FSA/RMA Notice PM-3029

FPAC NOTICE	NUMBER: FPAC-N 4040-005
SUBJECT: Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) Strategic Leadership Development Program (SLDP)	DATE: November 25, 2019
APPROVING OFFICIAL: Margo Erny, Acting Chief Operating Officer, FPAC Business Center (FPAC-BC)	EXPIRATION DATE: September 30, 2020

1. **PURPOSE**

   This notice announces the FY 2020 FPAC Strategic Leadership Development Program (SLDP).

2. **MESSAGE**

   a. FPAC has partnered with the Center for Excellence in Public Leadership (CEPL) at the George Washington University to develop and administer the FPAC Mission Area SLDP. The program is designed to develop a pool of effective leaders who can move into positions with increasing strategic responsibilities within the agency over the next five years. Those interested in becoming future state, regional, or national leaders may find this program of value.

   b. The Human Resources Division (HRD), Employee Development Section (EDS), is currently accepting applications for the calendar year (CY) 2020 10-month SLDP that will begin on February 24, 2020, for aspiring leaders. The program focuses on deepening knowledge and practicing skills and will include classroom training (virtual or in-person), participating on learning teams, coaching, mentoring, a targeted stretch assignment, and a substantive group project focused on an agency priority, challenge, or opportunity. The SLDP will prepare participants to serve effectively as strategic leaders within the FPAC-BC, Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Risk Management Agency (RMA), and potentially move into positions with increasing responsibility in future years.

2. MESSAGE (Continued)

c. The SLDP is built around the FPAC Leadership Development Framework (LDF), Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Executive Core Qualifications, and FPAC leadership competencies. The program will introduce participants to supervisory and leadership theories, techniques, and concepts applicable to management theories in the public sector. Each SLDP participant will be aligned with a mentor/sponsor.

(1) The SLDP is a 10-month program that includes the following learning platforms:

    (a) Web-based training (WBT)
    (b) Classroom and /or synchronous virtual learning environment
    (c) Mentoring
    (d) Learning teams
    (e) Action learning coaching
    (f) Stretch assignments (will be chosen by the participant)
    (g) Group projects focused on an agency priority, challenge, or opportunity

(2) To be eligible for the SLDP, applicants should be graded at the General Schedule (GS)-13 level or above for at least two years at the time of the application closure period, have at least three years of supervisory experience, or manage programs national in scope with at least two of the three years as a supervisor, not have participated in any prior FPAC-BC, FSA, NRCS, or RMA national leadership development program, and have the ability to complete a 60-day stretch assignment outside of official duties within the 10-month time period of the program. All job series are welcome to apply.

    Note: FSA employees who have completed Influencing Excellence: Effective Leadership at FSA and/or Strategic Leadership: Partnering for Excellence courses are eligible to apply.

(3) Applicants selected for this highly competitive program, will be required to continue to perform their primary assigned duties and responsibilities of their position while participating in the SLDP.

d. FPAC-BC will provide funding for tuition, travel, lodging, and per diem. Participant's permanent organizational units will fund salary and benefits.

3. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

a. **Application Process**. Interested applicants must submit an application package which includes; a resume; letter of recommendation from two State, regional, or national leaders within FPAC-BC, FSA, NRCS, or RMA; and a narrative, describing experiences and accomplishments with the five competencies listed below. Narratives should be written in the Challenge-Context-Action-Result (CCAR) Model. An overview of the CCAR model is attached for your review. Responses should be at least one page in length for each competency. Interviews may be scheduled for top candidates.

(1) The following are SLDP key competencies:

(a) Fiscal Responsibility: Understands the agency's fiscal responsibilities and financial processes, including the preparation, justification, and administration of the budget in a fiscally sound manner; monitors expenditures and uses cost-benefit analysis to set priorities.

(b) Supervision and Management (Assigning, Evaluating, and Monitoring Work): Directs and oversees the planning, distribution, and assigning of work activities for other employees; evaluates other's work to ensure it meets established standards and agency goals, and objectives including fostering a diverse workplace.

(c) Relationship Management: Develops and maintains relationships within internal and external networks to build alliances within FPAC and with external customers and partners; collaborates across boundaries to achieve common goals.

(d) Strategic Thinking and Action: Develops strategies to implement solutions consistent with the interests of the agency; capitalizes on opportunities and manages risks.

(e) Human Resource Management: Builds and manages a workforce based on organizational goals, budget considerations, and staffing needs. Ensures that employees are appropriately recruited, selected, appraised, and rewarded; takes action to address changing talent and staffing needs.

(2) Applications are due by 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on December 23, 2019. Submit completed application packages to Mark Bushman, program manager, by email to **Mark.Bushman@usda.gov**.

4. CONTACT

Potential candidates are encouraged to apply for the SLDP. As FPAC grows, we need to ensure the mission area has the most qualified personnel trained and ready to assume leadership roles. If you have any questions, contact Mark Bushman, program manager, using the email in section 3 a (2) or by telephone at 817-509-3267.

Attachment A – SLDP Application
Attachment B – CCAR Overview

-END-

FPAC Strategic Leadership Development Program (SLDP)

Applications should be submitted via PDF format to Mark.Bushman@usda.gov by 5 PM on Monday, December 23, 2019. Completed application packages must contain each of the items listed below. Interviews may be scheduled for top candidates. The Challenge-Context-Action-Result (CCAR) model is attached for your review.

Application Items:

1. A signed and completed SLDP Application.
2. A current resume.
3. Two letters of recommendation from State, regional, and/or national leaders within FPAC.
4. A narrative describing experiences and accomplishments with the five competencies listed below, written in the CCAR Model. Responses are expected to be at least one page in length foreach competency.

SLDP Key Competencies:

- Fiscal Responsibility: Understands the agency's fiscal responsibilities and financial processes, including the preparation, justification, and administration of the budget in a fiscally sound manner; monitors expenditures and uses cost-benefit analysis to set priorities.

- Supervision & Management (Assigning. Evaluating. and Monitoring Work): Directs and oversees the planning, distribution, and assigning of work activities for other employees; evaluates other's work to ensure it meets established standards and agency goals and objectives, including fostering a diverse workplace.

- Relationship Management: Develops and maintains relationships within internal and external networks to build alliances within FPAC and with external customers and partners; collaborates across boundaries to achieve common goals.

- Strategic Thinking and Action: Develops strategies to implement solutions consistent with the interests of the agency; capitalizes on opportunities and manages risks.

- Human Resource Management: Builds and manages a workforce based on organizational goals, budget considerations, and staffing needs. Ensures that employees are appropriately recruited, selected, appraised, and rewarded; acts to address changing talent and staffing needs.

FPAC Strategic Leadership Development Program (SLDP) Application Information Page

1. Name	2. Title:
3. Duty station:	

4. Current Grade:	5. Years in Current Grade:	6. Series:

7. Address:	8. City:	9. State:	10. Zip Code:

11. Office Phone:	12. Cell Phone:	13. Office Email:	14. Years of Service:

Supervisor Information:	
1. Name:	2. Title:

3. Office Phone:	4. Cell Phone:	5. Office Email:

2nd Line Supervisor:	
1. Name:	2. Title:

3. Region:	4. Office Phone:	5. Office Email:

FPAC Strategic Leadership Development Program (SLDP) Application Endorsement Page:

Supervisor Endorsement (if different from Next-level Supervisor):

This applicant has my support to participate in the FPAC SLDP, and to fulfill all the requirements for successful completion of the program.

1. Supervisor Signature:		
2. Supervisor Name:	3. Title:	4. Date:

Next-level Supervisor Endorsement:

This applicant has my support to participate in the SLDP and to fulfill all of the requirements for successful completion of the program.

If your supervisor is the State Conservationist or State Executive Director, only one signature is required below.

1. Next-level Supervisor Signature:		
2. Next-level Supervisor Official Name:	2. Title:	3. Date:

Date: If you have any questions, please contact the SLDP Program Manager, Mark Bushman, at Mark.Bushman@usda.gov, or by phone at (817) 509-3267.

Challenge-Context-Action-Result (CCAR) Model

- Results-oriented approach

- Requires focus on the leadership skills needed to manage programs, process, and people.

- Provides a more complete picture of:

  - Applicant's leadership competencies
  - Specific role played in an organization's success.

- Focus on the candidate's accomplishments, not the organization's.

- No more than **2 examples** per ECQ.

CCAR Model

Challenge

describe a specific problem or goal

Context

describe individuals and groups you worked with and/or environment in which you worked to address a challenge

Result

measures/outcomes that had some impact on the organization. This demonstrates the quality and effectiveness of leadership skills

Action

discuss specific actions you took to address the challenge

(CCAR) Model

Quick Example

Challenge

Energy Information Administration (EIA) lacked a formal, corporate, and strategic approach to managing and operating its web assets. My vision was to completely revamp the way EIA approached its web management activities by developing an integrated approach. Program officials strongly resisted my initial efforts to consolidate web management as they feared that giving up the existing approach would cause them to lose control of their resources.

Context

The agency had taken a completely decentralized approach to web operations, with each program office independently managing its own substantial web holdings. As such, the agency hosted a myriad of websites and applications that had disjointed navigation models and produced a high amount of redundancy and duplication.

Action

To overcome resistance, I met with them individually and in groups, and strongly championed the integrated approach. I demonstrated how the current approach was highly duplicative and inefficient, and was hampering progress in advancing its missions and meeting customer needs. To garner broader support, I created and led a study group in examining critical issues and also led them in a series of exercises to gain and understanding of the major shortcomings of the existing website.

Result

As a result of these efforts, the corporate approach to web management became prominently featured in EIA's Strategic Plan, making it one of the agency's top priorities over the next five years. Progress in implementing the new plan has already made the EIA web a much more dynamic and responsive tool that is now widely used by customers and stakeholders.