Schweitzer Fellows Reach Out to Chinatown Residents

How do you get a group of 5-11 year-olds to learn more about dental health in a fun, non-intimidating setting? Or teach enthusiastic young Chinatown residents about the determinants of health in their community through photography? Just as importantly, how do you provide committed dental and medical students valuable hands-on experience in working with an often-underserved community?

Through the efforts of the Tufts chapter of the Albert Schweitzer Fellows program, such mutually beneficial experiences are an ongoing occurrence.

Albert Schweitzer Fellows are students who are leaders in service. Prospective students apply to the fellowship by committing to partner with a local community agency and designing a 200-hour community service project. Projects focus on addressing health issues and/or studying the social determinants of health in the population served.

The Tufts chapter of this national program gives graduate students the opportunity to partner with community-based organizations to develop and implement yearlong, mentored service projects that improve health and well-being. Participation in the program is in addition to the student’s regular academic responsibilities.

Beyond their individual service projects, the Fellows are responsible for completing an annual service project as a group. Since 2010, the Fellows have made Chinatown’s annual Oak Street Fair their collective service project. More than a dozen Fellows run activities during the day. The Nutrition School students organize a brown rice sushi-making demonstration and display a food art table; Medical School and Sharewood* students conduct blood pressure screenings and a sensory test; and the Dental School students offer dental screenings and teeth-brushing demonstrations.

* See page 8 for more about Sharewood.
Tufts University is fortunate to be located in Chinatown, one of Boston’s most vibrant neighborhoods. We are committed to encouraging all members of our university community—students, faculty and staff—to be active citizens and to make a difference in the world. We welcome the many opportunities to partner with the residents and non-profit organizations in Chinatown.

We are proud of the Tufts health science students who engage actively in the Chinatown community. Students from our Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy maintain the Quincy Garden Program at the Josiah Quincy School; students from our Medical School work with a variety of community agencies though the Community Service Learning initiative; and students from our Dental School provide outreach care at the Wang YMCA. All of these students gain knowledge from the residents of Chinatown and learn the importance of giving back to the community.

Tufts’ faculty are also engaged on important community issues, from studying the air quality for people who live near highways to providing dental care in the public schools through Smart Smiles. We also work together with the many non-profit organizations in Chinatown that are so vital to our shared community.

We are grateful to be a part of Chinatown and support the community’s goal of improving the overall well being of the neighborhood. Tufts University welcomes more opportunities in the future to be a good neighbor to Chinatown.
Chinatown’s Castle Square Apartment Complex is home to 1500 residents, many of whom are of Asian descent and do not speak English. Residents of Castle Square are often unable to access basic dental and health care services.

Under the guidance of Tufts’ Dr. Kanchan Ganda, who first identified the apartment building as a favorable site for a community clinic in Chinatown, the Linkage of Tufts University Students (LOTUS) Community Service Program at Castle Square was founded.

At the inaugural event in the summer of 2013, Tufts Dental students and faculty began the first stage of a groundbreaking project to reach out to the Chinatown community. Following a presentation in both Cantonese and English on the link between nutrition, oral hygiene, and health, about 40 residents underwent an oral examination and health assessment. For many, it was their first such screening in years.

At a second screening in July, dental students, nutrition students and an ear, nose and throat (ENT) resident together screened 57 residents of the complex. The third screening was held in October where dental, medical, and nutrition students along with orthodontic residents and an ENT faculty member saw 120 patients, including 35 children.

As the numbers of participants increased at each screening, it became clear to LOTUS organizers that they were filling an unmet need in the community.

The organizers at the Dental School are working to expand the project by including volunteers from the other Tufts Health Sciences, including medical, nutrition, hygiene, veterinary students, and physician assistants. Doing so will result in a more comprehensive clinic for residents and further promote Tufts goal of interprofessional education.

Next steps include working with the Castle Square Board of Directors and administration from the Tufts Dental School to set up a clinic focusing on the oral care and overall health of the residents. The goal is to have student rotations, under faculty supervision, provide regular care to residents. Also planned is the creation of a mentoring program that will expose middle and high school student-residents to the sciences.

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Recent individual Tufts-Schweitzer Fellows projects in Chinatown include:

Jenny Citrin, School of Dental Medicine, 2012–2013

Jenny’s project addressed oral health in Chinatown by developing iSmile, a program that dealt with prevention of dental disease through fun and non-traditional oral health education at the Josiah Quincy Upper and Lower Schools. Tufts dental students mentored local high school students who developed a storyboard for an interactive, educational app on dental health with a focus on the dietary causes of cavities, targeting 5–11 year olds. The high school students then mentored their elementary school counterparts in healthy behaviors and gained insight for app design.

Evan Barnathan, School of Medicine, 2011–2012

Evan addressed the need for additional music programming in the Boston public schools by creating an a cappella singing group for teenagers at the Josiah Quincy Upper School. The group performed songs for their classmates, families, and the community. The group also gained exposure to music production techniques by recording several selections with a professional sound engineer.

Two second-year medical students, Melody Michaelson and Dave Frederick, continued Evan’s project at the Upper School. They recorded group selections at a studio and introduced the a cappella group members to a college-directed experience.

Alan Hsu, School of Medicine, 2011–2012

Alan’s project encouraged Chinatown youth to learn more about health through photography. Participants at the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center’s Youth Center used cameras to document their communities and experiences. Themes included food, art, environment, nature, and culture. Participants created a photo-book that was viewed by Governor Deval Patrick when he visited BCNC. The young people honed their photography skills while gaining an increased awareness of health determinants.
IMPROVING COMMUNICATION WITH ASIAN PATIENTS

Dental student Alan Wong observed a sizable pool of Chinese-speaking patients from Chinatown and Quincy seeking care at the Tufts Dental clinics. The Chinese-speaking students were eager to treat these patients but had limited vocabulary in Chinese dental and medical terminology.

With support from the Dental School’s administration, Wong and his classmate, Michelle Tsao, organized a lecture series and developed educational materials for Mandarin and Cantonese-speaking Tufts students. They recruited Chinese-speaking faculty members as volunteer lecturers. The goal was to improve the students’ ability to communicate complicated dental procedures and terminology to these patients.

26 Tufts students participated in the first lecture series. As a result, these students are better able to inquire about patients’ oral health concerns and medical conditions, and can explain procedures in everyday, conversational Cantonese or Mandarin.

In all, there were eight sessions in the lecture series. The majority were captured to TUSK, an online educational content sharing platform for Tufts students, where they’ll serve as a resource for future students. Wong hopes to continue these language workshops once they’ve been integrated into the LOTUS Community Service Project at Castle Square.

Some interesting translations are shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dental Terms</th>
<th>MANDARIN</th>
<th>ENGLISH</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>蔡</td>
<td>Cavity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>填充</td>
<td>Filling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>菌斑</td>
<td>Plaque</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>根管</td>
<td>Root Canal</td>
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</tbody>
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Tisch College and School of Medicine Community Service Learning Program

The Tufts University School of Medicine has long had a commitment to public service. The school took this to a new level with one of the most robust community service learning (CSL) programs in any United States medical school. Every medical student is required to complete at least 50 hours of community service. Approximately 200 students per class are supported by over 50 faculty reviewers, course directors, staff and partners from over 25 community organizations.

Through a partnership with Tisch College, an online course was developed to help students understand the fundamentals of community service. All students are expected to complete the course prior to undertaking their community service.

To ensure the quality of the experience for both the students and the organizations served, the Medical School utilized a community service learning coordinator to help facilitate projects and track outreach efforts. Medical students can choose where to perform volunteer hours and many do so in the local community.

Recent Chinatown projects include:

- **Tufts Outreach: Nutrition Education (TONE)** This versatile and ongoing program trains Tufts medical students to provide nutrition counseling for medically underserved Boston communities. TONE students commit service time to established community partners, including the Wang YMCA in Chinatown.

- **Medical Students provide science and math tutoring after school at the Josiah Quincy Upper School (JQUS), and offer SAT preparation lessons and activities. Additionally, they have organized after-school enrichment activities at JQUS.**

- **Medical and nutrition students lead cooking lessons with children at the Red Oak After-School Program.** The program is run by the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center in partnership with the Friedman School of Nutrition and Jumbo’s Kitchen.

- **Tufts medical students support the Castle Square Tenants Organizations’ LOTUS project through health screenings and tutoring at the Teen Center.**
The Readiness through Integrative Science and Engineering (RISE) project is creating preschool curriculum resources for dual-language learners (DLLs) in science, technology and engineering (STE). The primary goal is to improve school readiness for DLL children by strengthening connections between home and school and by fostering positive approaches to learning through hands-on STE content.

Participants include teachers, families, and children in pre-K programs in East Boston and Chinatown areas of Boston. The project team will develop integrative STE curriculum materials that will be published at the end of the project. The project is funded through grants from the National Science Foundation and the Brady Education Foundation for three years, from 2012–2015.

Tufts students are highly involved, with three doctoral students working as the primary research assistants. They are supported by a team of 11 graduate and undergraduate Tufts Research Assistants who primarily volunteer in the classrooms. The Tufts team provides a combined 80 hours across all classrooms per week.

With the growing population of DLL children and the recognition that early childhood education in STE makes significant contributions to children’s education, this project has the potential for national impact.

**COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

Through financial contributions and memberships, Tufts helps to support a range of vibrant Chinatown organizations, including: the Asian Community Development Corporation, the Asian American Resource Workshop, the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center, Chinatown Main Streets, the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, the Chinese Historical Society of New England, and the Wang YMCA of Chinatown.

**TUFTS NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICE FUND (TNSF)**

More than $60,000 in small grants has been given to Chinatown non-profits since 1996. TNSF is a giving option within Tufts’ annual Community Appeal. The university encourages employees to contribute to the charitable organizations of their choice and covers all the costs so that every dollar donated goes directly to charity. TNSF awards grants to community-based charitable organizations that serve Tufts communities and engage Tufts volunteers in their work. Recent TNSF grants were awarded to the following Chinatown organizations:

- 8centric
- Asian American Civic Association, Inc.
- Boston Asian: Youth Essential Services
- Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center
- Josiah Quincy Elementary School
- Ricesticks and Tea
- Wang YMCA of Chinatown

**CHINATOWN AGENCIES USING TUFTS FACILITIES**

Chinatown organizations can take advantage of Tufts facilities for event and meeting space. While there are not any rental fees, charges for additional services may apply. Recent users include: the Asian American Civic Association, the Boston Chinese Evangelical Church, the Josiah Quincy Upper School.
The Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy is the only graduate school of nutrition in the United States. Its students and faculty are involved in many outreach activities in the Chinatown community.

**Josiah Quincy School Garden Program:**
The Agriculture, Food and Environment (AFE) Program at the Friedman School has embraced the school garden movement and partnered with the Josiah Quincy Elementary School (JQES) to explore the benefits of garden-based learning. AFE students present interactive garden and nutrition-based lessons for the third-graders. During the 2012-2013 school year, 14 Nutrition students contributed 150 hours of service as a part of the program. The Friedman-Quincy partnership provides graduate students a chance to gain experience in garden-based instruction. Ultimately, the partnership hopes to contribute knowledge about the value of school gardens as well as design a curriculum guide geared to the needs of school teachers.

**Chinatown Tour:** A walking tour of the neighborhood, including historical and contemporary information on development, gentrification and the history of Chinese settlement in the area, took place last Fall. The tour was sponsored by the Friedman Justice League and hosted by the Chinese Progressive Association.

**Jumbo’s Kitchen:** Jumbo’s Kitchen works with underserved populations teaching basic cooking skills, promoting an understanding of sound nutrition, and empowering children to prepare healthy foods in a fun and interactive environment. This year, Jumbo’s Kitchen formed a new partnership with the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center and is now serving students in kindergarten through 5th grade. Each week, volunteers from the Friedman School, along with the School of Medicine students, provide local students with a nutrition lesson focused on a portion of MyPlate, a cooking lesson with recipes, and tasting sessions.

Jumbo’s Kitchen remains committed to strengthening the relationship between Tufts and the Chinatown community, consistent with the Friedman School’s mission of education and dissemination of information.

**TUFTS GIVES BACK**

**Addressing Disparities in Populations Through Translational Research (ADAPT)** is an initiative to connect researchers, administrators, service providers, and community partners to work together and address Asian health disparities in the Boston area. One of the current programs, “Building Your Capacity,” provides training and education that supports the participation of community-based organizations in community engaged research projects in Chinatown.

Initially, community partners were involved in the studies as research participants. As Tufts’ engagement grew, those agencies became key players in research partnerships. When ADAPT was introduced in 2011, there were two community-based organizations at the table; this grew to five partners in the first year.

Since ADAPT was formed it has provided consultation and letters of support for fifteen grant applications focused on studying Asian health and promoting new academic and community research partnerships, including:

- Funding a study to research obesity in Chinese families.
- Forming a partnership to conduct a community-driven health needs assessment of Chinatown residents.
- An additional partnership includes researchers interested in patient navigation and community partners interested in the study of cancer.

Project ADAPT and its research team have no plans of slowing down. It has evolved into a partnership that brings together different stakeholders in ways that promote co-learning and collaboration.
Active Students as Active Citizens

The Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service is a national leader in civic education, preparing young people to be lifelong active citizens. Chinatown has a strong relationship with Tisch College through its research projects and student community outreach efforts.

Generation Citizen

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” Cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead’s words are particularly relevant to the efforts of the Tufts chapter of the Generation Citizen program.

Generation Citizen (GC) is a national non-profit that teaches “action civics” in the classroom. College students are trained as democracy coaches who work in classrooms to organize students around issues in their communities. The Tufts chapter, led by Tisch Scholar Benjamin Berman, successfully expanded into Chinatown in 2013.

During the Fall semester the Tufts GC chapter met weekly in three classes at the Josiah Quincy Upper School (JQUS). Six Tufts students taught in those classrooms, working on thought-provoking projects with about 70 JQUS students.

One class studied teen smoking and discussed potential ways to encourage state lawmakers to enact legislation that would support additional penalties associated with underage possession and use of tobacco products.

The Tufts GC chapter hopes to teach JQUS students the importance of being civically engaged.

A glimpse of college life

In the Fall of 2013, 50 ninth-graders from the JQUS School toured the Tufts’ Medford/Somerville campus, spoke to admissions officers, visited culture houses, were treated to an a capella performance, and spent time with current undergraduates. The visit was organized by AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteer in Service to America) representatives at Tisch College with help from the Tufts Asian American Alliance and the First Generation College Student Council.

The Calm Breathing Project

The Calm Breathing and Relaxation Project is helping to improve medical understanding and treatment of children with emotional and behavioral disorders by reducing their stress and anxiety, and helping them to succeed at school. Tisch Scholar Alyssa Wohlfahrt and Dr. Naomi Steiner, a developmental-behavioral pediatrician at Boston’s Floating Hospital for Children and director of the Center for Mind-Body Pediatric Research at Tufts Medical Center, have partnered with the Josiah Quincy Elementary School (JQES).

Another Tisch Scholar, Craig Cooper, joined Wohlfahrt and Dr. Steiner’s head research assistant to visit JQES to work with groups of students, teaching them how to breathe calmly and discuss when to use these techniques in their daily lives to reduce stress.
Medford/Somerville Campus Continues Its Support of Josiah Quincy School

The students and academic departments on the Medford/Somerville campus are no strangers to Josiah Quincy School students.

The Asian American Alliance (AAA) undergraduate student group partners with the Josiah Quincy School (JQUS) on multiple outreach efforts. AAA brings about 60 Chinatown youth to the Medford/Somerville campus for the annual Halloween on the Hill event in October, and Kids Day in April. AAA also organizes a college awareness day for ninth-graders from the JQUS. Most recently, AAA started a mentoring program where one Tufts student is matched with a ninth- or tenth-grader at JQUS. Most meetings take place in Chinatown, and include activities like mentoring, meeting and attending movies together.

The Chemistry Department hosted 15 Advanced Placement (AP) sophomores from the JQUS in June 2013. The tour included visits to four of the research labs in the Pearson Chemistry Building, the Organic Chemistry teaching lab where the students were shown classic chemistry demos, including the eruption of an ammonium dichromate volcano and the burning of lycopodium powder. The tour ended with a visit to the campus center where undergraduates answered students’ questions about college.

Contact Information

Tufts Neighbors Page  http://tufts.edu/home/neighbors
Tufts Directory  617.627.5000
Office of Community Relations  617.627.3780
Tufts Police (non-emergency line)  617.627.3030
Tufts Website  http://tufts.edu

Dental Clinics

Tufts University School of Dental Medicine  
1 Kneeland Street Boston, MA 02111  617.636.6828
http://dental.tufts.edu/patient-care/

Tufts Dental Clinics offer a full range of high quality general, specialty, and emergency dental care at lower fees than private dental practices.

Free Healthcare Clinic

Tuesdays, 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm

First Church in Malden
184 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148
781.324.8991

sharewood.tufts.edu

The Sharewood Project is a free healthcare clinic that offers care to medically underserved populations from the greater Boston area. Sharewood is staffed by volunteer physicians and medical students affiliated with the Tufts Health Sciences Schools. All services are free and open to the public. Translation services are provided in many languages, including Mandarin and Cantonese.