

# OUR FELLOWS SPEAK

## Reflections on the 2018-19 Fellowship Year



### THERESA YAO

This past year as an Albert Schweitzer Fellow has been so meaningful and inspiring to me. I've been honored to work with the Aphasia Treatment Program and the Hayward Promise Neighborhood to create an intergenerational volunteer reading program for adults with aphasia (an impairment of language due to brain injuries) and children from low-income families in Hayward. Since my first day as an Albert Schweitzer Fellow, I've learned many lessons about service, leadership, mentorship, boulders, and most importantly, advocacy for underserved populations. The support I received from my family, my mentors, the other Fellows, Dale and Melody allowed me to successfully develop this project and accomplish my goals. This Fellowship experience has helped me become a better speech-language pathologist and reminded me of my role in advocating for people with communication disorders. I'm truly honored to have been a member of the Albert Schweitzer family this year. I enjoyed all the meetings we had; I loved all the ideas we shared; I appreciated all the support we received from each other. Now, I'm ready to call myself a Schweitzer Fellow for Life!



### TIMOTHY KIM

Simply put, the Schweitzer Fellowship was a life-changing experience. It gave me the courage and resources to act on a vision I have held on to for quite some time. It gave me the opportunity to pursue a passion project with the fellowship of so many talented, passionate and like-minded students from around the Bay Area. Hearing their stories, their passion and growing alongside them is an experience I will cherish and refer back to as I continue to expand this project. When I started the Schweitzer Fellowship, I had a dream. Throughout the fellowship, that dream became a real project. And today, the project has become a non-profit urban farm. This experience has given me clarity and inspiration to the kind of physician I will become, and the manner through which I hope to bring health and wellness to my patients.



*"One who gains strength by overcoming obstacles possesses the only strength which can overcome adversity..."*

Albert Schweitzer

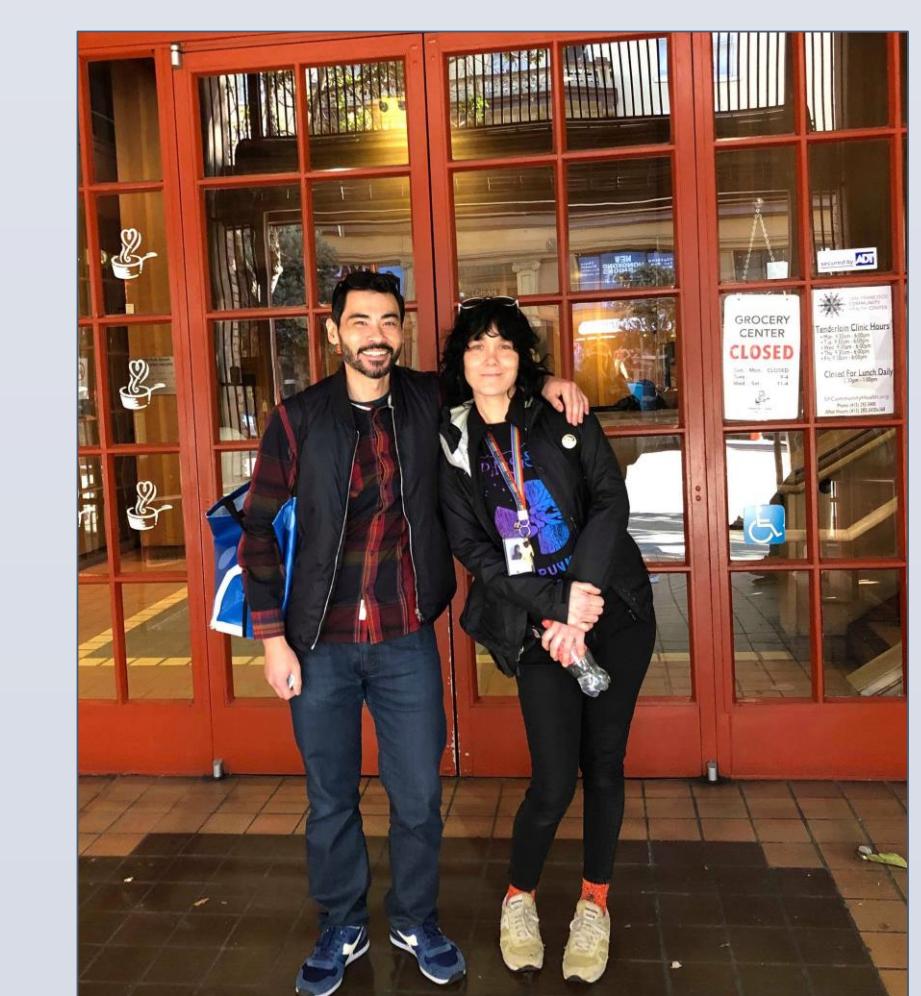
### KATHERINE KU

This past year as a Schweitzer Fellow has inspired me in many ways. The impact of incarceration doesn't end upon release. Many leave jail or prison in far worse health than when they entered and then fall through the cracks upon release. Working with the Transitions Clinic and the network of incredible physicians and community health workers providing a medical home for formerly incarcerated men and women was truly formative. I heard stories not only about their barriers to health but housing, employment, and community as well. I saw how community health workers connected patients not just with health services but also social and financial services. I saw how the team physician provided compassionate care and used her experience to advocate for her patients. My project aimed to reduce stress and build community through a mindfulness-based peer support curriculum. While we achieved some success, we encountered many barriers, some unexpected. Our success came from providing a space for clients to feel safe and free to express themselves without judgement. The patient voice is powerful. I know I will be a better physician in the future because of the stories that were shared with me over the course of this project.



### THOMAS NGUYEN

This project has helped me clarify my role as a dental provider in the current epidemic of homelessness in San Francisco. Dental care is always high on the list of patient needs but often the last to be addressed. The underlying reasons for this discrepancy must first be identified before a plan of action can be effective. The findings of this project are just the tip of the iceberg. The California Dental Act identifies Justice as a core ethical principle: "Justice is often associated with fairness or giving to each his or her own due. Issues of fairness are pervasive in dental practice and range from elemental procedural issues such as who shall receive treatment first, to complex questions of who shall receive treatment at all. The just dentist must be aware of these complexities when balancing the distribution of benefits and burdens in practice..." For the just dentist, the "question of who shall receive treatment at all" is not complex. Albert Schweitzer's concept of "Reverence for Life" makes no distinctions between patients; all are equally deserving of care by virtue of their humanity. To administer to those most in need is far from being a "burden"; it is the gift that my years of training have granted me. Dentists have long tipped the balance towards what is beneficial to themselves, resulting in a national epidemic of untreated chronic pain and disdain for the profession. As I establish my own Lambaréne in the Tenderloin, I intend to tip that balance towards what I believe to be just.



### KEVIN SUN

My thanks to Dale, Melody, my project partner Bright, and the Schweitzer Fellowship cohort for a fantastic year of service learning. I am grateful for the interdisciplinary perspectives I heard and the diverse projects I saw unfold. The inspiration I took from our meetings gave me the motivation to better design projects with my community partner organization. The insights I gleaned developed my mindset of learning humbly from vulnerable populations. And the encouragement I received helped me believe in myself and my work. There is still so much health inequity and suffering in our world. After a year of the Fellowship, having witnessed how empathy, creativity, and direct service can effect change large and small, I feel a calling. I want to keep learning about underserved populations, and I want to make a difference. With the experience and skill sets I now have from the Fellowship, I believe I can create an impact on community health.

### BRIGHT ZHOU

I applied to the Schweitzer Fellowship seeking a space to transform my energy and passions into a tangible program that would benefit my personal communities. Throughout the year, I had an opportunity to learn from engaged community organizers and activists, both at my project site and within my cohort. This Fellowship has supported me in times when I felt alone at my home institution, given me the voice and tools to continue engaging sustainably with my communities, and continually reminded me that trainees across the country are motivated to enact real change. I'm further grateful for the friendship of my incredible project partner Kevin Sun, for helping me grow alongside him, for listening and sharing stories, and for motivating us throughout this entire project process. This year has been about so much more than producing a single community health project - and indeed, I'm struck as always by how much more I learn from my communities than I end up providing. I am excited for the future of the community health advocates being recognized tonight, and I'm forever grateful to them, my mentors, and my community for helping me curate a lifelong passion for service.

