07/14/04

TO: SSSP Board of Directors

FROM: Kathy Fox, Committee Chair
                           Lee Student Support Fund Committee (Kathy Fox, Joya Misra, and Chris Baker)

We are very grateful to Michele Koontz for the work she did on behalf of the Lee Student Support
Fund Committee.

Student Support Funds

This year, we helped make it possible for thirty-two students to attend the 53rd Annual Meeting
of the Society for the Study of Social Problems. The Committee received a total of 40 applications for
Lee Student Support funds. It had a limit of $4,000 to award. We awarded funds to 32 students after
Michele Koontz checked the preliminary program and the membership database to verify which
potential recipients were eligible to receive funds. There were 34 eligible applicants but one declined
to attend the meetings and another did not respond to Michele's inquiries.

Most applications were submitted electronically, requiring individuals to send copies of student IDs
separately. The committee makes a suggestion regarding the application process:

*It is unclear whether or no undergraduate students are eligible. We suggest that the application
forms be changed to reflect the process is open to both undergraduate and graduate students.*

Similar to last year (and based upon the large number of requests as well as the distance and expense
for many of the applicants), we decided to make equal awards ($125.00) to the 32 applicants. The
committee anticipates a large number of applications for funds to attend the 55th Annual Meeting of the
Society for the Study of Social Problems.

Newcomer Mentoring Program

The committee was responsible this year for matching meeting mentors with newcomers to the
meeting who indicated an interest in being mentored. We received 42 requests for mentoring and only
34 willing mentors. The committee members tried to solicit more mentors and were mildly successful.
Many members indicated they were unwilling to be mentors because they a) weren't sure what they
could do or say that would be helpful; b) didn't feel they were sufficiently well-connected to mentor
successfully. We ended up asking a few mentors to "double up" on mentees. However, the committee
makes these recommendations for next year:

1) *Possibly solicit mentors and mentees earlier so that some e-mail mentoring could occur
   before the meetings*
2) *Possibly arrange a meeting spot and time for mentors/mentees to connect; perhaps even a
   reception for mentors and mentees to meet and mingle.*
3) *While we understand the value of informal mentoring, perhaps mentoring could happen a
   bit more formally with clearer parameters for what is involved. The vagueness of the role of
   mentor seemed problematic for members who were uncomfortable signing up to mentor
   others. Mentoring relationships usually evolve rather briefly with a stranger, so a clear
   definition of what is expected might encourage more volunteers.*