

## **THIRD ANNUAL BUFFETT EARLY CHILDHOOD INSTITUTE GRADUATE SCHOLARS OVERVIEW**

### **Summary**

The Buffett Early Childhood Institute will offer fellowships for advanced doctoral students conducting research concerning the education, development, and well-being of young children. The program provides financial support and mentoring for doctoral students admitted to candidacy within the University of Nebraska system. Up to four students will receive \$25,000 awards to explore early childhood issues. The overriding goal of the program is to increase the diversity and skills of young scholars conducting innovative research with implications for early childhood, with particular attention to children placed at risk as a consequence of economic, social, and environmental circumstances.

The Buffett Early Childhood Institute Graduate Scholars program grows out of the work of the Buffett Institute's four-campus mission focused on applied research, training/professional development, outreach, and policy. Just as the Institute is cross-disciplinary and cross-campus, the fellowship program is intended to reach across traditional higher education boundaries to include all those who may have an impact on the lives of young children. To increase the diversity of perspectives in research on young children, the Buffett Institute encourages applications from scholars from historically disadvantaged or underrepresented groups, including individuals of color, first-generation college graduates, and individuals from low-income backgrounds. The Buffett Institute seeks to support high-quality research from such diverse fields as health, education, social work, music, art, and others. Multidisciplinary research and new methodologies are encouraged.

**Full applications are due by March 30, 2018. Announcement of the award winners will be made by the end of June 2018.**

### **Program Goals**

**The goals of the Buffett Scholars program are to:**

- Support advanced doctoral students in the dissertation phase in a variety of fields across the NU system.
- Foster the growth of diverse, exceptional graduate students by providing mentoring by experts within the NU system and creating opportunities for graduate students within the program to communicate, network, and collaborate.
- Encourage multidisciplinary research as well as the application of new methodologies.
- Promote an early childhood research agenda across disciplines and campuses by engaging students and faculty in in-depth explorations of issues within the field.

- Increase the quantity and quality of research projects that are consistent with the mission and goals of the Buffett Institute.

#### **Award Information**

- The Buffett Institute will fund up to four awards this year.
- Applicants are funded for up to 12 months.

#### **Eligibility Criteria**

- Applicants must be full-time, doctoral-level graduate students who have been admitted to candidacy within a department on one of the NU campuses.
- Faculty mentors are expected to be actively involved with the student's research and related Buffett Institute activities. They must be employed full time at one of the NU campuses.

#### **Project Requirements**

- Scholars will complete an original research project consistent with the mission and goals of the Buffett Early Childhood Institute.
- During each year of the award, the student and faculty mentor are required to attend two meetings sponsored by the Buffett Institute on one of the NU campuses.
- Scholars are also required to participate in a midyear check-in with Buffett Institute staff.

#### **Selection Process**

Applications will be reviewed by a committee of cross-campus, multidisciplinary NU faculty, as well as by Buffett Institute senior staff. The criteria and application process are detailed in the RFP. Applications are highly encouraged from scholars from historically disadvantaged or underrepresented groups, and from fields not typically associated with early childhood, that use innovative methodology, and/or take a multidisciplinary approach.

#### **About the Buffett Early Childhood Institute**

The Buffett Institute represents a new model of how public higher education can be engaged with children and families in the first years of life. It builds on the land grant and metropolitan college philosophies and experience of the university campuses and combines basic and applied research, training, policy development, and outreach to all corners of the state—urban and rural. In order to achieve its goals, the Institute is committed to bringing together scholars, practitioners, community members, and policymakers to advance a unified approach to research, education, outreach, and policy on behalf of vulnerable young children and their families, and the individuals and systems that support them.

**For more information about the Buffett Early Childhood Institute, as well as its signature programs, visit <http://buffettinstitute.nebraska.edu>.**