The John J. McKenna Graduate Fellowship in Creative Nonfiction

The John J. McKenna Graduate Fellowship in Creative Nonfiction is a fellowship for a student of creative nonfiction for the academic year, 2015-16. It includes up to 9 hours of tuition in both fall and spring semesters, fees, and a book stipend of $350. Awards for Runner-Up ($3000) and Honorable Mention ($1500) will also be given to assist with educational costs.

The John J. McKenna Graduate Fellowship in Creative Nonfiction is named in honor of the faculty founder of the Graduate Certificate in Advanced Writing at UNO. Professor McKenna, a celebrated teacher, writer, and scholar, retired from the Department of English in 2011 after more than forty years of teaching and service to the University. His legacy is commemorated through this Fellowship by former student and benefactor Yvette Kinney, who has generously established the Fellowship in honor of her former teacher and mentor and in support of students devoted to the study and craft of creative nonfiction. Yvette Kinney was also the first student to earn the Graduate Certificate in Advanced Writing at UNO.

Eligibility

Graduate students admitted to or currently pursuing the Graduate Certificate in Advanced Writing and/or the Master of Arts degree in English are eligible to apply—including current undergraduates who have been accepted to either of these graduate programs for the following year. Previous Fellowship winners and applicants may apply again in subsequent years. Students enrolled for only one semester during the academic year covered under the scholarship (2015-2016) will receive tuition reimbursement and fees covering only that one semester, half of any award money, and half of the book stipend ($125). In addition to interested students, faculty in the Department of English may also initiate applications on their students’ behalf.

Application Process

To apply, applicants must submit: (1) a letter of interest describing the applicant’s interest in creative nonfiction writing and how the scholarship will help them achieve their goals; and (2) a prose writing sample with a maximum limit of 5000 words. We strongly suggest interested applicants confer with their teachers and mentors to select the best work for submission. Application materials must be sent via email to the Director of the Graduate Certificate in Advanced Writing (Prof. John T. Price; jtprice@unomaha.edu), using the subject heading “McKenna Graduate Fellowship.” Please cc Prof. Jody Keisner (jkeisner@unomaha.edu). Materials should be attached as Word documents or as PDFs. The deadline for receipt of application materials this year is Monday, March 02, 2015.

Review and Award Process

The review committee, chaired by the Director of the Graduate Certificate in Advanced Writing, will consist of Creative Nonfiction faculty teaching at the graduate level. The faculty review committee will consult with Dr. McKenna and the creator of the Fellowship, Yvette Kinney, to determine the final awards. The recipient of the McKenna Fellowship and the Runner-up and Honorable Mention recipients are expected to attend the annual English Department Honoring Ceremony on April 17, 2015, where they will be recognized.