

Improving Health and Creating Change: 2012 Schweitzer Celebration of Service Honors Emerging and Established Community Health Leaders

Jefferson School of Population Health

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From bringing blood pressure screenings to barbershops in West Philadelphia, to implementing a diabetes management program among Northern Philadelphia's Hispanic population, fifteen graduate student Schweitzer Fellows spent the past year working to improve the health of vulnerable communities in the Greater Philadelphia area.

At the sixth annual Greater Philadelphia Schweitzer Celebration of Service ceremony those Schweitzer Fellows were honored—as was Dr. George L. Spaeth of Wills Eye Institute, who was presented with the 2012 Schweitzer Leadership Award by Dr. David B. Nash, Greater Philadelphia Schweitzer Program Chair and Dean of the Jefferson School of Population Health.

The cocktail reception that launched the event was warm and buzzing as newly selected Schweitzer Fellows mingled with graduating Fellows, Schweitzer Fellows for Life (program alumni) and a host of academic and community site mentors, local advisory board members, family, friends, and funders. In addition to Drs. Spaeth and Nash, the ceremony was attended by distinguished guests including Sally Harris, Vice Chair of The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship (ASF)'s National Board of Directors, and Dr. Cornelius Pitts of Zion Baptist Church, who served as community site mentor for 2011-12 Schweitzer Fellow Lawrence Onishi, a

Temple University medical student. A new ASF video “*Creating Change, Improving Health*” described the Schweitzer Fellowship story and set the stage for the event. Dr. Nash then shared a behind-the-scenes look at the genesis of the Greater Philadelphia Schweitzer Fellows Program, and Harris shared a personal perspective on Albert Schweitzer and the Fellowship's work to develop a corps of Leaders in Service across the U.S. Dr. Nash also had the pleasure of presenting Dr. Spaeth with the Schweitzer Leadership Award. Dr. Spaeth's ensuing keynote speech charged the Fellows to continue leading lives of service.

Against the backdrop of posters that illustrated their year-long service projects, the Fellows spoke about their Fellowship experience, including the ways in which the Fellowship's structure and guidance helped them to overcome the metaphorical “boulders” they faced. In the words of the Fellowship's namesake, Dr. Albert Schweitzer, “*Anyone who proposes to do good must not expect people to roll stones out of his way, but must accept his lot calmly if they even roll a few more upon it. A strength which becomes clearer and stronger through its experience of such obstacles is the only strength that can conquer them.*”

In sharing their remarks, all Fellows noted that their year-long, mentored community service

and leadership development experience with the Fellowship has helped to shape their personal and professional lives as future health care leaders. The celebration culminated in the outgoing Fellows receiving their official ASF pins and being inducted into the Schweitzer Fellows for Life alumni network—and the new 2012-13 Fellows being introduced as they embark on a year of personal and professional growth and skilled service to vulnerable communities. ■

The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship (ASF) is improving the health of vulnerable people now and for the future by developing a corps of *Leaders in Service*—professionals skilled in creating positive change *with and in* our communities, our health and human service systems, and our world. To learn more about ASF's Greater Philadelphia Schweitzer Fellows Program, which is funded entirely through charitable donations and grants, visit: www.schweitzerfellowship.org/philadelphia.

Nicole Cobb Moore, MA
Greater Philadelphia Program Director
Albert Schweitzer Fellowship

The most important thing in education is to make young people think for themselves.
~ Albert Schweitzer



From left to right, newly pinned Schweitzer Fellows for Life: Emily Day, Nicholas Kenji Taylor, Sarah Nguyen, Quidest Kiki Sherif, Isata Sesay, Jules Chyten-Brennan, Maria Geyman, Charles G. Taylor, Sara Shuman, Gordon Crabtree, and Akhila Vasthare. (Not pictured, Victor Cueto, Franklin Jeng, Tiffany “TK” Rodgers and Lawrence Onishi)



Dr. George L. Spaeth, Schweitzer Leadership Awardee, Nicole Cobb Moore, MA, Greater Philadelphia Program Director, and Dr. David B. Nash, Dean, Jefferson School of Population Health