

**United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
National Human Resources Management Center
Denver Federal Center, Building 50
P.O. Box 25047
Denver, Colorado 80225-0047**

In Reply Refer To:
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October 19, 2000

EMS TRANSMISSION 10/19/00
Information Bulletin No. HR-2001-008

To: Center Directors, BC-600, HR-200, NI-100, ST-100

From: Acting Director, National Human Resources Management Center

Subject: FY 2001 Educational Awards Program

DD: 11/8/00

Attached are guidelines for the upcoming FY 2001 Education Awards Program. Up to eight awards of \$800 will be granted. If there are fewer than eight selected employees, the balance of the fund will be equitably distributed. Two alternates may be selected in case an award is forfeited.

This Program is designed for motivated permanent employees at grade levels GS-1 through GS-9 in single-grade interval series or Wage Grade equivalents. The program's objectives are to provide these employees with educational assistance to help them meet their career goals and improve their skills for future use in the BLM.

Employees identify the education needed to further their career goals. This includes training in different fields and occupations than currently held by the employee. Selected employees demonstrate the best potential for career development and use of the acquired skills and knowledge.

Please assure that all eligible candidates are sent the Education Grant Program package we have provided to your Staff Assistant. The Education Grant Program package is composed of an interest announcement, an education award guideline, an application form, and a supervisory evaluation form. All applications and supervisory evaluations are due to HR-220 by the close of business **November 8, 2000.**

Please encourage employees in your organization who meet the criteria to apply for the award. Questions regarding the program may be directed to Marilyn Ladd 236-8267.

Signed by:
Mark Whitesell
Acting Director

Authenticated by:
Darlene Robitaille
Secretary

2 Attachments

- 1 - Interest Announcement (1 p)
- 1 - Education Award Guidelines (5 pp)

Distribution:

ST-150A, BLM Library
HR-220

INTEREST ANNOUNCEMENT

EDUCATION AWARD

NUMBER OF AWARDS: 8

ALTERNATES: 2

CLOSING DATE: November 8, 2000

AWARD DESCRIPTION: The Education Award is designed to provide permanent employees in one-grade intervals series, GS-9 and below or wage grade equivalent, with educational opportunities that may assist them in moving into BLM positions with promotional potential. Up to eight educational awards of \$800 will be granted to selected employees. If there are fewer than eight selected employees, the balance of the fund will be equitably distributed. Monies for each award will be applied toward approved educational courses selected by the award recipient. Courses are taken after working hours from a college, university, or private vendor. Two alternates will be selected in the event an award must be forfeited.

The recipient of the award must begin taking courses within six months or two academic semesters/quarters from the date the award is granted (whichever is later). Study under an award must be completed within two (2) calendar years from the date you begin the course work.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS: All permanent employees in one-grade interval series, GS-9 and below or wage grade equivalent, from the Denver Office of IRM/Modernization, National Business Center, National Applied Resources Sciences Center and National Human Resources Management Center may apply. Applicants for this program must have a satisfactory performance appraisal rating. Employees who currently have Education Awards with outstanding balances or have received the Education Award twice previously are not eligible for the program.

SELECTION CRITERIA: Selection for the awards is based on the employee's demonstrated efforts at self-development, the relevance of requested training to stated career goals, the potential for using acquired skills and knowledge, and the ability to successfully complete the Education Award Program.

HOW TO APPLY: The applicant must complete the attached application form and have his/her immediate supervisor complete the supervisory evaluation portion. All applications, along with the supervisory evaluation, must be received by the National Human Resources Center (HR-220) by the closing date. Late applications will not be accepted. If you need assistance, please call Marilyn Ladd at (303) 236-8267.

The opening date of this announcement corresponds to the release of the FY 2001 Education Awards Program Information Bulletin.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
NATIONAL HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT CENTER

EDUCATION AWARD GUIDELINES

OCTOBER 2000

EDUCATION AWARDS GUIDELINES

PURPOSE

The Education Award Program is designed to provide permanent employees in one-grade interval positions with an educational opportunity which may assist them in moving into BLM positions with promotion potential.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. National Human Resources Management Center (NHRMC)
 - a. Is responsible for the management, coordination, and administration of the Education Award.
 - b. Coordinates the announcement of the award with the Office of IRM/Modernization, the National Business Center, and the National Applied Resource Sciences Center to ensure there are funds to support the program.
 - c. Announces and promotes the award.
 - d. Creates a panel to evaluate the candidates.
 - e. Serves as the selecting official.
2. Office of IRM/Modernization, National Business Center, National Applied Resources Sciences Center and National Human Resources Management Center
 - a. When feasible, allocate monies for the award.
 - b. Encourage employees to apply for the award.
 - c. Evaluate employees who apply in a fair and consistent manner.
3. Employees
 - a. Ensure he/she meets the basic eligibility and submit his/her application before the announcement expires.
 - b. Selectees must follow designated procedures in utilizing the award.

- c. Work with the training officer if circumstances beyond his/her control prevent him/her from enrolling and/or completing the award in a timely manner.

PROGRAM COVERAGE

The Education Awards Program is for permanent employees of the Denver Office of IRM/Modernization, National Business Center, National Business Center, and National Human Resources Management Center who are in single-grade interval positions GS-9 and below or Wage Grade equivalent. Applicants for this program must have a satisfactory performance appraisal. Employees who currently have Education Awards with outstanding balances or have received the Education Award twice previously are not eligible for the program.

OUTLINE OF THE EDUCATION AWARDS

1. The program is announced once a year.
2. Grants of \$800 are awarded to a maximum of eight employees. If there are fewer than eight selected employees, the balance of the fund will be equitably distributed. Two alternates may be selected in the event an employee is unable to use the grant. This grant is separate and apart from courses identified in the Annual Training Plan.
3. The award may be applied to one training/academic class or a series of courses which continue for more than one semester, term, or quarter.
4. Cash is not awarded to the employee. The employee must complete an SF-182 requesting the training. If approved, the educational institution works directly with the BLM in obtaining payment for the class. Travel and per diem money is not available for Education Award courses.
5. The employee pays for the student activity fees unless they are included in the tuition costs.
6. If books are paid for by the BLM, they must be turned into the BLM library upon completion of the course. If the employee wishes to keep the books, he/she must pay for them using their own money.
7. Employees are given up to 2 years to attend training for academic courses from any public or private education or training vendor.
8. Selection for the awards is based on the employee's demonstrated efforts at self development, the relevance of the requested training to stated career goals, the potential of using acquired skills and knowledges, and the ability to successfully complete the Education Award Program.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. The NHRMC will announce the program to the Center Directors, and the Office of IRM/Modernization Manager and all eligible employees.
2. Eligible employees must submit complete applications to the NHRMC by the closing date. This includes supervisory evaluation. Applications will not be accepted after that date.

SELECTION PROCESS

1. Once the announcement closes, a panel consisting of four members including at least one supervisor, one employee, and one past recipient will be established to evaluate the applications and determine the eight best qualified employees. Panel members will be selected from the four Centers. Up to eight employees will be selected, with two serving as the alternates, in the event an award is forfeited. The identity of the applicants will remain anonymous during the panel rating process.
2. The list of best qualified applicants will be forwarded to the Director, NHRMC, who will serve as the selecting official.
3. Selected employees and their supervisors will be officially notified by the NHRMC.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Selected employees will receive a Confirmation of Award form with special instructions for registering for Educational Award courses. The following rules apply to all selectees:

1. Use of an Educational Award must be initiated within 6 MONTHS or two academic quarters/semesters from the date the award is granted (whichever is later). Training or study under an award must be completed within two CALENDAR YEARS from the date training or study began.
2. Class attendance and study (or use of correspondence or self-study material) will occur outside the person's duty hours.
3. THE STUDY UNDERTAKEN MUST BE COMPLETED SATISFACTORILY (GRADE C OR ABOVE) BY THE EMPLOYEE; OTHERWISE, THE EXPENSES OF THE PARTICULAR TRAINING BECOME THE PERSONAL EXPENSE OF THE PERSON.

- a. Within 45 days of the completion of each class the awardee must present the grade to the Training Office, HR-220. For non-academic courses that have no grades, submit a certificate of completion. The Training Office will then document that the training has been satisfactorily completed.
 - b. When uncontrollable circumstances prevent the orderly completion of an award, the employee must advise the training officer of the circumstances and request additional time.
4. Courses different from those initially proposed may be substituted only by written petition to the Training Officer who must determine that the request for substitutions preserves the intent of the Education Awards Program.
 5. The employee may attend approved training from any institution or organization, government or non-government, within the commuting area of the employee's duty station, including study to prepare for a high school equivalency examination. (Correspondence or self-study material may be obtained from anywhere.)
 6. All above conditions, procedures, and qualifications must be met or the award money remaining may be terminated upon review by the Training Office.

FORFEITURE OF AWARD

An awardee who changes status so that they no longer meet eligibility criteria, forfeits any unspent portion of an award. Participants who no longer meet entrance requirements or leave their sponsoring organization must notify the Training Office (HR-220) so an alternate may benefit from the remaining award.