

### **FTE Announces Recipients of 2016 Fellowship for Doctoral Students**

ATLANTA, August 15, 2016 — Sixteen students across 11 institutions, have been selected to receive a 2016 Forum for Theological Exploration (FTE) fellowship to support their PhD or ThD program in religion, theological studies or biblical studies.

The students within this class of FTE Fellows will either receive the Fellowship for Doctoral Students of African Descent or the Fellowship for Latino/a, Asian and First Nations Doctoral Students. Each recipient will be awarded a living stipend of up to \$25,000 to support her or his studies while in the dissertation stage of his or her program. Fellowship recipients also attended the 2016 FTE Christian Leadership Forum, held June 1-4, in Atlanta, GA, as a part of the award. The Forum provided opportunities to develop a community of peer support, explore issues important to their leadership formation, engage in professional development and establish mentoring relationships.

FTE is pleased to announce the following fellowship recipients:

#### **FTE Fellowship for Doctoral Students of African Descent**

Ericka Dunbar, Drew University, *Biblical Studies: Hebrew Bible*  
David Latimore, University of Chicago Divinity School, *Theological Studies*  
Heather McLetchie-Leader, Harvard University, *New Testament*  
Oluwatomisin Oredein, Duke Divinity School, *Ethics*  
Timothy Rainey, II, Emory University, *American Religious Cultures*  
Kera Street, Harvard University, *Religion and Culture*  
Eric Thomas, Drew University, *New Testament*  
Tiffany Trent, Arizona State University, *Theatre for Youth and Child Theology*  
RL Watson, University of Chicago Divinity School, *Religion and Literature*  
Catherine Williams, Princeton Theological Seminary, *Homiletics*

#### **FTE Fellowship for Latino/a, Asian and First Nations Doctoral Student**

Ángel Gallardo, Southern Methodist University, *Religion and Culture*  
Ren Ito, Emmanuel College of Victoria University, *North American Asian Theology*  
Elekosi Lafitaga, Graduate Theological Union, *Biblical Studies: New Testament*  
Jennifer Owens, Graduate Theological Union, *Practical Theology: Religion and Culture*  
Jee Hei Park, Fordham University, *New Testament and Early Christianity*  
Erica Ramirez, Drew University, *Religion and Society*

FTE is committed to supporting rising theological educators from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups who are committed to making an impact through their teaching and scholarship. Since 1999, FTE has awarded over 550 fellowships to students of color and has maintained a 98 percent retention rate among its Doctoral Fellows. In addition to its current fellowships for dissertation stage doctoral students, FTE provides professional development opportunities for PhD or ThD students in the first two years of their studies. According to the Association for Theological Schools, in North American theological schools less than 20 percent of faculties are people of color.

FTE's doctoral initiatives foster diversity in the academy by accelerating the successful completion of doctoral degrees among students of African, Latino/a, Asian and First Nations descent by providing financial support, a community of peers and mentors and professional development opportunities.

"The 2016 FTE Fellows represent the next generation of educators, scholar/practitioners and institutional leaders that our church and academy need. As scholars of color, their work addresses the issues of today with the wisdom of their intellectual traditions coupled with the ingenuity of the communities they come from and serve," said Director of Strategic Partnerships for Doctoral Initiatives Patrick B. Reyes. "We look forward to accompanying the Fellows on their vocational journeys."

The Forum for Theological Exploration is committed to cultivating diverse young adults to be faithful, wise and courageous leaders for the church and the academy. FTE provides resources and a forum for young adults and students to explore their purpose and call to pastoral ministry and teaching. For more information, visit [fteleaders.org](http://fteleaders.org).

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