

## **Activities for K-12 and Community Organizations:**

- Sponsor hands-on science activities in under served communities; develop a local Kids & Science Program. Participate in activities (science fairs, adopt-a-school, mentoring, career day) at local schools with high minority populations.
- Volunteer as a visiting scientist at a local elementary school. Offer to help a teacher coach students with science fair projects.
- Through school authorities or local community organizations, inform students of non-traditional careers in science.
- Distribute copies of the Agricultural Research magazine to elementary schools, libraries, and community centers and churches. Start a "pass it on" program and encourage employees to share the magazine with others.
- Offer your laboratory facility as a possible field trip for elementary students as a means of introducing them to traditional laboratory or field projects. Set up an exhibit table to share information on the Science4Kids and Careers with ARS web sites: <[www.ars.usda.gov/is/kids](http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/kids)> and <[www.ars.usda.gov/careers](http://www.ars.usda.gov/careers)>.
- Donate videos such as "Science in Your Shopping Cart" to a school in an under served community.
- Start a once-a-month or quarterly science night for teachers and parents. Develop contacts with science teachers at local K-12 schools to keep them abreast of cutting edge science which they can in turn share with their students (mentoring teachers).
- Volunteer to help start a summer camp for students interested in science.

- Work with local community organizations to identify hometown talent. Develop lists of high school counselors, civic groups, churches, and fraternal organizations to help identify potential candidates.
- Identify science clubs at K-12 schools and develop relationships with students who are members of these clubs. Offer to host a seminar or presentation for the club.

## **Activities for Recruitment at Colleges and Universities, Minority Organizations, and Professional Societies:**

1. Promote ARS Employment Opportunities and Careers in Science:
  - Distribute flyers or make presentations promoting student and summer employment.
  - Advertise your student and summer positions in all the right places (e.g., colleges of agriculture and science, college newspapers, minority student organizations, and on your own web site). Provide information to teachers and employment guidance counselors.
  - Use student appointments (summer or whole year) as a means to increase awareness of ARS research programs and employment opportunities. Your efforts to teach and mentor a student may impact a student's decision to pursue a career in science and to seek permanent employment with ARS. Provide summer research opportunities for high school teachers.
  - Assist student candidates with application preparation and filing procedures.
  - Conduct quarterly seminars on "Finding and Applying for Federal Jobs" at your location in the afternoon or evenings. (The Recruitment Office can provide

standard presentation materials.)

2. Network with regional offices or local chapters of associations that exhibit diversity of our population (e.g., Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences; Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science; American Indian Science and Engineering Society). Attend regional conferences and meetings of these associations to share information about your research and the mission of ARS.
  - Invite members of the above organizations to be speakers at your diversity committee and leadership meetings.
  - Adopt a chapter of these organizations and actively participate in their programs.
  - Co-sponsor a career day program with a local minority advocacy group.
  - Hold a joint meeting with a local minority advocacy group.
  - Promote membership in professional societies to members of minority advocacy groups.
3. Promote employment with organizations for veterans and the disabled:
  - Initiate contacts with local disability and veterans organizations. Professionals with these organizations can help you identify suitable candidates. Invite representatives from local vocational rehabilitation and veterans groups to speak at meetings at your location.
  - Use the Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students with Disabilities to fill student and summer positions in order to increase awareness of our employment opportunities.

4. Share information on ARS employment opportunities with women and under represented minorities in scientific and professional societies to which you belong. Encourage local chapters of professional societies to include under represented minorities and women as speakers at meetings. Sponsor an under represented minority or woman to attend national or regional meeting of a professional society.
5. Contact colleges and universities near your office with a large minority enrollment (Don't overlook community colleges and universities that you would not typically contact as they may be a good source for minority students). College professors and career services professionals can also help you identify good candidates for your positions. Conduct "Informational Sessions" on campuses of two- and four-year colleges and universities with the help of career service professionals.
6. Use job banks sponsored by minority associations and relevant list-servs to advertise your employment opportunities.
7. Follow-up on contacts made at job fairs, colleges and universities, and minority associations. In these follow-up contacts show commitment to diversity at all levels of the organization and encourage it among all employees.
8. Use the Departmental liaison officers at colleges and universities across the United States to help you identify potential candidates for your positions.

#### **Activities to Retain Employees:**

1. Peer mentor an under represented minority or woman colleague and educate them on activities of professional societies to which you belong. Institute a marketing campaign to get under represented minorities and women to join professional societies and to participate actively in local, regional or national levels of such societies.
2. Make available training that will help employees with career development and advancement in their current career or future opportunities.
3. Conduct exit interviews with departing employees to learn the "good and bad" of ARS, for subsequent emphasis on the "good" and corrective action of "bad."
4. Provide opportunities for employees to make lateral career moves or to compete for career enhancing/career change positions.
5. Set up agency supported employee networks and encourage employees from diverse backgrounds to get involved with them. These groups can provide minority employees with support, mentors, and prevent feelings of isolation.
6. Hold regularly scheduled discussions on issues that are of concern to employees.
7. Encourage the permanent placement of students hired under the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP).

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## Suggested Recruitment/Retention Activities

(To Enhance Diversity in the ARS Workforce)



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