The goal of the Elsie Hillman Honors Scholars program is to inspire and support students to develop new knowledge and/or action on critical social, economic, and political issues.

The Elsie Hillman Honors Scholars Program is designed to connect motivated and creative students with community partners and a faculty mentor in the Pittsburgh region for the purpose of developing original, student led civic engagement projects that explore and address issues important to the community partner and reflect the social commitment of Elsie Hillman.

Through a structured and collaborative process, the student will work closely with the community agency and faculty mentor to develop new knowledge and/or action in an area of civic engagement about which the student feels passionately. This service learning fellowship program will incorporate several different learning goals and leadership development activities such as instruction on mindful leadership, examination of the “person in environment” philosophy, and an understanding of the various types of civic engagement.

The Elsie Scholars Fellowship is an eight-month training program, beginning in September and concluding in April. All participants will receive a monthly training stipend of $400, for a total award of $3,200. The scholars program is open to all undergraduate students and offers one credit of research per term through the University Honors College.

For more information contact Megan M. Soltesz at mms34@pitt.edu or 412.624.18.39

Who may apply for this fellowship?

The Elsie Scholars program is a competitive program that is open to all full time, undergraduate students on the Oakland campus. Effort will be made to recruit applicants with diverse backgrounds in terms of race and ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic class.

How do I apply?

Students apply online and participation is awarded on a competitive basis. Application requirements include: Résumé, personal statement, area of interest (see below), and references.


Key Dates:

Application Deadline: April 8, 2016.

Do Elsie Scholars receive a training stipend?

Elsie Scholars will receive a generous fellowship in the amount of $3,200, allocated as a monthly distribution of $400, from September through April. Students will also receive $500 in resource funds to support any costs associated with the execution of their project.

What will I be doing if I am selected as an Elsie Scholar and what is the time commitment?

Together, the student, faculty mentor, and community agency will identify a priority area where new or additional action/research is needed. While the community partners will provide the area(s) of focus - the development and execution of the project will be student led with regular guidance by the community agency and faculty mentor.
The Elise Scholars program follows a structured project development and implementation timeline (roadmap). The Elsie Hillman Civic Forum is committed to providing academic and environmental support to assist the student in producing outcomes that inform policy and build capacity within the community partner.

The Elsie Scholars will participate in a bi-weekly interdisciplinary seminar and/or mentorship meeting where the student will join their peers to receive guidance on project development, receive leadership coaching, and develop project management and collaboration skills. The Scholars program will culminate with a final publication and poster presentation to the Elsie Hillman Civic Forum Program Committee, Pitt faculty and students, and community partners.

*It is expected that the student will commit 10 hours per week to the Scholars program. This commitment includes seminars, meetings with mentor, project development, and scholarship.*

**What is the focus area of the projects and/or research the student will be required to develop?**

There are a broad variety of projects and/or action the student may develop in response to the community organizational need and priorities. This is a collaborative process with site mentors and is an organic process that evolves over the first term.

The Elsie Hillman Civic Forum supports projects in the following areas:

- Income Inequity
- Food Insecurity
- Equity in Education
- Housing
- Access to Quality Healthcare
- LGBT Rights
- Race and Politics
- Environment
- Health Disparities
- Transportation
- Immigration Reform
- Job Training Programs Vs. College Education
- Women’s health and reproductive rights
- Collaborative Leadership
- Policy Issues Affecting People with Disabilities

*If your area of interest is not represented please email us.*

**Can I choose the community agency with which I will work?**

Interns do not typically choose their sites. Instead, the Elsie Forum will match students to agencies that align with the interests reflected in their personal statements.

On occasion, the Elsie Hillman Civic Forum will accept and support applications from students looking to develop new research or action projects with a specific community partner; however, this is not guaranteed.