

Alyson Grine: Friday Fellowship for Human Relations

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Alyson Grine has been accepted to participate in the 2011-2012 William C. Friday Fellowship for Human Relations. It is a highly competitive application process, and I know several other well-qualified applicants who were not included in the next class of Friday Fellows. Congratulations to Alyson! The program was named to honor Bill Friday, “one of the state’s greatest humanitarians.”

[The Friday Fellowship](#) “is a two-year Fellowship for emerging leaders in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors who are able to directly affect issues facing our communities.” Follow the link and see a testimonial from Anita Brown-Graham, who also participated while she was a faculty member at the School. The Fellowship is a part of the [Wildacres Leadership Initiative](#) and it interprets human relations in a broad, diverse, and challenging way. Some statewide leadership programs are as much about networking as about leadership. The Friday Fellowship is about intense personal reflection and challenging assumptions at their deepest level. The Fellows make a “commitment to practicing self-critique and discernment of core values, acknowledging and understanding their differences, and finding the intersections between their varied perspectives to affect change.”

I have followed the program for many years and they approached me a couple of years ago about possibly becoming a part of the School. It did not work out for a variety of reasons. My potential interest in the program was its goal of trying to create constructive public dialogue across many diverse perspectives. That goal has never been more important. In the past the Fellows have been too heavily weighted toward the liberal end of the political spectrum, which has made it seem unlikely that they will affect the public debate on issues in our communities. The staff has tried hard to recruit more conservative participants and that emphasis may be reflected in the incoming



class of Fellows.

I am excited for Alyson and I cannot wait to hear about her experience. It will challenge her and she will make many wonderful contributions to the group.