

## USDA Names 2017 Agricultural Outlook Forum Student Diversity Program Winners

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7, 2017 — The United States Department of Agriculture today announced the selection of 28 university students who will attend USDA’s 2017 Agricultural Outlook Forum. The finalists include students from Land-Grant, Hispanic Serving Institutions and American Association of State Colleges of Agriculture and Renewable Resources institutions who are the recipients of corporate and USDA sponsorship aimed at promoting the education of the next generation of agriculturalists. The Forum entitled “A New Horizon: The Future of Agriculture” is USDA’s largest annual event and will be held Feb. 23 and 24 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel in Arlington, Va.

“USDA’s Outlook Forum gives these students the opportunity to hear leaders describe their vision for the direction of agriculture’s future,” said Chief Economist Robert Johansson. “USDA in turn welcomes the next generation to learn so they might excel to even greater heights in their careers.”

The 20 university juniors and seniors majoring in agricultural-related studies were selected based on their essays, “Agriculture As A Career.” The 8 graduate students submitted essays on “The Greatest Challenge Facing Agriculture Over the Next 5 Years.” Each institution conducted a “pre-selection” process and chose the final best two essays among the applicants based on the recommendations from their academic deans or department chairs.

### Undergraduate Winners

<u>Name</u>	<u>University</u>	<u>University Type</u>
Sarah Baskins	California State University, Stanislaus	HSI
Taylor Boone	University of Maryland College Park	1862
Zhane Brown	Prairie View A&M University	1890
Nakia Coit	University of Maryland Eastern Shore	1890
Nora Faris	University of Missouri	1862
Carlos Flores	Kansas State University	1862
Vanessa Garcia Polanco	University of Rhode Island	1862
Joshua Harms	Oregon State University	1862
Helena Hollins	Langston University	1890
Brandon Jackson	University of Maryland Eastern Shore	1890
Jeremy Jolly	South Carolina State University	1890
Brittney Langer	California State University, Chico	HSI
Vivian Maier	Fresno State University	HSI
James Martin	North Carolina A&T State University	1890
Virginia Miller	University of Nevada	1862
Rocio Ortiz	San Diego State University, Imperial Valley	HSI
Deja Perkins	Tuskegee University	1890
Matthew Schroeffer	South Dakota State University	1862
Bailey Thomas	Texas State University	HSI
Jessica Vallejo	San Diego State University	HSI

## Graduate Winners

<u>Name</u>	<u>University</u>	<u>University Type</u>
Benjamin Brown	University of Missouri	1862
Tiffany Carter	Kansas State University	1862
Jabari Hawkins	University of Maryland Eastern Shore	1890
Grant Lapke	Oklahoma State University	1862
Gregory McNealy	Florida A&M University	1890
Luis Rodriguez-Cruz	University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez	HSI
Timothy Silberg	Michigan State University	1862
Arneisha Smallwood	North Carolina A&T State University	1890

This year's sponsoring academic institution, corporations, and USDA agencies include:

### Academic Institution

University of Maryland Eastern Shore

### Corporations

CHS Foundation

Farm Credit

### USDA Agencies

Agricultural Research Service

Economic Research Service

National Agricultural Statistics Service

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Office of Advocacy and Outreach

Office of the Chief Economist

USDA's Office of the Chief Economist and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture launched the Student Diversity Program a decade ago in 2007. USDA hosts a briefing and discussion of career opportunities featuring agriculture leaders in academia, government, and industry; takes the students on a tour of the Nation's Capital; and the week-long visit culminates with their participation in the Forum. The USDA Outlook Forum Student Diversity Program provides students with a unique insight into their agricultural studies. The program is designed to expose students to contemporary agribusiness, future trends, scientific research, and agricultural policy in today's real world environment.

USDA Student Diversity Program details can be found at the [USDA AOF Student Diversity Program webpage](#).

Registration for the 2-day event is \$500. Plenary speeches will be webcast after 6:00 p.m. EST on Feb. 23. Program details and registration information are available at on [USDA Agriculture Outlook Forum 2017 webpage](#).

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