NEWS RELEASE

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2013-14 New Hampshire/Vermont Schweitzer Fellows Named
26 Graduate Students Will Spend Next Year Improving Community Health and Developing Lifelong Leadership Skills

Hanover, NH, April 29, 2013—The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship (ASF) today announced the selection of its 2013-14 class of New Hampshire/Vermont Schweitzer Fellows —26 graduate students who will spend the next year learning to effectively address the social factors that impact health, and developing lifelong leadership skills. In doing so, they will follow the example set by famed physician-humanitarian Albert Schweitzer, for whom their Fellowship is named.

This year’s class of Schweitzer Fellows will be inducted during the 100th anniversary year of the building of The Albert Schweitzer Hospital in Lambaréné, Gabon (known as French Equatorial Africa when the hospital was built in 1913). Today, the Albert Schweitzer Hospital continues to serve those in need of care, and it is a living monument to Dr. Schweitzer’s commitment to service, peace, and his philosophy of Reverence for Life.

“Schweitzer Fellows are passionate about improving the health of those living in underserved communities, and they are committed to improving their own skills to do so,” said ASF Executive Director Sylvia Stevens-Edouard. “They come from all academic disciplines—medicine, law, art, policy, and research—and they are pursuing work that improves lives. Over the next 12 months, they will also learn how to be effective leaders so they can inspire others to increase the health of those who experience barriers to care. They will carry these lessons into their professional careers, and further promote Dr. Schweitzer’s legacy to show reverence for life.”

“Our Fellows were selected after a competitive process, and they have signed up for a demanding year. They are expected to design and implement projects that will address the root causes of health inequities, and they will be doing this while also fulfilling their academic responsibilities,” said New Hampshire/Vermont Schweitzer Fellowship Program Director Rebecca Torrey. “Under the close guidance of community mentors, their projects—each of which is set in a community-based organization that serves vulnerable populations— are expected to make measurable differences on issues ranging from childhood literacy to diabetes to behavioral health.”

The 26 New Hampshire/Vermont Fellows will join approximately 220 other 2013-14 Schweitzer Fellows working at 13 program sites, 12 in the US and one in Lambaréné, Gabon at the site of The Albert Schweitzer Hospital. Upon completion of their Fellowship year, the 2013-14 New Hampshire/Vermont Schweitzer Fellows will become Schweitzer Fellows for Life and join a vibrant network of nearly 2,700 Schweitzer alumni who are skilled in, and committed to, addressing the health needs of underserved people throughout their careers. Fellows for Life routinely report that ASF is integral to sustaining their commitment to serving people in need.

Since 1996, the New Hampshire/Vermont Schweitzer Fellowship Program has supported more than 350 Schweitzer Fellows in delivering nearly 70,000 hours of service. The program is funded entirely through charitable donations and grants. Sponsors of the New Hampshire/Vermont Schweitzer Fellowship Program include the Byrne Foundation, the Couch Family Foundation, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth, Grafton County Medical Society, Lintilhac Foundation, Thayer School of Engineering at Dartmouth, University of New Hampshire School of Law, University of Vermont College of Medicine, Vermont Law School.
Marissa Meredyth, Vermont Law School
Marissa is increasing awareness about stress and stress management among young children in South Royalton by utilizing pet therapy.
Community Site: Therapy Dogs of Vermont

Kelly Michaelsen, Thayer School of Engineering
Kelly is fostering connections between students and seniors through intergenerational programming at the Bugbee Senior Center.
Community Site: Bugbee Senior Center

Courtney Gray and Juli Hincks, University of New Hampshire School of Law
Courtney and Juli are assisting crisis centers in providing social services and emotional support for victims of domestic and sexual violence.
Community Site: Dove Program

Ilda Bajraktari, Dartmouth College Geisel School of Medicine
Ilda is helping adults between the ages of 65-85 strengthen their bodies, improve their mobility, and better their balance through a bi-weekly exercise class.
Community Site: Aging Resource Center

Randi Bouchard, University of New Hampshire School of Law
Randi is expanding the numbers of teenagers served by Teen Court and strengthening the connection between Teen Court and students at the University of New Hampshire School of Law.
Community Site: Teen Court

Christine Breuer and Erik Andrews, Dartmouth College Geisel School of Medicine
Christine and Erik are helping clients of the Claremont Soup Kitchen access health screenings and educational resources by expanding a health and education program put in place by Schweitzer Fellows last year at the Claremont Soup Kitchen. They are also working with the Good Neighbor Health Clinic to establish a new satellite office in Claremont to serve uninsured individuals who lack the resources to travel to White River.
Community Site: Claremont Soup Kitchen

Laurie Delatour, Dartmouth College Geisel School of Medicine
Laurie is teaching children from families experiencing food insecurity about the importance of good nutrition and helping them develop good eating habits through an afterschool cooking and nutrition program.
Community Site: Upper Valley Haven

Charles Becker and Benjamin Gufstafson, Vermont Law School
Charles and Benjamin are helping teens recognize the importance of education for a healthy and prosperous life, and getting them interested in going to college from an early age, by connecting middle school and high school students from Bethel, VT with student mentors and role models at Vermont Law School.
Community Site: Bethel High School

Emily Laine, Vermont Law School
Emily is increasing awareness about sustainable agriculture, local food production, self-sufficiency, and food insecurity by producing a weekly food and agriculture radio show.
Community Site: Royalton Community Radio

John 'Nez' Nesbitt and Katia Chavez, University of Vermont College of Medicine
John and Katia are increasing access to health services for migrant Hispanic farm workers living in Lamoille County, Vermont.
Lamoille County, Vermont

Community Site: Community Health Services of Lamoille County

Shravan Rao and Luke Neill, University of Vermont College of Medicine
Shravan and Luke are increasing computer literacy among low-income/homeless guests utilizing the Burlington Emergency Shelter.

Community Site: Burlington Emergency Shelter

Christiaan Rees and Leonard Hills, Dartmouth College Geisel School of Medicine
Christiaan and Leonard are increasing patient access to basic needs such as food, shelter, legal support and transportation by developing a patient Health Desk.

Community Site: Good Neighbor Health Center

Matthew Lin and Reiko Sakai, University of Vermont College of Medicine
Matthew and Reiko are designing and delivering sexual health education specific to the needs of LGBTQ youth

Community Site: Outright, VT

Sarah Johnson and William Thompson, University of Vermont College of Medicine
Sarah and William are increasing the self-sufficiency of at-risk youth by teaching them vegetable gardening skills; how to maintain a chicken coop; and how to prepare nutritious, affordable, and accessible meals that they can bring back to their families and larger community.

Community Site: Soar Learning Center

Leslie Wenning and Janel Martir, University of Vermont College of Medicine
Leslie and Janel are utilizing art therapy to help women who have co-occurring diagnoses of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and substance abuse and who are transitioning back into their communities after a period of incarceration.

Community Site: Northern Lights

Muhammad Zain-ul-Abideen and Charis Ripley-Hager, Dartmouth College Geisel School of Medicine
Partnering with Upper Valley Farm to School and UV HEAL, Zain and Charis implementing a healthy living curriculum at the Romano Circle afterschool program that will include creating a community garden, and programming that will encourage the children to

Community Site: Romano Circle

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About The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship
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. Through community-based, mentored direct service and a multidisciplinary, reflective leadership development program, ASF is building community capacity and training a professional workforce that is:

- skilled in addressing the underlying causes of health inequities;
- committed to improving the health outcomes of underserved communities; and
- prepared for a life of continued service.

To date, nearly 2,500 Schweitzer Fellows have delivered nearly 500,000 hours of service to nearly 300,000 people in need. Additionally, more than 100 Fellows have provided care at the 100-year-old Schweitzer Hospital in Lambaréné, Africa. Through this work and through the contributions of Fellows whose professional careers serve their communities, ASF perpetuates the legacy and philosophy of physician-humanitarian Dr. Albert Schweitzer. ASF has 12 program locations in the U.S. and one in Lambaréné, Africa. Its national office is located in Boston, MA and hosted by Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.