

Marquette University: Educational policy professor receives Way Klingler Early Career Award

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MILWAUKEE — Dr. derria byrd, assistant professor of educational policy and leadership in the College of Education at Marquette University, is the recipient of a 2021 Way Klingler Early Career Award.

The Way Klingler Early Career Award is used to support promising new scholars in critical stages of their careers. The competitive awards are given to select full-time regular junior faculty in the three years following their third-year review.

The awards are intended to fund \$2,000 in operating cost and to cover a portion of salary to afford the recipient a one-semester release from teaching.

byrd's broad research agenda focuses on how social power marginalizes non-dominant groups in higher education and the consequences this has for educational equity.

"My work aims to trouble deficit discourses by investigating how colleges and universities circumscribe opportunity for marginalized populations," byrd said.

byrd will use her Way Klingler Early Career Award to extend her research agenda by investigating the experiences of first-generation faculty members, a group that has received relatively little scholarly attention despite the deep research focused on first-generation college students.

"I am looking forward to the dedicated research focus afforded by the Way Klingler Early Career Award," byrd said. "I am indebted to the study participants who shared their stories with me and I look forward to bringing their unique experiences to the

broader scholarly community — an effort in which the research sabbatical will be critical.”

byrd said she shares this award with her family and dedicates it to her paternal grandmother Pauline Winifred Huff Byrd.

One nominator wrote that byrd’s research is significant in several ways.

Her work “has the potential to reshape how higher education understands the contributions of first-generation faculty to the college success of marginalized students, an assumption that to-date is untested.”

The nominator added, “the strength of byrd’s scholarship lies in her ability to publish original empirical research that contributes new knowledge to her discipline and theoretical pieces that will shape, and influence, policy related to equity in higher education.”

In addition, byrd authored a research article titled “Uncovering Hegemony in Higher Education: A Critical Appraisal of the Use of ‘Institutional Habitus’ in Empirical Scholarship,” which was published in 2019 in SAGE Journal’s Review of Educational Research.