THE ALBERT SCHWEITZER FELLOWSHIP – COLUMBUS-ATHENS CHAPTER

The Columbus-Athens Schweitzer Fellows Program® is a one-year interdisciplinary, mentored fellowship program focused on health-related community service and leadership development.

In addition to the four overall goals of the U.S. Schweitzer Fellows Program®, the Columbus-Athens Schweitzer Fellows Program strengthens Fellows’ resolve to provide health service to underserved populations by facilitating opportunities for students to:

- Use their skills and knowledge in real-life situations
- Become culturally sensitive and compassionate advocates and caregivers
- Understand the impact of social and environmental determinants of health
- Build capacity for and commitment to improving the health status of individuals and communities as well as contributing to social change
- Work collaboratively and across disciplines in pursuit of a common goal
- Learn how to exercise leadership skills to work with and influence community based organizations, community leaders, and academic institutions to embrace holistic, service-oriented approaches to health-related issues.

Upon successful completion of the initial Fellowship year, Fellows become part of the alumni network of Fellows for Life – an interdisciplinary pipeline of emerging professionals who are dedicated and skilled in meeting the health-related needs of underserved communities.

DEFINING HEALTH

Schweitzer Fellows focus on health as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO): a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Rooted in this holistic understanding of health, Schweitzer projects address not only clinical health issues, but also the social determinants of health—defined by the WHO as the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, and which are mostly responsible for health inequities.

ELIGIBILITY

Students enrolled in graduate or professional degree-granting programs from any accredited academic institution in the geographic area may apply. While the applicant’s field of study does not have to be traditionally health-related, his/her proposed service project must focus on health and/or the social determinants of health. Past Fellows have addressed health or its social determinants from a wide variety of perspectives and disciplines including education, arts and humanities, business, divinity studies, health sciences, public health, and social work. We encourage applicants from other fields including engineering, agriculture and environmental sciences, and law. Applicants must be enrolled throughout the Fellowship year (April 2015-May 2016).

PRIOR TO APPLYING
Prospective Fellows should be prepared to partner with a local community agency and design a community service project that seeks to provide direct service to an underserved population. This project should focus on addressing health and/or the social determinants of health in the population served.

The project should:

- Provide a direct service that meets a community-defined need and reflects national and local health priorities, such as Healthy People 2020. Prospective applicants should investigate and reflect on unmet local health-related needs, and think through the ways in which their own energies and talents might contribute, even in small ways, to ameliorating one or more of these problems. Applicants are encouraged to communicate with potential community partners prior to submitting their applications and to be specific in their proposals about their relationships with their community partners.
- Be of an enduring value to the community/agency served. The project proposal should include a brief discussion about sustainability of the project at the end of the Fellowship year.

Applicants are encouraged to identify one or more potential academic mentors at their schools and a site mentor at the agencies where they propose to conduct their projects.

Applicants should be creative in developing their proposal. They may choose to develop a totally unique project in keeping with Dr. Schweitzer’s directive that everyone should find their own Lambaréné—their own special place to serve, and way of serving. Alternatively, applicants may find inspiration by reviewing past Fellows’ projects and partnering agencies. Research, fundraising, and policy-based projects are not considered eligible for a Schweitzer Fellowship. Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact the Program Director if they would like assistance in identifying a project and/or a project site.

REQUIRED ACTIVITIES OF FELLOWS

Retreats: Fellows must attend an orientation retreat in Spring 2015 and a mid-year retreat in Fall 2015.

Service Project: Working in collaboration with a local community agency, each Fellow must design and carry out a service project of at least 200 hours that addresses an unmet community health-related need. At least 125 of the 200 hours must be spent in direct, face-to-face contact with the population being served. Each Fellow will work under the supervision of a Site Mentor from the participating agency and with input from an Academic Mentor of the student’s choice. The Program Director is also available to provide support and guidance throughout the Fellowship year. The 200 hours must be conducted separately from any school course requirement. Retreats, monthly meetings and other Fellowship activities are not part of the required 200 hours. In designing a project, applicants should carefully consider the issues of evaluation and sustainability and include in their applications their ideas for addressing these aspects of the project.

Reports: Fellows are required to submit monthly reports about their activities and a comprehensive written final report to their Program Director, Academic Mentor, and Site Mentor.

Evaluation: In addition to the evaluation plan for his/her individual project, Fellows are required to participate in the national pre- and post- evaluation surveys for the Fellowship. Fellow’s Site Mentors also complete a final site mentor survey.
**Monthly Meetings:** Fellows are required to attend 9 evening monthly meetings. Monthly meetings provide the Fellows with leadership development, interdisciplinary discussions, time for reflection on community service, and an opportunity to network with like-minded students from diverse fields as well as professionals in areas of interest to them.

**Recruitment:** In the months of November, December, and January, current Fellows work with the Program Director and faculty to organize information sessions about the Schweitzer Fellows Program and present information at their schools about their Fellowship experiences.

**Stipend:** Fellows receive a stipend of $3,000, distributed in three payments throughout the Fellowship year as specific program objectives are completed. The stipend may be used in any way the Fellow wishes, including project related costs and personal expenses. As funding is limited, The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship is unable to provide any additional financial support beyond the stipend.

**Celebration of Service:** Fellows are required to attend a Celebration of Service in their honor in Spring 2016.

**INFORMATION SESSIONS**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend an information session before completing an application. Information sessions will be scheduled on the OSU, OU, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, and Capital University campuses.

**REFERENCES**

Contact information of three references are required on the application. At least one reference should be a faculty member from your school who could serve as your academic mentor for the Schweitzer Fellowship. Formal letters of recommendation will not be accepted.

**DEADLINE**

Applications for the 2015-16 Fellowship program will be accepted until 8am Monday, February 16.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT**

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