

UPDATE | October 20, 2017

Meet Our Advocates: Dr. Sarah Horvath

Where are you from?

New Jersey, Iowa, Texas, California, Illinois, New York and Pennsylvania. If I ever decided to run for office, I'd have a lot of different "homes" to choose from.

What's your specialty or area of expertise?

I'm a Family Planning Fellow by way of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

What first inspired you to become a doctor?

I came to medicine late. After studying theater at UCLA, I lived in a liberal bubble surrounded by actors, artists, and musicians. In 2004, some friends and I volunteered a bit with the Kerry campaign. His loss was devastating to me. I knew that I had to do more to change the political climate in this country and thought that I could advocate for



social justice as a doctor. So I cut my hair, registered for classes and began this long journey into medicine.

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

As a resident, I cared for a pregnant patient with pulmonary hypertension. She was diagnosed as a teenager and knew that her disease meant she that if she ever became pregnant she had a 30-50% chance of dying. She had used contraception for decades. This pregnancy was intentional. She wanted to be a mother so much, she was willing to die trying. She was not only a special patient to me, but became symbolic of my dedication to patient autonomy. I passionately defended her decision to carry her pregnancy. We must not judge a patient's decision to parent anymore than we should judge our other patients' decisions NOT to parent.

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

The Hyde Amendment prevents any federal money from paying for abortion except in cases of rape, incest, or maternal life-threat. This disproportionately affects low-income women reliant on Medicaid. Initially passed in 1976, it has been reauthorized every year since. It creates a financial barrier to health care for poor women, immigrants, women in the military or civil service, women married to people in the military or civil service and many others. While there are many, many contemporary problems with insurance, politics and health care, the Hyde Amendment continues to impede reproductive justice for women in the United States.

Who is your social justice hero?

Social workers. Teachers. Nurses. The unsung heroines who do the hard work everyday, fighting for equal access to health care and education. Fighting for equal access to opportunity.

Every week, 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. Sarah Horvath, MD is an incoming member of the Leadership Training Academy Class of 2018.

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

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