



2024 NOPHNCSE Scholarship Announcement

The National Organization of Professional Hispanic NRCS Employees (NOPHNCSE) has the mission to motivate and mentor members for leadership roles to assist NRCS and partners in delivering natural resources conservation. Following our mission, NOPHNCSE is proud to present the 2024 NOPHNCSE scholarship program.

This year NOPHNCSE will award a total of four (4) \$1,000.00 academic scholarships to qualified students that are pursuing a degree in Agriculture, Natural Resources, or Natural Resources Conservation related field of study at an accredited school of higher education.

Student Eligibility Requirements:

- Be US Citizen and show proof of U.S. citizenship - copy of Birth Certificate or Naturalization Certificate only, if the application is selected as a winner.
- Graduating High School students accepted to an accredited college or university and registered students with at least one full academic year remaining before completing undergraduate education, undergraduate college students and graduate college students are also **eligible** for this scholarship. Demonstrate integrity, ability, and competence in work.
- Show interest in pursuing a career in Natural Resources Conservation
- Have a grade point average of at least 2.75 on a 4.0 scale
- Submit a complete application package which includes: application form and requested documentation.

One of the four scholarships NOPHNCSE offers is a specially funded scholarship established by a notable member and her family to encourage new generations of Hispanics to pursue careers in Public Affairs, Agriculture or Natural Resources Conservation. The **Martha Guerra-Arteaga Scholarship** is specifically for a female student with a major in Public Affairs, Communications or Natural Resources Conservation.

Martha Guerra-Arteaga was born May 27, 1967 in McAllen, Texas. Martha graduated from Texas A & M University in 1989 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Speech Communication. Martha served as a Public Affairs Specialist for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation (NRCS) for thirteen years. During her years of service, she received the prestigious USDA Group Honor Award from the Chief of the NRCS for providing outstanding outreach programs aimed at the Hispanic Community and socially disadvantaged. She was a member of the National Organization of Professional Hispanic NRCS Employees and the Southwest Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society.

One of the four scholarships NOPHNCSE offers is a specially funded scholarship established by a notable member and his family to encourage new generations of Hispanics to pursue careers in Agriculture or Natural Resources Conservation. The *Milton Cortés Colón Scholarship* consideration will be given to qualified students that are pursuing a degree in Soil Science, Agriculture, Natural Resources, or Natural Resources Conservation-related field of study at an accredited school of higher education.

Milton Cortés Colón began his professional career as an Extension Agent with the Puerto Rico Agricultural Extension Service in Toa Alta, Puerto Rico (1981-1990). In 1990, he took his first Federal assignment with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Milton's exceptional efforts earned him an award in 1997 for his outstanding support to the "St. John Island Global Climate Changes Project". Also, in January of 2002 he was recognized for his outstanding contributions to the success of the "USDA Hurricane Mitch/Georges Reconstructions Project in Central America and the Caribbean." Among the many accomplishments throughout his 40 years of public service, Mr. Cortés collaborated to complete the publication "Soil Survey of San Germán Area of Puerto Rico." He assisted in the translation of two editions of the NRCS worldwide-used soil taxonomy. He was also instrumental in the translation (English/Spanish) of the document "From the Surface Down (Desde la Superficie Hacia Abajo)," a keystone agency-wide publication.

Beyond Milton's expertise in soils and outstanding knowledge and abilities in using technology in natural resources conservation, he was always prepared and willing to help others, especially new employees. His desire to offer guidance and mentorship to many young Hispanic employees left an everlasting impact on a generation of professionals who continue to lead by his guiding principles, work ethic, and professionalism. Among many other contributions, Milton was a National Organization of Professional Hispanic NRCS Employees (NOPHNCSE) founding member and served on numerous committees.

The following is the scholarship application form and guidelines for completing and submitting the application. Due date for consideration is **Friday, July 26th, 2024.**

For additional information, please contact:

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Web Site: <https://nophnrcse.org/>

**NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF PROFESSIONAL HISPANIC
NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE EMPLOYEES**

2024 NOPHNRCSSE Scholarship Application

The National Organization of Professional Hispanic Natural Resources Conservation Service Employees (NOPHNRCSSE) provides scholarships to deserving Hispanic students that wish to pursue, are pursuing a bachelor's degree or graduate studies in a Natural Resources or a Natural Resources Conservation-related field of study at an accredited four-year institution.

To Apply ONLINE: download the application form at: <https://nophnrcse.org/nophnrcse-scholarships/>
Please, complete, sign, scan and submit the digital application with all required documents to the following email address: scholarships@nophnrcse.org. For questions, request to mail the application, or additional information, please contact:

Teddy Moreno Santos by Phone at or Email: Scholarships@nophnrcse.org

Completed application package must be postmarked by Friday- July 26th, 2024.

Please note: It is the responsibility of the student to ensure a complete application is submitted. Incomplete or late applications will not be evaluated.

Choose one: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Name: _____

Permanent Address: _____

City, State, and Zip: _____

Mailing Address (If different from above): _____

Telephone: _____ Birth Date (Mo/Day/Yr): _____

Birthplace (State and Country): _____

Email: _____

Name and address of High School or College you are currently attending:

Student Number (not Social Security number, if known): _____

Expected Year of graduation: _____

Overall GPA (on a 4.0 scale): _____

Concentration/Major in: _____

Scholarship applying for: ☐ NOPHNRCSSE ☐ Martha Guerra- ☐ Milton Cortés-Colón

Have you received this application? _____

Have you won a NOPHNRCSSE or Martha Guerra-Arteaga or Milton Cortés-Colón Scholarships?

☐ Yes, what year? _____ ☐ No

Name: _____

The following items must be submitted along with this signed application form. Failure to submit a complete 2024 NOPHNCSE Scholarship Application package will result in you forfeiting any opportunity to be selected for a 2024 NOPHNCSE Scholarship.

The following items constitute a complete 2024 NOPHNCSE Scholarship Application package:

1. Submit this completed application with your signature.
2. Submit a personal statement of 350 to 500 words in length (double-spaced) in English. Please include information such as personal background, name of school(s) you plan to attend or are attending, personal and career goals, extracurricular activities and your special interest in pursuing a conservation career in natural resources such as; soil science, agronomy, soil conservation, range science or engineering. You may also include other information that you feel is important (remember not to exceed 500 words);
3. Submit a copy of an official or certified high school or college transcript; non-official digital documents will be accepted in the application process. However, if an official college transcript was not submitted in the application process, it will need to be submitted if your application gets selected in order to claim prize.
4. Submit two **signed** letters of recommendation in English from a High School teacher(s)/counselor(s), College professor(s) employer or supervisor.
5. Graduating high school applicants, submit a copy of a letter of acceptance from the college you plan to attend.

**** Note: Receipt of a NOPHNCSE Scholarship does not constitute a guarantee of future employment with the USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other federal agency.**

Certification:

I certify that all the information provided is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. Providing false information may result in the recall of any scholarship granted or in the forfeiture of any scholarship awarded.

I am aware that any scholarship awarded by NOPHNCSE will be disbursed through my University Financial Aid Office. If I am selected to receive a NOPHNCSE Scholarship, I will utilize the NOPHNCSE award toward expenses related to my college attendance. I also understand I can receive this award only one time.

I understand that proof of college enrollment will be required if selected and that I must notify my University Financial Aid Office and NOPHNCSE of any changes to my enrollment status. I further understand that changes to my enrollment status may result in the cancellation of any award provided. I hereby acknowledge that it is my responsibility to keep my institution's Financial Aid Office and NOPHNCSE informed of all address changes.

I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to submit a complete application package to NOPHNCSE in compliance with the posted deadline. Incomplete or late application materials will disqualify my scholarship application package and I will not be considered for any award. All application materials become the property of NOPHNCSE. I hereby give NOPHNCSE permission to share this information for recruitment, public relations, or possible employment.

I hereby certify that I have read the application information and guidelines, as well as this Certification, and that I understand and accept all the conditions specified. Failure to sign this Certification will result in my ineligibility for this Scholarship Award.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

National Organization of Professional Hispanic Natural Resources Conservation Service Employees Scholarship Program 2024 NOPHNRCS Information and Guidelines

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) was first organized in 1933, as the Soil Erosion Service and was later known as the Soil Conservation Service. In 1994, USDA went through reorganization and the Agency's name became the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The Agency's purpose has always been, and continues to be, the promotion of the conservation and wise use of our country's natural resources. USDA-NRCS employees possess backgrounds in a variety of disciplines that include agronomy, agricultural engineering, animal science, civil engineering, computer science, crops science, hydrology, range science, soil science, wildlife science, financial management and several other disciplines.

NRCS accomplishes its conservation goals by drawing upon the various sciences and conservation disciplines to help private landowners conserve their soil, natural resources and water and air resources. NRCS employees and private land users assess the land's capabilities and resources along with the existing conservation problems and opportunities. NRCS employees then work closely with agricultural producers and landowners to assist them in developing conservation plans and with the implementation of conservation practices while achieving their production goals and objectives. Through the implementation of conservation practices, the overall quality of life within a watershed and across our country is improved.

The National Organization of Professional Hispanic Natural Resources Conservation Service Employees (NOPHNRCS) was established as a Professional Society of Natural Resources Conservation Service employee. NOPHNRCS promotes the belief that Hispanics can and should fill an existing, invaluable void in the protection of our country's natural resources and the wise use of our agricultural and recreational private lands. NOPHNRCS was created to assist the USDA-NRCS with its delivery of program information and program benefits to minority and non-minority communities; to showcase the value that Hispanics bring to the USDA-NRCS; to demonstrate the role of Hispanics in a diverse, multi-cultural workforce; and to serve as a strong link between the USDA-NRCS and the Hispanic community.

NOPHNRCS was organized to augment the outreach programs of USDA and NRCS, and to enhance USDA Program Delivery. Internally, NOPHNRCS has vowed to assist USDA-NRCS achieve a multicultural workforce and to assist with the recruitment and professional development of quality Natural Resources Conservation Service Hispanic employees.

With this Scholarship Program, NOPHNRCS achieves one of its founding goals, "to develop and establish a NOPHNRCS Scholarship & Endowment Fund." NOPHNRCS intends to support Hispanics goals of higher education and to encourage Hispanics to become protectors of our country's natural resources through this Scholarship and Endowment Fund Program.

NOPHNRCS wishes to provide scholarships to deserving Hispanic students who wish to pursue, are currently enrolled in, or are admitted to an accredited four-year institution with the intent of earning a Bachelor of Science degree in a natural resources field or a natural resources conservation-related field of study.

Candidates elected to receive the 2024 NOPHNRCS Scholarship will be selected based on academic achievement, personal strengths, demonstrated leadership abilities, and career goals. NOPHNRCS will accept Scholarship Applications postmarked by **Friday, July 26th, 2024.**

The NOPHNRCS Scholarship Committee will determine the 2024 NOPHNRCS recipients utilizing established selection criteria. Each applicant will be evaluated based on their complete Scholarship Application package that must include the items above. The NOPHNRCS Scholarship Committee is organized and administered by the NOPHNRCS National Council.

To learn more about NOPHNRCS or USDA-NRCS please explore our web pages at <http://www.nophnrcse.org> or <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>, respectively.