The Langston Hughes Visiting Professorship

Call for Nominations

The Langston Hughes Visiting Professorship was established at the University of Kansas in 1977 in honor of the African American poet, playwright and fiction writer who lived in Lawrence from 1903 to 1915. The visiting professorship—open to scholars in all fields—has attracted prominent or emerging ethnic minority scholars to the university campus, involving a broad range of disciplines and academic departments/schools. Nominations are welcome from the humanities, social sciences, all professional schools, and STEM disciplines. This appointment provides the recipient with a stipend appropriate to the candidate’s rank, a small travel allowance, and a modestly furnished apartment near the KU campus. Depending on the field of expertise, the Langston Hughes Professor will teach and conduct research during the semester of their appointment (an arrangement coordinated with the academic unit) and deliver a campus-wide presentation on a topic or issue related to the visitor’s discipline.

Nomination and Timeline

This call for nominations will be for an appointment in the fall 2018 semester. Nominations may come from either an individual faculty member, department chair, or a dean. However, it is strongly recommended that nominations be coordinated through an academic unit and approved at the dean level. More than one candidate may be nominated by an academic unit. There is typically no cost to the academic unit as the Office of the Provost is generally able to fully fund the position. Nominations should be sent to Professor Shawn Alexander, slalexan@ku.edu, by MARCH 1, 2018. (For a review of past recipients, please visit the Diversity & Equity website at: www.diversity.ku.edu.)

Documentation and Selection

The nomination must include a cover letter of interest from the candidate, a current resume, and a letter of support from the department chair and dean of the academic unit at KU. While it is not required, it is highly recommended that a letter of support from the candidate’s home institution be included as part of the file. Nominations will be reviewed by the Langston Hughes Committee. Once the committee decision is made, its recommendation is forwarded to the Provost for final approval.

The KU Impact

Eight past recipients are now tenured faculty members at KU – a direct result of their appointment to the Langston Hughes Visiting Professorship. The Professorship has not only been a valuable program for bringing scholars to the University but has also created an opportunity to engage the campus community in an annual presentation on a variety of topics and issues not generally provided at KU.