




HBCU ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ACADEMY



2022 APPLICATION




Published by:

U.S. EPA Region 4
Office of Environmental Justice and Sustainability

USDA Forest Service
Fire and Aviation Management

Tennessee State University
College of Agriculture



Overview

Application Opening Date:	March 18, 2022
Application Closing Date:	April 15, 2022

Who May Apply:

Students currently enrolled at 1890 Land Grant Universities in agricultural and natural resources related degree programs. The ideal candidate has interest in gaining skills to be an effective and innovative leader in addressing environmental and public health challenges in their community.

Program Focus:

Through a three-day series, the Environmental Justice Academy (EJ Academy) will cultivate skills so that participants may successfully identify their environmental challenges and accomplish their communities' environmental improvement goals. Courses include environmental laws and regulations, community capacity building, strategic partnerships and replication of best practices. Students will learn professional program and project management, grant writing, program evaluation, and resource management skills. After completing the EJ Academy, students will return to their respective universities and complete a capstone project by the end of the Spring Semester. The capstone project is student led with a committed faculty mentor guiding the student's progress to success. The goal of the capstone project is to identify and address an environmental challenge in the student's community.

The EJ Academy is primarily based on EPA's Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS) Model, which is a seven-step process for bringing about positive change and community revitalization by having community leaders, community members, and their stakeholders working together. For more information on the CPS Model, go to:

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-06/documents/cps-manual-12-27-06.pdf>The main topics addressed in each module include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Setting goals
2. Advocating for your community
3. Dealing with differences

4. Partnering and leveraging resources
5. Identifying financial sources
6. Sustaining organizational efforts
7. Assessing progress

Program Goals:

- Gain a basic understanding of environmental justice - its principles, concepts, and history
- Identify and address communities' environmental and/or public health concerns through the use of tools and other resources
- Learn how to leverage human, social, and financial resources to make long-term progress in communities
- Understand how to use consensus-building processes and skills to help ensure successful collaboration and negotiations
- Apply knowledge on environmental regulations and policies to determine the best approach to address environmental challenges
- Gain an understanding of key steps in conducting an evaluation of progress and efforts, as well as developing evaluation plans, designing logic models and documenting program efforts

Benefits from Participating in the EJ Academy:

As a result of participating in the EJ Academy, participants will receive the following benefits:

- Foundational knowledge and support to complete a project capstone, which will assist in a student's academic and professional career
- Become an active stakeholder in the community
- Interact directly with technical experts from federal, academic, and other organizations
- Network with community leaders, faculty mentors, and federal partners to establish mutually beneficial relationships

Responsibilities of Selected Participants:

Commitment of Time and Attendance:

In order to receive a certificate of completion, participants enrolled in the EJ Academy must attend all three days and complete all assignments included in each module, including a final capstone. Participants will receive assignments to be completed prior to the first day of the Academy.

Homework Assignments:

Participants will participate in a series of webinar to review homework assignments. Assignments should be completed before the next scheduled webinar. The purpose of these assignments is to reinforce what participants learned during the three-day session and give them a viable way to apply those lessons in their community. These assignments will serve as the groundwork for their portfolio.

Community Portfolio:

The portfolio will be a compilation of materials, in a binder, that exemplifies the community's beliefs, skills, qualifications, challenges, partnerships, and other critical information that will define the purpose and practices of the community, the organization and its members. The portfolio contents will be derived from the session's activities and homework assignments, and will be compiled by the participant as a representation of their capability and capacity to be used when meeting with potential partners and benefactors.

Accountability Partners:

Participants will be paired with a teaching faculty member at their university who will guide and assist them with completing their capstone project. Students are encouraged to meet with their mentor weekly to promote proper time management on all components essential to completing an innovative, thorough capstone project. In the application packet, a letter of commitment from a faculty member is required.

How to Apply:

Each applicant must submit a **completed application package** which consists of the following:

- Applicant Information Form (Part A)
- Responses to the essay questions (Part B)
- Letter of Recommendation*: 1) One letter from a faculty member or community leader that can speak on the applicant's ability to successfully complete the EJ Academy. (Part C)
- Letter of Commitment*: 2) One letter from a faculty member that will commit as an EJ Academy Mentor (Part C)

*These letters may be from the same individual but should be separate letters.

Once accepted into the EJ Academy, students will have transportation, lodging, and per diem covered.

Information about the Academy and Applications are online at:

<http://www.tnstate.edu/agriculture/1890eja.aspx>.

To be considered for selection, applications must be submitted online by 11:59 pm PST, April 15th, 2022 to hbcuejademy@gmail.com / Subject Line "HBCU EJ Academy Application". If you are unable to access the online application, please email Dr. Young where you may request a hard copy (dyoung23@tnstate.edu).

Selection Process

- A review panel will evaluate applications based on responses to the assessment questions and recommendation letters.
- No more than two people will be selected from the same university.
- All participants will be notified whether they were selected via e-mail.

For More Information, Contact:

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Project Manager, HBCU Environmental Justice Academy
hbcuejademy@gmail.com

Or

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Office: (615) 963-5123
Email: dyoung23@tnstate.edu

Environmental Justice Academy

Participant Application

Part A

Applicant Information

Full Name: _____
Last *First* *M.I.*

Address: _____
Street Address *Apt/Unit #*

City *State* *ZIP Code*

Phone: () _____ Best Time to Contact: _____

Email Address: _____

Name of the university represented

Part B – Essay Assessment Questions

Please answer each Assessment Question within 100-200 words. Send response to Assessment Questions in a single word or pdf file with application.

1. Describe what environmental justice means to you.
2. How does your major intersect with environmental justice?
3. Describe your involvement and activities within the community you would represent as an Environmental Justice Academy Fellow.
4. What leadership skills/qualities do you offer that: 1) Benefit the community in which you work, and 2) You would like to develop further?
5. What do you hope to gain from your Environmental Justice Academy experience that would benefit the community you represent?
6. Briefly describe your desired Environmental Justice Capstone Project. In the description, please highlight: how your major/academic background will be utilized in the project, the community you intend to impact, and the role of your committed faculty member.

Part C – Letters of Recommendation and Commitment

Letter of Recommendation:

Please include a letter recommendation from a faculty member, professor, or community leader that highlights: your accomplishments, leadership roles, community service, and ability to successfully complete the EJ Academy and how you would benefit from the EJ Academy.

Letter of Commitment:

Please include a letter of commitment from a faculty member or professor that expresses their ability and commitment to guide and assist you in completing your EJ Capstone Project.

Letter of Commitment can come from the same professor or faculty member that wrote Letter of Recommendation.

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