

**For:** FAS National Office Employees and All FSA Federal Employees and County Office Employees

**2003 Aspiring Leader Program (ALP)**

**Approved by:** Deputy Administrator, Management



**1 Overview**

**A**

**Purpose**

This notice announces that HRD, Training and Development Branch (TDB) is accepting nominations for the 2003 ALP.

**B**

**Contact**

If there are questions about this notice, contact Tanya Coram-Howard at 202-418-9044 or TDD 202-418-9107.

**2 ALP Overview and Dates**

**A**

**Program Overview**

ALP is:

- a 6-month leadership development program for Federal/County employees who are at the GS/CO-5 through GS/CO-7 level who have potential leadership qualities and abilities
- designed to enhance employees' teaming, leadership, and management skills so that they can become more effective team members, project leaders, and office managers

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<p><b>Disposal Date</b></p> <p>July 1, 2003</p>	<p><b>Distribution</b></p> <p>FAS National Office Employees and All FSA Federal and County Office Employees</p>
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**2 ALP Overview and Dates (Continued)**

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**A**

**Program  
Overview  
(Continued)**

- tailored to the participant's own developmental needs using basic competencies. Basic competencies include:
    - leadership
    - problem solving
    - self-direction
    - flexibility
    - interpersonal skills
    - decisiveness
    - written communication
    - oral communication
    - technical credibility
    - customer service.
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**B**

**Program Date**

There will be 1 program for 2003 that will begin April 2003 and end September 2003.

The program includes 3 separate 1-week residential seminars located within 200 miles of the Washington, D.C. area.

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**3 Program Components**

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**A  
Program  
Requirements**

Participants must complete all of the following program requirements:

- Core Classroom Curriculum (see subparagraph C for 3, 1-week seminars).
  - Individual Needs Assessments
  - Leadership Development Plan
  - Management Readings
  - 3- Management Interviews
  - 1-Week Shadowing Assignment
  - 30-Day Developmental Assignment
  - Learning Team Activities.
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**B  
ADP  
Requirements**

Participants should have access to the following:

- computer with printer
  - modem
  - internet electronic mail.
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**3 Program Components (Continued)**

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**C**

**Core Curriculum** An outline of each residential 1-week seminar is in the following table.

**Outline**

Week I--Core I	Week II--Core II	Week III--Core III
<p><b>Orientation and Skill Building</b></p>	<p><b>Teams at Work</b></p>	<p><b>Team Presentations, Close-Out, and Graduation</b></p>
<p>Participants are assigned to a leadership development team and begin working on team presentations. In addition, program requirements, policies, expectations, and opportunities are outlined.</p> <p>Participants will also focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• individual development needs</li> <li>• self-direction</li> <li>• team building</li> <li>• leadership skills</li> <li>• team formation</li> <li>• interpersonal skills.</li> </ul>	<p>Core II takes place 6 weeks after orientation and concentrates on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• team performance</li> <li>• conflict management</li> <li>• decision making and problem solving</li> <li>• interpersonal skills</li> <li>• customer service</li> <li>• diversity and cultural awareness in the work place</li> <li>• flexibility</li> <li>• presentation skills.</li> </ul>	<p>This is the final week of the program. Teams deliver presentations. Participants, supervisors, managers, program coordinators, team advisors, and mentors attend a graduation ceremony and luncheon. The emphasis is on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• oral communications</li> <li>• self-direction</li> <li>• leadership skills.</li> </ul>

**D**

**Additional ALP Information** Exhibit 1 contains information from the ALP brochure.

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## Notice PM-2318

### 4 Nomination Process

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#### A Nominee Qualifications

Nominees for ALP must:

- be permanent full-time employees
  - **Note:** Schedule B employees, with re-employment rights, are also eligible to apply.
  - be at GS/CO-5 through GS/CO-7 or equivalent level
  - have potential leadership qualities and abilities
  - have potential and motivation to complete all ALP requirements.
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#### B Nomination Procedure

Eligible employees may apply by submitting a nomination package containing the following:

- completed AD-2021 (Exhibit 2), including supervisory concurrence and signature. (SED signature required for State and County Office employees)

**Notes:** Union officials on 100 percent official time do not need supervisory concurrence and signature.

AD-2021 is available at the FFAS Employee Forms website at <http://intranet.fsa.usda.gov>

- a statement written by the first-line supervisor or Agency nominating official that assesses the applicant's potential
  - current resume, OF-612, or SF-171, which includes the following:
    - full name
    - home address
    - applicant's signature
    - date signed
  - a written statement of up to 2 pages, addressing how the following abilities or competencies in the following areas are supported in your current position; address each individually:
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Notice PM-2318

4 Nomination Process (Continued)

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**B**

**Nomination  
Procedure  
(Continued)**

- leadership
  - initiative
  - interpersonal communication
  - oral
  - written
  - technical competence
  - list of all formal training courses taken in the last 5 years.
- 

**C**

**Accommodations**

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this training should contact Tanya Coram-Howard at 202-418-9044 or TDD 202-418-9107 by COB October 11, 2002.

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**D**

**Submitting  
Nomination  
Forms**

Send the original and 3 copies of the completed nomination package using either of the following methods. FAXed copies will not be accepted.

IF sending by...	THEN use the address...
regular mail	Tanya Coram-Howard USDA, FSA, HRD, TDB STOP 0574 1400 Independence Avenue SW Washington, DC 20250-0574
FedEx	Tanya Coram-Howard USDA, FSA, HRD, TDB Suite 303-A 2101 L Street NW Washington, DC 20037-1526

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**E**

**Deadline Date**

All nominations must be **received** in HRD, TDB by **COB October 11, 2002**. Nominations received after this date will **not** be considered. Substitution of nomination items will **not** be permitted after the deadline.

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Notice PM-2318

5 Selection Process

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**A**  
**Participants by Organization**

Employees selected will be organizationally distributed as follows:

- FAS may support up to 3 nominees
  - FSA may support up to 15 nominees.
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**B**  
**Participant Selection**

Participants will be selected as follows.

- Panels will review and rank employee nominations using Agency-wide criteria.

**Note:** USDA prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). This agency provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. The decision on granting reasonable accommodation will be on a case-by-case basis.

- The work of candidates while on official time, performing labor relations representational functions, must be viewed with neutrality.
- FAS and FSA Partnership Council-related work shall be viewed as administrative duty, therefore, shall be subject to evaluation by the panel.
- Recommendations are made to the Administrator based on the following table.

<b>IF the nominee is an employee of...</b>	<b>THEN the...</b>
FSA	panel recommends final participants and refers participants to the Administrator or designee for approval for the allotted number of spaces approved.
FAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Executive Advisory Group makes recommendations to the Administrator</li><li>• Administrator or designee selects final participants.</li></ul>

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## Notice PM-2318

### 5 Selection Process (Continued)

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#### C

##### Panel Membership

HRD, TDB will facilitate panels. Separate panels will be established for each Agency. The panel consists of:

- 3 voting agency employees
- 1 nonvoting HRD, TDB representative
- 1 nonvoting EEO representative
- 1 nonvoting union representative. **Union participation will be based on Agency's selection panel.**

**Note:** No panel will be held if the number of applications received does not exceed the number of positions available.

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#### D

##### Program Costs

Tuition for the 2003 ALP is \$2,395 per participant.

Tuition for FAS employees will be paid from the Agency-wide management fund.

**Note:** Individual training budgets will not be charged.

Tuition, travel, lodging costs, and per diem for FSA, GS, and County Office employees shall be coded to their originating office. Upon notification that candidates have been selected, the originating office may request an increase in their travel allotment consistent with the travel costs associated with participation in the program. Requests shall be submitted to FSA Budget Division.

**Note:** Meals **are not** included in the tuition costs. A complimentary meal will be provided by the Leadership Development Academy during the graduation ceremony.

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#### E

##### Selection Notification

HRD, TDB will notify nominees whose names are forwarded to the Graduate School, USDA for consideration. The Graduate School, USDA will send selectees written notification of their acceptance.

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**5 Selection Process (Continued)**

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**F  
Labor  
Management  
Obligations**

Where exclusive representation exists, bargaining may be requested to the extent allowed by applicable statutes. Where contract language already addresses these policies and procedures for bargaining unit employees, contract language prevails.

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**Additional ALP Information**

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**Core Classroom Curriculum**

The Aspiring Leader Program's classroom curriculum is divided into three 5-day residential seminars located within a 200-mile radius of the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. Because teamwork is critical to good management, participants are assigned to a Leadership Development Team during their residential sessions. These teams strengthen leadership and interpersonal skills, stimulate commitment to personal development and provide a forum for exploring and addressing current issues facing supervisors and managers in the federal workplace. Each team will prepare and deliver a two-hour presentation on a management-related topic for their class. Additional details for each session follow:

**WEEK 1: Orientation and Skill Building**

This session focuses on the participants':

- **Individual Development Needs**
- **Self-Direction**
- **Team Building**
- **Leadership Skills**
- **Team Formation**
- **Interpersonal Skills**

Participants are assigned to Leadership Development Teams and begin working on team presentations. In addition, program requirements, policies, expectations and opportunities are outlined.

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**Additional ALP Information (Continued)**

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**WEEK 2: Teams At Work**

This session takes place approximately six weeks after the initial session and concentrates on:

- **Team Performance**
- **Conflict Management**
- **Decision Making**
- **Problem Solving**
- **Interpersonal Skills**
- **Customer Service**
- **Diversity and Cultural Awareness in the Workplace**
- **Flexibility**
- **Presentation Skills**

Teams continue working on presentations.

**WEEK 3: Team Presentations, Closeout and Graduation**

In this session, emphasis is placed on:

- **Oral Communication**
- **Self-Direction**
- **Leadership Skills**

Teams deliver presentations. Participants, supervisors, managers, program coordinators, team advisors and mentors attend a graduation ceremony and luncheon.

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**Additional ALP Information (Continued)**

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**Other Program Components****Individual Needs Assessment**

In order to help customize the program to fit individual needs, each participant will complete the following before attending the initial residential session:

- **Leadership Effectiveness Inventory to assess competencies and managerial skill level; and**
- **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator to facilitate team-building exercises**

**Leadership Development Plan**

Each participant creates a Leadership Development Plan for developmental assignments and independent study activities within his/her agency. This plan acts as the blueprint for his/her developmental program. Participants are also required to prepare a plan for continuous development once they have completed the program. The Aspiring Leader Program will provide a questionnaire to help participants define and meet specific career development objectives. The Aspiring Leader Program Director will counsel each participant on plan design. Participants must coordinate plan preparation with their first-line supervisor and agency program coordinator to ensure appropriate support.

**Management Readings**

In order to broaden knowledge of the management field and strengthen analytical skills, participants will read and write their reviews of two books on management issues.

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**Additional ALP Information (Continued)**

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**Other Program Components (Continued)****Management Interviews**

Participants must interview a minimum of three federal managers at the GS 11-13 levels. These interviews will provide an additional opportunity for participants to have visibility at the management level and gain critical information for long-term career planning and development.

**Shadowing Assignment**

In addition to the three residential sessions, the program includes a one-week "shadowing" assignment of a federal manager at the GS 11-13 levels. Participants will observe a manager in action, focusing on their management style and how they interact with their employees.

**30-Day Development Assignment**

Participants will complete a 30-day development assignment within their agencies, but outside their position of record. The development assignment does not have to be completed within 30 consecutive days.

**Learning Team Activities**

Participants are assigned to learning teams during the orientation session. Each team will explore a program-related issue and make a one-hour team presentation of this issue during the final week of the program. This activity is designed to strengthen leadership and interpersonal skills, stimulate commitment to personal development, value and increase the understanding of diversity and to provide a forum to explore current issues facing leaders in the federal workplace.

AD-2021, 2002 Aspiring Leader Program (ALP) Nomination Form

This form is available electronically.

<b>AD-2021</b> (09-12-02)		U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Farm Service Agency <b>2003 ASPIRING LEADER PROGRAM (ALP)</b> <b>NOMINATION FORM</b> Note: Deadline October 11, 2002	
1. Indicate appropriate Agency (Check) FSA <input type="checkbox"/> FAS <input type="checkbox"/>			
2. Name		3. Duty Station Address (Include Zip Code)	4. Stop Code
5. Title		6. Grade (GS or CO and Grade)	7. Tele. No. (Work) (Include Area Code)
8. Please notify your supervisor that you are submitting your name for consideration of the training listed above. Have your supervisor sign below to indicate that they have been notified. Travel/lodging costs will be funded by the employee's office travel budget. <b>NOTE:</b> Union officials on 100% official time do not need supervisory concurrence and signature.			
A. Supervisor's Signature		Date (MM-DD-YYYY)	
B. State Executive Director Signature (Required for all State and County Federal and Non-Federal Employees).		Date (MM-DD-YYYY)	
9. Other required information to be included with this nomination form: A. A statement written by the first-line supervisor or Agency Nominating Official that assesses the applicant's potential. B. Current resume, OF-612 or SF-171, which includes the following: • Full Name • Home Address • Signature of Applicant • Date C. Written statement of up to 2 pages addressing how the below abilities or competencies in the following areas are supported in your current position. <i>NOTE: When providing the written statements please address the below abilities or competencies individually.</i> • Leadership • Initiative • Interpersonal Communication • Oral • Written • Technical Competence D. List of all formal training courses taken in the last 5 years.			
10. Please submit this nomination form and all other "required" information listed above (the original and 3 copies), by October 11, 2002.			
Tanya Coram-Howard USDA FSA HRD TDB STOP 0574 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20250-0574		OR	FEDEX Tanya Coram-Howard USDA FSA HRD TDB Suite 303-A 2101 L St. NW Washington, DC 20037-1526