

## *A Prospectus*

“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” - Gandhi

### *The Program*

When Cornell University's first students arrived in 1865, they found little on the grassy hill between Cascadilla and Fall Creek gorges that would hint at the world-class institution that was to come. “You are here to build a university,” said President Andrew Dickson White to that first class of Cornell students. Indeed, White and Ezra Cornell felt that labor was an essential element to complete an otherwise purely academic program. And build they did—literally. In exchange for their labor, the university waived part of the cost of their education. The Cornell Tradition, an alumni-supported program that recognizes and rewards outstanding undergraduates, is a contemporary expression of the founders' vision. The program awards 500 fellowships each year to Cornell students who demonstrate significant work experience, a commitment to campus and/or community service, and academic achievement. Through The Cornell Tradition, students can make meaningful contributions to campus life that enhance their own education as well as the education of future generations. At the same time, these students reduce the level of debt they incur while obtaining a Cornell degree. True to the founders' ideals, the Tradition supports the development of Fellows into well-rounded, productive members of society who will serve as the role models and leaders of tomorrow.

### *Rewarding Achievement, Supporting Development*

Tradition Fellows are members of a select group, representing less than four percent of the undergraduate population. Accordingly, the program's staff prides itself on the personalized attention it affords each student. Fellows come to know that their time at Cornell is a journey and that the Tradition staff is here to help at each step along the way.

### *Program Benefits*

#### **Service Support Account**

All Cornell Tradition Fellows have access to up to \$3,500 over their undergraduate Cornell career to cover the cost of service-related activities, such as summer break internships, Pre-Orientation Service Trips, Alternative Breaks trips, service-learning trips, and other educational experiential activities approved by the program.

#### **Fellowship Awards**

Depending on demonstrated financial need, Fellows can receive a fellowship award of up to \$4,000 per year to replace need-based student loans. Fellowships are often funded by Tradition alumni whose experience with the program impacted them so significantly that they endowed fellowships to ensure that future Fellows have similar opportunities. Fellows who receive a named fellowship often have an opportunity to meet with their donors, which can result in ongoing relationships.

#### **Employment Support**

Fellows are eligible for a wage subsidy during the academic year to help them find or keep a position either on-campus or through Cornell-affiliated off-campus programs. Fellows who receive work-study monies can receive the Tradition wage subsidy once their work-study funds are depleted. Fellows who do not receive work-study monies can receive the subsidy as soon as they secure work. Tradition wage subsidies are available to Fellows throughout their time at Cornell.

#### **Summer Expected Savings Replacement (ESR)**

Fellows may be eligible to receive monies to replace Cornell's savings expectation from summer earnings if they have completed a full time program-sponsored service and/or career-related position but were unable to meet the summer savings expectation. Limited ESRs are available on a first-come, first-serve basis; some restrictions may apply.

#### **Explore CT**

Explore CT is a first-year extended orientation program designed to acquaint new Tradition Fellows with other Fellows; the Tradition program benefits, requirements, and ideals; and the greater Cornell University. Participation in Explore CT events is required for first-year students and includes teambuilding, program orientation, an in-depth session on employment at Cornell, a large-scale community outreach project, and a spring semester dinner.

## *Program Benefits, Continued*

### **Student Advisory Council (SAC)**

Fellows can apply to be members of the SAC annually. The SAC works with the Tradition's director to sponsor service as well as social and educational opportunities for Fellows. SAC members also advise the Tradition staff on areas of interest to Fellows and serve as ambassadors of the Tradition program.

### **Connect with a Community of Leaders**

Relationships Fellows develop with one another and with the Fellows who came before them add richness to the Tradition experience. Social networking, visits from alumni, and special events promote connections between students and alumni who have lived the Cornell experience and have applied it to the world beyond.

### **Tradition Online**

The Tradition maintains a website at [www.commitment.cornell.edu](http://www.commitment.cornell.edu) that provides program information. The Tradition's twice weekly email announcements help keep students current on program happenings as well as upcoming volunteer opportunities, educational events, and job openings. The program also maintains a Facebook page (The Cornell Tradition Fellowship) that spotlights student service projects and Cornell Tradition alumni.

## *Becoming a Tradition Fellow*

Most Tradition Fellows are nominated during the Cornell application process. The faculty and staff involved in the selection process look for applicants who have expressed characteristics that align with the program ideals: a strong work ethic, commitment to serve their communities, and strong academic achievement. Fellows must meet program requirements and reapply to the program each year. Current Cornell students in a full-time undergraduate degree program may also apply to the Tradition.

## *Remaining a Tradition Fellow*

In order to remain in the program, students must meet basic minimum program requirements. Most students find that the requirements encourage them to get involved with activities and employment that are in-line with their ideals. The requirements are designed to encourage Tradition Fellows to make the most of the resources the program and the university have to offer. By codifying the values for which the Tradition stands, we ensure that some of the university's finest traditions are carried well into the future.

To remain in the program, Fellows must:

- Complete at least 250 combined hours of paid work and service during the academic year

Within those 250 hours, students must meet the following distribution requirements:

- At least 100 hours of paid work
- At least 100 hours of campus or community service (of which 15 hours or more must be community service)
- Maintain at least a 2.3 cumulative grade point average
- Participate in Explore CT as first-year students

Fellows are also strongly encouraged to complete the Cornell financial aid application. Individuals having any difficulty meeting the Tradition requirements should make an appointment to meet with the program's director. As valued members of a select, dynamic program, Tradition Fellows are encouraged to seek out the unique, personalized support the Tradition program can offer as they endeavor to make the most of their Cornell experience.

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