



New Fellow Spotlight: Dr. Richard Gregory Johnson III

Tenured Professor and Department Chair

Department of Public and Nonprofit Administration, School of Management, University of San Francisco

Richard Gregory Johnson III is a tenured Full Professor and Department Chair for the Department of Public and Nonprofit Administration, School of Management, University of San Francisco. He is also Director of the Business Minor in the School of Management as well.

Professor Johnson's research centers on social equity within the fields of public policy, management, higher education and Human Resources Management. He has been teaching in higher education for almost twenty years and is widely published with several peer-reviewed books and over two dozen peer-reviewed journal

articles.

Professor Johnson holds graduate degrees from Georgetown University, Golden Gate University and DePaul University. He holds membership in: Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society; Pi Alpha Alpha Honor Society; Pi Gamma Mu Honor Society. Professor Johnson is also a life Member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated.

What are you most looking forward to as a NAPA Fellow?

I have been a great admirer of NAPA Fellows since I was a newly minted Assistant Professor of Leadership and Public Affairs in 2003 at the University of Vermont. It was at that time that I learned about the important work that NAPA Fellows were called upon to accomplish. I specifically watched and learned how the Fellows addressed matters on Social Equity. I dare say that NAPA Fellows H. George Frederickson (1979) and Philip Rutledge (1974) assisted in creating a social equity pillar in public administration that continues in solving some of this country's greatest social problems. I look forward to continuing the work that these gentlemen started during the 1960's and 1970's. But I also look forward to working with many of the NAPA Fellows on other important public service endeavors as well. To this end I am greatly looking forward to working with the NAPA brotherhood/sisterhood as we strive to do the work that the U.S. Congress has charted us to accomplish.

What inspires you during these challenging times?

I am inspired by the amount of attention being given to vote campaigns, specifically around the presidential election. I don't remember a time in my life when I have witnessed so many organizations, celebrities, civic organizations and the like all encouraging people to vote. My fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha has a program called A Voteless People is a Hopeless People. I am also active with the San Francisco Bay Area ASPA Chapter and just today we held a voter education forum that was greatly successful. I believe that a truly democratic society is one where citizens exercise their right to vote. It is because of these reasons that I am inspired and predict that the United States will witness an unprecedented voter turn-out this coming Election Day on November 3, 2020.

What is your favorite class you have ever taught and why?

There are many classes that I enjoy teaching within the MPA Program at University of San Francisco. However, my favorite course is Ethical Leadership which serves as one of the program's concluding courses. In this course students explore the connections between core values and leadership. They describe and apply a variety of frameworks and major ethical theories for ethical decision-making as well as for best practices for core value driven leadership. Students also engage in reflection of their own views regarding ethics, leadership and public service. My students also have an opportunity to explain the human dimensions of ethical leadership and ethical failures. Specifically the students are able to apply a variety of approaches as public agency managers to create and sustain a culture of ethics within their organizations, including practical ways to increase the ethical awareness in organizations. Finally, students come away from the course with an understanding of normative, compliance, and ethical practice in relation to good governance, anti-corruption and the promotion of transparent and accountable administration.

Who or what inspired you to work in public service?

It was at an ASPA conference in 2003 that I heard then George Washington University Assistant Professor Lori A. Brainard say during a panel discussion that she “had something to say.” This is why she became a faculty member in our field. I was blown away by Lori’s words then as I still am today. I too became a Professor of Public Administration because as a Social Equity Scholar I too have something to say. In fact quoting from Barbara Jordan’s 1974 Nixon impeachment speech, “I am an inquisitor” and therefore, I take pride in having been a participant in public service as I work with my colleagues and students to speak for marginalized communities without a voice.