THE COLUMBUS-ATHENS SCHWEITZER FELLOWS PROGRAM

The Columbus-Athens Schweitzer Fellows Program — one of The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship (ASF)’s 13 locations across the U.S. — facilitates service projects to benefit the Columbus and Athens communities, and simultaneously develops emerging professionals who have the skills to address unmet health-related needs throughout their careers.

Launched in September 2010 and hosted by The Ohio State University College of Medicine, the Columbus-Athens Schweitzer Fellows Program is a growing consortium currently comprised of 11 Colleges and one School of the campus of The Ohio State University, three Colleges on the Ohio University campus in Athens, and one private institution, Trinity Lutheran Seminary.

In addition, two of Columbus’ largest medical centers, Nationwide Children’s Hospital and OhioHealth, are full partners. The consortium model fuels the Columbus-Athens ASF program with prospective Fellows, board member expertise, and funding.

ASF HISTORY AND MISSION

ASF was initially founded in 1940 to support Dr. Albert Schweitzer’s hospital in Africa. The U.S. Schweitzer Fellows Program, launched in 1991, supports and trains emerging graduate and professional students in creating and carrying out yearlong service projects that address unmet community needs.

The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship (ASF) is improving the health of vulnerable people now and for the future by developing a corps of Leaders in Service—professionals skilled in creating positive change with and in our communities, our health and human service systems, and our world. Annually, U.S. Schweitzer Fellows deliver more than 40,000 hours of community service addressing the social determinants of health.

When Fellows’ initial year ends, they carry their skills and commitment forward as members of the Schweitzer Fellows for Life alumni network, now more than 2,500 strong.

Goals

The Columbus-Athens Schweitzer Fellows Program’s goals are:

- Develop Leaders in Service who are educated, experienced, and committed to addressing unmet health-related community needs;
- Improve the community by providing direct service to individuals and strengthening the capacity of community-based organizations;
- Expand educational opportunities in partnering schools while raising awareness of the needs of underserved communities; and
- Maintain a growing and vibrant community of Schweitzer Fellowship alumni (Fellows for Life) committed to lives of service.

Community Service Projects

The Columbus-Athens Schweitzer Fellows Program administers and supports community service projects that are conducted in Columbus and Athens from April to April. Participants are students whose fields of study and/or personal interests are relevant to the goals and mission of the program.

These interdisciplinary Schweitzer Fellows receive stipends in the amount of $3,000. They design and carry out projects that provide at least 200 hours of service in partnership with an existing community agency and under the supervision of an academic and community-based mentor.

Projects include at least 100 hours of direct client contact with an emphasis placed on activities that will have an enduring benefit to the agency. Fellows also attend orientation, a mid-year retreat, monthly meetings, and participate in reflective leadership development programming. No academic credit is earned.
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

ASF’s National Office, headquartered in Boston and governed by a National Board of Directors, provides programmatic, evaluation, financial, and development services to local operations. Local sites are led by a Program Director and supported by a local Advisory Board.

PARTNERS AND SPONSORS

To meet its annual expenses, the Columbus-Athens Schweitzer Fellows Program seeks to expand on existing commitments from educational partners on OSU’s and other area campuses. Corporate and foundation partners and individual donors will be solicited as well.

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS

The Ohio State University
Arts and Sciences
Dentistry
Education and Human Ecology
Fisher College of Business
Medicine
Nursing
Optometry
Pharmacy
Public Health
Social Work
Veterinary Medicine
School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences
Office of Outreach and Engagement

Ohio University
Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine
Health Sciences and Professions
The Gladys W. and David H. Patton College of Education

Trinity Lutheran Seminary

CORPORATE PARTNERS

Nationwide Children’s Hospital
OhioHealth

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“Being a Fellow is not just a 12-month, one-service-project deal; it is a lifelong commitment and mission. It has reminded me that school is not all about scholarships, credentials and grades, but about being agents of change.”

- Tessa Yoder, Fellow for Life