Sarah Hallmark

# Pomona, CA

## '20-'22 Fellow Spotlight: Atnasia Mekonnen



After spending her first year as a Fellow in Greensboro, Atnasia is serving this year as a Senior Fellow, helping to lead the team in Pomona. Hailing from Ethiopia, she graduated from Occidental College. Reflecting on the Fellowship, Atnasia states "The hands-on experience in different facets of community health gained from my Fellowship experience has deepened my perspective. Learning from the communities in Greensboro and Pomona has been the experience of a lifetime. I hope to incorporate what I have learned about community and public health into my future pursuits within medicine."

At Right, - In the Health Partners program the Fellows develop relationships and provide important extra support to seniors, adults living with mental illness and other vulnerable or isolated adults. Their work with Health Partners truly captures the spirit of volunteer citizen service leadership.



At Left - The Fellows have enjoyed volunteering with God's Pantry and Pomona City Council Member Victor Preciado. Fellows help to deliver groceries and make visits to individuals and families in need as a valuable way to reach out to the broader community.



At Left and Right - Fellows providing academic support and mentorship in the Pomona Hope after school program. Fellows volunteer four days per week working with children in grades K-8 in support of this outstanding program. We are grateful for our partnership with Pomona Hope, now in its second year.



## Community Partner Spotlight: Volunteers of America (VOA)

Horseshoe Farm works with local community organizations to help identify individuals who could benefit from the extra support provided by the Health Partners program. Volunteers of America is a shining light that is making a real difference in helping to transition people from homelessness to stable housing in the Pomona community. We are grateful to have the opportunity to work with this outstanding organization. Rolando Lumbsden, VOA Case Manager and Program Coordinator for Life Skills (pictured right with Fellows) stated that "The added support provided by the Fellows is so needed- it's equivalent to providing two oxygen tanks to someone on life-support. The Fellows add a sense of worth and value to their Health Partners at such a deep level. To quote Mahatma Gandhi, 'in a gentle way the Fellows are shaking the world.'"



# Marion, AL



## '17 - '19 Fellow Spotlight: Tim Huang



Tim came to Horseshoe Farm after graduating from Northwestern University. After completing his first year as a Fellow in Greensboro, he decided to stay for a second year (along with classmate Brooke Hess) to help launch the Horseshoe Farm Marion site. Tim said he felt deeply welcomed into the Marion community, and loved talking with people and hearing their stories. Tim's ready smile, warm and caring spirit, consistent positive attitude, and hard work and commitment all contributed to a successful launch of the site that is now in its fourth year.

Tim is currently in his third year medical student at Rush Medical College where he has continued to show a commitment to service to others. He volunteers as a counselor to local 4th and 5th grade students, helps prepare meals for other volunteers at his Church, and is exploring opportunities to help at a local homeless shelter. In recognition of his outstanding work, he was selected by Rush as a Family Medicine Student Scholar and participated in the selective Summer Institute for Medical Students at the Betty Ford Clinic. Tim is currently considering specializing in family medicine or psychiatry, and maintains his longer term aim of practicing and serving in a local underserved community.

Photos at Left - The Marion Team making a difference in the lives of individuals and the broader community. Fellows continue to work with Health Partners referred from multiple local clinics, provide volunteer support to children and teachers at Francis Marion Elementary School, and provide group support at Marion Senior Nutrition Program, Perry Ridge Apartments, and Vaughan Clinic.

## Community Partner Spotlight: Perry County Nursing Home

Perry County Nursing Home specializes in providing long term care as well as providing personalized rehabilitation programs to help individuals regain their independence. We are grateful to the leadership and staff of Perry County Nursing Home who have welcomed the Fellows and Horseshoe Farm's involvement. Volunteering to visit with individual residents and helping with group activities has been one of the highlights for the Marion team this year.

At right - Marion Fellow (Kendal) meets each week with Perry County Nursing Home Resident (Danny) -- they love arguing about college football. This is a wonderful example of the difference relationships can make in touching lives, supporting an important local organization, and strengthening a community.



# Greensboro, AL



## '11-'12 Fellow Spotlight:

### Komal Shah, M.D.

Dr. Komal Shah is a 2011-12 Horseshoe Farm Fellow graduate. She now is a pediatrician who for the last three years has helped lead the maternal and child health program at Lummi Tribal Health Center in Washington State, which serves Lummi tribal members and other Indian Americans and Alaska Natives. Komal says that her interest in community health, working with the underserved, and working in rural settings stemmed from her experience as a Fellow at Horseshoe Farm. Fostered by her Fellowship experience, Komal has made a deliberate effort to engage with the community she serves by attending high school football games and other important community gatherings and events. Her husband also teaches at the local high school on the reservation.

Komal says that she began to learn about and understand the importance of relationships in medicine and health while she was at Horseshoe Farm. She now clearly sees on a daily basis how much better her patients who have caring, stable, and supportive relationships respond to illness and other challenges than those who lack these relationships. She says that her clinic's emphasis on creative approaches to relationship-based support was one of the big draws to her current work.



Above and Below - Undaunted by not being able to volunteer in schools due to COVID, the Greensboro team started "Horseshoe Farm in the Neighborhood" to provide important social, emotional, and academic support to children in their own backyards. Giving children the opportunity to get outside, smile, play, and connect with others has been one of the most important ways HSF has contributed to health and quality of life of our vulnerable neighbors during COVID.



At Right and Left - The Courtyard completed by the Auburn University Rural Studio. This new courtyard has truly been a blessing in allowing HSF to restart our community center programs in the midst of COVID.



## Community Partner Spotlight: Men of Valor

Men of Valor is a group of community leaders who have come together to support children and serve and strengthen the broader Greensboro community. The Greensboro HSF team is grateful and proud to have worked with this outstanding group in support of their very successful May Day community event for children, their Halloween Haunted Barbershop, and a community wide health and school supply distribution fair. Men of Valor shows what can be done by a group of citizen service leaders dedicated to strengthening their community.





**Uniontown, AL**  
 With the support of the Alabama Power Foundation, Project Horseshoe Farm has expanded its reach to begin working in Uniontown, AL. Now in our second year, we work with local elementary schools, provide support to health partners, and volunteer with The CHOICE Center and other community organizations to help seniors, other vulnerable adults, and children in the community.



# LEADERSHIP AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## SITE DIRECTORS



**Sarah Hallmark, MSW**  
 Assistant Director and Greensboro Site Director



**Josh Oriez**  
 Marion Site Director

## LEADERSHIP DONORS

*We want to thank the many individuals whose generosity has been critical to supporting and sustaining Horseshoe Farm's work — we are grateful for each and every donation. We would also like to especially thank and recognize the following Leadership Donors and Supporters for putting their trust in Horseshoe Farm and for their extremely generous contributions.*

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