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# Chicago Schweitzer Fellows

## Fellow Promotes Healthier Pilsen Halloween

As a 2008 Schweitzer Fellow, I am always looking for creative ways to enrich my community and myself as well! In Pilsen, a predominantly Latino and low income community on Chicago's south west side, I visit a local pediatric clinic once a week to present bilingual information to patients about how to have a healthy diet on a budget. This Halloween, I wanted to infuse some good old-fashioned health education into the slew of candy, gum, and sugary drinks that will be contributing to the kids' belly-aches the next day.

"Healthy Halloween" was a special edition of my waiting room nutrition education project. I set up a table on 18<sup>th</sup> street in Pilsen and passed out healthy snacks with nutrition tips stapled to the packaging. These included bags of natural popcorn with a message about fiber and a healthy heart,

*(Cont. on p. 4)*



**Bobby Redwood brought his health messages to the streets**

## Examining the Schweitzer Program as Public Health Training Tool



**Schweitzer Fellows at a monthly meeting**

The Schweitzer Fellowship doesn't define itself as a public health training program. However, Schweitzer Fellows often conduct public health services and go on to continue careers in public service, usually related to health. This may arguably make many Fellows for Life public health professionals. There are about 7 million health professionals in the U.S., and only 300,000 of them are considered part of the public health workforce, making Schweitzer Fellows part of a unique group of people. With such a limited public health workforce, it is critical that it is of high quality in order to address the complex public health issues of today. Nationally, only 25% of public health professionals receive formal training at schools of public health, although all are trained in some other health profession. Locally, most Schweitzer Fellows do not come from public health training programs, but rather from a wide range of health and social service fields. Janna Stansell, a Fellow in 2007-08, decided to delve deeper into the

*(Cont. on p. 3)*

## Fellows for Life Conference a Success, Chicago will host in 2009



October 4<sup>th</sup> marked the second annual Fellows for Life Conference in Boston, MA. Fellows for Life from across the country came together with Schweitzer Program staff and Board of Directors members for a day jam-packed with inspiring guest speakers, discussion sessions, and networking. Leaders in service provided skill-building seminars, shared their service stories, and offered advice on how to become the best change agent one can be. Several Chicago Area Fellows and Fellows for Life attended the conference, including Sonia Kennedy, Andrew Loehrer, Camille Quinn, Chastity Rolling, Elizabeth Salisbury, Janna Stansell, Mark Stoltenberg, and Jennifer Young.



Fellows felt refreshed and rejuvenated after the conference. Mark Stoltenberg, a current Fellow remarked, “The conference provided an oasis. Not only was I surrounded by others that were interested and committed to the same goals as me, but most of them are pursuing these goals more effectively and passionately than I am. So, not only was it a brief window of support—it was also a push for me to work even harder.”

Clockwise from upper left corner: Chastity Rolling, Jennifer Young, Janna Stansell, Elizabeth Salisbury, Mark Stoltenberg

The Fellows for Life Conference will be hosted in Chicago next year! We are very excited to have been given the responsibility and honor of hosting the 2009 Fellows for Life Conference on October 17, 2009, and we look forward to working with the Boston staff and Chicago Area Fellows and Fellows for Life to make it a success!



## “Las Caras Lindas” Takes New York



For my Schweitzer project, I am working with Las Caras Lindas, which is a self esteem program to help adolescent girls (ages 12-18) define themselves as women by exploring who they are as individuals, members of their community and leaders in our society. Las Caras Lindas serves girls in the Humboldt Park Community on Chicago’s northwest side.

Humboldt Park is a culturally rich community and home to a high concentration of Puerto Ricans. There are over 75,000 residents, with a nearly even split between African American (47%) and Latinos (48%). Approximately one third of the

*(Cont. on page 4)*

## Fellow's Program Helps Albany Park Kids Stay Active

Two years ago I met with the Coordinator of the Healthy Albany Park Coalition in her small backroom office at a northwest-side Chicago community health center. I asked her, "What can I do?" The coordinator raised the idea of helping to create a small sports equipment exchange project and now the idea has grown into a full-fledged physical recreation program, called, "The Albany Park Sports Club."

The program provides new and gently used sports equipment for underserved families along with hosting weekly physical recreation activities at a community park to encourage routine exercise. Albany Park has one of the most diverse and largest immigrant populations in the city. It also has a significantly high rate of childhood obesity when compared to other Chicago neighborhoods.

*(Cont. on page 6)*



### *Fellowship as Public Health Training Tool (cont.)*

Schweitzer Fellowship experience and examine how the program acts as a public health training tool for a group of probable public health professionals not formally being trained in public health practice.

Janna qualitatively analyzed data from focus groups held with Chicago Area Fellows in 2005 and 2006 to see how well the Program experiences mapped on to the core competencies and essential services of public health practice. Janna also considered how well interdisciplinary bonds were established, as many institutions call for a more interdisciplinary approach to public health problems.

**“The Fellowship enhanced the educational experience and provided practice in areas not taught in school.”**

She discovered that Fellows learned skills related to the core competencies and 10 essential services of public health, including: assessment, planning, evaluation, health education, acting as a resource, communication, management/leadership, cultural competency, and advocacy, and that Fellows felt that their career opportunities were enhanced by the Fellowship.

Fellows also faced and overcame many barriers throughout the program, felt well-supported by their project site, faculty, and alumni mentors; and experienced several changes in their project plans throughout the year. The Fellowship enhanced the educational experience and provided practice in areas not taught in school. The Fellowship reinforced the desire of many Fellows to work with communities, especially communities that are typically underserved in the health system. It allowed for Fellows to network with a diverse group of health professionals, allowing the development of interdisciplinary bonds and increased awareness of various perspectives within the health field.

Janna found that there were some ways in which the Schweitzer Program did not map on well to the public health core competencies. The Fellowship does not have a strong focus on rigorous program evaluation and does not provide opportunities for fellows to learn fiscal management, advanced research skills, or the basic health sciences. She does not see these areas as large deficits, however, because the Program acts fairly well as a public health training and professional development tool, preparing the future public health workforce to face complex public health challenges. Janna said, “The Schweitzer Fellowship program should consider to what extent it should call itself a type of public health training program as it is well worthy of this title.”

*To view Janna's full report, please go to [www.hmprg.org](http://www.hmprg.org).*

*Las Caras Lindas (cont.)*



families live below the poverty level and more than 50% are below twice the poverty level. Youth aged 10-24 make up a significant portion of the population and approximately half of all youth are adolescent girls.

Recently, Las Caras Lindas returned from an eventful weekend in New

York City as a part of our cultural immersion experience. This trip provided each of our 8 participants with a truly memorable opportunity. Through our visits to many tourist sites like MOMA, Empire State Building, Statue of Liberty and Madam Tussaud's Wax Museum the girls were given the opportunity to see, touch and feel things that they have only read about. However, it was our conversations and interactions with Ivan Sanchez, author of "Next Stop," New York DJ SuperSize SpanishFly Lynx and actress April Lee Hernandez, from the movie "Freedom Writers," that really helped the girls to understand how to turn their life challenges into something positive for themselves and their communities and to do so with a spirit of excellence.

Our many lessons ranged from small to big. Simply navigating the streets of New York forced each of us to recognize each others strengths/ weaknesses and to learn to work together in new ways.

Some were able to identify new strengths about themselves while others learned to communicate more effectively with each other. By the end of the trip several of the girls commented that they had different appreciation for Chicago that they would not have had otherwise. Overall, the feedback that we have received from the girls thus far has proven this trip to be a very defining moment on various levels and in many different ways.

The most defining moment for me was sitting in a small park near Times Square with Author Ivan Sanchez and artist Robert Castillo while listening to April Lee Hernandez ask each girl to explicitly state their dream in life. Several of the young women had dreams but had not yet had the moment to share their dreams with others in quite that way. One young woman came away from the experience knowing that "her dream was to find a dream."

I thought to myself, "This is what this trip was all about! To provide the girls with an opportunity to experience life surrounded by people with unique backgrounds, diverse cultures and model leaders who are using their "story" to make a purposeful difference in their communities.



-Monika Black, 2008-09 Fellow

*(Monika is a DePaul University psychology student)*

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*A Healthy Halloween (cont.)*

attached, and pre-packaged "Apple Dippers" with information about eating 1-2 cups of fruit per day. Kids who could provide me with an additional reason why the snacks were healthy were given a spooky sticker to wear. All materials were donated, the air was nice and crisp, and all I needed then was some "silk" to go with my corn on the cob costume!

I have also been working to improve my effectiveness in the pediatric waiting room. I have learned that my role at the clinic is not just to be a presenter, but to be an engager as well. For example, I have started recruiting children to assist me by flipping the pages of the posters for me. Simple steps like this invite children to have fun with the presentation and also have helped earn me trust from the parents. I'm always looking for more ways to be an "engager," so please contact me at bobby.redwood@gmail.com if you have any suggestions.

**“Kids who could provide an additional reason why the snack was healthy also got a spooky sticker to wear.”**

--Bobby Redwood, 2008-09 Fellow  
*(Bobby is a Rush University medical student)*

## Fellows Organize Voter Registration Drive



*Fellows at voter registration table- Jazz Festival*

Chicago Area Schweitzer Fellows organized a nonpartisan Voter Registration Drive, targeting college age students (a demographic that is often uninsured and also underrepresented) and also minority/low income citizens. The Fellows were able to get permission to register voters at Truman College, a community college in Chicago's Uptown neighborhood, one of the most diverse neighborhoods in the city. They also arranged to register voters at the annual Hyde Park Jazz Festival on September 27. In addition, some Fellows registered voters at their community project sites. The Fellows succeeded in registering 175 people, many of whom indicated they were first time voters.

"This was an excellent way to be involved in a community on a short term basis," said Sophie Hermann, a UIC medical student, who helped plan the service day. "I enjoyed talking

to Truman students about their eligibility and hearing from a lot of people that this is an urgent election. It was an uplifting and meaningful service experience."

"I really enjoyed registering people at my site," commented Ruth Marshall, a DePaul University music student. "It was a great way to meet people from the community, and a simple way for them to feel more empowered and more active as citizens."

*(Cont. on page 6)*

### Program Welcomes New Project Assistant



Janna Stansell became the new Chicago Area Schweitzer Fellows Project Assistant in September, 2008. The Program was sad to learn that Andrew Udofia, the Project Assistant for the past 2 years, would be leaving in order to move to Kansas City. He was such a

valuable asset to the Fellows, the Advisory Council, the Sites, and to Health and Medicine. However, the program feels fortunate and thrilled that Janna Stansell, a Fellow in 2007-08, and a recent graduate of the UIC School of Public Health, assumed his position. Janna is also supervising another project at Health and Medicine, and is excited to be working closely with the Program.

As a Fellow, Janna worked at the Chicago Christian Industrial League providing fitness classes and health discussion groups for residents. As a Policy Analyst for Health and Medicine, Janna also coordinates the Health Care Safety Net project, which looks to improve the health system for northern Illinois residents who are un- or underinsured.

### Fellows for Life Partner with Rush University to Support Underrepresented Nursing Students

To help address the nation's serious and growing shortage of nurses, Fellows for Life and Rush University College of Nursing are collaborating on an exciting mentoring project for underrepresented student nurses. The project will match 10 Fellows for Life Mentors who are in the nursing field with student nurses to provide them with guidance, encouragement and support, and to help the students develop their leadership capabilities. The project will last 18 months, covering the nursing students while they are completing their degree work at Rush. The nursing students were recipients of a special Robert Wood Johnson/Rush University scholarship.

The program will kick off with a welcome dinner on December 17, 2008.



**To support the work of the Chicago Area Schweitzer Fellows Program and the Fellows for Life Program, please donate online at [www.hmprg.org](http://www.hmprg.org)**

*Voter Registration Drive (cont.)*

“Sharing the day (at the Hyde Park Jazz Festival) and connecting with new people was invigorating,” Laura Granros, a Chicago School of Professional Psychology student said. “The people I met and registered to vote at the festival seemed hopeful about the election and determined to participate. I too registered to vote for the first time in Illinois! The act of registering in my new home state filled me with a sense of ownership and pride, a sense of empowerment that I think all newly registered voters felt that day.”

“I think the voter registration drive was an excellent idea. I had such a great time there,” remarked Birtukan Belew, a medical student at Northwestern University. “I felt that I was contributing to the process although I cannot vote myself. What surprised me was how receptive people were, and also how invested people were in this election. When I asked if they were registered, more than 90% of the time the answer was “absolutely,” with a forceful voice and nod. It made me feel good to see that. Some people were indeed offended that I asked because for them voting was so important... At the end I was glad that I asked everyone with no preconceived notion of who is informed and who is not.”



*Albany Park Sports Club (cont.)*

Donated sports equipment is distributed at three health fair events throughout the year. The most recent distribution event occurred at the Albany Park Community Center on Saturday, October 11th. At the fall event, several City of Chicago organizations participated and made available many important services. The Chicago Department of Public Health provided immunizations and lead screenings for school-aged children. The Office of the Chicago City Clerk provided children’s identification cards using the City’s new KID ID computer system. And the Chicago Department of Transportation had Mayor Daley’s Safe Route Ambassadors properly fit child and adult bicycle helmets donated by Children’s Memorial Hospital to all 130 attendees plus volunteers.

**“Albany Park Sports Club has become a successful program by the teamwork of its coordinators.”**

Albany Park Sports Club has become a successful program by the teamwork of its coordinators. As a Fellow, I am part of the team along with -- Berenice Neri, from the Albany Park Community Center, Radhika Sharma-Gordon, Coordinator of the Healthy Albany Park Coalition, Kathryn Kruse, previous coordinator of the Healthy Albany Coalition, and Louise Wasilowski, who is also a Chicago Area Schweitzer Fellow and a DePaul University Nursing Student.



If you have equipment you would like to donate or for more information, please visit the Albany Park Sports Club’s website at: [www.albanyparksports.com](http://www.albanyparksports.com)

-John Leahey, 2008-09 Fellow

*(John is a Northwestern University public policy and administration student)*

## *Make Your Life Your Argument!*



Now in its thirteenth year, the Chicago Area Schweitzer Fellows Program addresses the health needs and well-being of underserved and vulnerable communities throughout Chicago. Each year we select 30 health professional students as Fellows and match them with community-based organizations where they design and implement direct service projects aimed at improving health and access to health care.

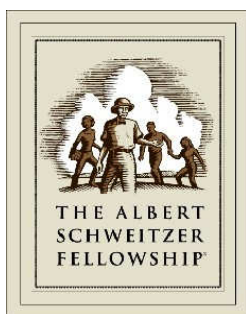
For example, last year Adrienne Hampton, a medical student from Northwestern University, taught prenatal yoga classes at the PCC Wellness Health Center to alleviate some of the stress experienced in pregnancy. Jessica Horwitz, a DePaul University nursing student, taught teen health promoters at Uplift Community School to educate their peers to eat healthier and be more physically active. Deresha Gibson, a Loyola University social work student, worked with Heart to Heart to create a network among seniors to help reduce loneliness and isolation.

Our Program has a secondary objective: to cultivate a cadre of aspiring health professionals to embark on a lifelong path of service. We draw upon Dr. Albert Schweitzer's ethic of "Reverence for Life" and his vision that a wealth of idealism and altruism exists in communities that can be tapped as a powerful instrument against the problems facing the poor and underserved. In addition to 200 hours of direct service, other elements of our Program are designed to inspire and inform the Fellows, and to reinforce their commitment to humanitarian service. These include monthly meetings, symposia on pertinent public health issues and service days. Fellows receive a \$2,000 stipend for their participation.

Nationally over 1800 Schweitzer Fellows in the fields of medicine, law, public health, psychology, social work, pharmacy, occupational therapy, music and others have followed Dr. Schweitzer's example and "made their lives their argument."

**Application Deadline: Friday, February 6, 2009**

For further information, including application guidelines, contact Ray Wang, [rwang@hmprg.org](mailto:rwang@hmprg.org) or visit [www.hmprg.org](http://www.hmprg.org)



The Chicago Area Schweitzer Fellows Program, a collaborative effort of The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship™ and the Health and Medicine Policy Research Group, provides service learning opportunities and support for graduate level health professional students interested in working with individuals and communities who are underserved by the health care system. In partnership with existing community-based organizations, Schweitzer Fellows initiate diverse and innovative projects to improve health and access to care. The Program envisions that the Fellows are embarking upon a lifelong commitment to serve the most vulnerable members of our society. The Chicago Program is one of 11 Schweitzer Fellows Programs nationwide, and is administered by Health and Medicine Policy Research Group.

For information visit <http://www.hmprg.org> or email Ray Wang at [rwang@hmprg.org](mailto:rwang@hmprg.org).

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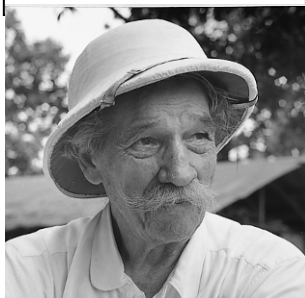
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Schweitzer Fellowship  
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Advisory Council Chair &  
National Schweitzer Board

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**Chicago Area Schweitzer Fellowship Events**

**Dec. 4, 2008 (Thurs.) 6:00pm-8:00pm – Fellows for Life Wine and Cheese Fundraiser**

*New Wine, New Trends, New Challenges, New Friends*  
The Home of Dr. Quentin Young, Chicago, IL  
*Admission Donation Requested. For more information or to RSVP: [jstansell@hmprg.org](mailto:jstansell@hmprg.org) or call 312 372-4292 ext. 25*

**Jan. 7, 2008 (Wed.) 6:00pm- 8:00pm – Information session for graduate students interested in applying for Schweitzer Fellowships**

*Health and Medicine Policy Research Group  
29 E. Madison Street, Suite 602, Chicago, IL  
RSVP to [rwang@hmprg.org](mailto:rwang@hmprg.org) or call 312 372-4292 ext. 24*

**Feb. 6, 2009 (Fri.) – Application Deadline for 2009-2010 Schweitzer Fellowships**

*For guidelines, please visit [www.hmprg.org](http://www.hmprg.org) or email [rwang@hmprg.org](mailto:rwang@hmprg.org) or call 312 372-4292 ext. 24*

**April 16, 2008 (Thurs.) 6:00pm – Schweitzer Annual Event**

*Northwestern University  
Lurie Research Center, Hughes Auditorium  
303 E. Superior Street, Chicago, IL  
For more information, please email [rwang@hmprg.org](mailto:rwang@hmprg.org) or call 312-372-4292 ext 24*

*Everyone has his Lambaréné.  
- Albert Schweitzer*

We express our gratitude to:

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and the many individuals  
and families who support  
the Schweitzer Program.