



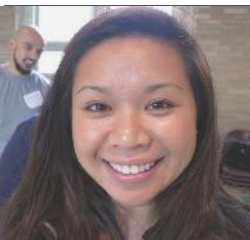
SUMMER 2016

# CHICAGO SCHWEITZER FELLOWS NEWSLETTER

The Chicago Area Schweitzer Fellowship is a Program of Health & Medicine Policy Research Group

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### MENTOR SPOTLIGHT:

#### JOANNA VILLACORTA

*Schweitzer Fellows have the unique opportunity to design and implement a community project and to be in the “driver’s seat” with regard to ensuring their project is a success. Each of the Fellows has the strong support of several mentors, including a Fellow for Life mentor. Joanna Villacorta, a 2014-15 Fellow who is now serving as a Fellow for Life mentor, shared her reflections about guiding a group of Fellows:*

My experiences as a Student Mentor this year have helped me to see a wider view of the Schweitzer Fellowship; they have led me to feel much more part of a network of people working to create a more equitable and just society.

I deeply enjoy my group of mentees and continue to be so

*Cont. on pg. 4*

## Chicago Schweitzer Fellows Program Marks 20th Year!

*Conference in April, 2016 Will Advance  
Community Health, Health Equity*

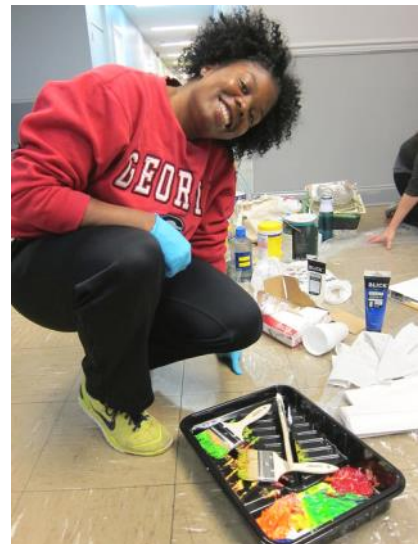
The Chicago Schweitzer Fellows Program is “making no little plans” to celebrate its 20th year. Since 1996, the Fellowship has provided graduate health professions students opportunities to act upon their idealism through innovative direct service projects to improve the health and well-being of underserved individuals and families throughout the city and surrounding communities. “They learn much about leadership, problem solving, the powerful difference that individuals with a conscience can make,” said Dr. Quentin Young, founder and chairman of the program. “We believe that these marvelous young people are embarking on a lifelong commitment to making a difference.”

To date, nearly 550 Chicago Schweitzer Fellows have partnered with 200 area clinics, schools, social service agencies and other community organizations, helping these nonprofits expand their capacities. While conducting their projects, the Fellows gain valuable experience listening to the community and tailoring their projects to best serve the community’s needs. In addition, seeing firsthand how health inequities undermine communities’ ability to thrive helps to inform and motivate these aspiring change agents.

Chicago Schweitzer Program staff are busy planning a spring 2016 weekend conference that will provide Fellows, Fellows for Life and the Schweitzer community the chance to come together and share inspiration, best practices and opportunities for collaboration. The weekend will kick off with the 2016 Schweitzer Leadership award event on Fri., April 29, which will honor a local public servant for their work to mitigate the social determinants of health. On Sat., April 30, the Schweitzer conference will be held at the Loyola School of Law’s Water Tower campus. And on Sun., a service event will give the Schweitzer community a chance to work together and have fun. Register for all the events online at <http://www.hmprg.org/Events/Schweitzer20th>



Mural painting project at FACES in Uptown



## A SEASON OF SERVICE: SCHWEITZER FELLOWS IN THE COMMUNITY

In addition to the year-long projects each Fellow directs to help underserved Chicago communities, Fellows also work together in small teams to plan and hold different outreach events. This fall, teams of Fellows: organized a “Love Is Respect” symposium to help 24 high school student leaders respond to the alarming problem of dating violence amongst youth; held a mural painting and “makeover” service day to help an agency for refugees seem more inviting; and planned a thanksgiving service day for the artists, staff and volunteers of Arts of Life, an organization that provides arts programming for adults with or without intellectual disabilities.

*Many thanks to Chef Chao and his team from Union Sushi for donating the Arts of Life thanksgiving meal!*



Thanksgiving service day at Arts of Life



Dating violence prevention training for student leaders in Bronzeville



## M. FRED FRIEDMAN RECEIVES 2015 SCHWEITZER LEADERSHIP AWARD

The Schweitzer Leadership Award recognizes an individual who has done significant work to mitigate the social determinants of health in our community, and whose commitment to service has influenced and inspired others. This year, the Fellows for Life Selection Committee honored M. Fred Friedman, co-founder and chief organizer of Next Steps NFP, a nonprofit organization that works to ensure that people with lived experience of homelessness, mental illness, substance use, or addiction are active leaders in the development and implementation of healthcare, housing, and social policies.

On Wednesday June 24, 2015 the Schweitzer community gathered at Loyola University Chicago for the Schweitzer Leadership Award event to honor and celebrate the work of M. Fred Friedman. Excerpts from Mr. Friedman's acceptance speech are included below. More photos and a transcript of Mr. Friedman's speech can be found at <http://hmprg.org/Events/2015Leadership>.

“In my youth when I saw an unjust war, I tried to stop it. When I was a young man, I saw economic, social, and environmental injustice. I tried to redress it. I see a fragmented, dysfunctional, under-funded homeless and behavioral health system, I try to improve it. I think of my work as a war. I fight by being in the rooms when public policy is being debated, where laws are made, where policy is discussed and decided, where funding is allocated, and where education is delivered... While I have many regrets, I do not regret a single battle. I regret the battles I did not join either because of my symptoms or because I simply cannot be in two places at once.”

“I both hope and believe that people recover. Recovery does not mean cure, or even complete remission of symptoms. Hope is basic to recovery. And I'm here to tell you that hope is real. In a life where the symptoms of mental illness can cause disaster, hope is real. We may lose almost everything. I lost my wife of 24 years, my profession of 20 years and my home of 10 years, yet I know that hope is real. I spent most of last year in bed and may not get out of bed tomorrow, but hope is real. My illness often makes me forget, but hope is not up for debate. There is such a thing as false science; there is such a thing as false promises; and I have made more than my share of false starts. But there is no such thing as false hope. There is only hope.”



***Mentor Spotlight - cont. from pg. 1***

impressed and inspired by their stories in their monthly reports. They approach their work with passion and dedication. I have also noticed that, although they lead very busy lives, they have not been jaded or burned out! I have also been pleasantly surprised with how swiftly they overcome or reframe their "boulders." Although they have encountered many challenges, they only seem to ask, "What else can I do?" I have also been energized by observing the fellows' interactions over social media. They invite each other to events, network, and even join each others' advocacy efforts! Many of them have inspired and enlightened me to become more engaged in both service and also networking within the Schweitzer network.

My experiences as a Student Mentor have also led me to reflect on my own professional development, particularly as it pertains to staying in direct service as opposed to working in policy. I have been very touched by some of the Fellows' self-reflections on how the Fellowship has changed them, especially those who are in fields in which it is very easy to be a student and professional without ever interacting with high-needs populations. I realized that, to me, these are the types of students for whom the Fellowship can have the greatest impact because they are most likely to come into contact with those who have the power to change policies and circumstances for the highest needs segments of society. It benefits those whom I serve directly that the future doctors, lawyers, and professionals of America have seen first-hand their plight, an experience which was made possible through the Fellowship. Therefore, mentoring has helped me to see that, even if I chose to go into policy work later in my career, it still benefits those I directly serve today to have someone creating policies and programs who has stood in the trenches and knows what life is like on the ground.

When I originally agreed to be a Schweitzer Student Mentor, I thought my role would be to give back to the Fellowship. What I did not anticipate is that the experience of mentoring would also lead me to better understand myself and my own professional development. While I hope that I have contributed and will continue to impact the Fellows in a meaningful way, I also hope that mentoring continues to drive me forward in my own development of a life of service.



## **Working to Improve Veterans' Health Outcomes: Fellow for Life Amina Ghalyoun**

*Amina Ghalyoun was a Schweitzer Fellow in 2012-13 while she was a student of the Midwestern University Chicago College of Pharmacy. She is now in the 2nd year of a pharmacy residency in ambulatory care at the John D. Dingell Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center in Detroit, Michigan. The majority of her patients are from the lower peninsula of Michigan, and are veterans of the Vietnam War.*

I'm working to improve health outcomes in patients with chronic disease states (diabetes, high blood pressure, dyslipidemia), medication adherence, safety, and patient quality of life. My personal goals include improving healthcare access for

both veteran and non-veteran patients. I also want to spread clinical pharmacy services available to Veterans outside the Veterans Affairs Health system.

My Schweitzer Fellowship experience encouraged me to do this residency. When I was a Fellow, working with inner city students and learning about obstacles to healthcare access sparked my passion about public health and outpatient care. It also taught me the importance of working with like-minded individuals and partnering with professionals in other disciplines to really improve quality of life for everyone, and to push medicine and society forward. I also continue to learn so much from the other Fellows.

I've had a veteran come to me and cry in my office because he could not get his blood sugars under control. He couldn't meet his health goals. When I saw him crying and struggling, it made me realize that we have to come up with other solutions to help people reach their health goals. I think it's important to give veterans the time to tell you about themselves. Even when their appointment with me is short, I usually ask the veterans questions about themselves, to tell their stories -- that's how I get to know them and how best to help them. I always ask them about their health goals, what they want in life. I've found that strategy works very well to creating safe spaces for patients to heal.

I would like to devote my career to involve pharmacists in different outpatient settings. I truly believe that ambulatory care pharmacists can be the solution to the shortage of primary care providers. My dream is start a free clinic run by pharmacists in an inner city setting.

## CREATING A SAFE & WELCOMING SPACE FOR LGBT REFUGEES AND ASYLEES



“This is a group that often experiences isolation from society due to legal hurdles, institutional discrimination and language barriers.”

For my Schweitzer Fellowship project, I am creating a social group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) refugees and asylum seekers to come together in community. This is a group that often experiences isolation from society due to legal hurdles, institutional discrimination and language barriers. Our group aims to provide opportunities to meet new people, receive social support and explore Chicago – improving physical and mental well-being in the process.

December was a month of incredible growth for the group. We had two highly-attended events. At the beginning of the month, ten of us went to a free day at the Field Museum. It was the first time some of the participants had met each other, and they enjoyed taking lots of pictures, exploring the museum, and getting to know each other. A highlight for me was visiting the Africa exhibit- African group members chatted about maps of their regions and shared memories of home. I think a lot of the group members would tell you that the dinosaur bones were a highlight - I have noticed a lot of dinosaur selfies in WhatsApp profile pictures since our visit!

The second group event was my favorite moment of the fellowship so far. We held a big holiday party featuring diverse homemade cuisines. Participants met me early in the day to go grocery shopping at an African grocery store. They selected ingredients, everyone brought recipes, and we all cooked together! We had

Nigerian jollof rice, goat meat soup from Uganda, a Sri Lankan vegetarian dish inspired by a member’s host family, a big salad and delicious “Arabic sweets” from Jordan for dessert. Fifteen group members and three Schweitzer fellows attended. Everyone got involved in cooking and talking about their recipes, we shared music and dancing, and the food was delicious. It was beautiful to see how our community is growing and the relationships that people are building! Group members exchanged phone numbers, made plans to meet up and even decided to volunteer at an LGBTQ conference together. I could not stop smiling, it was such a beautiful night.

January brought more group growth and cohesion – with a movie night at a local LGBTQ center and group volunteering at an LGBTQ conference. We are making connections in the local and national LGBTQ communities and building our network of allies. Group members are creating a plan for the group’s future and sharing in group leadership. Next month, we will be doing a presentation for local refugee resettlement and mental health workers- aiming to improve the welcome that future LGBTQ newcomers receive. I am so excited to see the group becoming stronger each month and I can’t wait to see where the new year will bring us!

- Elizabeth Harrison, Occupational Therapy doctoral student, University of Illinois at Chicago, and 2015-16 Schweitzer Fellow



For the past 4 years, Chef Chao and his team from **Union Sushi and Barbecue** (230 W. Erie St.) have donated and helped serve a delicious traditional thanksgiving meal to the artists and volunteers at **Arts of Life**. The Schweitzer Program thanks them for their generosity and for making this annual service day even more special!

### **Parting Thoughts from Outgoing Schweitzer Fellows Coordinator Bonnie Ewald**



I've had the privilege of serving as the program coordinator for the Chicago Schweitzer Fellows program for the past three years. In this role, I've been humbled time and time again by the Schweitzer community.

The Schweitzer community is a wonderful network, where each conversation sparks new ideas and continued inspiration to work toward a common cause of reducing health inequities. I witnessed this at each monthly meeting, symposium, service day, and Celebration of Service. Because the Fellowship attracts students from such a variety of professional fields and with interests in a range of community issues, the Fellows are able to learn even more from each other's unique perspectives and experiences.

While Dr. Schweitzer lived his life of service by providing medical services to the community of Lambaréné, Gabon, in Africa, he has inspired countless others to "find their own Lambaréné" and use their unique backgrounds, skills, and inspiration in their own service work. I have been humbled to see the last four classes of Fellows do this, and am grateful to each of those Fellows for allowing me to participate in their journey. I value each of the relationships I've developed with you all, and I look forward to continuing to work and partner with you in the future. As I move on in search of "my own Lambaréné" and opportunities to grow as a public health professional, I will take with me many wonderful memories from my time with the Fellowship. Thank you to everybody for the inspiration!"

*Bonnie recently left Health & Medicine in order to travel for a year. She plans to return to Chicago, continue working in public health, and attend graduate school in a related field.*



# 20TH ANNIVERSARY SCHWEITZER CONFERENCE: IMPROVING COMMUNITY HEALTH TOGETHER



## APRIL 29 - MAY 1, 2016

### FRIDAY, APRIL 29

**Schweitzer Leadership Award - 5:30PM**  
honoring Meade Palidofsky, Founder & Artistic Director, Storycatchers Theatre

*Admission is free but registration is required.*

**Fellows for Life Party - 7:30PM**  
*This event is open to Fellows for Life only.*

Location for both events:  
Loyola University Lewis Towers  
Regents Hall  
111 E. Pearson St, Chicago, IL 606011

### SATURDAY, APRIL 30

**Schweitzer 20th Anniversary Conference: Improving Community Health Together**

*We invite all members of the Schweitzer network, communities, and stakeholders to learn from our presenters and each other about working with vulnerable populations and leadership in service.*

Loyola University School of Law  
25 E Pearson St, Chicago, IL 60611  
9AM – 5PM

### SUNDAY, MAY 1

**Service Day**  
*Join alumni and the community in celebration of the Schweitzer ethos of service.*

Multiple locations - see website for details.

*Participation is free but registration is required.*

To register for the conference visit: <http://hmprg.org/Events/Schweitzer20th>

contact [cmcloughlin@hmprg.org](mailto:cmcloughlin@hmprg.org) with questions



A limited number of discounted rooms (approx. \$180-\$200/night) are reserved for conference attendees at the Whitehall Hotel at 105 E. Delaware Place! Call the hotel at 312-944-6300 and mention "Schweitzer Fellowship."

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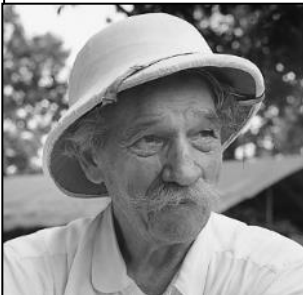
**Quentin D. Young, MD**

Chairman, HMPRG

**Arthur F. Kohrman, MD**

Schweitzer Fellowship Advisor  
Advisory Council Chair &  
National Schweitzer Board

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**Chicago Area Schweitzer Fellowship Events**

**Tues., Apr. 12** - Schweitzer Celebration of Service  
honoring the 2015-16 Fellows and the program's  
mentors and supporters. To register online visit  
[www.hmprg.org/events/celebrationofservice2016](http://www.hmprg.org/events/celebrationofservice2016)



**Schweitzer 20th Anniversary Conference**

*Improving Community Health Together*

**Fri. Apr. 29** - Schweitzer Leadership Award Event  
- Fellows for Life Party

**Sat. Apr. 30** - Schweitzer 20th Anniv. Conference

**Sun., May 1** - Schweitzer Community Service Day

Register online at [www.hmprg.org/Events/Schweitzer20th](http://www.hmprg.org/Events/Schweitzer20th)

*“Search and see if there is not  
some place where you may  
invest your humanity.”*

- Dr. Albert Schweitzer

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**Northwestern University**

**Anonymous**

*and the many individuals and  
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