



# FELLOWS NEWS

February 2013

## ***New and Noteworthy***

On February 11, **Diana Spencer** and **Ellen Schantz** traveled to Washington, D.C. Together with local **David Adelman ('11)**, they met with the White House Director for Social Initiatives and Special Assistant to President Obama. Discussions about possible collaborations between the Fellows program and the White House were very productive. Many thanks to Kellogg's **David Chen**, one of last year's Symposium speakers, for arranging the introduction. Stay tuned!

The Fund has just completed a 360 survey of the Fellows program, which is this year completing its "beta test" phase. In cooperation with the ten partner schools, virtually every aspect of the program was scrutinized, with an eye toward improving operations and program upgrades. Based on some terrific feedback, quite a few alterations have been planned that will improve Fellow selection and onboarding.

You'll find the **Class of 2013** on retreat in South Miami Beach April 4 through 6, working very diligently, of course, on their group project.

The **McGowan Fund Board** gathered in Atlanta on February 8-9 for a facilitated discussion about refining objectives and benchmarks of success for each area of funding. **Ellen Schantz** presented an update on the Fellows program, which is the Fund's key national initiative.

## ***McGowan Fund Grantee Spotlight***

*Fellows have expressed interest in learning about other projects that the Fund supports. This article features the **Rush University Medical Center ELMs Sustainability Project**.*

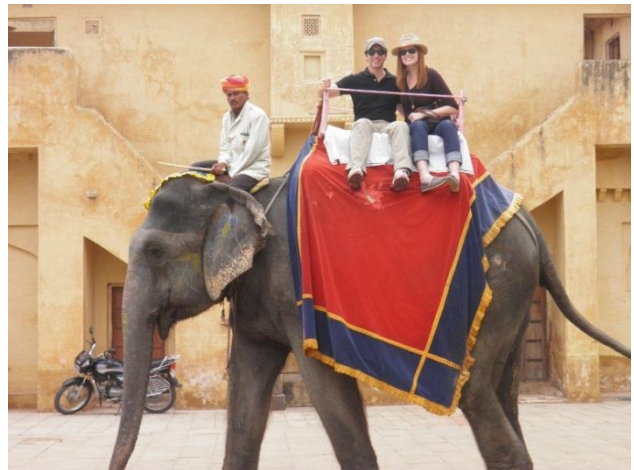
Heart failure is the only cardiovascular condition that has consistently increased over time in the general population. Because heart failure is not reversible, prevention is of key importance.

One of the most significant risk factors for heart failure is metabolic syndrome, the joint occurrence of high blood pressure, high blood sugar, abdominal obesity, and adverse lipid profiles. About 50% of people over age 45 with metabolic syndrome have diastolic heart failure – a marked decline in heart function – often unknowingly. Guidelines indicate that the first approach to reducing the syndrome is lifestyle modification.

In 2010, the McGowan Fund supported the **Rush University Medical Center ELM (Eat Well, Love Better, Move More)** study that would examine the efficacy and acceptability of a lifestyle intervention program for patients with metabolic syndrome. With the McGowan funding, Rush was able to form a collaborative, multi-disciplinary team, drawing on the Medical Center's expertise in nutrition, exercise physiology, behavioral sciences, cardiology, and endocrinology.

## ***Out and About***

**Karen Olson ('13)**  
***Dartmouth College***



I recently enjoyed Tuck's eight-week winter vacation (a perk of being a second year), highlighted by a trip to India. I spent the first ten days on a Learning Expedition, sponsored by Tuck, where we visited companies, government bodies, and cultural sites in Chennai, Agra, and New Delhi. After that, I stayed for ten more days with friends to enjoy more sightseeing in Jaipur, Udaipur, Mumbai, and Goa. It was a whirlwind three weeks and a fantastic experience. Over break, I also accepted an offer to join 3M in St Paul, MN after graduation, where I will be working in Strategic Business Development (an internal strategy group) for about two years before transitioning to a management position with the company. I am excited to explore the Twin Cities and pick up a few new winter sports such as snowshoeing and cross country skiing.



The resulting protocol comprised monthly group meetings with a variety of activities for patients. Participants spent the first 30 minutes of each meeting in physical activity, then planned, prepared, and presented dinners featuring healthy food substitutions. Over dinner, a facilitator introduced pertinent topics such as interpersonal effectiveness, sleep hygiene, and social influences on eating behavior.

Between monthly meetings, patients engaged with each other via the internet and peer walking groups. Those needing more support received tailored contact two weeks following each group meeting. After 12 months, patients entered a 12-month maintenance period where they still met monthly to discuss their progress – and sometimes lack thereof.

At the end of the two-year period, the results were tremendous. Researchers found that over 50% of patients in years one and two were successful in achieving a regression in metabolic syndrome. They no longer met its diagnostic criteria.

The project is now in its third and final year. To achieve sustainable change, researchers have examined other programs where participants self-manage and continue to be successful. Alcoholics Anonymous is the standout program, with thousands of successful participants. Armed with this information, Rush is now engaged in creating a platform where patients will continue to be successful without a strong, formal support system.

We hope that patients will maintain the gains they have worked so hard to achieve and that this study will lead to national-level funding from the National Institutes of Health. Experts believe that the youth of today will be the first generation to *not* outlive their parents. The McGowan Fund is doing its part by continuing to seek out and support programs with a history of success in heart disease and heart failure prevention.

**Danielle Sewell ('13)**  
**Massachusetts Institute of Technology**

I have accepted an offer to work in Cargill's Strategy and Business Development group. I'm very excited about it! I believe it is the perfect place for me to explore how the private sector can be leveraged to bring about deep and lasting positive change in developing regions (which is my passion). I also think food and agriculture will be one of the most complex and critical areas as global resources become more constrained by a growing population. Otherwise, I hung out in Puerto Rico for the month of January, working on a class project. Generally speaking, I feel pretty darn lucky these days!

**Brendan Hickey ('12)**  
**University of Chicago**

Here are two photos to prove that I did successfully summit Mount Kilimanjaro with my older brother in December!



**Constantinos G. V. Coutifaris ('12)**  
**University of Pennsylvania**

My news is that I started volunteering with KIPP in New York City. You probably know what KIPP does but just in case: KIPP is a network of free, open-enrollment, college-preparatory public schools throughout the United States, with a track record of preparing students in underserved communities for success in college and in life.

I began at KIPP through an annual Alumni Summit where I participated in a speed networking session as a volunteer. The session was designed to help KIPPsters learn how to network effectively with professionals and also help them build their networks. It was a fantastic session overall!

I owe my recent involvement with KIPP to fellow McGowan Fellow **Jen Tindle ('12)** who currently works at KIPP NY and put me in touch with several members of the KIPP organization. The McGowan bond is already paying high dividends!! Thanks again Jen! KIPP is a phenomenal organization and I look forward to volunteering more of my time there.

**Frank Sasso ('11)**  
**Northwestern University**

Uma and I are really enjoying Columbus (OH). Though we miss Chicago, we've found a lot of great restaurants and fun things to do here. It's been good to re-connect with old friends and meet new people. We are busy planning for a two-week trip to Argentina in March: hiking in Patagonia, exploring Buenos Aires, and wine tasting in Mendoza. Should be a blast!



**Dan Kruse ('11)**  
***Carnegie Mellon University***

Lots of photos to share! One (*right*) is in the Redwood Forest. We stopped there on the way to Pleasanton, CA where we celebrated Christmas with my side of the family. Incredible to see those monstrous trees. There's also a picture at Mt. Hood (*below left*), near Portland, OR. In August there was still snow and still people skiing. We love hiking! Finally, me and my girls at the top of a mountain in Colorado (*below right*) that was taken on our moving adventure from Jackson, MS to Portland, OR. Beautiful country. Workwise, I may have more news in the near future as I will be rolling off the program at Eaton in the next three to five months.



For more information on Rush's ELMs project, contact Diana Spencer at [Diana.spencer@mcgowanfund.org](mailto:Diana.spencer@mcgowanfund.org)  
Please submit news items for the June issue of the Fellows Newsletter by **May 31** to [ellen.schantz@mcgowanfund.org](mailto:ellen.schantz@mcgowanfund.org)