

Sruti Bandlamuri founded the Outpatient Project (www.thoutpatient.org) when she was in high school in 2016, a nonprofit community initiative that hosts creative health advocacy events and publishes a series of photographs and interviews of women of all ages, but primarily teenage girls, as they reflect on their experiences with mental health (and if they desire, any health topic that connects to their mental health). She wanted to create a voice, community, and support system for the girls around her who were struggling with their mental health. She had several friends suffering from anorexia, depression, anxiety, and obsessive compulsive disorder, along with a few friends who were feeling suicidal from immense loneliness. The Outpatient Project was her way of helping her friends after seeing stigmas around mental illness and therapy inhibit the mental health recovery of her close friends and watching people around her occupied with inescapable emotional and mental turmoil. With a camera and her phone recorder, she interviewed girls and women in her high school and local community of Tucson, Arizona about mental health, hoping to begin a community-wide breakdown of stigma associated with the topic. As she posted the stories of different girls from Tucson on her website with the intention that these girls will feel supported by the community of voices surrounding their story on the website, she began receiving texts and emails from her friends. All of her friends, whether formally diagnosed with mental illness or merely feeling alone, felt much more supported and relieved, knowing that they were not alone. Eventually girls from across the country and world began sending their stories to The Outpatient Project, about food deprivation, depression, anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder, mental health treatment, psychiatry, and more. Around the same time, she wrote blog posts, compiling interviews of her high school classmates' perspectives on happiness, the lack of adequate rural mental healthcare (especially for young children, adolescents, and teens), and a personal account of how stress can affect mental health and how it can be mitigated for the nonprofit organization Young Minds Advocacy (<https://www.ymadvocacy.org/author/sruti-bandlamuri/>).

Sruti's impact on her local community's mental health has greatly expanded. She facilitated a collaboration with Anxiety in Teens, another 501(c)3 nonprofit organization based in New York City, for the OutRun Anxiety 5k in Tucson, AZ in May 2017. She gathered several student volunteers to interview participants of the 5k on why they are participating in the 5k, how anxiety has impacted their life, and what anxiety means to them. Sruti then published these interviews (<http://theoutpatient.org/Events-OutRunAnxiety/>) and created a YouTube video compiling these interviews to destigmatize anxiety and bring awareness to its impact on Tucson's community. Sruti then spearheaded The Human Health Library, an event presented in August 2017 in which anyone from the public could come to the public library and "check out" any of the available "human books," each of which represented a health condition, whether it be mental illness or related to mental health. Some titles of books at the event include: Mother of Autism, Adopted Child, Toxic Masculinity, Hypothyroidism, Grief, Anxiety, and Depression. In March 2018, Sruti and The Outpatient Project team created TucsonPERIOD: Menstrual Product Drive for Tucson's Homeless Women after discussing instances in their lives when access to

menstrual products were limited and the subsequent ramifications on their mental health. Thinking of homeless women and their already difficult situations in which mental health is often deeply impacted, they tried to aid in lessening the mental and emotional burden of getting one's period while homeless by collecting and donating as many menstrual products as possible. They raised \$260 via <https://www.gofundme.com/femtucson> and subsequently hosted a period packing party, in which community volunteers could help make period packages that held one month's worth of period products each. They ended up making 51 packages with several products leftover (all donated), all of which is documented here: <https://youtu.be/wfD7WMu7Vv4>

As an undergraduate student Union College, Sruti interviews students about their mental health stories and publishes them via The Outpatient Project. She advertised and helped host a Mental Health Share and Listen through her position as the Outreach Chair on the executive board of Union College's Active Minds chapter. The goals for this student-led safe space were to create a discourse between peers about mental health and connect students with a therapist on campus who was there to answer questions, educate students, and talk to them about available resources. Sruti then advertised and helped host the nonprofit organization Art With Impact to present Movies 4 Mental Health, a film screening and discussion with student panelists, faculty, and counselors at the wellness center. From surveys taken by participants before and after the event, Art with Impact found that 70% of students not already receiving mental health support reported an increased likelihood to reach out for help, 93% of students said that the workshop reduced stigma related to mental health, and 100% of the students felt the event created awareness of mental health issues. She is also a member of Union College Organization of Peer Educators, a group of students who host outreach activities that bring awareness/destigmatize health topics on campus in addition to informing students about on-campus mental health services and encouraging students to utilize wellness center resources, such as therapy dogs, free counseling services, and self-care events. Sruti also serves on the Active Minds National Advisory Committee, and evaluates applications for the Active Minds Healthy Campus Award.