United States Department of Agriculture

USDA/1890 National Scholars Program

2015 HIGH SCHOOL APPLICATION

1890

National Scholars Program

October 2014-r1

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's 1890 National Scholars Program. The USDA/1890 National Scholars Program was established in 1992 as part of the partnership between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant Universities.

The goal of the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program is to increase the number of minorities studying agriculture, food, natural resource sciences, and other related disciplines. The program is available to high school students and rising college sophomores and juniors, who exhibit leadership and community service, and desire to attend an 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant University. Each year, hundreds of students apply for the program, which provides full tuition, employment, employee benefits, fees, books, and room and board each year for up to 4 years to selected students pursuing a bachelor's degree at an 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant University.

The USDA/1890 National Scholars Program is implemented under the USDA Fellows Experience Program (FEP). Scholars accepted into the program will be appointed using the Schedule A(r) authority (5 CFR 213.3202) and are not eligible for noncompetitive conversion to full time employment upon graduation. However, all USDA/1890 National Scholars are required to compete for appropriate employment immediately after graduation and, if selected, commit to at least one year of service to USDA for each year of financial assistance provided.[1]

The USDA/1890 National Scholar is required to:

- ✓ Compete for appropriate employment immediately after graduation and, if selected, commit to at least one year of service to USDA for each year of financial assistance provided.[2]
- ✓ Reimburse the USDA Sponsoring Agency for costs of education (excluding the employee's pay and allowances) incurred by the USDA Sponsoring Agency if the Scholar is voluntarily separated from the service of the USDA Sponsoring Agency before the end of the period for which the Scholar has agreed to continue in the service of USDA.
- ✓ Consult with and obtain the approval of the Sponsoring Agency prior to making any changes to his or her academic program. Unapproved changes will affect the Scholar's continued participation in the program.

Again, thank you for your interest in the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program and best wishes in your pursuit of academic excellence!

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[1] Specific details of this "service requirement" will be outlined in the agreement entered into by the selected Scholar, the University at which Scholar is matriculated, and USDA. Also, the "service requirement" is subject to change.

USDA/1890 NATIONAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Overview

The USDA/1890 National Scholars Program is a partnership between the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant Universities. The program awards scholarships to students attending one of the 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant Universities, pursuing a bachelor's degree in agriculture, food, natural resource sciences, or related academic disciplines. The 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant Universities are as follows:

Alabama A&M University
Alcorn State University
Central State University
Delaware State University
Florida A&M University
Fort Valley State University
Kentucky State University
Langston University
Lincoln University (Missouri)
North Carolina A&T State University
Prairie View A&M University
South Carolina State University
Southern University
Tennessee State University
Tuskegee University
University of Arkansas Pine Bluff
University of Maryland Eastern Shore
Virginia State University
West Virginia State University

AUTHORITIES

- Act of August 30, 1890, (commonly known as the "Second Morrill Act") 7 U.S.C. §§ 321 et seq.);
- National Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, Pub. L .95-113, §§ 1402-1404, 7 U.S.C. §§ 3101-3103;
- Executive Order 13256, President's Board of Advisors on Historically Black Colleges and Universities, dated February 12, 2002;
- 5 CFR Part 410-Training;
- OPM Excepted Schedule A, authority (r), 5 CFR 213.3102(r); and/or
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Student Internship Programs, Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform of 1996 (FAIR Act), Title IX, Section 922 (7 U.S.C § 2279c).

PURPOSE

The purposes of the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program are:

- ✓ To strengthen the long-term partnership between USDA and the 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant Universities.
- ✓ To increase the number of students studying agriculture, food, and natural resources science, or other related disciplines.

OBJECTIVE

The USDA/1890 National Scholars Program offers scholarships to U.S. citizens who are seeking a bachelor's degree at one of the 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant Universities in any field of study in agriculture, food, natural resource sciences, or other related disciplines. Scholars are required to study in the following or related disciplines:

Agriculture
Agricultural Economics
Agricultural Engineering/Mechanics
Agricultural Production and Technology
Agronomy or Crop Science
Animal Sciences
Botany
Business/Management
Farm and Range Management
Forestry and Related Sciences
Food Sciences/Technology
Home Economics/Nutrition
Horticulture
Natural Resources Management
Soil Conservation/Soil Science
Other related disciplines, (e.g., non-medical biological, sciences, pre-veterinary medicine, computer science)

AWARD

Scholarships are awarded annually and must be used at one of the 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant Universities. Each award provides full tuition, as well as room and board, for the term of the scholarship. The scholarship may be renewed each year, contingent upon satisfactory academic performance and normal progress toward the bachelor's degree.

GENERAL ELIGIBILITY

Applicant must:

- ✓ Be a U.S. citizen
- ✓ Be a graduating high school senior or expect to hold a high school diploma or G.E.D. certificate
- ✓ Have a high school cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better (on a 4.0 scale)
- ✓ Have a combined verbal/math/written score of 1,500 or more on the SAT (note: 1,000 or more combined for those universities that only accept verbal/math score) or a composite score of 21 or more on the ACT
- ✓ Have been accepted for admission to an 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant University
- ✓ Intend to study agriculture, food, natural resource sciences, or other related academic disciplines
- ✓ Submit a 500-800 word essay describing 1) my interest in USDA, 2) how I envision the scholarship will impact me and my future as a public servant, and 3) my experiences and perceptions about agriculture, food, and natural resource sciences.
- ✓ Demonstrate leadership and community service
- ✓ Submit an official transcript with the school seal and an authorized official's signature
- ✓ Submit a signed and dated application (original signature only)

APPLICATION DEADLINE

All application materials must be postmarked no later than February 1, 2015, and sent to the USDA/1890 Program Liaison at the university or universities selected by the applicant.

INSTRUCTIONS

Only complete application packages submitted by February 1, 2015, the application deadline, will be considered. All application materials must be submitted in one application package. Complete application packages must include the following:

- ✓ Completed Privacy Act Advisory Statement and Release Form
- ✓ Completed Biographical Questionnaire
- ✓ Current resume
- ✓ 500-800 word essay on the designated topics
- ✓ High School Counselor's Assessment Report (see page 18) in a sealed envelope
- ✓ High School Teacher's Assessment Report (see pages 20-24) in a sealed envelope
- ✓ Signed and dated application (including signature of parent of guardian, if the applicant is under 18 years old)

Applicants are responsible for obtaining the Assessment Reports of the High School Counselor (pages 18-19) and the High School Teacher (pages 20–24). These Assessment Reports should be in a sealed envelope and included with the application package.

All application materials must have original signatures and seals/stamps.

Application materials containing photocopied signatures and transcripts will not be considered for the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program scholarship.

Please note: The selection of scholarship recipients will be influenced by the submission of complete, neat, and legible application packages. The application is a fill-able adobe acrobat file. The application may also be printed and filled in by hand in black or blue ink only.

PRIVACY ACT ADVISORY STATEMENT

The Privacy Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-579) requires that you be given certain information in connection with this request for information. Accordingly, pursuant to the requirements for this Act, please be advised:

1. Furnishing the information requested is voluntary.
2. The data will be used for selection of USDA/1890 National Scholars, printing of certificates, and related activities.
3. The data is maintained in a privacy act system as defined by NARA under OMB.
4. Failure to complete the form will mean that you cannot be included among those candidates being considered for designation as USDA/1890 National Scholar.

Affirmation of Candidacy and Authorization for Release of Information

I, _____, understand that I am a candidate for the honor of USDA/1890 National Scholar, have read the Privacy Act Advisory Statement, and affirm my wish to be considered. In the event I am named a Scholar, permission is hereby given for the release of materials submitted by me for the use of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant Universities as deemed appropriate for purposes of the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program.

I further consent to the release of photographs that may be taken of me, by or for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in connection with the Program. I am (*check one*) willing ☐ unwilling ☐ to appear on radio and/or television if such arrangements are made by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in connection with the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Candidate's Biographical Questionnaire

The questions that follow are designed to collect information about your background, your interests, and your plans. Your answers to these questions will be used only in connection with your application for this scholarship program and will be divulged only to qualified persons who must see them in the course of their duties.

(Please Print)

A. Biographical Information

Legal Full Name:

_____

Last First Middle

Sex: F ☐ M ☐

Permanent Home Address:

_____

Street City/Town State Zip Code

Telephone:
(Home) _____(Cell)_____

Age: _____

Are you a U.S. Citizen? (select one) ☐Yes ☐No

Email Address: _____

B. Education

1. Name of High School currently attending:

_____

Address:

_____

Street City/Town State Zip Code

Telephone: _____

GPA (on a 4.0 unweighted scale)____

ACT Composite Score _____
SAT Math _____ and Verbal _____

Combined _____

Note: Grade point averages and standardized test scores should match supporting documentation submitted by counselor. Only applicants meeting minimum GPA criteria and standardized test scores will be considered for the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program scholarship. Please do not submit an application if you do not meet these criteria.

2. List any other schools that you attended in the last 4 years, with the one you attended first.

Name of School	Address	Dates of Attendance

3. List any advanced or special program, courses, or summer courses you have taken. List the most recent course or program first.

Course or Program	Name of School	Address	Dates of Attendance	Hours Per Week

4. Name(s) of the 1890 University (or Universities) to which you are applying:

5. If accepted at multiple 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant Universities, please list in order of preference (i.e. 1- Most Preferred, 3-Least Preferred)

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____

   Note: Applicants applying to more than one 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant University must submit separate USDA/1890 National Scholars applications for each university.

6. What course of study (major) will you pursue?

   1st Choice: _____

   2nd Choice: _____

   Other Related Discipline/Unlisted Major (Please Identify):

   _____

   Note: All academic disciplines may not be available at every 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant University. Check the University's academic offerings before applying.

7. Have you made career decisions related to agriculture, food, natural resource sciences, or related disciplines?

   Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, please explain:

   _____

C. Activities

1. List activities in which you have participated in or outside your school (such as academic activities, publications, debating, dramatics, sports, music, art, and student government).

Activity	Participation Dates	Office(s) Held	Special Award(s)

2. List volunteer services and jobs you have held in the past 4 years (including summer employment).

Volunteer Service(s) or job(s)	Name of organization or employer	Dates of service or employment	Hours per week	Special award(s)

Note: Be concise and limit your response(s) to the space provided.

D. Hobbies

1. What is the most stimulating book or article (other than those for school assignments) you have read in the past 6 months? Why did you find it stimulating?

2. What do you do for relaxation and fun?

3. Describe your leadership role in activities in both your school and your community.

4. Please describe any characteristics of yourself or your family that have been important to your personal development.

E. Candidates Self-Assessment

1. Describe a recent experience that has given you a sense of satisfaction or pride. Explain why you were satisfied or proud.

2. Briefly discuss why you want to study agricultural, food, natural resource sciences, or a related discipline in college.

Review this form to make sure you have answered all questions completely. Proofread your responses.

I certify that I completed this application and that all statements are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that a false statement could eliminate me from consideration for this scholarship.

_____

Applicant's Signature

_____

Date

This form and all other application materials must be returned to each 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant University of your choice and postmarked by February 1, 2015.

How did you hear about the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program Scholarship?
(Select all that apply.)

College fair(s)
Name of event(s)

_____

Informational Session
Location

_____

Public Service Announcement
Stations

_____

Direct Mail/e-mail
Source of communication

_____

USDA Employee
Name of employee(s)

_____

Church or place of worship
Name of Facility

_____

Website(s)
Name of website(s)

_____

Other

_____

USDA/1890 NATIONAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM SCHOLARSHIP
Applicant's Authorization to Release Academic Information

Applicant's Full Name

_____

Last First Middle Suffix

To comply with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, a school must obtain signed authorization before it can release student information for use in this scholarship program. Permission is hereby given to school officials to release record and other requested information for consideration in the scholarship program named above.

Student's Signature _____
Date _____

Parent's or Legal Guardian's Signature _____
Date _____

Applicant: If you have attended this school less than 2 years, you must copy this form and have your previous school also complete this form for you.

School Name

_____

Address

_____

_____ _____ _____ _____

City State Zip Code Phone Number

The above-named student is a candidate for the honor of USDA/1890 National Scholars Program scholarship. To process this application, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the University will need:

An official secondary school transcript, the SAT, and/or ACT scores. The transcripts from the student's secondary school record must contain a seal and signature of an authorized school official. Please note that only students with a GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale and a combined SAT score of at least 1500 or 1000 (math and verbal) or ACT score of at least 21 are eligible for the USDA/1890 Scholars Program.

Thorough responses will greatly enhance your student's candidacy. This information will be used only in connection with the selection of Scholars and will be seen only by qualified persons involved in the selection process.

Please delete all personally identifiable information, such as social security numbers and dates of birth from any supporting documentations.

For questions or more information about the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program Scholarship, please contact us at 1890init@usda.gov or (202) 205-4307.

Please copy form as necessary.

USDA/1890 National Scholars Program Scholarship
Secondary School Report
High School Guidance Counselor Assessment Report

A. Please type or print using black ink

Name of Counselor

_____ _____ _____ _____
Last First MI Suffix

Address:

_____

Phone:

_____

B. Are you confident that the student will receive a high school diploma during the current academic year? Yes ☐ No ☐

If no, please explain.

C. Student's class rank _____

How many students are in the class? _____

D. Student's cumulative grade point average (unweighted on 4.0 scale) _____
Do not enter GPA on a scale of 0-100.

E. ACT Composite Score _____
SAT Score (combined) _____
SAT Score (math and verbal) _____

F. Secondary School Record

The applicant's SAT and/or ACT scores, along with an official secondary school transcript (with seal and signature by an authorized official), including grades 9 through 12 must be attached to this section of the application. If the official transcript and SAT and/or ACT scores are not provided, the applicant will not be considered for the scholarship.

Counselor's Signature_____

Date _____

This form and the candidate's transcript and SAT and/or ACT scores must be included in the student's application package. Applicants applying to more than one 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant University must submit separate USDA/1890 National Scholars application packages for each school. The complete application packages must be postmarked by February 1, 2015.

USDA/1890 National Scholars Program Scholarship
Secondary School Report
School Teacher Assessment Report

The application for the USDA/1890 National Scholars program scholarship requires a carefully considered character and ability assessment by a teacher who knows the student well, including a summary of other teachers' judgments of the student.

A. Please type or print using black ink

Name of Teacher

_____	_____	_____	_____
Last	First	MI	Suffix

Address _____

Phone _____

B. Length of Relationship _____

C. Considering this student's interests, work habits, and life goals, what is your assessment as to whether the student will be motivated to take advantage of the opportunities available in college? Please give reasons for your assessment.

D. What special features is a part of your school's curriculum (e.g., AP and honors courses, college study, and independent study)? Has the student taken advantage of the most challenging opportunities your school has to offer?

E. Has the student shown exceptional talent or originality in agriculture, food, natural resource sciences, and/or other related disciplines?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please explain:

F. Describe this student's strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

G. Sometimes, special circumstances should be considered when evaluating a student's achievement records and test scores. If in your opinion, this student may have been disadvantaged by any such circumstances, please specify.

H. Indicate comments made by teachers about the student relative to the following:

1. Participation in discussion:
   - ☐ always involved, often initiates discussion
   - ☐ occasionally participates
   - ☐ seldom participates
   - ☐ not applicable

2. Involvement in classroom activities:
   - ☐ active, usually shows genuine interest
   - ☐ mild, politely attentive
   - ☐ languid, attention often wanders
   - ☐ vacillates gently
   - ☐ poor understanding

3. Pursuit of independent study:
   - ☐ considerable study and major project(s)
   - ☐ some study and minor projects(s)
   - ☐ no evidence of independent study
   - ☐ not applicable

4. Evenness of performance:
   - ☐ even, varies no more than one mark
   - ☐ slightly uneven
   - ☐ uneven, often varies two marks
   - ☐ erratic, fluctuates greatly
   - ☐ inadequate opportunity to observe

5. Critical and questioning attitude:
   - ☐ often challenges
   - ☐ occasionally probes
   - ☐ rarely questions
   - ☐ not applicable

6. Depth of understanding:
   - ☐ excellent insight
   - ☐ good understanding
   - ☐ some insight
   - ☐ little understanding
   - ☐ not applicable

7. Personal responsibility:
   - ☐ always accepts fully
   - ☐ usually accepts fully
   - ☐ sometimes refuses
   - ☐ often refuses

8. Consideration for others:
   - ☐ always considerate of others' rights and feelings
   - ☐ usually considerate
   - ☐ sometimes inconsiderate
   - ☐ often inconsiderate

9. Population of the community in which your school is located:
   - ☐ less than 500
   - ☐ 500 – 1,500
   - ☐ 1,500 – 5,000
   - ☐ 5,000 – 25,000
   - ☐ 25,000 – 100,000
   - ☐ over 100,000

10. What economic or social conditions characterize the community and most of the parents of the children in your school?
    - ☐ Rural farming area
    - ☐ Industrial
    - ☐ Small town
    - ☐ Large city, Metropolitan area
    - ☐ Other _____

Teacher's Signature_____

Date_____

This form and the candidate's transcript and SAT and/or ACT scores must be included in the student's application package. Applicants applying to more than one 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant University must submit separate USDA/1890 National Scholars application packages for each university. The complete application packages must be postmarked by February 1, 2015.

USDA/1890 National Scholars Application Checklist

1.	☐	I have read the eligibility requirements and meet all eligibility criteria.
2.	☐	I am submitting an original application and transcript to each USDA/1890 University of interest (see addresses on page 26 of this application).
3.	☐	I have applied for admission to each 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant Institution of interest.
4.	☐	I have read and completed the Candidate's Biographical Information section.
5.	☐	I have included the Secondary School Report from my High School Counselor and explained the need to have all official transcripts with a seal and signature and SAT and/or ACT scores enclosed with this response.
6.	☐	I have included the School Teacher Assessment completed and signed by my teacher.
7.	☐	I have signed and dated the application (original signature only).
8.	☐	I have enclosed a 500-800 word essay describing 1) my interest in USDA, 2) how I envision the scholarship will impact me and my future as a public servant, and 3) my experiences and perceptions about agriculture, food, and natural resource sciences.
9.	☐	I understand that the application package must be postmarked no later than February 1, 2015, for consideration for the USDA/1890 Scholars Programs Scholarship.

1890 Land-Grant Universities

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
Alabama A&M University
Dawson Extension Bldg., Room 300
Post Office Box 1087
Normal, AL 35762
(334) 724-4493

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
Alcorn State University
1000 ASU Drive, Room 1139
Agriculture Science Building, Room 104
Lorman, MS 39096
(601) 877-3849

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
Central State University
1400 Brush Row Road
Wilberforce, OH 45384
(937) 376-6625

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
Delaware State University
College of Agriculture & Related Sciences
1200 North Dupont Highway
Baker Building Annex, Room 102
Dover, DE 19901
(302) 857-7131

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
Florida A&M University
1740 South Martin L. King Jr., Boulevard
Room 217, S. Perry-Paige Building
Tallahassee, FL 32307-4100
(805) 561-2644

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
Fort Valley State University
1005 State University Drive
Pettigrew Center, Room 244
Fort Valley, GA 31030
(478) 825-6298

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
Kentucky State University
Cooperative Extension Building, Room 221
400 East Main Street
Frankfort, KY 40601
(502) 597-6955

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
Langston University
School of Agriculture and Applied Sciences
100 Success Drive, Room V115
P.O. Box 846
Langston, OK 73050
(405) 466-6154

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
Lincoln University
108 Bennett Hall
818 Lee Drive
Jefferson City, MO 65101
(573) 681-5108

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
North Carolina A&T University
1601 East Market Street
107 B.C. Webb Hall
Greensboro, NC 27411
(336) 285-4783

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
Prairie View A&M University
E. E. O'Banion CARC Building, Room 119
P. O. Box 2736
Prairie View, TX 77446
(936) 261-2521

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
South Carolina State University
300 College Avenue, N.E.
P.O. Box 7246
Orangeburg, SC 29117
(803) 536-8463

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
Southern University and A&M College
College of Agriculture, Family & Consumer Sciences
Fisher Hall, Room 102
Baton Rouge, LA 70813
(225) 774-3870

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
Tennessee State University
3500 John Merritt Boulevard
Ag Science Dept., Room 112
P.O. Box 9629
Nashville, TN 37209-1561
(615) 963-5442

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
Tuskegee University
College of Agricultural, Environmental and Natural Sciences
Campbell Hall, Room 103
Tuskegee, AL 36088
(334) 724-4493

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
University of Arkansas Pine Bluff
1200 North University
Mail Slot: 4806
Pine Bluff, AR 71611-2799
(870) 575-7241

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
University of Maryland Eastern Shore
Trigg Hall, Room 1137
Princess Anne, MD 21853
(410) 651-6313

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
Virginia State University
P.O. Box 9416, Carter G. Woodson Avenue
L. Douglas Wilder Building, Room 107
Petersburg, VA 23806
(804) 524-5252

Attn: USDA/1890 Program Liaison
West Virginia State University
302 Curtis R&E Complex
P.O. Box 1000
Institute, WV 25112-1000
(336) 334-7709

Applications Must Be Postmarked by February 1, 2015

For questions, please contact:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration
Office of Advocacy and Outreach
USDA/1890 Programs
1400 Independence Ave. SW., Stop 0601
Washington, D.C. 20250
Telephone Number: (202) 205-4307
Fax Number: (202) 720-7136
Email: 1890init@usda.gov

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