

2021 Annual Report
of the Robert & Patricia
Switzer Foundation

The Robert and Patricia Switzer Foundation was formed in 1985 in Cleveland, Ohio. Its core giving program is the Switzer Environmental Fellowship program, which supports talented graduate students who are dedicated to environmental problem solving. Beyond the fellowship program, the foundation offers a variety of professional and leadership development grants and resources to fellows throughout their careers. The foundation intends its grantmaking to be instrumental in creating a cadre of highly motivated, trained, and committed individuals who will be the environmental leaders of tomorrow. All grant programs are administered through the foundation's office in Belfast, Maine.

From the Board Chair and the Executive Director:

We are grateful to the Switzer Foundation staff for their responsiveness, flexibility, and compassion in response to ongoing challenges of a global pandemic, economic uncertainty and social change during 2021. We selected an inspiring cohort of 20 new Switzer Fellows, awarded 48 grants to alumni, convened welcoming virtual retreats and networking events, and completed a strategic review process to chart new directions for the foundation's programs and finances.



Joe Aldy

In March 2021, we welcomed Cora Preston as the foundation's first Network Manager. In this role, Cora cultivates Switzer Fellows' engagement in the Switzer Network, sustaining relationships and convening events to build our community. Cora also manages the foundation's communications, elevating Switzer Fellows as recognized leaders driving positive environmental change. The Network Manager search prompted the foundation to adopt **best practices in equitable recruiting**, and Cora's new role signals the importance of aligning the foundation's staff to meet the needs of a growing and changing Switzer Network.

Guided by our equity mission, the Switzer Foundation also **updated our fellowship review process**, involving the Switzer Network in decision making, bringing more perspectives into the selection process, and providing alumni with new opportunities to give back to the foundation. The updated process resulted in selection of the most diverse cohort of Switzer Fellows to date. Volunteer reviewers expressed enthusiasm for the opportunity to give back to the foundation in a meaningful way, drew inspiration from the applicants, and enjoyed the sense of connection to the Switzer Network.

In 2018, the Switzer Foundation updated its mission, vision, and values to focus on advancing social equity as well as improving environmental quality. With the transition to Sarah's leadership, trustees charged the staff with conducting a strategic review to support implementation of the foundation's equity goals. We formed two collaborative working groups of Fellows Advisory Committee (FAC) and staff members to develop recommendations for updating the foundation's grant programs and funding options. Our efforts culminated in a retreat in early December, where working groups presented their recommendations and trustees identified collective priorities for implementation. These include developing a spending policy for the foundation, enhancing fellowship outreach via an ambassador program, updating our other grant programs, and exploring opportunities to expand the fellowship to a new region.



Sarah Reed

Each cohort of Switzer Fellows brings a renewed sense of hope and purpose to the foundation's work. Please join us in celebrating and amplifying their accomplishments in 2021!

Meet the 2021 Switzer Fellows



With nearly **700 Switzer Fellows** across the country and around the world, we have awarded:

Over **\$9,005,000** in Switzer Fellowships

\$6,565,000 in Leadership grants

\$411,000 in Collaborative and Network Innovation grants

Over **\$179,000** in Professional Development grants

Welcoming the 2021 Switzer Fellows

We are thrilled to share the 2021 cohort of Switzer Fellows with you. Please enjoy this **video** highlighting each fellow, and dig deeper into their expertise, studies and motivations in the following excerpts from their **profiles**.

New fellowship review process supports network engagement and equity

The Switzer Foundation **updated our fellowship review process** this year to support network engagement and equity. The goals were to bring a diversity of perspectives into the selection process, involve the Switzer Network in decision making and provide alumni with a new opportunity to engage and give back to the foundation.

Hiring our first Network Manager—the process for equitable recruiting

The foundation hired our first Network Manager this year, **bringing Cora Preston on board** in March 2021. The hiring process provided an opportunity to implement new best practices for equitable recruiting. We shared **our approach** in order to be transparent about the policies and practices we are adopting to advance equity and justice within the foundation, and to provide Switzer Fellows with an example to support equitable hiring processes within their own organizations.

OUR VALUES

Belief in individuals
Environmental stewardship
Sustainability
Social equity and diversity
Systems thinking and problem-solving
Maximizing impact

OUR STRATEGIES

To accomplish our mission and carry out our vision, the Switzer Foundation awards academic fellowships and project grants, supporting a continuum of environmental leadership from graduate school through professional careers, and nurturing leaders who will be instrumental in driving environmental change. The foundation sponsors professional development activities, facilitates collaboration and communication among Switzer Fellows through the Switzer Network.

Switzer Network Event highlights

With the ongoing pandemic, we held another year of online-only Switzer Network events. We are particularly proud of the leadership of our fellows in planning many of our 14 gatherings this year. For example, a planning committee of alumni, staff and consultants worked together to plan the 2021 Fall Retreat. Despite a quick pivot to a virtual format when the Delta variant thwarted our in-person plans, the new fellows reported the retreat was an enriching and fulfilling three days of community building with an outstanding group of environmental leaders.

A team of 3 fellows also led the Switzer Network's Race & Equity Discussion Group, hosting well-attended meetings such as **The Biden Administration and Environmental Justice—What's going on?**, **Full Moon Rising: Land justice and first light**, a film screening of "**Cooked: Survival by ZIP code**," and BIPOC fellows social hours.

Additionally, 10 fellowship alumni working in the philanthropic sector served as panelists during **Demystifying Philanthropy and Networking**, leading a candid conversation about environmental philanthropy between grant-making and grant-seeking fellows. Science communication, decarbonizing bank lending and collaborative problem-solving were among other engaging topics for **Switzer Network events**.

Leadership Grants

The Switzer Foundation supported two leadership grants in 2021, enabling organizations to hire Switzer Fellows in innovative new positions to create positive environmental change and advance their careers.



Jessica Hall



Lindsay Barbieri

Accessible data for climate-smart agriculture: Earth Science Information Partners hired 2018 fellow **Lindsay Barbieri** to address data gaps and challenges facing climate-smart agriculture and nature-based solutions to climate change.

Developing critical design tools and training in waterway restoration: The Waterways Restoration Institute hired 2000 fellow **Jessica Hall** to expand regional knowledge of suitable bioengineering methods and materials for holistic stream restoration.

Fellows in the News

These are just a few highlights of Switzer Fellows in the News, showcasing how Switzer Fellows are making an impact across fields.



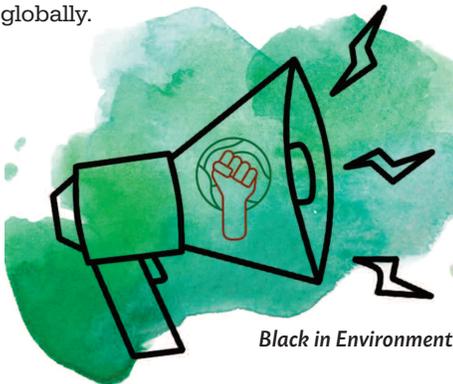
Kevin Kung

Kevin Kung's company Takachar wins Prince William's inaugural Earthshot Prize

Takachar has developed a cheap, small-scale, portable technology that attaches to tractors in remote farms. The award-winning machine converts crop residues into sellable bioproducts like fuel and fertilizer, with up to 98% less smoke emissions than burned agricultural waste.

Regan Patterson co-founds inaugural Black in Environment Week

Black in Environment was launched to build collective community for Black folks in environmental spaces. Their mission is to highlight the scholarship, activism and engagement of Black environmentalists globally.



Black in Environment

OUR VISION

By 2026, Switzer Fellows will be recognized leaders driving positive environmental change for the benefit of natural and human communities.

Rachel Morello-Frosch and Lara Cushing lead the Toxic Tides project to map more than 400 toxic sites in California at risk of flooding from sea level rise.

"We know from past flood events that the wealthy communities are not the ones that suffer the greatest impacts," **Cushing** said, pointing to recent disasters in New Orleans and Houston. "The vulnerabilities of environmental justice communities to sea level rise have not been front and center in the conversation in a way that it should be."

Reclaiming STEM Institute founded via the merger of two fellows-led organizations

In 2018, **Evelyn Valdez-Ward** co-founded Reclaiming STEM to represent experiences of marginalized scientists in science communication and policy training. That same year, **Sarah Myhre** co-founded Rowan Institute to support STEM experts to engage in public leadership, education and communication. The two organizations have now merged to collectively support scientists and scientific institutions to address, repair, and heal from historical and ongoing systems of oppression.

Karen Merritt's fellowship comes full circle with proposed settlement to clean up mercury in the Penobscot River



photo: Jim Dollar / Flickr

When **Karen Merritt** received her Switzer Environmental Fellowship in 2006, she was working on her dissertation on the site of a court-ordered study to evaluate mercury contamination in the Penobscot River. Now a professional environmental engineer, Karen returned to the project in 2016-2018 for the next stage of a remediation study. Her team's results have led to a 2021 proposed settlement that would allow the cleanup to begin.

Lourdes Vera receives ASA award for outstanding publication "When Data Justice and Environmental Justice Meet: Formulating a Response to Extractive Logic Through Environmental Data Justice"

The Robert Boguslaw award is given every second year to an outstanding young investigator whose work explores "the relationship between technology and humanism or otherwise proposes innovative solutions to emerging social issues associated with technology." **Vera's** leadership in applying and extending the concept of environmental data justice across multiple contexts was truly exemplary and deserving of this honor.

Biden selects Karen Hyun for chief of staff position at NOAA

In January 2021, The Biden administration appointed a new political team to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) that will help guide policies on the oceans and atmosphere. 2007 Switzer Fellow **Karen Hyun** now serves as NOAA chief of staff.

A vibrant community of environmental leaders • www.switzernetwork.org

Robert and Patricia Switzer Foundation Annual Financial Report

(FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2021)

The following financial data is based on an annual compilation of financial statements.

SWITZER FOUNDATION MISSION

The Robert and Patricia Switzer Foundation identifies and nurtures environmental leaders who have the ability and determination to make a significant impact, and supports initiatives that will have direct and measurable results to improve environmental quality. The foundation accomplishes this by awarding academic fellowships and project grants, sponsoring professional development activities, and fostering a growing network of Switzer Fellows, environmental practitioners and organizations.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT	FY 2020	FY 2021
Assets (at market value)		
Common stocks	\$ 12,095,245	\$ 13,754,457
Fixed income & alternatives	5,384,941	7,416,770
Liquidity	823,774	600,286
Other assets (equipment)	20,760	2,278
Total assets	\$ 18,324,720	\$ 18,324,720
Liabilities and Equity		
Liabilities	\$ 189,933	\$ 173,794
Equity (unrestricted net assets)	18,134,787	21,599,997
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 18,324,720	\$ 21,773,791

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND DISBURSEMENT

Income from Investments		
Interest income and dividends	\$ 328,651	\$ 453,894
Capital gains distribution	0	0
Realized gain/loss	(298,704)	1,114,769
Other income	0	30
Total operating revenues	\$ 29,947	\$ 1,568,693
Disbursements from Income		
Grants paid	\$ 312,818	\$ 436,481
Investment management expenses	74,122	60,000
Operating and admin expenses	555,823	571,487
Total expenses	\$ 942,763	\$ 1,075,181

2021 SWITZER FOUNDATION TRUSTEES:

Joe Aldy (Chair)
Linda Switzer Clopton
Scott Fruin
Bruce Kahn
Izzy Martin
Laura Meyerson
Rachel Morello-Frosch

FELLOWS ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Carolina Balazs
Ekow Edzie
Lisa Feldstein
Lara Hansen
Dave Kramer
Maria Martinez
Roger Perez
Donna Vorhees
Olivia Walton

STAFF

Laine Kuehn, Administrative Coordinator
Erin Lloyd, Program Director
Cora Preston, Network Manager
Sarah Reed, Executive Director

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