

**Chair Christopher Hanson**  
**Remarks for AAMU University**  
**November 9, 2023**

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It is my pleasure to visit AAMU and am delighted that my visit coincides with Federal Employment Preparation Week at AAMU. It's also exciting to have AAMU as my first official HBCU visit!

The NRC appreciates the opportunity to support the AAMU Fall 2023 Federal Employment Preparation Week activities. This included the resume review and mock interview workshop on November 8<sup>th</sup> and the employer information table event later today.

The NRC is proud to be recognized for many years, including for 2023, as a "Best of the Best" Top Supporter of Blacks or African Americans by the Black Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE) Journal Magazine. <https://diversitycomm.net/black-oe-journal/top-government-lawenforcement-agencies/>

The NRC's workforce represents diversity in gender, ethnicity, education, occupation, and age (FY2023 Data).

- 41% female and 59% male.
- 21% under the age of 40 is 21% and 50% over the age of 50.
- Alumni from 35 HBCUs in 141 positions (technical and corporate).
- Students from 4 HBCUs in 4 positions (technical and corporate).

NRC has an over 20+ year recruiting relationship with AAMU, including participation in various career events and the AAMU Youth Motivation Task Force Program. There are currently 13 AAMU alumni working at the NRC both with technical and non-technical backgrounds. They hold a variety of positions including as a Deputy Division Director for Reactor Projects, Technical Assistant for Reactors, Senior Reactor Inspectors, Senior Health Physicists, Enforcement Specialist, Human Resources Specialist, and Senior Physical Scientist for International Programs.

NRC's is very proud of our key entry-level agency developmental program, the Nuclear Regulator Apprenticeship Network (NRAN) and its predecessors. NRAN is designed to develop regulators who have a broad understanding of the NRC mission by focusing on skill development in various program areas across the agency. The initial training phase is followed by the apprenticeship phase in the regions and headquarters program offices.

The program has been successful in meeting the powerful goal of developing career regulators who embody and foster ownership of our mission and agency values. Two AAMU alumni were in the inaugural NRAN cohort and we currently have a recent AAMU grad in the second cohort.

Many other AAMU alumni at NRC, including LaDonna Suggs and Shawn Smith, are graduates of NRAN's predecessor, the Nuclear Safety Professional Development Program (NSPDP).

In FY2016 and FY2018, the NRC's Office of Research (RES) University Nuclear Leadership Program (UNLP) (formerly named, "Integrated University Program") provided scholarship grants to AAMU totaling \$400,000. The program supported junior and seniors in the nuclear power and nuclear systems concentration areas under Electrical Engineering and Mechanical Engineering degree programs. 33 students received support under the grants. Of which, 20 graduated with B.S. degrees. The remaining students continued in the degree program. Both grants are now closed. Two recent AAMU graduates that are working at the NRC received NRC scholarship funding under the AAMU scholarship grant awarded under the Integrated University Program.

In 2020, the UNLP was broadened to also include Research and Development (R&D) grants, which directly support NRC research needs while also giving students the opportunity to gain skills and knowledge about important and cutting-edge nuclear safety topics. The 2024 Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFO) for R&D grants is expected to be issued in mid/late March timeframe. The 2024 NOFO for education grants is expected to be issued in July timeframe.

The NRC welcomes AAMU's continued partnership under our Minority Serving Institution Program (MSIP) to help achieve the Federal Government's STEM workforce development and diversity inclusion initiatives. In 2022, the NRC reinstated the Minority Serving Institution Grants Program (MSIGP) to address challenges that MSIs and HBCUs faced in applying for NRC funding. While the MSIGP has since issued four grants, no HBCUs submitted applications at that time for the available scholarship funds. The most recent NOFO for scholarships and fellowships closed at the end of August; 2 HBCUs submitted applications for 2024; AAMU did not apply. The next NOFO will open at the end of July 2024 for scholarships and fellowships.

The NRC encourages AAMU to apply for the MSI Grants Program and the UNLP, as well as the R&D grants under the UNLP. Currently, there are no program grants awarded to HBCUs. The NRC encourages and readily welcomes AAMU faculty to resume serving on our grant review panels. Additional information on NRC's grant opportunities can be found on the NRC's website: <https://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/civil-rights/programs/contactus.html>.

The NRC encourages AAMU to become a partner for contracting opportunities available for HBCUs. These contracting opportunities cover a variety of activities, including hiring undergraduate students to work on acquisition contracts and covering tuition costs to acquire graduate degrees. NRC offers counseling sessions to HBCUs to explore future agency prime and subcontracts that may align with AAMU's technical capabilities, as well as subcontracting opportunities with our Federally Funded Research and Development Centers and the national laboratories that we work with for specialized support areas.

Some examples of NRC's return on investment with our university grants to HBCUs have included the following: (1) the establishment of a nuclear science and engineering minor at Fort Valley State University; (2) the development of a new nuclear power course on safety critical

applications in digital instrumentation and control at Howard University; and (3) the establishment of a monitoring station for airborne radio-active material as part of the Applied Radiation Sciences Laboratory at South Carolina State University.

NRC's relationship with universities is strengthened through our University Champion Program. The NRC relies on the strong relationship between our University Champions and the campus career centers to increase the opportunities available to current and new graduates while also providing the NRC access to substantial talent pools. Three AAMU alumni serve as NRC University Champions for AAMU. NRC's relationship with the AAMU Career Development Services Center over the years and its success with recruiting AAMU alumni into fruitful careers at the NRC is to be commended. NRC looks forward to this continued partnership.

Working at NRC offers a unique opportunity to experience a career where your impact reaches across the country and around the world. Whether you're a student, recent college graduate, veteran, someone with nuclear industry experience, or a current government employee looking for a new opportunity, the NRC can offer you a competitive salary and a fulfilling career. We encourage your students and alumni to visit the NRC website to learn more about career opportunities.

Currently, the NRC is accepting resumes from engineers and scientists who recently graduated or will be graduating (June 2022 - June 2024), to fill future entry-level vacancies that may become available. The vacancy is currently posted on [usajobs.gov](https://usajobs.gov) and closes December 18, 2023.

We look forward to continuing to establish and cultivate relationships with AAMU and its students in the future, while also creating an established and trusted campus presence to build a pipeline for our future needs.