

Encompass Scholars Program expands career opportunities

April 12, 2022



Fellows of the 2021–2022 Encompass Scholars Program (clockwise from upper right): Janeva Williams, Kavya Krishnan, Yingxue Yu, Zenith Tandukar, Cleiton Wartha, Joseph Burke, and Nathan Hein. Not pictured: Adrian Broz.

As ASA, CSSA, and SSSA build support and collaborations for students, a late-breaking award was announced for the 2021 Annual Meeting with the new Encompass Scholars Program. Sponsored by Bayer Crop Science, the program expands career opportunities. The 2021–2022 Encompass Scholars Program brought together a group of diverse scholars and built on the 2020 Bayer Diversity Scholars initiative. Thanks to the generosity of Bayer Crop Sciences, the Societies initiated this broader program with a goal of building a program for participation by all corporate members and sponsors. The objective is to create a robust experience that connects students, science, and mentorship—both at the Annual Meeting and beyond.

The program featured two levels of scholarship:

Eight Fellows

The Fellows program nominations were open to graduate students and postdocs either near the end of their programs or within two years of graduation, seeking employment in the agronomic, crop, soil, and environmental science fields. Applicants provided a statement of the impact this program would have on their career development, a list of leadership positions they held, a statement on change needed to improve DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) in their scientific field, and one reference letter. Applicants were required to be a presenter at the Annual Meeting. Preference was given to candidates from underserved groups. The Fellow award was

highly competitive with more than 50 students and postdocs applying for consideration.

The experience of Fellows was immersive, and recipients participated in several welcome webinars and networking opportunities; received membership renewals, Annual Meeting registration, and travel expense reimbursement; and attended the Graduate Student Leadership Conference and Science Policy Lunch. In addition, they each were provided a mentor for one year as well as the opportunity to participate in this year's Congressional Visits Day.

100 Scholars

The Scholars program focused on virtual opportunities, and nominations were open to undergraduate and graduate students. Applicants provided a statement of impact, and preference was given to candidates in underserved groups. Recipients received a new membership (or renewal) as well as access to the Annual Meeting recordings and the mentoring community. In addition, in a collaboration with the Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANRRS), students were able to request membership in MANRRS.

This spring, both the Fellows and Scholars participated in a webinar series focusing on soft skills, leadership, and DEI education. Webinars were:

- **StrengthsFinder Training (including a self-assessment)** with facilitator Libby Jenkins, Bayer Crop Science
- **Culture and Today's Global Learning and Workplaces** with speaker Luiza Dreasher, Mastering Cultural Differences
- **Virtual Presence** with speaker Masha Trenhaile, Bayer Crop Science

- **Transitioning to the Workforce** with a panel discussion by Asim Biswas, Odiney Alvarez Campos, Tiffany Carter, and Anna Rogers

Congratulations to all Fellows and Scholars!

2022–2023 Encompass Scholars Program

The 2022–2023 Encompass Scholars program, sponsored by Bayer Crop Science, is in development. Watch your email for announcements.

Encompass Fellows Class of 2021–2022

Joseph Burke, Texas A&M University

Adrian Broz, University of Oregon

Nathan Hein, Kansas State University

Kavya Krishnan, Cornell University

Zenith Tandukar, University of Minnesota

Cleiton Wartha, University of Minnesota

Janeva Williams, North Carolina A&T State University

Yingxue Yu, Washington State University

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