



Dr. Cynthia Senn Johnson was a co-founder of the Student Development in Higher Education program at Long Beach State University. // Photo courtesy of Dr. Jonathan O'Brien.

SDHE to get new fellowship program

The Kay Goddard Fellowship will accompany the Cynthia S. Johnson Fellowship as an opportunity for new students

Applications are due January 15 for perspective students hoping to become part of the new cohort of Student Development in Higher Education students. But, this year new SDHE students will also be able to apply for two fellowship programs within the SDHE application as well: the Kay Goddard Fellowship and the Cynthia Johnson Fellowship.

Dr. Goddard and Dr. Johnson are founders of the SDHE program. When Dr. Johnson passed away several years ago, the Cynthia S. Johnson Student Development Institute and Fellowship was created in her honor. About a year ago, Dr. Goddard was approached about funding another fellowship this year.

"I chose to [fund a fellowship] because of my belief in the importance of the out-of-classroom life of college students contributing to education and to community, which are my goals," Dr. Goddard said.

"A sense of community in our society as a whole and education certainly is a critical part of us running and maintaining a democracy. So that's why I really decided to become involved, so that promising students would

have an opportunity to participate in a manner that I did."

The Johnson Fellowship began two years ago with the first fellow, Jovana Ramos, who has held the position for two years. The position is normally held for one year, but because it was a new program and going through changes, Jovana continued on as the fellow after the first year.

As a fellow, one of Jovana's primary duties is to help coordinate the annual Johnson Forum, which "brings together leaders and scholars at all levels of experience to advance their understanding of the evolving issues affecting students, higher education institutions, the profession of student affairs, and a fundamental commitment to social change." She works in the background to ensure everything runs smooth at the forum. She also interns with the Leadership Research Center on campus and assists faculty in SDHE with their research. Although, her duties haven't always been the same.

"It's been changing over the last two years, so I have a feeling it's going to change for the next fellow who's going to be taking my place," Jovana said. "For example, last year, I didn't really do budget work and this year I did a lot of things in terms of budgeting."

Jovana is also considered a liaison between different cohorts when projects require her to interact within her cohort-mates and other cohorts. She helps with the admissions of prospective SDHE students and the Field Work Reception, where 3rd year students celebrate completing finishing their hours.

"I came right out of undergrad, so it's not like I went from working in the field and then

went to grad school, like some of my cohort-mates have," Jovana said. "So it has impacted me in helping me transition from undergrad to a graduate student in terms of networking and communicating with faculty and other professional staff, because I had not had that experience in the field yet."

Dr. Jonathan O'Brien, head of the SDHE program, supervises the Johnson fellow and will also supervise the Goddard fellow. He says that while the Johnson fellowship has a broader goal surrounding social justice and equity, the Goddard fellowship will be more concentrated on leadership and civic engagement.

"These are our fellowships in that fellows are brought in to work among both practitioners for about half of their time and faculty doing research for about half their time," Dr. O'Brien said. "So they get the opportunity in their first year to explore a whole range of what you can do in post-secondary higher ed student affairs work."

The fellowship recipient will be a first-year SDHE student and must have need for the fellowship (meaning they already don't have a full-time job) and have an openness to learning about student affairs and research, Dr. O'Brien said.

"We're just really thankful that Dr. Goddard who helped us supplement opportunities for new students and that her legacy continues in this program," Dr. O'Brien said. "... We're very excited that she's going to continue to maintain her connection with the program."

Applications for both fellowships are due JANUARY 15 with the SDHE application.