



**American Planning Association**

*Making Great Communities Happen*

## **APA Planning Fellowship Program**

**2009-2010 Academic Year**

### **The Program**

Planning is concerned with the rational and equitable distribution of resources and opportunities. These same concerns apply to the training of those who would become professional planners. The purpose of the American Planning Association Planning Fellowship Program is to foster increased minority interest in the study of urban planning at the graduate level. This will provide increased minority participation in the planning profession, and ultimately, greater service to communities across the nation.

The Program is open to first and second year master's degree students.

Due to limited funding by APA, the Fellowships for graduate planning students are targeted to the minority groups that have historically suffered the most discrimination in the United States, and who are currently under-represented in the planning profession. These have been defined as African Americans, Hispanic Americans and Native Americans.

The fellowships are meant to provide partial funding for the graduate student. The awards are made to the school on the student's account. To that end, several fellowships ranging from approximately \$1,000 to \$5,000 are awarded on an annual basis. (The exact amount of the awards is dependent upon the number and qualifications of the applicants). A paid one-year student membership in APA is awarded to those selected for a fellowship.

The APA welcomes student members and supports student organizations on many campuses in the U. S. Graduating APA Student Members now qualify for a new reduced dues category – New Professionals – developed to ease the financial burden of professional membership during the early years of their careers. Their planning careers will be enhanced through continuing education, professional networking opportunities, chapter and division activities and other resources for the beginning planner as well as the more experienced practitioner. After obtaining a graduate degree and a minimum of two years work in the planning field, a professional planner may become certified through the AICP certification process.

### **Eligibility**

An eligible applicant is:

- A member of one of the following minority groups – African American, Hispanic American or Native American
- Citizens of the United States
- Students enrolled or officially accepted for enrollment in a graduate planning program

accredited by the PAB (Planning Accreditation Board)

- Students who intend to work as practicing planners in the public sector (which includes local, state & federal government, and not-for-profit careers).
- Students able to document their need for financial assistance

**Note: Prior winners of any APA-administered fellowship or scholarship program are not eligible.**

## **Application Requirements**

Application requirements include:

1. a two page personal and background statement written by the student, describing how their graduate education will be applied to career goals and why they chose planning as a career path,
2. a completed and signed APA Financial Aid application;
3. two letters of recommendation in support of the student's application and career goals;
4. official transcripts (sent by the offices of the Registrar to APA) of **all** previous collegiate and graduate academic work – to be requested by student with adequate time for receipt in APA's **Chicago office** no later than **April 30<sup>th</sup>**;
5. written verification from the school's financial officer or copies of a school publication or website indicating the average cost of one academic year of graduate school;
6. a resume (**optional** if the information is supplied in the student's personal statement);
7. copy of acceptance letter from a PAB-accredited graduate planning school (incoming students only);
8. a notarized statement of financial independence signed by the student's parent(s) (**optional**) certifying that the student will not be taken as a tax deduction in the year for which the scholarship is sought and will not receive financial aid from the parents;
9. the student's signature on this application.

### **Please Note:**

***Incomplete applications will not be reviewed by the Committee. To check on the status of your application, send your request to [kblank@planning.org](mailto:kblank@planning.org)***

## **Selection Criteria**

A Selection Committee of three to four persons appointed by the APA President will review applications and determine award winners. Applications will be judged using the following criteria, listed in order of importance:

- ❖ commitment to planning as reflected in personal statement and resume
- ❖ academic achievement and/or improvement during previous two years
- ❖ letters of recommendation
- ❖ financial need - both absolute need and need relative to tuition costs
- ❖ professional presentation
- ❖ geographic balance of awards during that particular year

Awards will be made to those demonstrating the highest levels of commitment to the planning profession as communicated in the personal statement and involvement in other planning-related activities, academic achievement, strong letters of recommendation, and financial need.

## The Award Process

- The Selection Committee meets in July to review applications.
- Alternates are chosen in the event those selected for a planning fellowship are unable to return to school or if a student recipient fails to submit a written acceptance within the stated period after being notified of award.
- APA Executive Director will announce the names of award recipients by the end of August.
- **Award recipients are required:**
  - to provide a written acceptance of the award, and
  - to provide a contact name and mailing information for the school's financial aid/business office, to insure proper payment to the student's account at the school.
  - Social Security Number
- Upon receipt of these required materials, the first half of the award will be paid to the student's account at the school. The second half will be paid in January, *contingent on a written report from the school stating that the student is still enrolled and maintaining a satisfactory level of work.*
- It is the responsibility of the applicant/recipient to notify APA of any change in address for any and all notices and student membership services.
- Staff will notify the appropriate APA Chapter President of fellowship recipients in their areas. Chapters are encouraged to involve recipients in Chapter activities and provide mentoring.

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## Certification

*I have examined the entire application and all documents attached. I certify that to the best of my ability, knowledge and belief that this APA Fellowship application package is true and all representations herein*

are accurate statements of fact(s).

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_

## Award Information

Please indicate how you learned about this program (check one):

APA Promotion    APA Website    School/University Office    Financial Aid Guide

Other (please list): \_\_\_\_\_

## Checklist

Please make sure all application documents are arranged in order as noted in the checklist, below.

- completed APA Financial Aid application
- two-to-five page personal statement
- two letters of recommendation
- photocopy of letter of acceptance from PAB-accredited planning graduate program, if an incoming student
- written verification or copy of school's average cost for one academic year of graduate study
- a resume of work experience and background, if not incorporated into personal statement
- optional notarized statement of financial independence
- application signed on page 3.
- official (sealed) transcripts of all previous collegiate and graduate academic work

***Request official transcripts in time for them to reach APA by the deadline date.***

## Deadline

The deadline for the APA Fellowship Program is April 30th. All original application information must be received in the APA Chicago office by that date. If forwarded via FEDEX or similar courier service the delivery must be made to APA by April 30th. **Faxed or electronic documents will not be accepted.**

## Mail completed applications to:

APA Fellowship Program  
Attn: Kriss Blank, Leadership Affairs Associate

American Planning Association  
122 S. Michigan Ave., Ste. 1600  
Chicago, IL 60603-6107

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