

VICE PRESIDENT FOR GRANTS

Kaitlin Johnson

Monday, September 14, 2009

Distinguished Assembly Members,

This summer the following activities have comprised the majority of my GAPSA related work:

1. **Hiring of David LeGault, Grants Assistant**, my replacement and assistant. He has been doing a great job this summer taking care of getting checks cut for summer travel and implementing some changes to the grant application processes.
2. Met with GAPSA advisor, Megan Sweet, to discuss the need for increased transparency in the grant judging and award process as well as some simplification in the application process. Work is underway on **improving transparency** as well as making the application process an easier endeavor. Included in this effort is a **judging matrix** for Academic Initiative and Social Event grants so that groups applying will have a clearer idea of how their application will be evaluated. I would appreciate any feedback, comments or constructive criticism you have to offer regarding your own experience applying for a GAPSA grant.
3. A total of **30 grant applications** (22 Scholarly Travel, 3 Professional Travel and 5 Academic/Social) were received for the September cycle. We're off to a great start and I predict applications will be coming in in higher numbers than ever before.
4. Beyond grants, I have been working with Jasmine Blanks on adding to and revising Kristi Kremer's report on graduate and professional student indebtedness. This document will be presented to policymakers and contains important recommendations regarding the need for increased research on the state of graduate and professional student debt levels.
5. I have also been looking into making changes to the structure of the current GAPSA website. As it is right now, the website looks great but is difficult and time-intensive to maintain "behind the scenes."

I will be continuing to work with the grants committee on increasing transparency and efficiency in the grants process and I have high hopes for a very successful year.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The GAPSA grant committee is seeking one or two more committee members from the Assembly. There is very minimum commitment (one meeting per month). Serving on committee can be a rewarding experience for you. If you want to be more directly involved in how grant funding is awarded, please consider this opportunity. All those interested please talk to me or email me.

Thank You,

Kaitlin Johnson
651-307-2864
john2921@umn.edu