Meet an IPE Student Champion from Thomas Jefferson University
Sara Cohen, Occupational Therapy Student, Class of 2020

Briefly describe your work with/related to JCIPE:
Student Hotspotting, originally developed by the Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers, is an educational curriculum designed to train students in the science and art of complex case management. Jefferson has been participating in this program since 2014, and in 2017 became one of the four ‘Hubs’ across the country tasked with overseeing student teams from several regional universities. The development of these Hubs allowed the program to scale up to train more students and reach more patients in need. I was very fortunate to serve as a Student Hotspotter during this exciting time and see firsthand the immense impact this program can have on the lives of these super-utilizing patients. The Student Hotspotting Program has opened my eyes to the mistreatment of these patients within our flawed healthcare system, and that is something I cannot and will not look past. My patient has since graduated from this program and is continuing to make progress on his own, but the work here is far from over. I have stayed with this program as a research assistant and alumni advisor to the current Student Hotspotters. These patients need someone to fight for them and to give them a voice in a system that has silenced them— we can be that voice.

What excites you about this work?
This program has allowed me to take my knowledge beyond the classroom and onto the front lines of an epidemic that has plagued our healthcare system for too long.

Why is IPE/CP important to you?
From the first time I visited Jefferson, I was impressed by their commitment to interprofessional education. This truly set them apart from similar programs at other institutions and is why I chose to come to Jefferson to continue my education.

We’re here because we want to make a difference—we want to empower our patients, repair what’s broken, and create futures for those who may not have believed it possible. When a patient’s life is in our hands, it is imperative that we do absolutely everything in our power to give them the best chance of survival: medically, socially, and emotionally. This challenge is far beyond the scope of any single profession. Yes, one person may be able to save a physical life, but it takes a village to help that person, and every person we have the privilege of working with, make their life full and rewarding.

What have you learned that was new and how do you think you will apply your IPE/CP learning to your future role?
There is no doubt in my mind that I will leave Jefferson ready to take on all the challenges our patients are faced with—not because I have all the answers, because I don’t, but I know I will be successful because I know that I cannot do it alone. I have been armed with the very best resources in each and every one of my classmates and colleagues here at Jefferson. I know the distinct value of each profession and the importance of working as a team. I know that everyone I work with, no matter their specialty, will bring new knowledge and a new perspective on the challenge at hand. This is how Jefferson students are taught, and this is the foundation on which we will make a lasting impact.