

To: SSSP Board of Directors

From: 2010-2011 Lee Scholar Support Fund Committee

Subject: 2011 Lee Scholar Support Fund Committee Report

June 23, 2011

The Lee Scholar Support Fund Committee 2011 included Hoan N. Bui (Chair), Nadia Shapkina (Chair Elect), and Ruth Thompson. The committee was informed by Michele Smith Koontz that fund available for this year was \$4,000.

Nine applicants met the eligibility requirements (current non-student SSSP membership, accepted conference paper, from outside the United States), and they came from seven different countries including Cameroon (one applicant), Chili (one applicant), Cuba (one applicant), Israel (one applicant), Nepal (one applicant), Nigeria (three applicants) and Peru (one applicant).

The committee started the selection process on April 16, 2011. The evaluation of applications was guided by the purpose of the Lee Scholar Travel Support Fund (facilitating scholarly participation by persons engaged in research related to labor, gender, race-ethnicity, less advantaged countries, and other struggles) and the significance of their research papers. Information about applicants' countries of origin and papers' titles and abstracts as well as the amount requested was available to the committee members for evaluation.

Following consideration by the full committee, three applicants were selected as the award recipients, including Olayinka Ajala (Nigeria), Navin Mishra (Nepal), and Bayode Popoola (Nigeria). The committee also decided to split the available fund equally to three selected applicants. All three selected applicants accepted the awards. However, after the moneys were sent off, one applicant (Navin Mishra) was unable to obtain the visa to the United States. Given the situation, and the committee members agreed to reallocate available fund to the other two applicants once the money was sent back to and received by the SSSP.

The 2011 award recipients are as follows:

AWARDEE	COUNTRY	AWARD
Ajala, Olayinka	Nigeria	\$1,333.33 + reallocated fund (pending)
Popoola, Bayode	Nigeria	\$1,333.33 + reallocated fund (pending)

Several issues arose in the award selection process this year.

1. The committee members observed that several applicants wrote about the importance of their visit to SSSP meeting instead of their proposed paper (the abstract). Because the title and the abstract of research paper were the information committee members relied on to make judgment about the significance of the research paper, those who did not provide clear information about the papers to be presented at the conference were not

selected. Because all applicants who failed to provide the abstract were from South America, the committee was wondering if these applicants misunderstood the questions on the application form given the cultural context of their academic profession. Whether it was the case or not, should questions on the application form be revised to improve clarity?

2. One recipient of this year award (Bayode Popoola) also received the award last year. I was on the committee last year, but I could not remember all last year recipients. I only learned about the situation after the award was made and when I reviewed the report last year to prepare for the report this year. Although I did not receive instructions about repeated recipients, I felt that we should avoid the situation in the future, so that different individuals would have the opportunity. If the Board of Directors would feel the same, there should be clear instructions for the selection committee regarding this issue.
3. Another issue is related to applicants' inability to obtain travel visa to the US. When selected applicants could not obtain the visa to the US after receiving the award money, the SSSP incurs the additional wiring fees and administration time. To avoid these problems, Michele Koontz proposed that for future years the award money would be sent after the recipients received their travel visa. The proposal was approved by Susan Carlson (the Treasurer), Hector Delgado (the Executive Officer) and Hoan N. Bui.

Submitted June 23, 2011 by Hoan N. Bui

Hoan N. Bui, Chair, 2010-2011 Lee Scholar Support Fund Committee
Nadia Shapkina, Chair Elect
Ruth Thompson