

Schweitzer Application Information

APPLICATION INFORMATION – OVERVIEW

The New Hampshire-Vermont (NH-VT) Schweitzer Fellows Program® is a one-year interdisciplinary, mentored fellowship program focused on health-related community service and leadership development.

The NH-VT Schweitzer Fellows Program strengthens Fellows' resolve to provide health service to underserved populations by facilitating opportunities for students to:

- Use their skills and knowledge in real-life situations
- Become culturally sensitive and compassionate caregivers
- Understand the impact of social and environmental determinants of health
- Build capacity for and commitment to improving the health status of individuals and communities as well as contributing to social change
- Work collaboratively and across disciplines in pursuit of a common goal

Upon successful completion of the initial Fellowship year, Fellows have the opportunity to participate in an alumni network of Fellows for Life – an interdisciplinary group of professionals who are dedicated and skilled in meeting the health needs of underserved communities.

DEFINING HEALTH

Schweitzer Fellows focus on health as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO): a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Rooted in this holistic understanding of health, Schweitzer projects address not only clinical health issues, but also the social determinants of health—defined by the WHO as the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age, and which are mostly responsible for health inequities.

ELIGIBILITY

Students enrolled in graduate or professional degree-granting programs from any accredited academic institution in the geographic area may apply. While the applicant's field of study does not have to be traditionally health-related, his/her proposed service project must focus on health and/or the social determinants of health. Past Fellows have addressed health from a wide variety of perspectives and disciplines including, but not limited to, dentistry, education, engineering, law, medicine, music, nursing, occupational therapy, pharmacy, physical therapy, public health, and social work. Applicants must be enrolled throughout the Fellowship year (April 2021- April 2022). Applicants scheduled for a December graduation should contact the Program Director to determine if they are eligible for a waiver to this requirement.

PRIOR TO APPLYING

Prospective Fellows should be prepared to partner with a local community agency and design a community project that seeks to meet a community-defined need and that provides direct service to an underserved population. This project should focus on addressing health and/or the social determinants of health in the population served.

The project should:

- Provide a direct service that meets a community-defined need and reflects national and local health priorities, such as [Healthy People 2020](#). Prospective applicants should investigate and reflect on unmet local health-related needs and think through the ways in which their own

energies and talents might contribute, even in small ways, to ameliorating one or more of these problems. Applicants are encouraged to communicate with potential community partners prior to submitting their applications and to be specific in their proposals about their relationships with their community partners.

- Be of an enduring value to the community/agency served. The project proposal should include a brief discussion about sustainability of the project at the end of the Fellowship year.

Applicants are encouraged to identify an academic mentor at their schools and a site mentor at the agency where they propose to conduct their project.

Applicants should be creative in developing their proposal. They may choose to develop a totally unique project in keeping with Dr. Schweitzer's directive that everyone should find their own Lambaréné—their own special place to serve, and way of serving. Alternatively, applicants may find inspiration by reviewing past [Fellows' projects](#) in New Hampshire Vermont and projects at other [chapters](#). Applicants should keep in mind that they may utilize their unique experience and expertise to expand upon a past Schweitzer project, but should not simply duplicate or continue one that has been carried out previously. Research, fundraising, and policy-based projects are not considered eligible for a Schweitzer Fellowship. Applicants should contact the Program Director if they would like to request assistance in identifying a project and/or a project site.

We accept individual and paired project applications. Please note that we do not accept applications from groups larger than two.

REQUIRED ACTIVITIES OF FELLOWS

Orientation and Retreat: Fellows must attend an Orientation in March or April 2021 and a Retreat in September 2021.

Community Project: Working in collaboration with a local community agency, each Fellow must design and carry out a community project of at least 200 hours that addresses an unmet community health need. Each Fellow will work under the supervision of a Site Mentor from the participating agency and an Academic Mentor of the student's choice from the student's current academic institution. The Program Director is available to provide support and guidance throughout the Fellowship year. The 200 hours must be conducted separately from any school course requirement. Monthly meetings and other Fellowship programming/reports are not part of the required 200 hours. At least half of the 200 hours must be spent in direct, face-to-face contact with the population being served. These direct service hours do not include administrative duties or research. In designing a project, applicants should carefully consider the issues of evaluation and sustainability and include their ideas for addressing these aspects of the project.

Reports: Fellows are required to submit monthly reports about their activities and a comprehensive written final report to their Program Director, Academic Mentor, and Site Mentor.

Evaluation: Fellows are required to complete a pre- and post- survey for the Fellowship. Each Fellow's Site Mentor also must complete a final site mentor survey. These surveys are in addition to each Fellow's evaluation plan for his/her individual project.

Monthly Meetings: Fellows are required to attend all monthly meetings at their school.

Public Outreach: Fellows work together in groups to organize a public outreach activity that may take the form of public symposia and/or group service activities.

Recruitment: In the fall of each year, Fellows work with the Program Director to organize information sessions about the Schweitzer Fellows Program and present information at their schools about their Fellowship experiences.

Stipend: Fellows receive a stipend of \$2,000, distributed in two payments throughout the Fellowship year as specific program objectives are completed. The stipend may be used in any way the Fellow wishes, including project related costs and personal expenses. As funding is limited, The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship is unable to provide any additional financial support beyond the stipend.

Celebration of Service: Fellows are required to attend a Celebration of Service in their honor in April 2022.

INFORMATION SESSIONS

Information sessions will take place during November and December 2020. Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend an information session before completing an application. Applicants unable to attend an information session should contact the Program Director for more information.

DEADLINE

FEBRUARY 8, 2021

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Letters of recommendation are not required for application to the NH/VT Program. Please list references and their contact information in the space provided on the application. One reference must be from the applicant's school. Program staff will contact the references as needed.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

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