



2022 Annual HBCU Agency Plan

White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity
through Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Submission Instructions: By January 28, 2022, prepare and submit an electronic copy of your agency's 2022 Annual HBCU Agency Plan to the following office:

U. S. Department of Education
White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity
through Historically Black Colleges and Universities
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202-288-2437

The Initiative will submit your report to the Secretary of Education, the Executive Director of the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity through Historically Black Colleges and Universities (Initiative), the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the U.S. Senate, the Committee on Education and Labor of the U.S. House of Representatives, and the President's Board of Advisors on HBCUs (as established in section 3 of Executive Order 14041).

Federal Agency Name: Nuclear Regulatory Commission

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Office:	Submission Date:
Office of Small Business and Civil Rights	

(1) Identify programs and initiatives, at your agency, in which an HBCU may participate.

The Office of Small Business and Civil Rights (SBCR) administers the agency’s Minority Serving Institutions Program (MSIP), which comprises a Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Program and several minority-serving institutions (MSI) subprograms. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) approved the MSIP in 2006 to establish partnership programs to promote a diverse skilled workforce pipeline; improve education and employment opportunities and conditions that affect employability; and broaden participation in the NRC occupations, programs, and activities by underrepresented groups.

HBCUs are encouraged to participate in all of the NRC’s regulatory planning and decision-making processes open to the public (if applicable), programs, activities, training/development and job placement programs, and employment and funding opportunities (e.g., grants, contracts). The following programs may be of particular interest to HBCUs:

- NRC grants programs
- NRC contracts
- Temporary Student Internship Program
- Nuclear Regulator Apprenticeship Network (NRAN) Program
- Student Cooperative Education Program
- Honor Law Graduate Program
- Law Clerks Training/Hiring Programs (e.g., Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel)
- Resident Inspector Development Program
- Direct Hire Authority Program (under 5 U.S.C. 3304)

The program manager for the MSIP/HBCU program serves as the agency’s point of contact and stands ready to assist HBCUs to engage in the NRC’s processes.

(2) Provide details on grant and contract funding provided to HBCUs from your agency during FY21.

Agency-Issued Grants

The NRC’s University Nuclear Leadership Program (UNLP) (formerly the Integrated University Program (IUP)) awards \$16 million annually through nuclear education-related competitive grants to institutions of higher education (IHEs) for scholarships and fellowships, faculty development, research and development, and scholarships for 2-year trade schools and community colleges. Students supported under an NRC scholarship or fellowship must agree to serve in the nuclear industry for a period of time, as required by the NRC service agreement. Table 1 identifies the grant awards made to IHEs, MSIs and HBCUs over the past 6 years. **(Note: Some institutions received more than one award, which is reflected in the total number of individual grants awarded.)**

Fiscal Year	Individual Grants Awarded	IHEs that received grant awards	MSIs that received grant awards	HBCUs that received grant awards	Name of HBCUs
2021	48	32	6	1	Florida Memorial University
2020	45	24	4	0	N/A
2019	45	33	8	0	N/A
2018	51	40	9	1	Alabama A&M
2017	46	35	10	0	N/A
2016	51	39	7	4	Florida Memorial University Alabama A&M Texas Southern University Jackson State University

The NRC staff monitor pre- and post-award grant administration activities to ensure equal opportunity and equity throughout all process phases. The funds appropriated are designated to support project activities for nuclear science, engineering, technology, and related disciplines to develop a workforce capable of supporting the design, construction, operation, and regulation of nuclear facilities and the safe handling of nuclear materials.

Contracts

The NRC received a scorecard letter grade of “A” from the Small Business Administration for its FY 2020 small business performance. The Scorecard measured the agency’s efforts toward achieving prime and subcontract small business goals as well as the compliance,

technical assistance, and outreach activities of NRC’s Small Business Program. Specific achievements include the agency exceeding all five of its prime contract goals, such as more than doubling the goal for contracting with women, service-disabled veterans, and companies located in historically underutilized business zones.

The NRC contracts for services related to information technology (IT) and cybersecurity, corporate support and research, and engineering. The NRC provides an annual forecast of contract opportunities, which includes opportunities open to IHEs, including MSIs/HBCUs. Table 2 identifies contract awards made to IHEs and HBCUs over the past 6 years.

Table 2: NRC-Issued Contracts for Services Related to IT and Cybersecurity, Corporate Support and Research, and Engineering

Fiscal Year	Contract Dollars NRC Expended	NRC-Awarded Contracts	Contract Total Dollars to IHEs	Contract Total Dollars to HBCUs	Name of HBCU
2021	\$176,379,290	40	\$1,512,967	\$0	N/A
2020	\$176,379,290	37	\$1,221,751	\$0	N/A
2019	\$186,879,752	35	\$983,128	\$0	N/A
2018	\$199,951,524	54	\$2,420,579	\$0	N/A
2017	\$196,744,317	67	\$3,041,228	\$0	N/A
2016	\$209,146,944	53	\$3,277,125	\$0	N/A

The NRC works collaboratively to develop public-private partnerships geared toward increasing contracting opportunities for HBCUs and to transfer knowledge to HBCUs about participating in Federal contracting and NRC prime and subcontract opportunities and doing business with the NRC.

Examples of Strategic Partnerships Formed Related to Contract Acquisitions

At the onset of FY 2021, the NRC submitted a proposal to participate in the White House Initiative on HBCUs (WHI-HBCU) Federal HBCU Contracting Competitiveness Academy Pilot (C-CAP). The proposal was accepted and provided a yearlong virtual institutional capacity-building academy. The pilot launched officially in January 2021, with the capstone of the C-CAP taking place at the 2021 National HBCU Week Conference, September 8–11, 2021. The NRC staff serve on the Conference Planning Committee, White House HBCU Interagency Working Group, and Contract Cluster Interagency Working Group. On March 19, 2021, the staff held a contracting opportunities workshop designed to support HBCU competitiveness by providing basic guidance on how to do business with the NRC, introducing participants to requirements and expectations that must be met to participate in the contracting process, sharing “best practices” and strategies for winning NRC contract awards, and identifying NRC prime and subcontract opportunities. The staff also participated in the FY 2021 WHI-HBCU Conference Week Industry Day to promote HBCU participation in NRC Federal contracting opportunities. The staff also designed a template to assist the Contract Cluster Interagency Working Group in its efforts to coordinate the collection of target information from other Federal agencies for public distribution.

The NRC conducted extensive outreach to HBCUs. For example, University Champions and NextGen employee volunteers (detailed in section 7) conducted on-campus visits; other staff sent mail-outs and electronic notifications. The staff routinely requested that the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity through Historically Black Colleges and Universities post on its Web site and disseminate notifications about the NRC's career development, employment, and contract and grant funding opportunities, and to share this information during meetings, forums, and events. On April 27, 2021, the staff presented at the WHI-HBCUs and the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans' Student Summer Federal Opportunities Informational Forum. The staff provided information on the agency's MSIP/HBCU program, recruitment outreach efforts, student job training and placement opportunities, and current grant notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for research and development and upcoming NOFOs, including web site and point of contact information for each office/program activity.

The staff assisted the Office of Federal Procurement Policy in the Executive Office of the President and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) in conducting outreach about their crowdsourcing campaign to identify barriers faced by underserved groups that prevent them from full and equal access to Federal procurement opportunities. The staff reached out to various contacts and networks (e.g., Quality Education for Minorities Network, Howard University, Tougaloo College, Oak Ridge Associated Universities, Deloitte Services) and secured their help in galvanizing support from members of communities (i.e., underserved, impacted, socioeconomic disadvantaged communities), businesses, and educational institutions at all levels, with particular focus on HBCUs, predominantly Black colleges and universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions, and Hispanic-Serving Institutions.

In FY 2020, the staff assisted the U.S. Department of Treasury (Treasury) staff to establish Treasury's HBCU program. The SBCR Director supported Treasury by attending the White House-sponsored event commemorating a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Treasury and the U.S. Government Accountability Office to increase HBCU participation in Federal contracting.

In late FY 2019, the NRC, along with Treasury, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Emerging Technology Consortium, hosted a key workshop session on "Building Partnerships to Increase HBCUs' Workforce Dynamics in 2020 and Beyond." The session provided insights and best practices for establishing and maintaining effective academic partnerships. The NRC staffed a recruitment exhibit booth. The agency's NextGen cohort participated in the DOE-led Millennial Nuclear Caucus networking session that discussed the future of nuclear and clean energy, bringing young leaders into decision-making on energy policies, and the roles HBCUs and others can play. The NextGen cohort shared information with HBCU student participants on their jobs and experiences working at the NRC as a way of promoting interest in the NRC as an employer.

The NRC's current Global Infrastructure and Development Acquisition (GLINDA) Blanket Procurement Acquisition (BPA) has six awardees, two of which are small businesses. The BPA has a 6-year period of performance and an estimated value of \$679 million. It provides the NRC with a wide range of IT infrastructure and application maintenance and operations services. For example, Symposit LLC (a GLINDA subcontractor) is an SBA-certified Small Disadvantaged Business and SBA-certified 8(a) firm that provides modern IT solutions. Symposit participates in the National Institutes of Health's Path to Excellence and Innovation program, which provides partnership opportunities between Government contractors and HBCUs to assist HBCUs in securing Government contracts. In addition, Symposit actively recruits and engages with local HBCUs from the DC metro area for consideration as Government contractor support.

Similarly, Immersive Concepts, LLC (Immersive), is an SBA 8(a) firm and HUBZone Certified Business that provides technical innovation and professional services to the Federal Government and public-private sectors. Immersive is a prime contractor on three NRC multimillion-dollar contracts. Immersive has an MOU with Bowie State University and is in active discussions with Howard University to hire its undergraduate students to work on acquisition contracts that Immersive has with the Federal Government and the public-private sectors, and to pay students' tuition so they can acquire their graduate degree/certifications. For example, Immersive's contract with the NRC for multimedia services includes support from an HBCU graduate that recently received a master's degree in IT from Bowie State University. Moreover, Immersive currently employs graduates and active students from several HBCUs to support their public and private sector contracts, which include Morgan State University, Howard University, Florida A&M University, Bowie State University, Spelman College, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Tennessee State University, and Virginia State University.

(3) Identify federal programs and initiatives under the jurisdiction of your agency in which HBCUs are underrepresented.

During FY 2021, 63 percent (15 out of 24) of the NRC's recruitment activities focused on diversity, which includes MSIs and minority-serving organizations, including those for veterans, veterans with disabilities, and other people with disabilities. As part of this effort, NRC participated in recruitment events at four HBCUs: Alabama A&M University (concentration in civil, electrical, and mechanical engineering, and business management); Morgan State University (concentration in civil, electrical, and computer engineering); North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (concentration in IT and cybersecurity); and South Carolina State University (concentration in nuclear engineering and health physics).

The NRC also has three recruitment programs that focus on current college students and recent graduates to build its talent pipeline. These recruitment programs include summer interns, NRAN, and co-ops. The NRC is also committed to increasing the number of entry-level hires, through formal training programs such as the NRAN and through non-NRAN entry-level positions. Although progress has been made, additional progress is required to increase diversity within these programs. The subsections below give a snapshot of each program.

Summer 2021 Temporary Student Internship Program

A key strategy for improving diversity in the NRC's workforce pipeline is through the agency's summer internships, during which students are employed by the NRC for the summer. In FY 2021, despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 public health emergency, the NRC held the summer 2021 Temporary Student Internship Program. Certificates of eligibility were prepared based on the geographic location and desired academic major. Nine veterans with preference were evaluated first and placed in aligned internships based on geographic preference selected during the application process and academic major. A Tiger Team was formed to review the resumes, conduct interviews, obtain reference checks, and make placement decisions for the internship requests that had not been filled by veterans. A total of 60 students were selected for the FY 2021 Temporary Student Internship Program, including four students from MSIs. A goal for 2022 is to increase HBCU student participation in the Temporary Student Internship Program. Table 3 gives an overview of students from IHEs and MSIs/HBCUs who applied for the program.

Table 3: NRC Summer 2021 Temporary Student Internship Program Applicants								
Total Student Applicants	Student Applicants from IHEs (Non-MSIs)	IHE %	Student Applicants from MSIs	MSI % of Total Applicants	Student Applicants from HBCUs	HBCU % of Total Applicants	HBCU % of MSI Applicants	HBCUs and Students Represented
568	510	90%	58	10%	17	2.99%	29.31%	
								Albany State (1) Alcorn State (1) Bowie State (3) Ft. Valley State (2) Howard (2) Morgan State (1) Morehouse (1) NC A&T (3) Spelman (1) Tennessee State (1) University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (1)

Nuclear Regulator Apprenticeship Network Program

The NRAN program’s goal is to recruit, hire, develop, and retain recent college graduates who possess a technical degree (i.e., engineering, science, health physics/science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines (STEM)) to fill critical skill gaps and projected vacancies in regulatory positions. In 2019–2020, the NRC developed the framework for a new NRAN developmental and training program. On June 22, 2020, the NRC onboarded 23 new NRAN employees, including four students from HBCUs (Alabama A&M University and South Carolina State University). In 2021, the NRC assessed the implementation of the program and success of the initial cohort of NRAN apprentices. Recruitment for the second NRAN cohort was conducted from September 2 to December 21, 2021, with plans to begin the next cohort program in July 2022. A virtual information session was conducted for grants students attending MSIs, including HBCUs to increase interest in NRC entry level opportunities.

Student Cooperative Education Program

This program establishes student co-op appointments initially as 13-month terms rather than as permanent appointments, with flexibility to extend in appropriate increments (typically one year or less), for up to 120 days after the student’s expected graduation. This ensures that students remain eligible for Federal benefits, and it affords the NRC the flexibility to convert successful co-op program participants to term or permanent positions. When implementing co-op appointments, NRC is committed to these future conversions. The NRC’s high conversion rate has helped make its student employment programs an especially successful pipeline to meet long-term agency needs. As of January 12, 2022, the NRC employed a total of 42 co-ops, including one student attending South Carolina State University.

Honor Law Graduate Program

Each year, the NRC selects a small number of graduating law students or judicial law clerks to serve in the agency’s Honor Law Graduate Program (HLGP). Established in 1972, the HLGP is the primary mechanism for hiring entry-level attorneys at the NRC. The NRC currently has three attorneys in the HLGP, and one presidential management fellow, each undertaking three 8-month rotations, with assigned mentors for the first two years of their employment. In hiring efforts, the staff use diverse rating and interview panels, seeking volunteers from across the agency who employ attorneys to capture differing perspectives. The staff have increased outreach to law schools/universities with an increased minority student population. A review of NRC workforce data revealed four employees were hired in the HLGP during 2021, although not from HBCUs.

(4) Provide a description of how your agency intends to increase the capacity of HBCUs to compete effectively for grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements.

Grants/Cooperative Agreements

HBCUs face two commonly known challenges related to grants acquisition at the NRC. First, the NRC grants support research and development and education programs for nuclear science, engineering, technology, and related disciplines to develop a workforce capable of supporting the design, construction, operation, and regulation of nuclear facilities and the safe handling of nuclear materials. The program provides financial assistance for projects relevant to the NRC’s programmatic mission. Many HBCUs offer broadly focused STEM related programs which limit the number of HBCUs from competitive review. In 2021, the NRC addressed this area by expanding the program scope outlined in its NOFO to provide a more level playing field for MSIs. The NRC is encouraging partnerships with MSIs/HBCUs through FY 2022 NOFO. The NRC will continue to conduct outreach activities to promote MSIs/HBCUs awareness of and involvement in NRC funding opportunities. The agency will continue to solicit volunteers to serve as grant proposal reviewers and monitor pre- and post-award grant administration processes to ensure equal opportunity and equity in all operating phases of the programs.

Second, a gap exists because of a lack of NRC Federal financial assistance available to support MSIs/HBCUs. In 2017, as part of the agency’s Project AIM recommendations for corporate support reductions, the NRC discontinued the Minority Serving Institutions Grants Program (MSIGP). Before that time, the NRC had been repeatedly identified as having a model MSIP and was a “top supporter” of HBCUs. From 2006 through 2017, the MSIP conducted extensive outreach and provided support services to MSIs/HBCUs. The MSIP provided \$2 million or more annually in grants and cooperative agreements to assist numerous MSIs/HBCUs in their efforts to, among other things, provide STEM education; conduct projects and activities; and develop infrastructure, capacity-building, and experiential learning opportunities to inspire and inform the agency’s next-generation scientists, engineers, innovators, and other workers. The NRC recognizes these challenges and is pursuing efforts to reconstitute the MSIGP.

Acquisitions

While review of awards, analysis of information/data collections, and interviews with the staff confirm that the NRC has not made any prime/subcontract contract awards to HBCUs, the agency is actively engaging with HBCUs to explain how to identify and respond to agency prime and subcontract opportunities, along with what resources are available to HBCUs to expand their footprint into the Federal marketplace. Examples of contracts that universities currently support at the NRC and for which the agency intends to continue purchasing in the future include systematic human performance data collection, motor-operated valve training, alternative dispute resolution neutral services, guidance for evacuation time estimate studies, research on degrading under dry storage and transportation conditions, and technical assistance for the reactor and environmental programs. The annual Forecast of Contract Opportunities, which lists all current active contracts and awarded amounts at the agency, and the SB Toolbox are great resources to identify procurement opportunities at the NRC and the DOE national laboratories that the NRC works with across the Nation. The staff schedule counseling sessions to explain the resources available under the SB Toolbox and how to effectively use them. The staff also provide information on Federal procurement opportunities, mentor/protégé and support programs, important things to know and do, how to get on the U.S. General Services Administration contractor vendor list, and best practices for doing business with the Federal Government. The staff have implemented a “Helpline Support” button to access assistance during normal business hours on how to use resources in the SB Toolbox. The staff support efforts will increase the capacity of HBCUs to compete effectively for NRC contracts.

(5) Provide an outline of proposed efforts to improve HBCUs' participation in such programs and initiatives as described in question 4.

Commercial Contract Acquisition

In 2022, the Small Business Program plans to increase outreach to HBCUs include the following:

- Continuing partnership with the National Institutes of Health’s HBCU Contracting Competitiveness Academy Pilot program to showcase the services offered by the Small Business Program to assist HBCUs to identify and respond to contract opportunities.
- Exploring contractor’s recruitment practices and participation in HBCU contracting programs during market research for upcoming agency contract opportunities.
- Providing one-on-one counseling to HBCUs on how to navigate the Federal procurement landscape to identify and respond to opportunities.
- Expanding the Small Business Program’s web-based toolbox to include resources to assist HBCUs in securing prime and subcontract opportunities.

Grants

In 2022, the NRC plans to include selection criteria in its upcoming NOFO Announcements for grant awards encouraging partnerships with IHEs and MSIs.

(6) Describe any progress your agency has made toward advancing or achieving the mission of the Executive Order and the Initiative in the past year.

In FY 2020, to demonstrate the agency’s continued commitment to building a diverse talent pipeline, the agency implemented the NRC’s Fiscal Year 2021–2022 Historically Black Colleges and Universities Competitiveness Strategic Framework Plan, which was mandated by the White House Policy Management Counsel to improve the competitiveness, capacity, and contributions of HBCUs (e.g., participation in Federal programs, career development and placement, and funding opportunities). The NRC’s plan follows the Framework for the Development of a Federal HBCU Competitiveness Strategy issued to agencies on February 14, 2020. The NRC’s Fiscal Year 2021–2022 HBCU Competitiveness Strategic Framework Plan serves as the agency’s baseline for advancing and achieving the goals of the Biden administration and mission of Executive Order 14041, “White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity Through Historically Black Colleges and Universities,” dated September 3, 2021. FY 2021 performance results are captured throughout this plan. The NRC will continue to work towards meeting the HBCU metrics identified in the NRC’s Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Historically Black Colleges and Universities Competitiveness Strategic Framework Plan and below in Table 4.

Goal	Measurable Action	Performance Level	Timeframe End of Year	Status as of December 2021
HBCU Goal 1: Increase outreach to, and employment of, HBCU students, including through special hiring authorities.	Campus-based recruitment events will be conducted at HBCUs. The number of HBCU students offered noncompetitive employment will increase.	(1) 25% (2) 10%	2022	In progress
HBCU Goal 2: Increase HBCU students’ representation in NRC career development and placement programs.	Increase HBCU student participation in NRC career development and placement programs or initiatives.	5+	2022	In progress
HBCU Goal 3: Increase the percentage and amount of funds awarded to HBCUs through contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, the NRC’s Scholarship and Fellowship Program, and other sources.	Increase annual contracting with HBCUs to \$3 million.	\$3 million	2022	No contracts awarded to HBCUs.
HBCU Goal 4: Increase opportunities for HBCUs to participate in research and development, and NRC program-specific research and development opportunities.	Increase HBCU participation in research and development grant opportunities. Increase grant awards to \$3 million. This goal will be further evaluated in FY22 to determine how to increase HBCU participation and awarding.	(1) 5+ (2) \$3 million	2022	A grant was issued to Florida Memorial University
HBCU Goal 5: Increase outreach to HBCUs and HBCU participation in the NRC’s Small Business Program (i.e., outreach, training, contract opportunities).	Increase small business outreach, training, and counseling geared toward NRC contracting opportunities to HBCUs.	5+	2022	Increasing outreach to HBCUs

(7) Describe how your agency plans to encourage public sector, private sector, and community involvement to improve the capacity of HBCUs to compete effectively for grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements and to participate in programs and initiatives under the jurisdiction of your agency.

The NRC participates in ongoing recruitment outreach as well as numerous collaborative efforts with other Federal agencies, educational institutions, the public-private sector, community organizations, small businesses, professional associations, and other stakeholders to build relationships and to encourage meaningful community involvement in the NRC's programs, activities, and career and funding opportunities. Recruitment outreach efforts, programs, and activities include HBCUs, but the agency recognizes that more needs to be done to ensure increased HBCU representation in the NRC's recruitment outreach, participation in career development and placement programs, and selection processes. The subsections below describe examples of NRC efforts in this area.

SummerRISE Program

The NRC staff work with Montgomery County, Maryland, on the SummerRISE program, which works with local companies to provide unpaid internship opportunities to high school students. In July 2021, the NRC hosted five summer interns, one of which was selected from 800 students to speak at the SummerRISE closing ceremony.

Montgomery County Science Fair

NRC staff members helped coordinate and participated in the annual Montgomery County Science Fair targeted to high school students. A total of 31 schools participated, representing 14 high schools and 17 middle schools. Projects were reviewed and selected, and interviews conducted March 22–28, 2021. The committee selected three high school and four middle school winners. Each received an Under Armour shirt and bag donated by the NRC's Employee Welfare and Recreation Association store. The winners also received a letter signed by the Chairman and a certificate signed by the Executive Director for Operations. The recognition ceremony took place virtually on April 8, 2021.

NextGen

The agency's NextGen cohort is a group of NRC staff members who have volunteered to help attract, recruit, and retain the next generation of nuclear regulator leaders to better position the NRC to support future nuclear energy demands. The cohort helps to coordinate events between staff and summer interns, foster workplace engagement, and participate in internal/external networking opportunities to increase the NRC's presence in the local community and at recruitment events. The NextGen cohort leads efforts to identify gaps and solutions for optimizing recruitment of the next generation of regulators. The cohort also helps the agency identify and address needs as the NRC and nuclear industry evolve.

EmbraceNRC

The EmbraceNRC summer program consisted of a team of NRC employees (12 volunteers and more than 40 ambassadors) who welcomed summer interns to the agency. From June 1 to August 5, 2021, the program provided a broad range of experiential learning activities, including the introduction to the NRC; social welcome event; NRC history; lunch chats with staff; introduction to nuclear science and reactors; inspection findings and violations; new and advanced nonlight-water reactors and transportation and spent fuel; cybersecurity; emergency response; NRC panel; Fukushima storytelling; digital twins, artificial intelligence, big data, data transformation, and health physics; after-work socials; and a final lunch chat.

University Champions

The NRC developed the University Champions Program as part of the agency's overall human capital strategy to position the NRC to be as competitive as possible in this evolving environment. Through this program, NRC managers and senior staff volunteer to serve as emissaries of the NRC and establish a close individual liaison with university officials. A University Champion establishes a high-level presence on a university campus. Examples of University Champion activities include the following:

- Participate in meetings with engineering and science department heads, professors, and career counselors to discuss student and entry-level employment opportunities and disciplines of interest to the NRC.
- Provide NRC grants information and promote the NRC as an employer of choice. Participate in career fairs and conduct classroom technical presentations. Conduct NRC information sessions for student organizations. Review resumes for the Temporary Student Internship Program or any other vacancies the agency may be looking to fill.
- Participate on campus by serving on panels or technical advisory committees, or as a guest lecturer or speaker. Develop webinars and host resume clinics.

Additional Contributions

The NRC uses various communication methods and partnerships to increase outreach efforts and restructure the NRC's workforce to support the agency's safety and security mission. All NRC offices conduct a strategic workforce planning analysis of current staffing critical skills gaps to determine external hiring needs, including consideration of entry-level staff in support of succession planning. As a result of the agency's strategic workplace planning efforts, the 5-year hiring projections indicate a considerable increase in external hires to replace the loss of staff in mission-critical positions. The NRC's outreach and recruitment strategy will help to develop a diverse pipeline of candidates who possess critical skills and educational backgrounds to meet the demands of the NRC. The following are examples of agencywide progress:

- On September 8, 2021, the NRC issued its latest nationwide solicitation for the appointment of a new board member on the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS). The ACRS broadened the requirements to allow for a combination of education and experience, evaluated current hiring practices, and identify publications and outreach to organizations and individuals in an effort to create awareness of an ACRS board member vacancy and increase diversity in the applicant pool. The staff have directly contacted

approximately 138 organizations/individuals requesting assistance in recruitment outreach to our communities. These include the White House Initiative Offices (e.g., for HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions, other HBCUs, TCUs, and MSIs, Equal Employment Opportunity & Diversity and Inclusion entities and interested stakeholders. Staff posted a link to the solicitation on various sites including HBCU Connect. Twitter was also used to outreach to a broader community.

- NRC hired 41 summer hires, of whom six became co-ops and two are returning students; offered a permanent position to an existing co-op, and converted two summer intern positions to co-op positions.
- The staff supported the Honor Law Graduate and summer (legal intern) hiring activities, successfully recruiting two summer legal interns remotely. During the open period for the Honor Law Graduate Program vacancy, the staff communicated directly with the National Black Law Students Association and the National Latina/o Law Student Association which includes Howard University School of Law and the University of Puerto Rico School of Law. The staff also communicated with Santa Clara University, Florida International University, Oklahoma City University, Florida A&M, and University of California (Davis).
- The staff developed an agency quarterly performance review risk measure focused on the recruitment and retention of health physicists (materials and reactors).
- The staff supported agency efforts to pursue recruiting and hiring entry-level staff from a diverse, qualified group of potential applicants. Additionally, staff engaged with potential candidates for filling mid-career vacancies. Example efforts include:
 - Engagement with the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors and the Office of Personnel Management to address critical gaps in health physicists.
 - Conducted monthly knowledge management seminars on electrical and mechanical engineering topics for peers, rotational assignees, and NRAN employees.
 - Recruited ambassadors agencywide to network and welcome student interns to the NRC.
 - Participated in the NRC Technical Women's Network and the NextGen panel for NRC staff and summer interns to share knowledge on obtaining a Professional Engineer license.
 - Participated in the Philadelphia Federal Executive Board's Executive Women in Motion half-day series of mentoring sessions on executive core qualities and leadership competencies,
 - Participated in Lincoln University's Explore Day.
 - Supported a highly successful STEM virtual career exposition at Fermilab, engaging with a diverse group of high school students, college students, and college graduates to share interests and experiences and to discuss how opportunities at the NRC might align with their career interests.
 - Initiated daily discussions to assist Resident Inspector Development Program and NRAN employees in achieving qualification goals.
 - Selected veterans for the Resident Inspector Development Program.

- Participated in a college Criminal Justice and Government Networking panel for recruitment outreach with students of diverse backgrounds, so the students could learn about the NRC and potential career paths, and the agency could engage potential candidates from diverse backgrounds.
- Utilized IUP/UNLP grant recipients, scholarship grant recipients, and scholarship awardees in an effort to fill entry-level reliability and risk analyst vacancies open to the public.
- Participated in virtual outreach to Alabama A&M University students through the university's Youth Motivation Task Force, introducing them to STEM opportunities and careers within the public-private sectors.
- In honor of Black History Month, internally shared a series of videos honoring HBCUs and sponsored keynote speakers. Shared multiple photographs, historical facts and academic affiliations with the civil rights movement. The theme was "Leading During Uncertain Times."

(8) Provide any other information relevant to promoting opportunities to fund, partner, contract, or otherwise interact with HBCUs.

In addition to what is discussed in response to questions 1-7, the NRC plans to promote opportunities to fund, partner, contract, or interact with HBCUs by conducting targeted outreach and recruitment in FY 2022 to HBCU law schools (e.g., University of the District of Columbia's David A. Clarke School of Law, Howard University School of Law, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University College of Law, and Texas Southern University) to promote interest in the NRC's career development and employment opportunities (e.g., Honor Law Graduate Program, legal intern programs, and law clerk positions) and funding opportunities.

NRC's recruitment approach for the 2022 NRAN cohort included direct outreach to the NRC grant-funded scholarship/fellowship recipients attending MSIs/HBCUs, and participation in campus-based recruitment events to solicit applicants for a vacancy announcement posted on USAJobs which is being used for both NRAN and other entry level positions across the agency. The response included applications from women, minorities, and other special emphasis groups.

(9) Address any changes to agency policies and practices that the agency deems necessary or appropriate to ensure that barriers to participation are addressed and removed.

Reconstituting the NRC's MSIP/MSIGP would significantly address current challenges MSIs/HBCUs face in applying for NRC funding and will create an immediate return on NRC investments, as demonstrated historically (2006–2017).