

**NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION'S  
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE**

**STRATEGIC PLAN for  
AFRICAN-AMERICAN EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM  
2005-2007**

*Working Together to Save Lives*



## **African-American Employment Strategic Plan FY 2005- FY 2007**

Federal agencies are being challenged to lead our Nation into the 21st Century by building a highly skilled and well-trained Federal workforce that looks like America. NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) is committed to building a talented workforce that utilizes the skills of all employees and is representative of the nation's diversity.

More and more, NWS finds itself competing with private industry to attract skilled employees to fulfill its mission of providing weather, water, and climate forecasts and warnings for the United States, its territories, adjacent waters, and ocean areas for the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy. By tapping the talents of our increasingly diverse communities, NWS is building a stronger foundation for itself and the world.

One of the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Management's (OEODM) highest priorities has been to undertake a serious effort to strengthen the NWS workforce and management capabilities while addressing workforce diversity issues. The Assistant Administrator for Weather Services issued the NWS Policy on Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Diversity Management. In this policy statement, he directed the NWS to build and manage a talented and diverse workforce. Under this policy, NWS managers have an opportunity and responsibility to address the long-standing underrepresentation and underutilization of African-American in its workforce, especially in senior management, hydrology, meteorology, engineering, and physical science positions.

The African-American Special Emphasis Program has been established to increase the awareness and representation of African-Americans throughout the NWS. Executive Order 11478, which establishes EEO Program, helps to strengthen this program. It is the policy of the Federal government to provide equal opportunity in employment to all individuals regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or age. Although African-Americans are well represented in the NWS workforce, they are underrepresented in higher-grade positions.

This African-American Employment Program Strategic Plan (AAEPOP) is tied to the overall NWS Policy on EEO and Diversity Management. The Diversity Management Strategic Plan and the AAEPSP will be institutionalized in all facets of NWS operations. The plan calls for strengthening NWS outreach activities in a comprehensive effort to promote partnership opportunities with the African-American community in three critical areas: employment, training and education.

This plan has been developed to address and assist in reversing the under representation and under utilization of African-Americans at the NWS. The plan seeks to recruit talented candidates from outside the NWS; retain, promote, develop current employees; and create a pipeline for addressing current and future workforce needs.

## FY 2005-2007 Goals

Goal		Lead Office	Completion
Develop African-American Employment Program web page and announce completion to NWS family. .		OEODM	Quarter III – FY 2005 Completed. The OEODM website is inclusive of all SEPs; therefore, at the present time there is no need to create a different webpage
Contact regions and discuss African-American Employment Program Strategic Plan.		OEODM	Quarter IV – FY 2005  Not Completed: See details below
Initiate dialogue to establish long-term relationships with African-American advocacy groups.		OEODM	Quarter I - FY2006  Completed: Through programs such as BIG, networks can be established to develop long-term relationships with AA advocacy groups. These efforts will continue into FY2009.
Initiate dialogue to establish long-term relationships with African-American professional organizations, colleges and universities.		OEODM	Quarter I - FY2006 Completed: OEODM has participated in several conferences to establish relationships with AA professional organizations. Efforts will continue.
Create awareness among local African-American high school students about NWS Intern Programs (i.e. METCON).		OEODM	Quarter II – FY 2006 Completed. OEODM has established connections with local high schools. Thus far, NWS has supported the METCON program by placing several students in summer internship positions.
Identify and assess utilization of current entry-level intern programs to develop diverse groups of professional, administrative, and scientific trainees.		OEODM	Quarter III - FY2006  Not Completed. See details below
Identify African-American college students interested in hydrology, meteorology, engineering and physical science at the NWS.		OEODM	Quarter II –FY 2006 Completed. Outreach efforts are in place to identify these students, along with the EPP. HBCU schools were identified which offer

			<p>programs in meteorology. Currently, there are several students from HBCU schools working with the NWS.</p>
Create/monitor African-American informal mentoring program for employees in all occupations.		OEODM	<p>Quarter IV FY 2007 <b>Completed.</b> This goal is covered under the current mentoring program offered from NWS.</p>
Review GS-13, 14, 15, and SES search and placement procedures and ensure effective outreach tools are utilized to actively recruit qualified African-American candidates for senior-level positions. .		OEODM - HRMO	<p>Quarter II - FY2006</p> <p>Not complete: See details below</p>
Visit regions and monitor African-American Employment Programs.		OEODM	<p>Quarter IV - FY2006</p> <p>Not complete: See details below</p>

## **Goal A: Enhance/Develop Employee Potential**

**1. Develop African-American Employment Program web page and announce completion to NWS family.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:**

**Status:** OEODM's website is inclusive of Special Emphasis Programs therefore, at the present, OEODM will not create a separate web page.

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**2. Ensure that the requirements in vacancy announcements and the language in ranking factors are not restrictive or biased in nature; areas of consideration are broadened, where possible and review "status only" requirement.**

**Lead Office:** (WFMO) and OEODM

**Completion:** Review vacancy announcement language and procedures by end of Quarter III - FY2006.

**Status:** Due to mitigating circumstances, this goal was not fully accomplished. This milestone will be addressed in the FY 2008-2009 Strategic Plan.

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**3. Contact regions and discuss African-American Employment Program Strategic Plan.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Receive input on how each region will implement plan to fit their needs by end of Quarter III - FY2005.

**Status:** Due to prior OEODM obligations and milestone will be addressed during FY 2009.

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**4. Establish the African-American Employment Program Committee.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Request volunteers for the committee, get supervisor approval, select committee members, and select a Chair by end of Quarter IV - FY2005.

**Status:** OEODM will work with Blacks-In-Government (BIG) as well as EEO focal points to establish a committee collectively. These efforts will continue into FY 2008-2009.

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**5. Initiate dialogue to establish long-term relationships with African-American advocacy groups and organizations.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Initiate dialogue with a minimum of three African-American organizations by end of Quarter I - FY2006.

**Status:** OEODM has participated in several conferences to establish relationships with African-American professional organizations. As addressed in milestone #4, OEODM will continue to network towards establishing a stronger relationship with other African-American advocacy groups.

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**6. Identify and target institutions that graduate a significant number of African-Americans**

with degrees that meet NWS job needs. Partner with these institutions to identify students interested in the NWS.

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Develop list of viable candidates by end of Quarter I - FY2006.

**Status:** Jackson State University is one of the targeted colleges along with several others that graduate a significant number of African-Americans with NWS related degrees. This milestone will continue into FY 2009.

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**7. Research NWS recruitment strategies used to target African-Americans through professional organizations, colleges, and universities.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Create an African-American employment communications plan and initiate dialogue with a minimum of four major African-American publications and organizations by end of Quarter I -FY2006.

**Status:** OEODM will continue to participate and attend conferences focusing on African-American employment programs to determine recruitment best practices. This milestone will be addressed during the FY 2009 Plan.

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**8. Identify existing High School Intern Programs that prepare students for jobs and careers in the NWS and create awareness of these programs among local school systems.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM in coordination with local school districts

**Completion:** Develop partnerships with three local school systems and secure their participation in existing NWS internship/apprenticeship programs by end of Quarter II - FY2006.

**Status:** OEODM has partnered with local schools as a means of reaching our recruitment and outreach initiatives.

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**9. Identify and assess utilization of current entry-level intern programs to develop diverse groups of professional, administrative, and scientific trainees.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Review and assess intern programs statistical data by end of Quarter III - FY2006.

**Status:** OEODM will meet with Workforce Management by end of FY 2009 to address this goal.

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**10. Establish informal mentoring program for interested African-American employees.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Identify mentors and mentorees by end of Quarter IV - FY2006

**Status:** Under the current NWS mentoring program, all employees are encouraged to participate. OEODM will continue to monitor and promote this program to potential mentees and solicit the support from managers and supervisors.

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**11. Review GS-13, 14, 15, and SES search and placement procedures and ensure effective outreach tools are utilized to actively recruit qualified African-American candidates for senior-level positions.**

**Lead Office:** HRMO and OEODM

**Completion:** Make recommendations to OHRM, directors and managers for correcting any deficiencies by end of Quarter IV - FY2006.

**Status:** Due to mitigating circumstances this milestone will be addressed by the end of Quarter IV - FY 2009.

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**12. Ensure that EEO Managers report their participation on NWS administered Selection Review Boards and SES Selection Panels.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Review procedures on boards and selection panels and make suggestions to correct any deficiencies by end of Quarter IV - FY2006.

**Status:** OEODM will address this milestone during the FY 2008-2009 period.

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**Goal B: Improve Retention**

**1. Review exit interview procedures, questionnaires, and data for African-American employees and make recommendations for improvement.**

**Lead Office:** WFMO and OEODM

**Completion:** Review existing procedures, questionnaires, and data continuously.

**Status:** OEODM is meeting with the appropriate personnel to meet this requirement by the end of Quarter IV FY2009.

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**2. Review internal employment practices undertaken to retain African-American employees (e.g., use of retention bonuses, awards, promotions, etc.).**

**Lead Office:** WFMO and OEODM

**Completion:** Review retention data and make suggestions to correct any deficiencies by end of Quarter I - FY2006.

**Status:** OEODM will make contact with the WFMO to meet by the end of Quarter III of FY-2009 to accomplish this goal.

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**Goal C: Disseminate Accurate and Compelling Information about Training and Development Opportunities.**

**1. Review NWS African-American employee participation in existing skill-building training programs, conferences, and seminars.**

**Lead Office:** WFMO and OEODM

**Completion:** Review African-American participation data for training program by end of Quarter III - FY2006.

Status: OEODM will request RNO data from WFMO to review information for participants enrolled in the various leadership and skill-building programs. However, many training courses are not tracked because supervisors and employees are not using the SF-182s as previously requested. Efforts to coordinate with NWS Administrative officers are underway.

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**2. Promote awareness among NWS African-American employees of opportunities to compete for managerial, executive and upward mobility training.**

**Lead Office:** WFMO and OEODM

**Completion:** Review procedures for advertising and notifying employees about opportunities and make suggestions to correct any deficiencies by end of Quarter III - FY2006.

Status: Milestone will be addressed in FY2008-2010.

OEODM will continue to promote awareness among African American employees of the various leadership and career development opportunities offered for NOAA employees.

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**3. Review NWS nomination process among African-American and other employees (GS-6 through GS-13) for participation in leadership, and executive potential programs and other developmental programs.**

**Lead Office:** WFMO and OEODM

**Completion:** Review procedures for advertising and notifying employees about opportunities and make suggestions to correct any deficiencies by end of Quarter IV - FY2006.

Status: During Quarter III of FY - 2009, OEODM will address this goal.

**Goal D: Monitor and Ensure Accountability**

The NWS senior-level management is primarily responsible for ensuring and emphasizing efforts to achieve a fully diverse workforce, inclusive of African-Americans. OEODM, through existing tracking and reporting mechanisms, will assist the NWS Assistant Administrator, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Region Directors, Headquarters Directors, Staff Officers, managers and supervisors in accomplishing workforce diversity by implementing and monitoring workforce profiles and measures. The NWS will use the following action items to promote accountability and results with respect to African-American employment.

**1. Periodically update and review organizational African-American workforce goals and achievements.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Review goals and accomplishments semiannually.

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**2. Submit Annual Status Reports to the OEODM Director on NWS progress towards improving the promotion potential of African-Americans.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

Completion: