



## **USDA AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK FORUM STUDENT DIVERSITY PROGRAM PARTICIPATION** *Expands to Include Graduate Students*

### **Would you like to attend USDA's 2013 Agricultural Outlook Forum in Washington, DC?**

USDA's Agricultural Outlook Forum provides producers, policymakers, business, government, and industry leaders with a unique opportunity to meet, exchange ideas, and discuss timely issues at the forefront of America's agriculture. In an effort to increase the present and future diversity participation in the Forum, USDA created a program that provides sponsorship opportunities for junior-senior baccalaureate and this year has been expanded, for the first time, to include graduate students to attend this annual event.

**The 2013 Agricultural Outlook Forum will be held Feb. 21-22 in Arlington, Virginia, at the Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel.** USDA will host an introductory briefing and discussion of career opportunities on Feb. 19. On Feb. 20 students will tour USDA's Henry A. Wallace Beltsville Agricultural Research Center and the National Plant Materials Center. The USDA Outlook Forum Diversity Program is designed to expose students to contemporary agribusiness, future trends, scientific research, and agricultural policy in today's real world environment.

**TARGET:** The program targets 30 agriculture, agricultural economics, agricultural communications, agricultural business, nutrition and food science or pre-veterinary junior or senior and graduate students. Students (20 undergraduate and 10 graduate) will come from Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and American Association of State Colleges of Agriculture and Renewable Resources institutions.

**UNDERGRADUATE SELECTION CRITERIA:** Students first submit their one-page essay titled "Agriculture as a Career" to their respective institution representative (i.e., academic dean/department chair). Each institution performs a "pre-selection" process by choosing the final best two essays among the applicants selecting two undergraduate students.

**GRADUATE SELECTION CRITERIA:** Students first submit their essay (2-page maximum) titled "The Greatest Challenge Facing Agriculture Over the Next 5 Years" to their respective institution representative (i.e., academic dean/department chair). Each institution performs a "pre-selection" process by choosing the final best two essays among the applicants.

**Essay Submissions:** Schools will submit essays (for both graduate and undergraduate students) to Lisa Purnell ([lisa.purnell@osec.usda.gov](mailto:lisa.purnell@osec.usda.gov)) with individual letters of recommendation from the institution's dean by Nov. 9, 2012. (Two undergraduate and one graduate position are reserved for University of Maryland Eastern Shore students.) Essays must include student's name, student's major, year in school, address, phone number, and e-mail. Final student selections will be made by Lisa Purnell, USDA/1890 Program Liaison, University of Maryland Eastern Shore; Harry Baumes, Director, USDA Office of Energy Policy and New Uses; and Brenda Chapin, Information Officer with USDA's Office of the Chief Economist.

**TRAVEL ITINERARY:** Registration, transportation, lodging, and Forum meals are provided. Students will arrive in Washington, D.C., Feb. 19, 2013, and return home Feb. 22, 2013.

**2012 Sponsors include: CHS, Inc. and Farm Credit and USDA's Agricultural Research Service, Economic Research Service, and Natural Resources Conservation Service.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Please visit: [www.usda.gov/oce/forum](http://www.usda.gov/oce/forum).

**Program contacts:** Lisa Purnell; Antonio McLaren, USDA/1890 Program Liaison, Virginia State University, at [antonio.mclaren@osec.usda.gov](mailto:antonio.mclaren@osec.usda.gov); and Brenda Chapin. Ms. Purnell and Mr. McLaren are employed by the USDA Office of Advocacy and Outreach.