



JAN 23 2008

**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**

Office of the  
Assistant Secretary  
for Civil Rights

1400 Independence  
Avenue SW

Washington, DC  
20250

Margaret Malanoski  
USDA Desk Officer  
Office of Regulatory Affairs  
Office of Management and Budget  
725 17<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W., Room 10202  
New Executive Office Building  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Ms. Malanoski:

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) Chief Information Officer recently informed us that the application for the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program is in violation of the Paper Reduction Act 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35) and that it has not been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Once we were notified of this situation, we discontinued use and distribution of the application.

This news came at a very inopportune time as we were preparing to have literature and applications printed for our current recruiting cycle. This has created a severe problem for the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program as our USDA Agricultural Liaison Officers and University representatives are in the midst of recruiting at various high schools.

I am requesting your assistance in seeking emergency approval to utilize our application for the 2008 scholarship cycle. Please see the enclosed Supporting Statement and Burden Grid, and the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program Application.

The purpose of the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program is:

- to strengthen the partnership between USDA and the 1890 Universities;
- to increase the number of students studying agriculture, food, and natural resource sciences; and
- to offer career opportunities to the USDA/1890 National Scholars at USDA.

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This scholarship program serves as a major human capital initiative of USDA and the eighteen 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant Universities to award scholarships to students to attend one of the eighteen. Since the inception of the program in 1992, more than 432 students have received the scholarship.

Inability to implement the National Scholars Program has a far-reaching impact on our partnership with the 1890 Universities. These Universities have a long history of outreach to underserved individuals and communities and have made educational opportunities available to many non-traditional and first generation college bound students.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of my request. If you have any questions, please contact Thelma Floyd, Director, USDA/1890 Programs, at (202) 720-9238 or by e-mail to [Thelma.Floyd@usda.gov](mailto:Thelma.Floyd@usda.gov).

Sincerely,



Margo M. McKay  
Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

Enclosures