

Greetings, NRCS'ers!

I am writing to share an exciting career opportunity that should be of interest to NRCS employees and their families and friends. The news is that over the next few months we will be hiring 100 trainees to participate in a new USDA Business Management Leaders Program.

This opportunity is aimed at new hires but it may be a good opportunity for some existing employees, as well. Its purpose is two-fold. First, it's meant to help us with succession planning in the face of the looming federal retirement wave. Our average employee is 44 years old and about one-third of us are eligible to retire, so we must make a significant investment in our future workforce today.

Second, the NRCS budget now exceeds \$4 billion per year. Our financial and information management systems are growing increasingly sophisticated, and our contracts, grants, and agreements are becoming more complex. It is vital that we stand up a corps of professionals who are experts in this area.

The USDA Business Management Leaders Program will help us address both areas. Applicants selected for the program will spend two years getting to know the work of the Agency and becoming familiar with the business aspects of our operations. They will gain valuable experience through a series of rotations in up to seven different USDA locations, ranging from field offices to NHQ. Throughout, they will master administrative skills fundamental to our ability to help people help the land.

We need your help to find the best, brightest and most promising applicants for this program. If anyone you know meets the following requirements, please encourage them to apply. Or if you think you're a good candidate, step forward!

Please note that, per the recommendation of the Office of Personnel Management, the vacancy announcements for these positions will be **open for just five business days, so applicants will have to act fast to be considered. The announcements will be posted the week of July 5th.**

We are looking for college graduates with degrees in disciplines like human resources, business administration, management, finance, and contracting. They should also be mobile, in order to take advantage of developmental opportunities and for ultimate assignment upon satisfactory completion of training.

Trainees will begin as GS-7s and 9s, with promotion potential to GS-11. In addition to other federal employee benefits, they will receive paid per diem while on rotational assignments. Those who successfully complete the training program may be converted - non-competitively - to a career or career-conditional appointment anywhere in the U.S. More information is available at USA Jobs at [www.usajobs.opm.gov](http://www.usajobs.opm.gov)

We plan to convene the first class this fall so there's no time to lose in getting the word out, or in preparing the next generation to lead the way in the business of conservation. Thanks for helping us bring this important program to life.

Dave White  
Chief