

**Final Report to Massachusetts Medical Society and Alliance Charitable Foundation
Submitted by the Boston Schweitzer Fellows Program
of The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship
June 1, 2012**

The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship received \$25,000 in 2011 from the Massachusetts Medical Society and Alliance Charitable Foundation to help support medical student Fellows in the 2011-2012 Boston Schweitzer Fellows Program. Fellows create and implement 200-hour health-related community service projects to address unmet health needs in local, underserved communities. In addition to their service projects with local community-based agencies, Fellows participate in structured leadership development activities throughout the year.

The 2011-2012 Boston Schweitzer Fellows submitted their final reports in May. Among the 25 Fellows that completed the Fellowship, six were medical student Fellows supported by the Massachusetts Medical Society and Alliance Charitable Foundation. A summary of their outcomes and achievements follows.

Fellows' Project Outcome Summaries

Evan Barnathan, Tufts University School of Medicine



Barnathan addressed the lack of music programming in Boston public schools by creating an a cappella singing group for teenagers at the Josiah Quincy Upper School in Boston's Chinatown neighborhood. Students rehearsed weekly and performed modern pop/rock songs for their peers, families, and communities at their school and throughout Chinatown. The group also gained exposure to music production, recording several selections with a professional sound engineer. Participation in the group afforded opportunities for teamwork, helped to promote self-confidence and encouraged creativity.
Community Site: [Josiah Quincy Upper School](#)

“Throughout [my] few years in high school, I thought to myself, ‘Wouldn’t it be amazing to have singing club or something of the sort.’ I wanted to sing so bad.... And nobody ever knew, not even my own family knew that I wanted to sing. I wanted to have it a part of my life. It never happened until you came along. At the end of last year when you came along, I thought it was a miracle.” – Participant, 11th grade

“Through the Fellowship, I gained a better understanding of the roles various healthcare professionals play in today’s evolving healthcare system. Moving forward, I plan to keep an open line of communication between social workers, nurses, public health professionals, dentists, etc. in the name of delivering top-notch care for my patients.”
– Evan Barnathan

Photos: Josiah Quincy Upper School A Cappella Group



Barnathan leading the group's warm-up



Students performing at their final show in March



Over 50 family members, friends, and teachers came to cheer on the students at their final performance

Abhiram Bhashyam and Alister Martin, Harvard Medical School



Bhashyam and Martin enhanced the educational and professional opportunities of students in Jamaica Plain and Roxbury, MA by creating a mentorship program that incorporates motivational speaking, active mentoring, and tutoring. The project exposed students to the power of education as it impacts personal and national health. Bhashyam and Martin aimed to uplift, motivate, and support students using

shared personal narratives and sustained interaction and communication in person and with modern technology.

Community Sites: [City on a Hill Charter School](#), [Tobin Community Center](#), and [Yawkey Club of Roxbury](#)

“The bonds formed at the Tobin community center, City on Hill, and at the Boys and Girls Club of Boston have meant a great deal to us and although we know we weren’t able to fix all the problems that we saw at each place respectively, we are left humbled by the fact that this work will be a lifelong process and we will be committed to it for as long as we are able to.” – Abhiram Bhashyam and Alister Martin

Talya Brettler, University of Massachusetts Medical School



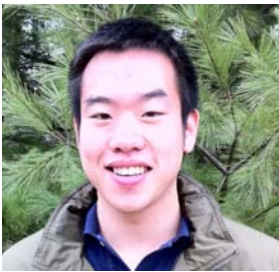
Brettler addressed obstacles to the delivery of quality healthcare for the underserved in Worcester, by working to improve communication, collaboration, and quality among the four free health clinics in the area. The clinic leaders now meet on a regular basis, along with a team of student volunteers devoted to clinic administrative matters. She worked with the student leaders to address some of their biggest challenges, including physician recruitment, primary care access, and data collection.

In doing so, Brettler coordinated a collaboration with the UMass Quality Improvement group, empowering many medical and nursing students to improve the quality of care provided at the clinics.

Community Site: [Worcester Free Clinic Coalition](#)

“I saw a patient we will call Mary at the Akwaaba clinic. Mary came in complaining of chest pain. .. The doctor asked Mary a number of questions, took her pulse, and did a cardiovascular exam. He then did his best to explain to the patient that he thought she had unstable angina, and while she did not need to seek immediate care in the emergency room, he highly advised that she see a cardiologist as soon as possible. At this, he turned to me to ask what we could arrange.... Mary did not have health insurance, but fortunately, she came to clinic on a week when an insurance counselor was present.... I gathered all of the necessary information so that I could make the referral during business hours the next day. About two weeks later, I got a voicemail from Mary: *I just wanted to say thank you, because you really helped me.*” – Talya Brettler

Alan Hsu, Tufts Medical School, MD/MPH Program



Hsu's project encouraged youth in Boston's Chinatown to view and explore health through a wider "lens" through a photography program which explored the multiple and varied determinants of health. Equipped with cameras, children at the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center's (BCNC) Youth Center documented their own communities, exploring themes such as food, art, environment, nature, and culture. At the conclusion of the project, with an expansive body of work in their own photos, the children

gained an understanding on how photography can be used to capture and illustrate powerful themes. An electronic book of the youth's photos can be accessed here:

<http://tinyurl.com/asf-hsu>.

Community Site: [Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center](#)

“I felt that this year, unbeknownst to me at the beginning, was likely a fork in the road and choosing to do the Schweitzer Fellowship not only led me in the path less traveled, but a path which I believe will lead me to do similar service work in the future.”

– Alan Hsu

Photos: Lens on Health



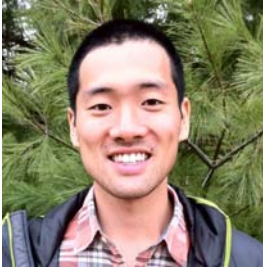
Hsu teaching youth how about photography



Photo credit: Shawn Read 2012

BCNC presented Governor Deval Patrick with a book of the youth's photos

Jonathan Lee, Harvard Medical School



Lee addressed HIV/AIDS and chronic disease among marginalized patients living in the Greater Boston area by developing and delivering a patient empowerment curriculum alongside community-based health workers who provide essential accompaniment and support services for these patients. Lee's "Adherence Transition Intervention" curriculum targeted HIV/AIDS patient agency and life-skills development to support independence in managing complex treatment regimens.

Ultimately, Lee's project has helped pave the way for the agency to empower its patients with the knowledge, skills, and self-care to manage their antiretroviral therapies as well as to further address structural issues in the healthcare delivery system that perpetually allow vulnerable patients to "fall through the cracks."

Community Sites: [Prevention and Access to Care and Treatment \(PACT\) Program](#), [Partners in Health/Brigham and Women's Hospital](#)

"[M]y understanding of the social and environmental determinants of health and its disparities was significantly deepened by my time working with the Schweitzer and PACT Project. In particular, I have gained insight into how health disparities may manifest itself in the varying levels of medication adherence amongst an HIV patient population." – Jonathan Lee

Fellowship Activities

Leadership Development Meetings

Throughout the year, Fellows actively participated in monthly Fellowship activities focused on their development as 'leaders in service'. The Fellowship year ended with a closing retreat on April 1 and Celebration of Service on May 3.

Meeting topics included:

- Advocacy
- Community-based participatory research
- Cradle-to-prison pipeline (juvenile justice and education)
- Cross-cultural skills and power dynamics
- Effective communication
- Global health
- Health behavior change
- Health care reform
- Health literacy
- Homelessness
- Human rights
- Innovative leadership
- Project planning and implementation
- Project sustainability

Fellows for Life Conference

In October, Fellows had the special opportunity to attend The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship's national annual conference *Achieving Health Equity Together* featuring a keynote address by George Thibault, MD about inter-professional education

Breakout session topics included:

- Healthcare Reform and Its Implications
- Making the Connection: Linking Underserved African American Women to Breast Cancer Screenings

- Massachusetts' Diabetes Crisis: Today and Future Trends
- Beyond Cultural Competency: Contextualizing Multiculturalism to Address Health Inequities
- Found in Translation: Practical Ideas for Improving Communication with Spanish-Speaking Patients

Read a conference recap here: <http://tinyurl.com/asf2011conf>

Public Outreach Activities

Each year, the Boston Fellows also conducted a series of public outreach activities that aimed to:

- Educate students in health related fields, professionals, and/or the general public about current local health disparities and unmet health needs;
- Strengthen existing links among the Schweitzer Fellows Program, community agencies, and professional schools;
- Identify new community organizations and other partners that the Schweitzer Fellows Program may collaborate with in the future;
- Help Fellows develop leadership, organizational, and team building skills useful in future public education activities;
- Provide Fellows with an experience of collaborative and shared responsibility within a small interdisciplinary group.

The 2011-2012 Fellows organized the following activities:

This year's Fellows' public outreach activities are complete:

Dana Farber Cancer Institute's Jimmy Fund Walk: Fellows helped to raise money and awareness for cancer research and treatment and volunteered at the five-mile start on the day of the walk.

Family Fitness Fun Night at the Tobin Community Center: Fellows facilitated a Zumba class and health cooking session for families in Mission Hill. The program supervisor was so pleased that he is working with the Fellows to continue their involvement in the Family Fitness Fun Nights.

Nutrition and Health Fair, Roxbury Boys and Girls Club and Greater Boston Food Bank: Fellows organized activities that included oral hygiene, hand hygiene with soap making, education on sugar content in popular beverages, fitness and dance, yoga and relaxation, and healthy eating with homemade smoothies. Approximately 150-175 children ranging in age from 5-14 participated in the event. The Director of the Roxbury BGC appreciated the wide range of topics, and the parents reported they were pleased this event was available for their children.

Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center's Oak Street Fair: Fellows organized stations related to health and nutrition including oral health screenings, cranial nerve exams, and healthy food taste tests (photos below).



Evaluation

ASF conducts systematic evaluation in order to measure its impact and to continuously improve its programs. The pre- and post-Fellowship surveys of Fellows, as well as the final written reports the Fellows submit, capture data on the impact of the Fellowship experience and the Fellows' projects on the Fellows, the clients served, the host agencies, and schools. The post-Fellowship survey completed by site mentors also help measure these impacts. The combination of data allows us to analyze more thoroughly the impact of our program on clients, agencies, schools, and Fellows and, thus, build a stronger program.

Our most recent 2010-11 survey results show that our Fellows' projects are making an impact. 2011-12 survey results will be available summer 2012.

- 6,302 clients were served
- 95% of community site mentors reported that they would recommend participating in the Schweitzer Fellows Program to another community-based agency
- 92% of Fellows reported that participation in the Fellowship increased their skills to integrate themselves into a community in a culturally appropriate manner
- 100% of Fellows reported that participation in the Fellowship increased their skills to set realistic goals for a project.

Expense Report

The funds (\$25,000) provided by Massachusetts Medical Society and Alliance Charitable Foundation are being used to support the six 2011-2012 medical student Fellows in their projects and leadership development activities.

Direct Expenses	
Stipends paid to Fellows ¹	\$7,500
Leadership Development	\$17,500
Total Expenses	\$25,000

Conclusion

We are grateful to the MMS Alliance and Charitable Foundation for supporting the work of our Fellows to improve the health and of individuals in our communities in Massachusetts and for including the Schweitzer Fellowship in the important and inspiring work the Foundation does.

¹ The standard stipend is \$3,000. The total stipend cost for these six medical student Fellows is \$18,000. Harvard Medical School and Tufts School of Medicine and Public Health Programs pay a portion of their Fellows' stipends (Tufts contributes \$6,000; Harvard contributes \$4,500).