What is Social Medicine Fellows Program (SMSP)?

Social medicine seeks to understand and influence the social, political, and economic factors that profoundly affect the health of individuals and communities. Given that up to 90% of health outcomes are determined by social factors, the importance of the social determinants of health in shaping the course of illness cannot be overstated.

The University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine’s (UPSOM) Social Medicine Fellows Program (SMFP) is a new initiative that trains medical students for careers as leaders who bridge academic medical institutions and traditionally underserved communities. Medical students selected in their first year partner for the duration of their medical school training with an underserved community, where they participate in service learning, research, and advocacy in accordance with community needs and assets. Through their membership on the SMFP Advisory Board, representatives of UPSOM and community partners share stewardship of the educational process, which is guided by the principles of community-based participatory research and grounded in structural competency theory.

**Director**
Dr. Thuy Bui, MD

**University of Pittsburgh Representatives:**
Ann Thompson, MD, MCCM, Vice Dean, UPSOM
Joan Harvey, MD, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, UPSOM
Chenits Pettigrew, EdD, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, Director of Diversity Programs, UP SOM
Steven Albert, PhD, MS – Professor and Chair, BCHS, GSPH

**Community Representatives / Advisors:**
Michael Yonas, DrPH, Sr. Program Officer, Research & Special Initiatives, The Pittsburgh Foundation
Fred Brown, President & CEO of The Forbes Funds
Theresa Chalich, RN, MPH

**Potential Faculty Research Mentors (among others):**
Elizabeth Miller, MD, PhD
Sonya Borrero, MD, MS
Judy Chang, MD, MPH
Leslie Hausmann, PhD, CHERP/VA
Esa Davis, MD, MPH, FAAFP
Kevin Kraemer, MD, MSc
Bruce Rollman, MD

**SMSP liaison with the Scholarly Project**
Dr. Judy Chang, MD

**Special thank you to the students who started SMSP**
Alyssa Bruehlman, Claire Paduano, Collin Schenk, Breonna Slocum

The 21st century demands physicians know more than biomedicine to be effective and exceptional practitioners. Physicians must understand how health systems issues and social determinants of health influence their patients at both the individual and population levels, and be prepared to apply relevant knowledge to provide the best care possible.

All UPSOM students will gain a foundation in the concepts and knowledge of social medicine. Social Medicine Scholars will have an additional opportunity for deeper exploration of social issues that impact health and develop skills to work with communities to mitigate conditions that undermine good health.
Structure

- An advisory board of university representatives and community partners oversees the design and implementation of the SMFP.
- A panel of research mentors guides SMFP scholars in their research endeavors in close collaboration with community representatives.
- Students from each class will be selected in their MS1 years. Each student partners with the same community for the duration of their training at UPSOM. Students receive $1000 to fund their service, research, and advocacy.

Application process

- Applications will be due in mid-December of the applicant’s first year at the UPSOM.
- Applicants must have demonstrated successful completion of all coursework to the end of the first term.
- A 500 word essay describing the applicant’s interest in the program, commitment to participation for three years, and goals to be realized during that period must accompany the application.

Selection of Social Medicine Scholars

The advisory board will announce the scholarship recipients by January 31 each year.

Contact Information:

Scaife Hall, Suite S530  
3550 Terrace Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15261  
Phone: 412-648-9000  
Fax: 412-648-9065  
http://meddiversity.pitt.edu/social-medicine-fellows-program