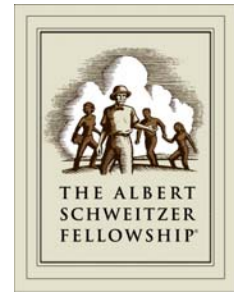


## PRESS RELEASE

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## \$167,000 Grant from Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation Will Bring Childhood Obesity Prevention Program to Columbus

**COLUMBUS, Ohio – Jan. 13, 2010**– The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship (ASF) today announced it has received a \$669,784, multi-year grant from the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation, of which \$167,446 will be used to implement ASF’s *5-2-1-0 Healthy Kids Countdown*, a childhood obesity prevention program, in Columbus, Ohio.

The *5-2-1-0 Healthy Kids Countdown* is a health promotion initiative built on evidence-based messaging that emphasizes healthy nutritional choices and behaviors. The program seeks to help kids live a healthy lifestyle by asking them to do four simple things:

- Eat **five** fruits or vegetables per day,
- Limit screen time (TVs, computers) to **two** hours or less per day,
- Get **one** hour or more of physical activity per day, and
- Drink **zero** sugar-sweetened beverages per day.

Developed in 2003, the *5-2-1-0* metric has since been recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics and adopted by wellness programs across the country.

“We’re excited to bring the *5-2-1-0 Healthy Kids Countdown* to Columbus because we know that if we can teach our kids about healthy, active lifestyles at a young age they have a better chance to avoid chronic health conditions such as obesity and heart disease throughout their lifetimes,” said Erin Hoeflinger, president of Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Ohio. “Childhood obesity has reached epidemic proportions, and it is a problem that impacts all of us in a number of ways including health care costs. This unique approach helps get at the crux of the issue.”

Obesity is a serious health issue for America’s families and their children. Nearly 1 in 3 children are overweight or obese, and one-third of all children born in or after the year 2000 will suffer from diabetes<sup>1</sup> Additionally, research indicates that obesity and the resulting chronic health conditions associated with being overweight disproportionately impact people living in underserved communities, where fresh food sources are scarce and social factors make healthy lifestyles difficult to attain.<sup>2</sup>

ASF was selected for the grant because its Schweitzer Fellows – exceptional graduate and professional school students who dedicate themselves to addressing health disparities – have served youth and families in underserved communities for nearly two decades. Specifically, ASF will use the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation grant to support stipends for Fellows and participating community-based organizations, *5-2-1-0 Healthy Kids Countdown* initiative

<sup>1</sup> Source: *Let’s Move!*, <http://www.letsmove.gov/learnthefacts.php>

<sup>2</sup> Sources: Adam Drewnowski and SE Specter. Poverty and obesity: the role of energy density and energy costs. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, Vol. 79, No. 1, 6-16, January 2004 / The Office of Minority Health. Obesity Data/Statistics: <http://www.omhrc.gov/templates/browse.aspx?lvl=3&lvlid=537>

training, leadership development training, and the purchase of equipment and other materials needed to support the Schweitzer Fellows' *5-2-1-0 Healthy Kids Countdown* programming in community-based organizations.

The Fellows will address childhood obesity in underserved communities head-on and will work to help make the *5-2-1-0 Healthy Kids Countdown* habits a part of kids lives through a comprehensive approach, including:

- Integrating *5-2-1-0 Healthy Kids Countdown* activities into community health fairs;
- Featuring *5-2-1-0* messaging and programming in individual Schweitzer projects; and
- Providing children and their families with *5-2-1-0* resources, such as weekly log sheets and colorful posters that reinforce healthy lifestyle messages in the program.

A total of \$167,446 in grant funds will be directed to ASF for the Columbus program over the course of three years, beginning with \$47,446 in 2010. Subsequent grants of \$60,000 will be disbursed in 2011 and 2012, provided each year's grant terms are successfully met. The balance of the \$669,784 grant will be used to implement the *5-2-1-0 Healthy Kids Countdown* initiative in other communities served by Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield and its parent company outside of Ohio.

“Our hope is that through the *5-2-1-0 Healthy Kids Countdown*, we will have an immediate impact on the health of underserved children and families—but that also, in the long-term, we will have equipped future health professionals and community leaders with the tools to address childhood obesity in an empowering way that emphasizes individual choices,” said ASF Executive Director Sylvia Stevens-Edouard, who played a key role in developing *5-2-1-0* during her time as the senior director of Children's Health Initiatives at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts.

Since the launch of its U.S. Fellows Program in 1991, ASF has selected and supported over 2,000 Schweitzer Fellows who have delivered more than 400,000 hours of health-focused community service. From launching a Hepatitis B initiative that has since been replicated across the country, to creating a mobile legal assistance program for rural domestic abuse victims, Fellows from many disciplines partner with community agencies to create and carry out yearlong service projects that address the social determinants of health—all on top of their regular academic responsibilities.

“In a given program year, around 80 percent of our Schweitzer Fellows across the country create and carry out service projects related to nutrition, physical health, and obesity,” says ASF President Lachlan Forrow, MD. “By launching a new program site in Columbus with the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation's support, we will be able to expand the number of Schweitzer Fellows across the country who are working to address childhood obesity and other health challenges. And through our *5-2-1-0 Healthy Kids Countdown* initiative, we're providing our Fellows and the communities they serve with an exciting variation on a proven resource for effective health promotion.”

### **About The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship (ASF)**

ASF is a national nonprofit organization whose [mission](#) is to address health disparities by developing Leaders in Service: individuals who are dedicated and skilled in meeting the health needs of underserved communities, and whose example influences and inspires others.

These Fellows — primarily university graduate students — partner with community-based organizations to identify an unmet health need, design a yearlong 200-hour service project with a demonstrable impact on that need, and bring that project from idea to implementation and impact. Rooted in a holistic understanding of health, Schweitzer projects address not only clinical issues, but also the social determinants of health—defined by the World Health Organization as the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, and which are mostly responsible for health inequities.

Annually, Schweitzer Fellows deliver more than 40,000 hours of health-related community service at [twelve locations across the U.S.](#) A number of Schweitzer Fellows also work at the Schweitzer Hospital in Lambaréné, Africa, collaborating with hospital staff to help provide skilled care through over 35,000 outpatient visits and more than 6,000 hospitalizations annually for patients from all parts of Gabon.

When Fellows' initial year ends, they carry their commitment to meeting the health needs of underserved people forward as members of the [Schweitzer Fellows for Life](#) alumni network, now more than 2,000 strong.

### **About Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation**

Through charitable grant making, the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation LLC, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, promotes Anthem's inherent commitment to enhance the health and well-being of individuals and families in communities that Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield serves. The Foundation focuses its funding on strategic initiatives that address and provide innovative solutions to health care challenges, as well as promoting the Healthy Generations Program, a multi-generational initiative that targets specific disease states and medical conditions. These include: prenatal care in the first trimester, low birth weight babies, cardiac morbidity rates, long term activities that decrease obesity and increase physical activity, diabetes prevalence in adult populations, adult pneumococcal and influenza vaccinations and smoking cessation. The Foundation also coordinates the company's annual associate giving campaign and its parent foundation provides a 50 percent match of associates' campaign pledges.

\*ANTHEM is a registered trademark of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc. The Blue Cross and Blue Shield names and symbols are registered marks of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. To learn more about the Foundation please visit [www.wellpointfoundation.org](http://www.wellpointfoundation.org).

*To schedule an interview with ASF Executive Director Sylvia Stevens-Edouard, MS  
regarding the 5-2-1-0 Healthy Kids Countdown,  
contact Patrice Taddonio at 617.667.5628 or [ptaddonio@bidmc.harvard.edu](mailto:ptaddonio@bidmc.harvard.edu).*