

# Introduction to the ELLA Fellowship



## PURPOSE

The ELLA Fellowship Program is a unique leadership opportunity for young women age 16-22. The purpose of the fellowship is to encourage the leadership of young activists by providing them with the opportunity to conceptualize a project, the resources to implement it, and the support to analyze, evaluate, and learn from it.

## INTRODUCTION

The ELLA Fellowship Program was launched in September 2007 with a class of 6 inaugural Fellows. ELLA stands for *Engage, Learn, Lead, and Act*, but also represents the spirit of the social justice leader, Ella Baker. *Ella* is also the word for *she* in Spanish. The program funds and supports social justice projects that address the issues and needs within the Fellows' own communities. Each Fellow receives a personal monthly stipend, additional funding for her Fellowship project costs, and on-going staff support to complete the projects. Fellows attend monthly retreats, committing to a 9 month fellowship starting in October and culminating in June with a Project Expo.

## ELIGIBILITY

Fellows must be between the ages of 16-22 and must have at least 2 years of prior leadership experience through Sadie Nash Leadership Project (SNLP) or another program. If you are unsure if you qualify, PLEASE ask us.

The Fellowship is open to those living outside of New York City, but **all Fellows must commit to attending monthly retreats held in the New York area.**

To be a strong applicant, you should have:

- Passion about a clear issue affecting a community you belong to/people you relate to
- Willingness and ability to make a 9 month commitment to your project and to attend monthly retreats
- Desire to develop leadership skills and confidence

## SELECTION PROCESS

ELLA Fellowship PROJECTS must be:

-Youth-Led: Fellows are the main designers and implementers of their own projects. You can work independently or with a partner. You receive guidance and feedback but you set your own goals and are personally responsible for your project.

-Grassroots: Fellows work locally with people and issues that are personally significant to them. You will work to help your own community and will involve members of that community in your work. A community can be defined by geography (ex: East New York) or by shared experiences, background, need, or identity (ex: immigrant youth, people who need awareness on sex ed, a community with high risk of diabetes or cancer, etc...). We also invite you to engage individuals that SNLP does not traditionally focus on, and to collaborate with community organizations and partners.

# Introduction to the ELLA Fellowship

- Social Justice Focused: Projects will seek to address real needs within communities and will explore the root cause of injustice. Projects will use education, activism, and organizing (as opposed to community service like volunteering in a soup kitchen) to create change.
- Feasible: A project must be reasonable and do-able. It *should* be ambitious and creative, but it must also be completed within the nine month timeline. For example: Ending poverty is too broad, but writing a poem on poverty is too narrow. Your project should address the issue within the timeframe and with the resources you will have at your disposal.

## APPLICATION REVIEW

Applications are reviewed by an SNLP Staff member, the Fellowship Coordinator, and by a former Fellow. Fellowships are awarded based on the commitment of the Fellow, the match with ELLA philosophies, and the viability of the project. Final decisions will be made by **Friday, September 10th, 2010** and applicants will be notified promptly.

## FELLOWSHIP AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Fellowship payments: The Fellowship stipend is paid in 9 monthly installments. The \$300/month personal stipend reflects attendance at retreats, check-in meetings and the monthly work completed on projects. Fellows also receive funding up to \$500 to meet project costs.

Fellowship retreats: Mandatory monthly retreats are held in New York City and the local area. These retreats provide a time for fellows to meet face to face with Project Coordinators, to receive feedback and support from your peers, to receive training, and to produce important project deliverables (action plans, curriculum, flyers, etc...). Retreats will be held on the weekend and will be either full day or 2 day events. Transportation costs, housing, and food will be provided by SNLP. There are also regular office hours that fellows will attend as needed.

Progress and Final Reports: Fellows will track monthly progress towards goals, and will check in with Fellowship Coordinators regarding progress. Fellows will also be required to submit some material throughout the process (curriculum, outreach materials, etc...) and will complete a final report at the end of the fellowship. You will receive support creating all the required materials.

## HOW TO APPLY

Review this Introduction to the ELLA Fellowship Program

Review the Tips for Applicants

**Attend an Open House on Wednesday July 21<sup>st</sup> at 4pm, Friday July 23<sup>rd</sup> at 4pm, or Thurs Aug 5<sup>th</sup> at 4pm.**

Complete the Fellowship Application and **SUBMIT BY AUGUST 20th, 2010**

Submit via email to [shreya@sadienash.org](mailto:shreya@sadienash.org), or via fax at 718.422.8663. Contact Shreya Malena-Sannon, Program Director, at 718.422.8664 if you have any questions.