

191/40

MEMORANDUM ON JUNIOR FELLOWSHIPS

1. Need for junior fellowships

At the last meeting of the Committee the Director for Fellowships called attention to the fact that a great many applications were received from young candidates who had as yet not had an opportunity to attend graduate school. For the most part these candidates were in minor positions in some remote section of the South and therefore did not have available critical references who could give a convincing estimate of their potential abilities. Hence there was little basis on which to judge many of these applicants; certainly there was no real evidence on which to base an award. Such candidates therefore have in the past received little consideration because they were in competition with those having greater experience and with one or two years of graduate work to their credit, and who thus could submit an array of evidence of their ability, real and potential. Our present techniques are not designed to cover the younger group.

You will recall, also, that Doctor Johnson pointed out that a great many young men with superior minds in the senior classes in various Negro institutions are the first to get jobs, both in teaching and in other lines of work. Many of them get into blind alleys and do not have an opportunity for further development. He indicated that in many cases the less brilliant student is unable to get a job and because he cannot, he somehow gets into a graduate school where he makes only an average record.

Doctor Johnson felt that it might be well for us to devise a method of getting hold of these more brilliant young graduates before they become lost in some out-of-the-way place or in a blind alley job.



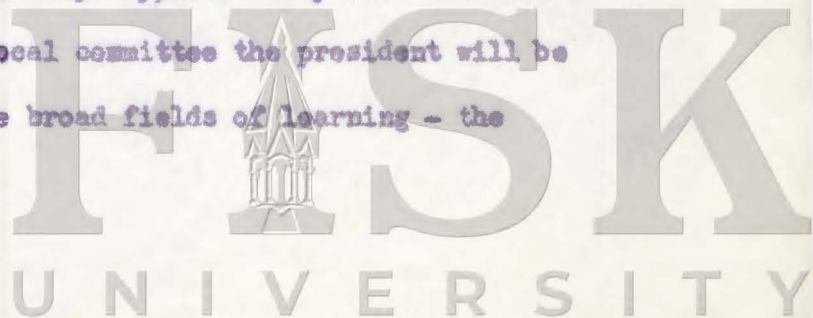
In order to present the matter to the Committee for concrete consideration, I am outlining a plan for awarding junior fellowships during the coming year. Your attention is called to the fact that this is being proposed on an experimental basis, at only a few institutions. The primary purpose of this experiment is to work out adequate techniques for uncovering and selecting the most brilliant young graduates of Negro institutions.

2. Scope of the junior fellowships

It is proposed to conduct an experiment for one year with a small number of institutions, five to ten, expending a maximum of \$5,000 on the awards, the average award amounting to \$500. This would mean during the current year the awarding of approximately 10 fellowships. Candidates for junior fellowships will be limited to men and women from 1941 senior classes of particular Negro institutions.

3. Proposed method of selection

(a) As indicated in the first paragraph, our present method of selection is unsuited for the junior program. Under the proposed plan, the first step in selecting junior fellows will be taken at the institution from which they come, and will be taken by a committee of the faculty of that institution. No direct applications to the Fund from individuals for junior fellowships will be accepted. Initial selection will be made at each institution. We will ask the presidents of the institutions to appoint a committee of five members of the faculty to sift local applications and to recommend to our Committee on Fellowships approximately five candidates per institution. In appointing the local committee the president will be asked to make it representative of the broad fields of learning - the



biological sciences, physical sciences, social sciences, the humanities - and the administration of the institution. The local committees will be asked to consider only candidates from the senior classes who are recommended to the committee by members of the staff. We will ask that they make no general call for applications. It will be impressed upon the committee that it is immaterial to the Fund whether the five candidates are scattered over the several fields of learning, or whether they are all in one field; the point will be made that the Fund is interested in the best brains regardless of what field or fields they may be in.

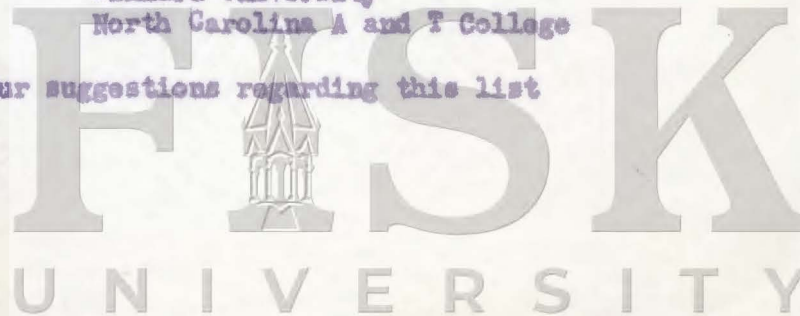
(b) The local committee will have each of its five candidates prepare a formal application on a blank furnished by the Fund, and with the blank each candidate will submit an essay stating why he wishes to continue his education in a particular field, and what his plans for a career are. It is hoped that the essay will give the Committee some insight into the abilities of the candidates. The length of the essay will be left to the candidate. The chairman of the local committee will forward the applications to the Fund, and the material will then be sent to our Committee. The Director for Fellowships will make no attempt to eliminate any candidate recommended by the local committees, but will forward the entire group of junior candidates to the Fund's Committee.

4. Proposed institutions

The following schools are proposed for the first experimental year:

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| Prairie View | Tuskegee Institute |
| Southern University | Talladega College |
| Fisk University | Fort Valley State College |
| Howard University | Dillard University |
| The Atlanta group | North Carolina A and T College |

We will be glad to have your suggestions regarding this list of colleges.



If we agree to carry forward this program, the Director for Fellowships will communicate at once with the presidents of the selected institutions concerning the grants and ask them to set up the necessary machinery so they will have plenty of time in which to make their selections.

5. Application dates

It is suggested that local committees be asked to file their selections with the Julius Rosenwald Fund not later than March 15. Selections will be made by the Fund Committee at its last meeting.

6. Publicity

We will give no publicity to this program, and we will request that the institutions give it no publicity of any kind. In announcing the awards no distinctive publicity will be given to the junior awards unless at that time it is decided to make this a part of our permanent program.