



Natural Resources Conservation Service
210 Walnut Street, Room 693
Des Moines, IA 50309-2180

May 24, 2012

IOWA BULLETIN NO. IA-230-12-8

SUBJECT: EOP – SPECIAL EMPHASIS PROGRAM MANAGER AND AREA CIVIL RIGHTS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES OPPORTUNITIES

ACTION REQUIRED BY: JUNE 15, 2012

PURPOSE. To solicit applications for Iowa's American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) and Hispanic Emphasis Program Managers (HEPM) and the Area 2 and Area 3 Civil Rights Advisory Committee (CRAC) Representatives.

EXPIRATION DATE. September 30, 2013

The Iowa NRCS CRAC focuses on providing counsel and recommendations to the State Conservationist and provides support, information, and education to all employees on all matters regarding equal employment opportunity and program delivery in Iowa NRCS.

The Iowa Special Emphasis Program Manager (SEPM) positions play an integral part in the overall Equal Opportunity Program and serve on the Iowa NRCS CRAC. These SEPMs are three year appointments that will begin in October 2012. SEPM duties are collateral to your regular job. All permanent NRCS employees are eligible to apply, regardless of grade level. Supervisors must concur with nominations and agree to support the employee by granting up to twenty percent of their time for SEPM travel and work activities.

All NRCS employees with an interest are encouraged to apply. **SEPM's are NOT limited to those who are ethnically or culturally linked to a specific group.** If you are someone who desires to develop skills and experience managing a state level program; to interact with management at the state and national levels; to create networking opportunities with state and national leadership; or to increase your knowledge of programs and exposure to issues from the national perspective; becoming a SEPM can provide all of these opportunities.

To apply for these SEPM opportunities, complete the application attached to this bulletin, obtain concurrence from your first and second level supervisors, and send it to the State Office, attention Tricia Mootz, Human Resources Specialist. The deadline for receipt of all applications is close of business on June 15, 2012.

The Area Representatives serve as a communication link between employees within their Area and the Iowa NRCS CRAC. They serve a minimum of 3 years that will begin in October 2012. If you are interested in the Area 2 or Area 3 CRAC Representative positions, please obtain your supervisor's approval and forward to your ASTC-FO by June 15, 2012. No application form is required.

Any questions regarding these opportunities may be directed to Ms. Mootz at 515-284-4587 or tricia.mootz@ia.usda.gov. Questions may also be directed to Clint Miller, current AI/AN Emphasis Program Manager at clint.miller@ia.usda.gov or Paul Vondra, current Hispanic Emphasis Program Manager at paul.vondra@ia.usda.gov.



Richard Sims
State Conservationist

Attachments

Reasons you would want to be a Special Emphasis Program Manager

Quotes from current and past SEPMs:

As a SEPM you can make a difference, meet new people and get outside of your own box. It is a great experience!

I enjoy doing work outside the typical NRCS work day. (Non technical work.)

As an SEPM, I am more in touch with the recruitment strategy and hiring activities of NRCS in Iowa. I visit high schools and colleges to recruit potential NRCS employees, helping shape our future workforce.

Being an SEPM is an opportunity that presents both rewards and challenges, as well as, provides experiences about cultures and history. I would encourage anyone who enjoys learning, recruiting and promoting diversity throughout NRCS to become an SEPM.

I enjoy promoting our agency at career days and recruiting events.

I hope to gain more of an understanding of the GLBT community and to share that with all NRCS employees so that we can close the gap of prejudice.

I had the chance to converse and work with NRCS employees across the nation, and then was able to travel to a national conference and meet them face to face – so much information to collect and fun activities to do! Being a part of this crowd, locally and nationally, not only expanded my knowledge of other cultures and customs, but my own personal growth in sharing ideas and self-expression. I can't encourage you enough to take the leap to do this – you'll never regret it!

I have a passion now for educating others about working and interacting with individuals with a disability.

I enjoyed having a program that I was fully responsible for and seeing positive results from my actions.

Because I had a direct connection with the State Conservationist I felt I had an impact on the leadership in Iowa.

Make a difference—apply to be a SEPM today.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs and marital or familial status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint, write the Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call 1-800-245-6340 (voice) or (202) 720-1127 (TDD). USDA is an equal employment opportunity employer.

Civil Rights Advisory Member Duties

The Area Civil Rights Advisory Committee (CRAC) Representative duties are to work with the CRAC in their role in:

- Identifying and bringing to management's attention any trends, problems, issues, or concerns.
- Monitoring recruitment practices and making recommendations for ensuring that under-represented groups are made aware of employment opportunities for career positions, temporary summer employment, or special appointment.
- Focusing the attention of management on specific personnel practices or problems of an EEO nature that are producing or could produce dissension and dissatisfaction among employees (e.g., merit promotion procedures; selection for training and assignments; criteria, nomination, and distribution of awards; etc.).
- Monitoring the policies and overall effectiveness of the Affirmative employment Plan (AEP) with regard to recruitment, hiring, promotion, and retention.
- Providing training resources for various civil rights workshops, seminars, and meetings.
- Acting as a forum for an exchange of ideas and action proposals on sensitive issues, matters, or concerns of a civil rights nature.
- Encouraging, supporting, or assisting in the development of projects or activities associated with civil rights needs or opportunities.
- Contributing to the development and implementation of strategies designed to improve and increase awareness of and participation in NRCS programs and activities by under-served groups, individuals, and communities.
- Promoting and communicating the efforts of management to achieve and operate a realistic and ongoing civil rights program.
- Participating and taking an active role in the development and implementation of the Affirmative Employment Plan.
- Participating in civil rights compliance reviews.
- Establishes lines of communication between employees and management through which employees' views on civil rights issues may be brought to the attention of management, providing management with feedback on the performance of the civil rights program, identifying weaknesses, and recommending ways in which the program can be improved. All recommendations are to be reported in writing to the DEOO for appropriate consideration and follow-up action.

COLLATERAL DUTY STATE SPECIAL EMPHASIS PROGRAM MANAGER (SEPM)

Employees seeking to expand their knowledge and acquire new skills on civil rights are encouraged to apply. The position provides leadership and direction for all activities related to the particular special emphasis program in Iowa. The successful applicant should expect to devote twenty percent of his/her time to the position.

Preferably the applicant should have:

- The ability to function independently and effectively under pressure;
- A commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity and Special Emphasis Programs; and
- Knowledge of NRCS General Manual 230, Part 401-405.

Duties Include:

- Advise management and the State Conservationist on matters affecting the employment and advancement of persons related to the specific emphasis program (SEP);
- Serve as a member to the civil rights committee in their organizational units to ensure that all NRCS activities are free from discrimination and that barriers to the recruitment, employment, and advancement of persons within the SEP are addressed. SEPM assists in evaluating the effectiveness of the overall equal opportunity program in their organizational units and assist in identifying new and changing program needs;
- Coordinate or conduct educational programs (e.g., workshops, seminars, or other types of programs, such as an observance);
- Maintain close contact with community organizations for possible job referrals of applicants within the SEP and stay attuned to concerns of the specific emphasis group;
- Attend job fairs or other functions at local high schools, colleges, and universities to obtain names of applicants and provide information on job opportunities; send recruitment literature to schools and community groups; sponsor workshops and speakers, information booths at conferences, career days, and other training programs;
- Keep the national SEPM informed of field activities affecting persons related to the SEP;
- Serve as local representative at national, regional, and State meetings related to the SEP;
- Serve as communication link between employees and the national SEPM, keeping employees aware of SEP activities and developmental opportunities through electronic messages, memos, bulletins, newsletters, and other appropriate means;
- Perform other duties related to the SEP as identified by the DEOO, national SEPM, and SEP committees, as appropriate.

Benefits of becoming a Special Emphasis Program Manager include:

- Developing skills and experience managing a state level program;
- Interaction with management at the state and national levels;
- Networking opportunities with state and national leadership;
- Knowledge of programs and exposure to issues from the national perspective;
- Training opportunities at the national level

For questions about the duties and program activities, please contact Tricia Mootz, Human Resources Specialist, at (515) 284-4587 or tricia.mootz@ia.usda.gov.

Anyone interested in the Collateral Duty Special Emphasis Program Manager should complete and submit the attached application form. Applications should include the applicant's first and second line supervisors' approval. Submit your application to Tricia Mootz, Human Resources Specialist, by fax at (515) 284-5196 or by mailing to: NRCS, Attn: Tricia Mootz, 210 Walnut Street, Room 693, Des Moines IA 50309-2180

COLLATERAL DUTY STATE SPECIAL EMPHASIS PROGRAM MANAGER APPLICATION

Name: _____ Grade/Series: _____

Title: _____

Work Address: _____

Work Phone: _____

Work Fax: _____

Email: _____

Please use separate sheet if necessary.

Work experience (brief description): Include any accomplishments in the Special Emphasis and Civil Rights area.

Comments: Include your interest in applying for this position.

Statement of concurrence from your supervisor.

Employee's Signature

First Level Supervisor

Second Level Supervisor

Date

Date

Date