

UPDATE | January 3, 2019

Meet Our Advocates: Dr. Maya Bass

What are your gender pronouns?

She/Her/Hers

Where are you from?

Born and raised in Philadelphia, PA

What's your specialty or area of expertise?

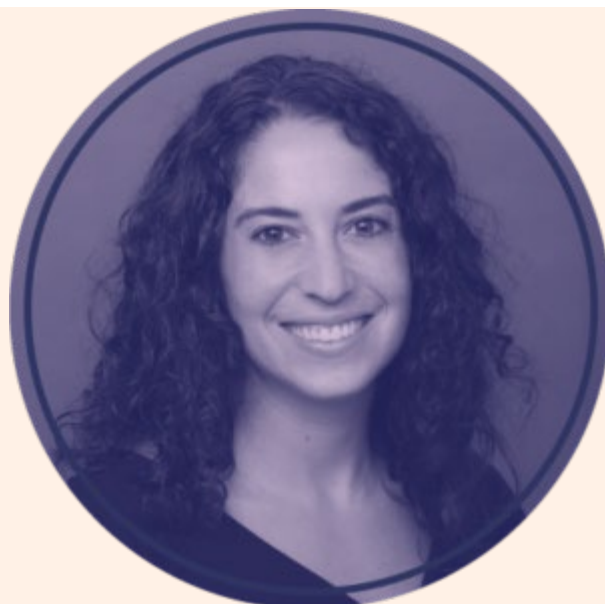
Family, community, and preventive medicine. I am focused on reproductive health, wellness, chronic pain, addiction, and underserved care.

What first inspired you to become a doctor?

It wasn't direct. I always wanted to follow my



mom and grandmom and become a teacher. I loved talking to people and felt like I wanted to help my community, so it seemed like teaching was the perfect job. However, in college I fell in love with research and biology. I worked in a lab but quickly found that you can not have conversations with cells. So to balance my time, I picked up work as a bartender. As a bartender, I would get to meet people and listen to their stories, but the pattern of enabling was not rewarding. I wanted to be able to meet people and actually help them so, I made a move towards medicine. Now, I'm not only a doctor who gets to work with people everyday, but I also get to teach doctors-in-training. It feels like a perfect fit.



What story about one of your patients most sticks with you?

The patient that inspired me to get my X waiver (*the waiver that allows health care providers to dispense medications for opioid dependency management*). She was 23 and had been put on buprenorphine during her pregnancy and maintained her sobriety afterwards. She moved home to go to college and needed someone to continue her medication but the only provider able was 90 miles away. This medication had helped her get her life back. Luckily, I was able to work with her previous doctor to cover her while I got my waiver. I was able to follow her and her son for their health care needs. Eventually, I was also able to help her when she was deciding on contraception so she could complete her degree. Every visit with her was a highlight of my day.

What current policy issue especially motivates you to be an advocate?

I am motivated to be an advocate because we still do not have universal health care.

Our patients need access to health care to get preventive services, to have access to birth control, and to be able to get regular



check-ups on chronic conditions. Without universal health care, we cannot effectively take care of all Americans. I specifically want to be an advocate for reproductive

rights because all patients deserve the ability to choose how they manage their reproductive health. Currently with TRAP laws (*targeted regulation of abortion providers*) and legislators working to ban abortion with increasingly harmful state legislation, reproductive health is under threat. So I need to be an advocate so that one day everyone will have insurance and access to full spectrum reproductive health care.

Who is your social justice hero?

My social justice heroes are my parents, Lis and Stu Bass. They have protested for change their entire lives – for nuclear regulation, against war, against white supremacy groups, for workers' rights, for women's rights. They have dedicated their lives to building communities and activism. My mother works in Camden teaching remedial English and serves on boards promoting grassroots activism, environmental protection, and mentorship of women of color. My father works through the AFL-CIO to strengthen unions, improve training, and continue to fight for workers' rights. I hope to emulate their passion to fight for equality and a better world.

Our Meet Our Advocates series showcases the talents and passion of one of our doctors and finds out, in their own words, what inspires them to be physician-advocates. Maya Bass, MD, MA is in our current Leadership Training Academy class. Dr. Bass practices family medicine in Pennsylvania.

[Read more interviews from the Meet Our Advocates series.](#)

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