Students Employment Opportunities

Instructions to Search and Apply

- Pathways Program
- Third Party Contractors Program
- Volunteers Program

“USDA – Serving the American Public – Every Day In Every Way”

Student Employment Opportunities
Diversity, Recruitment, and Work/Life Division
Office of Human Resources Management
USDA_internships@dm.usda.gov
www.dm.usda.gov/employ/student/index.htm

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.
Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Career Opportunities. USDA offers different opportunities for students and recent graduates to work in the agricultural, science, technology, math, environmental, management, business and many other fields. Our emphasis will be to foster a connection between continuing education and employment training in the Federal Government.

Through the umbrella Student Employment Opportunities (SEOs) program, student and recent graduates could find different opportunities.

- **USDA Pathways Program**
  - *Internship Program* - student are geared towards combining academic studies with on-the-job training and experience. List of programs:

    - **Recent Graduate Program** – this program provides individuals who have recently graduated from qualifying educational institutions or programs with developmental experiences in the Federal Government and is intended to promote possible careers in the civil service. This program will be available soon.

    - **Presidential Fellows Program** – this is a prestigious, competitive program that supports leadership development of recent graduates who have been pre-qualified, or recommended by a network of graduate schools.

- **USDA Third Party Contractors Providers** – these programs provide opportunities for interns to work in the Federal government as contractors. These programs typically provide stipends for interns. List of programs:

  - Conference on Asian Pacific American Leadership (CAPAL)
  - Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU)
  - Student Conservation Association (SCA)
  - Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) *(D.C. Government Passport-to-Work)*
  - Washington Internship for Native Students (WINS)

- **USDA Volunteer Program** – this program provides students or recent graduates who need professional work experience and/or academic credit with the opportunity to work with USDA. List of programs:

  - NAL - Dig into Rare and Special Collections Volunteer Experience (DRSCVE)
  - NRCS - Earth Team Volunteers (NRCSETV)
  - Higher Education Institution Volunteer Opportunity (HEIVO)
  - FSIS - Volunteer Student Program (VSP)

To apply for any of our SEOs USDA Career Opportunities, please follow the instructions.
Application Process

USDA Pathways Program

ONLY ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED THROUGH USAJOBS. DO NOT SEND YOUR TRANSCRIPTS OR OTHER DOCUMENTS VIA EMAIL.

For specific questions about the Pathways Programs, please send your inquiry to Askusdapathways@dm.usda.gov.

Searching For USDA Job Open Announcements on USAJOBS

All students interested in paid internship or recent graduate positions at USDA must apply through the USAJobs.gov system. There are several ways to start your search for USDA opportunities.

Your first option is to click this link www.USDA.USAJOBS.gov to begin your search. A window will open that resemble to the one showing below. In the “WHAT” box type “STUDENTS”, if you are looking for paid or unpaid internships, and then click “search” to view all the announcements. But if you are looking for paid and unpaid recent graduates’ opportunities, type “Recent Graduate” under the “What” box, to view all the announcements.
When searching for paid or unpaid job opportunities with the word “STUDENT” a list will appear resembling as the one showing below.

When you get the list of job opportunities, pay attention to the “RESULTS” area. Here you will know the number of job opportunities available to view. For example, in the above screen shot it shows 1 to 25 of 29 results. Meaning there are 25 job opportunities to view for students.

Click on “SORT BY” and make your selection. Scroll down and view each job announcement. Once you are viewing the announcements you will be able to select those that you are interested.
For a quick view of the job opportunity, just click “QUICK VIEW”.

When reading the brief summary under “QUICK VIEW” of the open opportunity, scroll down to continue reviewing the vacancy.
If you want to save the job for later review, just click “SAVE JOB,” or share the announcement. You will be prompted to sign in to “my account.”

If you don’t have an account, create a “NEW ACCOUNT”. If you have an account, log in with your ID and enter your password. Upload your resume, or build your own using USAJOBS system. Go back to the announcement opportunity your want to apply and click again “APPLY ONLINE.” Follow the instructions to submit your application. Then select your resume and click “SUBMIT”.

Never applying for a position, if you don’t meet both the required minimum qualifications AND any selective factors described in the JOA. Always document your experience and education in your résumé.
Another way to search for a USDA internship and recent graduate opportunities Federal wide is to go to [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov) and click on “STUDENTS AND RECENT GRADUATES”:

A window will open that resemble to the one showing below, click on “SEARCH JOBS.”
When you click on “SEARCH JOBS,” a page will appear that resembles the one below and follow the steps discussed above.

Another way to search for paid and unpaid opportunities at USDA is by selecting “AGENCY” for the pull down menu.
Click on “DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE” to see ALL USDA opportunities posted on USAJOBS.

Select a job announcement and click on the title.
Follow the instructions provided in the announcement to apply. Note the “OPEN PERIOD” showing when your application is due. Each announcement may have a different set of instructions to apply. Please read the announcement carefully and apply correctly to be considered for the position.

Applying for a particular vacancy announcement
Before you submit an application for any of our vacancies, students and recent graduates should completely review the vacancy announcement. Don’t apply for any of our positions, if you don’t meet both the required minimum qualifications AND any selective factors described in the vacancy announcement.

If you have reviewed the vacancy announcement and believe that you can meet both the minimum qualifications and selective factors, you should document your experience and education in your résumé. Since traditional résumés do not provide all the information needed to determine your qualifications for Federal positions, you should create a more detailed résumé to use when applying for Federal positions. Your résumé must include: 1) GPA and 2) Complete course work (unit/credit hours). Salary will be determined based on academic classification using the general schedule (GS) levels.
Click “APPLY ONLINE” to submit your resume. Follow the instructions given to you by the system.

You will be prompted to sign in to my account or create a new account page. Log in with your ID and enter your password. Then select your resume and click “SUBMIT”. 
Understanding the Application Process

Because Federal jobs are filled using a competitive process, understanding the timing of the process will better prepare you for the wait after you submit your application. Once the closing date passes, Federal agencies must wait a period of time (typically, 7-10 days) for receipt of postmarked applications.

During this time period, the Human Resources Specialist will begin reviewing the applications received to determine if the applicants meet the qualification requirements outlined. Those candidates who do meet the minimum qualifications will then be reviewed to determine if they are among the “qualified” or “best qualified” candidates. Sometimes this can take a few days, or a few weeks, depending on the number of applications received. Once the “best qualified” candidates are identified, a “certificate of eligible’s” is prepared and sent to the supervisor (or selecting official) for the position. The supervisor will then review the applications and determine who among the “best qualified” will be interviewed. Interviews are scheduled and conducted, reference checks are completed, and a final selection is made. The recruitment and selection process may take several weeks from the time a position is advertised to when a selection is made. Don’t be deterred by this. Ask questions and keep in touch with the point of contact during the application process.

Understanding the Follow up Process

And last, you should always print and keep a copy of this vacancy announcement. The vacancy announcement will have the contact information for the position, which you can use to check further on the status of your application. Don’t hesitate to ask the status of your application. Just keep in mind that the Federal hiring process does take time. Calling the Human Resources Office daily will not speed up the process. Rather, you might wait a few weeks or a month and then call. In most cases, you will be sent a notice acknowledging the receipt of your application. You will also be notified once a final selection has been made. Once a selection is made for a position all applicants are notified. Feel free to contact the Human Resources Specialist assigned to the vacancy announcement to request feedback on your application if you were not referred for consideration.

General Questions about USAJOBS and Pathways Program

For specific questions about the Pathways Programs, please send your inquiry to Askusdpathways@dm.usda.gov. For questions about USAJOBS and Pathways Programs, please click this link: https://twitter.com/USAJOBS.
USDA Third Party Internship Providers

To apply or to learn more about the programs and/or submit your application, click or copy any of the links below into your internet browser:

- Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU)
  http://www.hacu.net/hacu/HNIP.asp
- Washington Internship for Native Students (WINS)
  http://www.american.edu/spexs/wins/
- Student Conservation Association (SCA)
  http://www.thasca.org/serve/internships/applying
- D.C. Government Passport-to-Work - Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)
  http://does.dc.gov/service/summer-youth-employment-program
- Conference on Asian Pacific American Leadership (CAPAL)
  http://www.capal.org/programs/federal-internship-program/

USDA Volunteer Program

To apply or to learn more about the programs and/or submit your application, click or copy any of the links below into your internet browser:

- Dig into Rare and Special Collections Volunteer Experience (DRSCVE)
  To apply or for general questions contact:
    o Main Point of Contact: Theresa.Ridgewaya@ars.usda.gov
    o For the National Invasive Species Information Center: Joyce.Bolton@ars.usda.gov
    o For DigiTop, USDA’s Digital Desktop Library: Stan.Kosecki@ars.usda.gov
    o Website: www.nal.usda.gov
- NRCS Earth Team Volunteers (NRCSETV)
  http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/people/volunteers/?cid=stelprdb1041482
- Higher Education Institution - Student Intern Program (HEISIP)
  To apply:
    o Check with your college/university to earn credit, seek stipend payment and/or travel/housing assistance, if needed.
    o Search www.USAGJOBS.gov for a USDA Volunteer non-paid internship vacancy announcements.
- FSIS - Volunteer Student Program (VSP)

For general questions about the recruitment of students including: students, recent graduates, volunteers, third party internships, students with disabilities and student veterans - please contact the Department Student Employment Program Manager, Wenndy Carrasco at USDA.Internships@dm.usda.gov.