

# NCIS Scholarship Program Helps Deserving Students

By Dr. Laurence M. Crane, NCIS

## Careers in Agriculture

The objective of the 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 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.

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!”

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 men and women, and NCIS is honored to know them.

### NCIS 1890 Scholarship Recipients for 2021-2023

**Aja’Naeia Workman** is from Kalamazoo, Mich., and is majoring in Biology at Alabama A&M University in Normal. She has always loved science and is fascinated with the process of applying lessons from the classroom to real life situations. Aja has a passion for helping other people and believes she can make a difference in the world by preparing herself with knowledge to match her aspirations.

Aja is a member of Melanated Doctors of



Aja’Naeia Workman

America—an organization that provides virtual shadowing opportunities and the chance to gain applied experience within her biology major. She actively participates in the Young Women Emerge program, introducing high school juniors to the many opportunities at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. She is a former member of the Alabama A&M University cheer team, belongs to the Gamma Mu chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, and networks with the women of W.A.V.E—Women of Ambition, Virtue, and Excellence.

As a student at AAMU, she had been involved in the community actively volunteering at Girls on the Run events, Breast Cancer and Autism Walks, and a housing community for adults with mental and physical disabilities. She has a very caring heart and love for those in the community. Her goal is to eventually receive a medical degree and become a Physicians Associate, helping people make wise health decisions and live healthy lives.

**Erikton Goodloe** is from Rockford, Ill., majoring in Agricultural Business Manage-

ment at the University of Arkansas—Pine Bluff. He is fascinated with agriculture and the opportunities it offers to solve problems and benefit the community. He views agriculture as the bedrock of a successful society, and a degree in agriculture as the bedrock of a successful career. Erikton is well rounded; he is an outstanding student who is a quick learner, as well as an accomplished athlete. In high school he played football for four years, was the second fastest at running track his senior year, and played goalie in hockey four years for the junior Rockford Ice Hogs.

Erikton volunteers with senior citizens. He enjoyed watching his grandmother devoting her time working with senior citizens and it left an impact on him, so he is following her example. Specifically, he visits nursing homes in the community listening to music with the elderly, assisting with holiday parties, organizing activities, games, arts and crafts, and taking some of the residents on walks outside, or just visiting and giving them someone to talk to.

Erikton volunteered with the Rockford Park District teaching young men how to ice skate and learn how to play ice hockey. He also volunteered helping coaches teach the fundamentals of football and mentor young men how to deal with peer pressure and give them someone to talk to. He still keeps in contact with the young men he helped mentor. On campus he volunteers with The Male Achiever's, helping organize and promote campus community functions such as passing out masks helping students to be aware of the importance of wearing masks.

His goal is to be the best he can be at whatever direction his education and life experience



Erikton Goodloe

takes him. He will be the first in his family to graduate from college.

**Tiffani Patterson** is from Fayetteville, Tenn., and is majoring in Agricultural Sciences with a concentration in Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication at Tennessee State University. Her interest in agriculture blossomed as she actively participated in FFA in high school applying her natural leadership and communication skills. She is a motivated student, with a strong work ethic. In high school she started working summers for an insurance company in her hometown and continues working there during breaks now that she is in college. Tiffani credits this work experience as helping her to hone her people skills and broaden her horizons on careers in agriculture. It also has contributed significantly to her goal of graduating from college debt free.



Tiffani Patterson

She is very family oriented and looks forward to balancing motherhood and a career when that time comes. She loves spending time with her three nephews.

Even before enrolling us at TSU, Tiffani was deeply committed to developing her agricultural and leadership knowledge and skills, while serving others. She was a leader in Beta Club, Future Business Leaders of America, her FFA Chapter and other organizations. She competed in the FFA Opening and Closing, Ag Issues, Ag Marketing, and Vet Science Career Development events. Tiffani is known for her willingness to serve and help others, as she engages in community and service activities.

Agricultural policy is a special interest of hers. She has always wanted to be a teacher, and her agriscience teacher inspired her to prepare for a career in agricultural education.



Paris Jordan Williams

**Paris Jordan Williams** is from Dallas, Texas, and is majoring in agricultural business at Prairie View A&M University in Prairie View, Texas. Paris became interested in agriculture at an early age and that interest has grown as she has increased her knowledge by excelling in courses in soil science, horticulture, food distribution systems, marketing, and nutrition. She is no stranger to hard work and dedication. A tenacious student, she wants to do her best and is always considering how the information she is learning can be applied to improve the life of others.

As an active volunteer, she worked at the BCTEA Academy, tutoring children and assisting them in determining an educational path after high school. At North Dallas High School, her senior year, she was nominated for homecoming court. She was on the Student Council and was appointed the Varsity Captain of the Girls Basketball team, where she helped underclassmen on and off the court, with drills, homework, and motivation to stay in class. She learned that being a leader takes responsibility and selflessness to bring yourself and others to a level of success you couldn't reach alone. In the last year she has spoken to the USDA Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement on the Texas Youth Summit Panel as a 4-H alumna and scholarship recipient, became the secretary of the Minorities in Agriculture Natural Resources and Related Sciences, and joined the agribusiness club.

Her goal is to pursue a career in horticulture and agricultural research. She also plans to secure a small farm where she can demonstrate how to grow healthy food products to others in her community.



Samaya Brooks

**Samaya Brooks** is from Durham, N.C., and is majoring in Agribusiness at North Carolina A&T State University. She began studying Agriculture her freshman year of high school and it has been the main focus of her studies ever since. Growing up in Durham gave her the opportunity to observe how agricultural trends change and the effect it has on producers and

consumers when they do change. Durham has a large variety of farm-to table restaurants, farmer’s markets and local agribusiness companies which allowed her to receive firsthand knowledge on local agriculture.

She is a member of the Collegiate Farm Bureau and MANRRS (Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences), both of which focus on professional and academic development. Recently she performed community service with The Scrap Exchange, a consignment shop that repurposes old clothes, electronics, crafting materials, etc., and sells them for a discounted price. She mentors through The Mentor Collective group and is an undergraduate research assistant, researching “Small Farmers’ Readiness to Adopt and Consumers’ Willingness to Pay for Value Added.”

Her goal is to attend graduate school and pursue a Ph.D., in preparation to conduct research in agribusiness. Her ultimate goal is to help farmers live an improved lifestyle as well as protect them from being exploited.

## 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 contract (Standard Reinsurance Agreement) with USDA to deliver (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 an obligation to reach out to “under-served 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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