It's easy to see that health and health care are filled with disparities. During these tough economic times, when there are even greater needs to be met throughout Pittsburgh, The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship (ASF) is doing something about it.

Since 1997, ASF's Pittsburgh Schweitzer Fellows Program (one of 13 Schweitzer sites across the U.S.) has supported graduate students who wish to follow in Dr. Albert Schweitzer's footsteps. Translating their passion and idealism into action, these Schweitzer Fellows partner with community-based organizations to develop and implement yearlong service projects that improve the health and well-being of Pittsburgh's underserved people. In the process, they undergo a mentored, reflective, and multidisciplinary leadership development program that enhances their ability to successfully carry out health interventions.

our mission
To develop Leaders in Service: individuals who are dedicated to and skilled in addressing the health needs of underserved communities and whose example influences and inspires others.

Service That Makes a Dramatic Difference

Schweitzer service projects are not “band-aid” approaches to today's most pressing health issues; they're designed to have long-term impact on the health of underserved people and to create lasting relationships between professional schools, social service agencies, and communities in need. In carrying those projects from concept to completion on top of their usual academic responsibilities, Schweitzer Fellows—chosen on a competitive basis from graduate student applicants in a variety of disciplines—come away with a hard-earned blueprint for consistently integrating service into their lives.

Since the Pittsburgh Program's inception, it has supported more than 200 Fellows in providing nearly 50,000 hours of health-related community service. Fellows who complete their initial year become part of the Fellows for Life network, a pipeline of Leaders in Service now over 2,000 members strong.

Innovative Projects Meet Diverse Health Care Needs

For nearly 15 years, Pittsburgh Schweitzer Fellows have worked to address the social determinants of health through sustainable projects with direct service at their core. Examples include the following initiatives:

- Setting up permanent TB and Hepatitis B screening programs for homeless and jobless adults
- Educating parents and caregivers of special needs children on oral health preventative measures
- Establishing an OB/GYN clinic that provides both preventative and acute reproductive care services for underserved women
- Training a network of community health liaisons for Pittsburgh's Burmese refugee population
- Providing culturally competent legal counsel and referrals to Pittsburgh's Hispanic community,
- Coordinating care for inmates with mental health and substance abuse issues

The Pittsburgh Schweitzer Fellows Program not only provides services today to those in need, it invests in the students who will be caring for these same communities throughout their careers as professionals.
in their own words...

“The best part of this program is direct service with the community... designing a project given the needs of the community is essential to an individual’s personal development.”

Schweitzer Fellow Alejandra Camacho-Soto
University of Pittsburgh, School of Medicine
(pictured at left)

In school we’re most often told what to do. With the Schweitzer program, we get to implement our ideas, which come from our passions -and work with people in Pittsburgh communities. The experience, and what I learned, will stick with me for life."

Schweitzer Fellow Rebecca Altman
University of Pittsburgh, Public Health

“I can take what I’ve learned [as a Fellow]... as the essential part of my medical education, actually, and open up a free clinic on my own ... the Fellowship really takes me to the next level.”

Schweitzer Fellow Chi Zheng
University of Pittsburgh, School of Medicine
(pictured at right)

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Visit our website and blog for information about the Fellowship, the application process, the Fellows for Life alumni network, and giving securely online.

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