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USDA Announces 1890 National Scholars Program Funding Opportunity

WASHINGTON, March 19, 2019 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the opening of the 2019 scholarship application cycle for the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program. The program aims to increase the number of minority students studying agriculture, food, natural resource sciences, and other agriculture-related disciplines. The program is available through the USDA Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE).

The USDA/1890 National Scholars Program is a partnership between USDA and the 1890 historically black land-grant colleges and universities (PDF, 1.2 MB). The program provides full tuition, fees, books, room and board to students pursuing degrees in agriculture, food, natural resource sciences, or related academic disciplines. When the student has completed the academic and summer work requirements of the scholarship, USDA may at its discretion convert the student to a permanent employee without further competition. Since 2014, USDA has provided opportunities for nearly 140 scholars.

“The Scholars Program is a multifaceted approach to strengthen the pipeline of talented agriculture professionals while strengthening our relationship with USDA-supported institutions,” said Mike Beatty, Acting Director of the Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement.

This program is among several USDA efforts to build the capacity of historically black land-grant universities. Since the passage of the Second Morrill Act of 1890, USDA has supported scholarships, research, education, extension activities, and grants for facilities and equipment at these institutions.

The USDA/1890 National Scholars Program is available to high school seniors entering their freshman year of college, and rising college sophomores and juniors. General requirements include U.S. citizenship, a cumulative year-end GPA of 3.0 or higher, and have been accepted to, or currently attending an 1890s institution to study agriculture, food, natural resource sciences, and related academic disciplines. The scholarship is renewable each year and is contingent on satisfactory academic performance and normal progress toward the bachelor’s degree. Additional requirements are listed in the application package.

All application materials must be postmarked by Tuesday, April 30, 2019. See the 2019 high school application (PDF, 1.8 MB) and the 2019 college application (PDF, 956 KB) for details.

Immersive Business Course Offered in Berea this Spring

A six-week entrepreneurial course will meet twice a week from April 3 through May 6

BEREA, Kentucky (March 18, 2019) — Individuals interested in launching a new business or refreshing a current business should consider registering for a six-week entrepreneurial course meeting twice per week from April 3 to May 6 with three in-person sessions in Berea and the remainder online.

The Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED) has partnered with the Kauffman Foundation and the City of Berea to offer the Kauffman FastTrac immersive course for just \$25.

Local small business owner, Tim Harding of Boone Gap Outfitters in Berea, took the class in Fall 2019 and said he wished he had taken the course when he was first exploring his business idea.

“As entrepreneurs, we sometimes get distracted by our ideas and excitement. The FastTrac course helps you put your business idea into a package to confidently and clearly present it to others,” Tim said. “Also, the course helped us be real about the hardships of owning a business, and open up conversations with family and friends about what to expect in terms of time and stress with starting a business.”

The course is led by the program facilitator Jennifer A. Reis, a small business owner and creative entrepreneurship educator at Morehead State University. Expert guest speakers focus on small business management, marketing and branding, financial sustainability, and other relevant issues.

Participants who complete all assignments will come out with a business plan and be eligible to apply for a MACED microloan to help launch their business. Participants will:

- Utilize tools to formulate a new business or pivot an existing venture
- Develop a strong marketing strategy to reach your clientele
- Understand the true costs of your business to develop a sustainable financial structure and appropriate pricing structure, and diversify and expand revenue streams
- Gain insight about legal, financial, and liability issues affecting your business

The FastTrac course is scheduled for six weeks on Monday and Wednesday from 5:30 to 7:00 pm beginning on April 3 and ending on May 6. The class primarily meets through video conferencing using the Zoom platform, which is free and easy to use, and will only meet in person three times in Berea.

A small \$25 registration fee is required to help offset the cost of food and refreshments at the in-person meetings. Register by March 27 at <https://loans.maced.org/fasttrac/>.

There will be a free informational Open House on Monday, March 25 from 5 - 6:00 pm at Berea City Hall. Please contact Amy Williams for more information at amy@maced.org or (859) 986-2373.

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Don't be chicken. Donate blood!

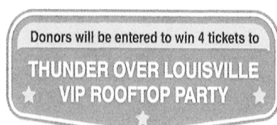
Lexington – One of the most common excuses for not donating blood is a fear of needles. Unfortunately, needles are necessary when giving blood. Many donors, however, quickly get over that dread when they realize their blood donation saves lives.

That's why Kentucky Blood Center (KBC) is offering donors a fun “I'm not a chicken” shirt to show off their bravery when they give at the following blood drive:



Bond Baptist Church
Sat., March 23 from 9 am - 1 pm

on the KBC Bloodmobile at 5355 Hwy 3630 West.



Blood donors must be at least 17-years-old (16 with parental consent), weigh at least 110 pounds, be in general good health, show a photo I.D. and meet additional requirements. Sixteen-year-old donors must have a signed parental permission slip, which can be found at kybloodcenter.org.

Walk-ins are welcome. To schedule a donation, visit kybloodcenter.org or call 800.775.2522.

About Kentucky Blood Center

Saving lives for 50 years, KBC is the largest independent, full-service, non-profit blood center in Kentucky. Licensed by the FDA, KBC's sole purpose is to collect, process and distribute blood for patients in Kentucky. KBC provides services in 90 Kentucky counties and has donor centers in Lexington, Louisville, Pikeville and Somerset.