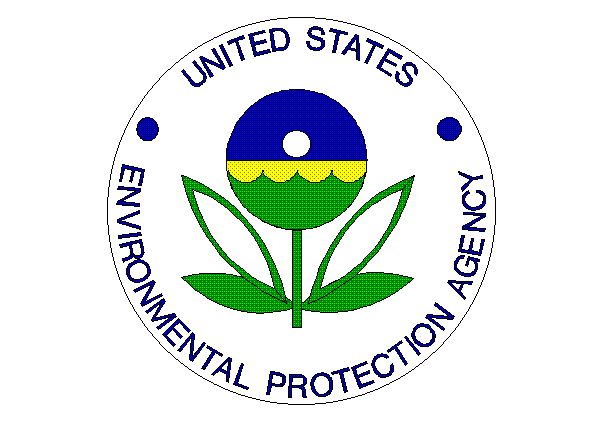
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**EPA Awards More Than $5.3 Million for Research Fellowships**

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**ATLANTA** - Today the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced more than $5.3 million in research fellowships to 127 students pursuing degrees in environmental studies throughout the United States. Twelve of the fellowship recipients attend one of eight universities and colleges in the Southeast. Duke University, Georgia Institute of Technology, University of South Alabama, University of Central Florida, North Carolina State University, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, University of Florida – Gainesville and Spelman College each had at least one student receive a fellowship. The 11 Greater Research Opportunities (GRO) fellows and the one Science to Achieve Results (STAR) fellow exemplify the agency’s efforts to improve Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education. These fellowships encourage leadership in the nation’s environmental science, research, restoration, pollution prevention and sustainability efforts.

2012 marks the 30th anniversary of the GRO Fellowship program, which is part of the national effort to ensure that the United States continues to graduate students ready to meet environmental science, engineering, and policy challenges. By enhancing and supporting quality environmental education for undergraduate students, the GRO fellowship program encourages promising students to pursue careers in environmental fields and to continue their education beyond the baccalaureate level. Supporting graduate environmental study for masters and doctoral students, the STAR fellowship program provides a steady stream of well-trained environmental specialists that are meeting society’s environmental challenges by performing new environmental research in engineering and in the physical, biological, health, and social sciences.

“These fellowship awards enable undergraduate and graduate students all over the country to pursue research and education opportunities that would otherwise be beyond their means” said Dr. Jim Johnson, director of EPA's National Center for Environmental Research. “Many of the fellowship opportunities springboard aspiring scientists and engineers into careers in environmental protection.”

EPA is proud of the many research accomplishments of the alumni of the GRO and STAR fellowship programs. “My research into low-cost solar cells was made possible by this fellowship,” said Dr. Cyrus Wadia, a 2002 STAR fellow and currently assistant director for the White House’s Clean Energy & Materials. These programs have helped thousands of students achieve higher education and conduct cutting edge environmental research.

Applications for the fiscal 2013 GRO Program and STAR fellowships are currently open and applicants have until November 27, 2012 to apply.

More information on the GRO program and STAR fellowships: http://epa.gov/ncer/fellow/