



Dorothy A. Johnson Center
FOR PHILANTHROPY

Kathy A. Agard Fellowship in Philanthropy

\$2,500 Fellowship Opportunity for GVSU Undergraduate and Graduate Students

Learn more about philanthropy and earn valuable resources.

Request for Proposals

The Johnson Center for Philanthropy is committed to introducing all students to philanthropy. We welcome individuals with a commitment to community and an interest in research, to embrace an exciting opportunity to make a difference through active learning and community engagement. *A community is a group of people who share something in common. You can define a community by the shared attributes of the people in it and/or by the strength of the connections among them. By combining an interest in community and a desire to learn more about philanthropy, you could learn more about a critical topic and earn valuable resources to assist in your education journey.*

All undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at Grand Valley State University are invited to submit a proposal for the 2024-2025 Agard Fellowship in Philanthropy, regardless of major or degree program. If you have a particular interest in community philanthropy and research to benefit the communities where you connect, serve, and live, this could be an opportunity for you.

Dr. Kathy Agard retired as executive director of the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy in 2010 after four years of service and a career providing leadership for the Michigan Community Foundations' Youth Project and the nonprofit Learning to Give. *Each year, two Agard Fellows are selected to engage in research on community philanthropy — defined by Learning to Give as “community members working together and leveraging community resources to better address challenges or to improve the quality of life in a community.”*

What topics excite you about neighbors and community members working together to address the challenges our society faces? Do you see an opportunity within your major to improve the lives of people within the community? How does philanthropy intersect with community solutions?

The Agard fellowship was initiated by friends and colleagues of Kathy Agard, Ed.D., in recognition of her years of service, dedication, and impact on the field of community philanthropy. Agard demonstrated leadership, love of higher education, care for youth and young adults, a belief in health and a high regard for innovation. She cared about making a difference in community and giving back.



Agard served as executive director of the Johnson Center; associate professor in the GVSU School of Public, Nonprofit and Health Administration; founding executive director of Learning to Give, a national program to infuse teaching of philanthropy into the K–12 core curriculum; and developer of the Michigan Community Foundations’ Youth Project, which now serves as an international model in youth grantmaking.

This legacy of community commitment can continue with you.

Are you searching for possible ideas?

We encourage you to consider research topics that include exploring the development of a particular grassroots movement, investigating how to best improve quality of life for a particular community by remedying a community challenge, illuminating a local family’s giving history and impact, or determining how community movements lead to the enactment of particular policy change. Our staff members, faculty and key stakeholders are willing to talk to you about potential research ideas or community philanthropy topics that you can consider. For more information contact Aimée Laramore at laramora@gvsu.edu or Ph: 616.331.7033.

Proposal Submission

The Agard Fellowship provides a research stipend of \$2,500 to two undergraduate and/or graduate students at GVSU — in any major or program — to pursue an original research project related to the field of community philanthropy. The fellow is expected to work with a faculty mentor of their choice. If academic credit is desired, the appointed fellow should arrange for an independent study course with a faculty member of their choice and create a product suitable for obtaining credit.

One-page proposals are invited at this time. Proposals should include a brief description of the research project you would like to pursue and how your areas of interest, previous education and experiences, or other aspects of your personal or professional profile make you a good fit for the fellowship.

Proposals are due March 29, 2024. Submissions received after the deadline, but by the close of business on April 5, 2024, will receive consideration as resources allow. The award is expected to be announced in May 2024, with resources distributed in fall 2024. To submit, please send the following items to laramora@gvsu.edu or jcp@gvsu.edu with the subject line “Agard Fellow Application.”

1. A one-page proposal including all information described above.
2. Your program/major and expected graduation date; a proposed faculty mentor; and when you plan to conduct your research: fall, winter, or both semesters.
3. Your resume with contact information.