

# NCIS Scholarship Program Helps Deserving Students

By Dr. Laurence Crane, NCIS

The objective of the National Crop Insurance Services (NCIS) 1890 Scholarship Program is to help qualified students at the 1890 Land Grant Universities complete their education and prepare them for careers in agriculture. The crop insurance industry is actively working to increase the diversity in its workforce, reflecting the diversity of the farmers they serve, and the NCIS scholarship program is a key building block in preparing and delivering an educated and diverse workforce.

The NCIS scholarship recipients are all academically strong and well-rounded students who participate in extracurricular activities giving back to their communities. They have an established track record of excellence in the classroom and a sense of community citizenship that extends beyond campus borders. They truly are exceptional young women and men, and NCIS is honored to know them.

Commenting on her scholarship experience, a previous scholarship recipient wrote: "John Holmes once said 'There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up.' To the phenomenal people and scholarship committee of NCIS, thank you. Thank you for reaching down, lifting me up and helping me accomplish my goals!"

Scholarships are \$3,000 spread over the four semesters of the recipients' junior and senior years. Because students start on scholarship their junior year, they will benefit from their NCIS scholarship for four semesters as long as they meet the academic qualification requirements and continue as full-time students in good standing at their respective university. The 1890 Land-Grant institutions are historically Black universities that were established under the Second Morrill Act of 1890. The purpose of this scholarship program is to enable deserving students to further their education and to expose them to the crop insurance business.

Currently NCIS has 10 students on scholarship. Five students are completing the second year of their scholarships and five students are in their first semester on scholarship. The new recipients for 2022-2024 are:



**Caleb Young**

**Caleb Young** is majoring in Plant and Soil Science at Alcorn State University in Lorman, Mississippi. He chose an agricultural major to increase his understanding of, and ability to, successfully grow crops in a climate smart environment. He loves working with his father on the farm in the Mississippi Delta that his grandfather also worked, to grow food for their family and others in the surrounding community. Additionally, his experience of volunteering and being involved in community activities is extensive. Caleb's goal is to position himself to be of help to others by learning all he can about crop production and sharing that knowledge with others who are growing the food for communities that lack local access to healthy and affordable food.

**Kenndall Bennett** has a love for animals and a natural ability to work with them so majoring in animal science at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was a great decision. His experience gained through volunteering and involving himself in civic and religious organizations has helped him develop as a person and instilled in him a sense of responsibility to his community. Volunteering helped him better understand himself and the diversity of people and gave him more awareness of



**Kenndall Bennett**

the needs of others, including younger children and those with special needs. Kenndall's short-term goals are to pursue a degree in a field he enjoys and further his skills, interests, and passion for plants and animals. Long-term goals include becoming an agricultural professional by selecting a career path that will positively impact others because society is dependent on a strong agricultural industry.

**Miniya Miller** is from Snellville, Georgia, and is majoring in agricultural economics at Fort Valley State University in Georgia. She is following the path of her mother and grandmother by going to college and getting a solid education. She is also a very accomplished athlete. Miniya has a track record of maintaining good grades and has always balanced academics with extracurricular sports, because she knew she could rely on her strengths in the classroom as a student, and her skills as an athlete to pave the way to college. She strives to be a good example to her brothers and others, providing them encouragement to pursue their academic dreams. Miniya's career goal is to work in the area of business finance where she can apply her strong sense of management, finances, and community involvement to really establish a



**Miniya Miller**

bright future for herself and help others.

An Oklahoma native, **Sydney Love** has always had a love of agriculture, nurtured by the visits to the family farm in Muskogee operated by her cousin. She quickly observed the complexity of growing and marketing crops and livestock in a volatile physical and economic environment. This led Sydney to major in crop and soil science at Langston University in Oklahoma to help her understand the lay of the land when it comes to soil fertility, the appropriate land for specific crops, and the cultural, physical, geological, and economic importance of land nationally and globally. She is a Regent Scholar and has extensive university and community leadership skills developed by volunteering in campus and community activities. Sydney plans on attending law school to practice agricultural law, aiding and serving producers in the buying, selling, and trading of land, cattle, and crops.

**Timothy Wiley** is from Anderson, South Carolina, and is majoring in food science and nutrition at South Carolina State University in Orangeburg. After completing high school and recognizing he was unhealthy and overweight, Timothy began to exercise and change his diet by reducing and then eliminating unhealthy food and drinks. His healthier lifestyle motivated him go to school. Undergoing this health transformation led him to the dietetic program at South Carolina State University. He is the current president of his department's Nutrition Association and Vice President of the Kappa Omnicron Nu Honors Society. He completed a job shadowing at the Medical University of South Carolina with the bariatric surgery and the Family Eating Disorder clinics for two weeks over the summer. Timothy's goal is to start a business focusing on weight management and offering healthy grocery items in low-income communities.



**Sydney Love**



**Timothy Wiley**

## Scholarship Specifics and Requirements

**Amount:** (\$3,000) - \$750/semester for four semesters

**Funding:** Provided by National Crop Insurance Services (NCIS).

NCIS is a 503(c) not-for-profit crop insurance trade association whose membership includes all of the private companies offering Federal multiple peril crop insurance.

- Qualifications:**
- Continuing status as a full-time undergraduate student at an 1890 Land Grant University.
  - Have completed the sophomore year in college and are considered a junior (four semesters to graduate).
  - Have a declared major in an agricultural discipline.
  - Minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA.
  - U.S. Citizen.

The scholarship program is just one of several activities NCIS engages in to build relationships and strengthen the association between the crop insurance industry and the minority community engaged in agriculture.

Whereas most Federal programs are delivered to citizens through a Federal agency, the Federal crop insurance program is delivered to farmers through the private insurance industry. There are 13 Approved Insurance Providers who have a Standard Reinsurance Agreement with USDA to sell crop insurance to farmers. As the not-for-profit trade association for those 13 companies, NCIS provides services to and for these insurance companies. Because crop insurance is a Federal program the industry has a duty to reach out to "underserved audiences." In practice this means small, limited resource, and socially disadvantaged farmers. On behalf of the crop insurance industry, NCIS' outreach activities work with the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) that have agricultural programs, Non-governmental Organizations (NGO), Community Based Organizations (CBO), and other allied professionals who work with and serve minority farmers across the country.

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