



## **The K-State Faculty and Staff Alliance for Hispanic/Latino Affairs 2017-2018 Professor Douglas K. Benson Scholarship Biography**

DOUGLAS K. BENSON

Doug Benson grew up in the high green mountains of Taos, in northern New Mexico, where Latinos and American Indians have formed the ethnic majority for centuries. As a child, he began to notice that his friends were profiled in stores, schools and traffic. He would not understand why until much later. It was there that he got his first exposure to Spanish.

Dr. Benson received the B.A. in Spanish and French from New Mexico State University in Las Cruces in 1966, after two initial years studying chemistry and physics. He also met his future wife Cecille there; they will celebrate 50 years of marriage in August 2015. He holds a Ph.D. in Spanish and French Literature (1974) from the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. It was during his university experiences that he began to expand his growing awareness of the cultures of Spanish-speaking peoples and to become involved in their issues.

For eleven years he taught Spanish at Hastings College in Nebraska. He was almost the only person in Hastings who spoke Spanish at first, but gradually members of immigrant families began to contact him and attend his classes.

In 1980 he was hired by the Department of Modern Languages at K-State and almost immediately made contacts with multicultural faculty and staff who generously invited him to participate in the university's diversity work. Some of these activities include:

**1984-87:** Development Committee for the American Ethnic Studies Secondary Major Program, served on Governance Board until it became a department in 2013.

**1989-1999:** Charter member of the President's Commission on Multicultural Affairs.

**1995-2002:** Planning Committee for the Kansas Regents (now Michael Tilford) statewide Conference on Diversity and Multiculturalism in the University Classroom.

**1996-2012:** Charter member of KSU Tilford Group on multicultural course transformation.

**1997-2009:** Co-chair (with Candice Hironaka) of Community Cultural Harmony Week (formerly Racial Ethnic Harmony Week founded by K-State student Barbara Baker in 1988).

**1999-2003:** Faculty advisor for the Hispanic American Leadership Organization (HALO).

**2001:** Founding member of Alianza.

Dr. Benson has published some 30 articles and book chapters on the post-Civil War poetry of Spain, Chicano poetry of the Southwest, and language teaching, and has presented more than 60 professional papers and workshops in the U.S. and abroad. He was promoted to full professor in 2004, and has received awards for teaching as well as service to multicultural students, including the Commerce Bank Presidential Awards for Excellence in Teaching (1999) and for Service to Underrepresented Students (2000), the Dr. Ron and Rae Iman Outstanding Faculty Award for Teaching (K-State Alumni Association, 2008), and the university's highest teaching award, the Coffman Chair for University Distinguished Teaching Scholars (2009-present).



**ALIANZA**  
**The K-State Faculty and Staff Alliance**  
**for Hispanic/Latino Affairs**  
**2016-2017 Professor Douglas K. Benson Scholarship**

**Deadline: FRIDAY, April 26 26, 2017 by 5:00 PM**

The Professor Douglas K. Benson Scholarship is a \$500 student scholarship for the 2017-2018 academic year. Eligible candidates are currently enrolled full time students with a 3.0 GPA or higher. The scholarship recipient must attend K-State as undergraduate student during the 2017-2018 academic year.

With this scholarship, ALIANZA honors Dr. Benson for his tireless advocacy on diversity issues at KSU and beyond, and for his continuous activism on behalf of Latino culture and heritage.

**Required application materials**

- A. A resume that includes: Personal contact information including K-state e-mail address; degree pursued including major, minors, cumulative GPA, and year in school; scholarships and awards received; activities; and work experience. Resume help is available at the following link: <http://www.k-state.edu/ces/students/>
- B. An essay describing the student's appreciation for Latino culture in a global world (language, literature, cultural productions, etc.) The essay should be between 250 and 500 words (about 1-2 pages double-spaced and typed).

**Please submit your complete application (A+B) to [alianza@ksu.edu](mailto:alianza@ksu.edu)**

By submitting this application, students allow us to verify their academic standing at Kansas State University.

The recipient of the Professor Douglas K. Benson Scholarship will be recognized during Alianza's End of the Year Reception on May 5th, 2017 from 3-5 p.m.