

S494 SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

A. Status: Special Committee

B. Composition and Tenure:

The Committee consists of the Chair plus members active in the SSSA Soil and Water Conservation Division. The scholarship chair will appoint the selection committee before the selection process takes place.

The term of office for members is a three-year, rotating term.

The Chair serves for life.

C. Functions:

1. To encourage applications for this scholarship.
2. To become familiar with the Guidelines and Procedures for this scholarship and to be responsible that all applications fulfill the required criteria of eligibility for the scholarship.
3. To evaluate applications and to select the most outstanding applicant for the scholarship.

D. Procedure:

1. The SSSA Headquarters Office distributes the applications to the Committee members and advises them of the scoring or ranking to be followed. The Chair transmits any special instructions to members.
2. The Chair of S494 submits an annual report as requested by the Society.

E. Presidential Responsibilities:

The SSSA President:

1. Cooperates with the Committee in its activities, as appropriate or in response to need.
2. Notifies the Committee directly of all deadlines on award selection, annual report, etc.
3. Receives and takes action directly, or by referring to the SSSA Executive Committee and/or Board of Directors, as appropriate, all suggestions and/or recommendations for action from the Committee.

F. Description of Scholarship:

The Soil and Water Conservation Scholarship was created to encourage undergraduate students and to nurture young scientists and to help them become soil and water conservationists. The scholarship is meant to bring back into focus the vital necessity and passion for the discipline by encouraging current students to consider a career in soil and water conservation.

This fund has been established by the Soil and Water Conservation Division, the Soil Science Society of America, and the Agronomic Science Foundation. The scholarship is administered by SSSA. Each year there is a deserving candidate and funding is available, a stipend of up to \$3,000 will be awarded to the candidate. The award will be given preceding the start of an academic semester. The scholarship award will be given as a one-time lump sum payment given directly to the candidate. In the event the candidate is not currently enrolled in classes at a university, the payment will be withheld until the enrollment has been completed and the student is attending classes. In addition, the awardee will be eligible to apply for a student trainee internship with USDA-NRCS for duration to be determined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service after the scholarship award has been granted

In addition, \$500 will be awarded to the student candidate's major professor to encourage the continued mentoring of the student in the field of soil and water conservation, also to encourage the student candidate to apply for the scholarship, and finally, to accompany the candidate to the SSSA Annual Meeting. The advisor mentor award will be presented at the SSSA Annual Meeting the same year.

The committee may select one awardee each year, or decline to award if no suitable candidates have applied.

G. Award Criteria:

The selection of the Soil and Water Conservation Division Scholarship candidate for award will be based on these criteria:

- Current scholastic accomplishments (classes taken, projects completed)
- Student's career goals in soil and water conservation
- Student's work experiences in the field of soil and water conservation
- Major professor's support and acknowledgement of student's activities

H. Format for Nominations:

A call for nominations is issued each year with the Scholarship Guidelines and Procedures for Nomination posted online. The Chair and Committee members can view the scholarship guidelines and procedures for nominations posted to the Awards Program webpage.

I. Eligibility of Nominations:

1. The program is also open to undergraduate students completing their junior or senior year by the end of spring term of the year in which they are submitting a scholarship application, or a M.S. candidate.
2. The candidate must be a student enrolled in a North American (USA, Canada, and Mexico) University. Preference will be given to students enrolled in a land grant university, or other universities having equivalent agricultural curriculum.
3. Nominees must exhibit classroom activities, special students, or work experience in the field of soil and water conservation and be matriculating toward a degree and career in soil and water conservation. The student's major professor must heartily support the candidate by assisting in the preparation of the scholarship prospectus and is invited to participate with the awardee at the Society's Annual Meeting.

J. Scoring or Ranking Procedure:

Each committee member ranks their top five candidates based on:

- The applicant's classroom, laboratory, and field experiences in the area of soil and water conservation.
- The career goals of the applicant in soil and water conservation.
- Passion for soil and water conservation as displayed in the applicant's vision statement.
- Support given to the applicant by the major professor.

A round table discussion will be used to discuss and decide the most deserving candidate.

K. Revising Guidelines or Procedures:

The scholarship committee may recommend changes or revisions relative to criteria, description, selection process of recipients, etc., for this scholarship. All recommendations must be approved by the SSSA Board of Directors or Executive Committee before said recommendations may be implemented. It is preferable to submit recommendations through the Society Awards Chair; however, recommendations may be submitted through the President or directly to the Board of Directors or Executive Committee.

L. Ties and Deadlocked Committee:

1. The Scholarship Committee is expected to make every effort to break tie votes.
2. If the Scholarship Committee cannot break the tie vote, the Scholarship Committee Chair shall vote to break the tie.