

U.S. Dept. of Agriculture: Partners with Community College Alliance for Agriculture Advancement to strengthen America's rural workforce

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STEVENS POINT, Wis., Aug. 2, 2023 - U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Acting Rural Development Under Secretary Roger Glendenning today announced that USDA is partnering with the [Community College Alliance for Agriculture Advancement](#) to strengthen the nation's rural workforce.

Through this partnership, USDA and the Alliance will provide community college students in the Midwest with resources and skill sets that will help them advance in careers in agriculture and rural economic development. The partnership will also help to ensure rural communities across the country have the leaders and workforce they need to thrive.

Students at the following community colleges will benefit from opportunities that will be created by this partnership:

- Northcentral Technical College (WI)
- Central Lakes College (MN)
- Clark State College (OH)
- Illinois Central College
- Ivy Tech Community College - Lafayette (IN)
- Lake Area Technical College (SD)
- North Dakota State College of Science
- Northeast Community College (NE)
- Northeast Iowa Community College

- Richland Community College (IL)

“USDA works with rural communities to make sure people everywhere have the resources they need to access quality education and good-paying jobs,” Acting Under Secretary Glendenning said. “That’s why we are finding new ways to work with our partners to ensure students have the tools they need to succeed in their coursework today so that they can thrive in their careers tomorrow.”

As part of a [memorandum of understanding](#), USDA Rural Development will coordinate with the Alliance to help students develop leadership and job skills through agency internships and networking opportunities.

“This is a wonderful opportunity to build a strong partnership between USDA Rural Development and the faculty and students at Northcentral Technical College,” said [Julie Lassa](#), Wisconsin State Director for Rural Development. “This partnership will add experience for students, both in and outside the classroom, as well as help build a stronger workforce for local rural communities.” [[Audio: Mp3, 16 seconds](#)]

The agency may also contribute information to college curricula and provide opportunities for students to shadow staff leading key initiatives under the Biden-Harris Administration, such as the [Rural Partners Network](#).

USDA Rural Development staff will also:

- Share public data, program resources, webinars and information that can help students bolster their schoolwork and succeed in their careers.
- Participate in guest lectures at community colleges to help students learn about the ways USDA Rural Development’s programs, initiatives and resources, like the [Rural America Placemaking Toolkit](#), help people in rural America thrive.
- Encourage students to join the [Rural Workforce Innovation Network](#) (RWIN) to help expand their networking opportunities in their respective industries.
- Connect colleges with staff in state and local Rural Development offices.

For more information, see the complete [memorandum of understanding](#) or visit www.rd.usda.gov/RWIN.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America’s food system with a

greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate-smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.