

NorthStar Youth Worker Fellowship Application – 2014-15

The purpose of the NorthStar Youth Worker Fellowship is to engage a cohort of experienced youth work practitioners in exploration, reflection, and study to generate more wisdom, language, and leadership in the field of youth work in Minnesota. Fellows in the 2014-15 cohort **will examine rights-based approaches to youth work** in Minnesota's past as well as the possible impact of using this approach on current youth work practice. Each of the fellows will frame an inquiry question and spend the year reviewing relevant research and writings; tapping the local wisdom of their professional network; engaging in conversation with local and national leaders in the field; and writing a position paper that will inform systems development and field advancement in Minnesota.

I. PERSONAL INFORMATION—please attach a current resume

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Agency: _____ Title: _____
Preferred Telephone: () _____ E-mail _____

II. THEME — A Rights-Based Approach to Youth Work

In the early 1970s the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare asked Dr. Gisela Konopka to develop a statement on the healthy development of adolescents as a possible basis for formulating national policy. In the resulting paper, *Requirements for Healthy Development of Adolescent Youth*, she identified five human rights that she felt most aligned with the healthy development of young people. They are:

- the right of the individuals to be themselves, to think their own thoughts and to speak them, consistent with the rights of others;
- the right to grow and to develop abilities to their full potential;
- the right to air grievances and to seek redress;
- the right to make mistakes without unreasonable punishment;
- the right to justice.

In 2003 a group of United Nations agencies adopted a rights-based approach to their work. For agencies working in the area of youth development "a rights-based approach to development recognizes that young people become empowered to act on their own behalf and enjoy their human rights as they gain access to relevant information, skills and opportunities."

Fellows in the 2014-15 cohort will examine rights-based approaches to youth work in Minnesota's past as well as the possible impact of using this approach on current youth work practice.

- **Questions for inquiry**

- Each Fellow will develop an inquiry question within the theme for their project, and articulate their position.
- The inquiry question should address the theme with an emphasis in one of three areas:
 - The practice of youth work
 - Systems development and the advancement of the field of youth work
 - Professional development needs of practitioners in the field

- **Methods of inquiry**

- Fellows will choose their methods for generating data that could include, but are not limited to: secondary research, surveys, focus groups, interviews, and site visits.
- Fellows will tap into their professional network as part of their inquiry process.

III. APPLICATION QUESTIONS (maximum 1,000 words total)

1. Why are you interested in being part of the NorthStar Fellowship? What are your personal and professional goals that relate to the Fellowship?
2. Share your thoughts on a rights-based approach to youth work. What kinds of relevant experiences and/or knowledge about the theme would you bring to the Fellowship?
3. How will you use your professional networks and other methods of data collection to inform the development of your position paper?
4. How do you think a Fellowship focused on rights based approaches to youth work might contribute to systems development and field advancement in youth work in Minnesota?

IV. APPLICANT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING—Please initial and sign

_____ I understand that if I am accepted as a Fellow that I am required to attend meetings consistently and spend significant time reading, writing, and meeting in the periods between the monthly Fellowship meetings. I am required to a day-long Orientation Event on September 9, 2014; produce a final position paper; and participate in a public presentation of my paper in the summer, 2015.

_____ I have read the attached Fellowship Overview and agree to the Fellowship requirements.

Applicant Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

Date

Minnesota Department of Education
Center for Democracy and Citizenship, Augsburg College
Youthprise
NorthStar Youth Worker Fellowship

V. SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

Please submit:

- Completed application form, including your answers to the Application Questions and the Applicant Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by you and your supervisor
- Current resume

Applications must be received by July 18, 2014. Please submit them by email to:

Email: **cdc@augsborg.edu**

If you have questions or would like more information on the NorthStar Fellowship, please contact: Sheila Oehrlein at **sheila.oehrlein@state.mn.us** (651) 582-8448