

THE COLUMBUS-ATHENS SCHWEITZER FELLOWS PROGRAM

Purpose: To facilitate service projects to benefit the Columbus and Athens communities, and simultaneously develop emerging professionals who have the skills to address unmet health-related needs throughout their careers.

THE ALBERT
SCHWEITZER
FELLOWSHIP®
*Addressing Health Disparities
by Developing Leaders in Service*

Safe Bicycling Education:

Community rides in the Franklinton neighborhood, Columbus, OH

Background

Many people in Columbus rely on bicycles for affordable, efficient transportation in an urban setting. Effective cycling depends on both mechanical readiness and safe cycling knowledge. Underserved populations face a number of vulnerabilities when riding on the road. Therefore, empowering community members with practical skills for utilitarian and recreational cycling could help mitigate these barriers.

Partner

Franklinton Cycle Works (FCW) is a nonprofit bicycle shop that provides mechanical and retail services in the Franklinton neighborhood (see map). We partnered to develop a curriculum and a route for community rides that provided focused instruction (rules of the road, turning, lane positioning, etc.) as well as camaraderie with fellow cyclists.



Project

We initially promoted the rides via social media (Facebook, Meetup), flyers, and presentations at other nonprofits in Franklinton. Rides kicked-off in April 2019 with an 8-mi, 2-hour ride through Franklinton and downtown Columbus. Bicycles and helmets were available for free to borrow from FCW, and all participants were required to wear a helmet. Riders completed a pre and post-ride survey to gauge baseline understanding and change in knowledge over the course of the ride. Riders received a small gift (e.g., bike lights) for participating.

Impact

- Conducted 12 community rides that served nearly 70 unique individuals, ranging from young children to retirees
- Facilitated youth bicycle safety event for summer camp at Lower Lights Christian Ministry
- Developed partnership with "The Refuge," a rehabilitation organization in Franklinton to link graduated clients with a bicycle package and safety instruction
- Staffed community festivals and events in collaboration with FCW to advertise rides and promote safe, affordable cycling
- Community rides re-launch planned for 2020 with volunteer leadership

Memorable participant quotes:

"Friendly, diverse group with all ages and great instruction."

"I learned all of the different signals and the safest ways to turn on busy roads and two-lane roads."



Acknowledgements

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Gates Failing



THE OHIO STATE
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COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

2019-2020 Albert Schweitzer Fellow

"Start early to instill in your students awareness that they are on this earth to help and serve others; that is as important to pass on to them as knowledge."

—Albert Schweitzer, PhD, MD