

Illini Science Policy Program 2023-2024
Host Agency Information & Project Overview
**as of 2/6/2023 – funding may change some host eligibility*

Legislative Host Placement

Illinois Legislative Black Caucus and the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus Foundation

Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus and the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation

Illinois Office of the Lieutenant Governor, Juliana Stratton

State Agency Host Placement

Illinois Department of Agriculture, Division of Natural Resources

Illinois Board of Higher Education, Early Childhood Consortium

Illinois Emergency Management Agency (*pending*)

Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Office of Broadband

Illini Science Policy Program Host Information: State Agencies

Host: [Illinois Department of Agriculture, Division of Natural Resources](#)

Location: State Fairgrounds

Scholar Supervisor: Michael Woods, IDOA, Division Manager, Natural Resources Division

Start Date: June 1, 2022

Preferred Qualifications

We are looking for a dynamic social science research assistant to join the Division of Natural Resources to assist with a study of overcoming barriers to implementing climate smart agricultural practices and policy. In this role, the scholar will assist IDOA staff and industry partners with research work, such as supporting focus groups, performing subject interviews, processing research data, and updating databases.

To ensure success as the research assistant, the Scholar should have a nuanced understanding of the agricultural conservation, nutrient loss reduction strategies, social sciences and the ability to use critical thinking methods to perform crucial research. The Scholar should be an organized individual who can accurately manage large quantities of data. The Scholar will help organize data, manage databases, review research findings, and analyze the information to ensure it is ready for publication.

Essential skills for scholar include: reading comprehension, active listening and writing, critical thinking, complex problem solving and office programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint). Personal scholar traits required include: integrity, attention to detail, analytical thinking, dependability, independence.

Position Description

The Illinois Department of Agriculture proposes engaging the SWCDs in a stakeholder process to determine and rank perceived barriers within their individual service areas for implementing conservation practices at a level necessary to reach scenario targets. The results of this process would then be used to inform the creation of framework tool to help SWCDs and local conservation practitioners' evaluation local goals and opportunities and set reasonable and attainable short-term targets for expanding practice adoption.

The information collected from the ranked list of perceived barriers will be converted into educational materials for review by policy makers when evaluating opportunities to expand or improve program access as well as financial assistance opportunities, especially in regard to directing resources to those efforts which are most likely to produce co-benefits related to agriculture and community resilience such as improved water quality.

The proposed research addresses the perceptions of different stakeholders about the relative importance of barriers to the consideration of evidence in decisions about climate-resilient best management practices, conservation initiatives and nutrient loss reduction strategies, placing the emphasis on identifying solutions to highly ranked barriers. The end result of the study is to understand the key barriers preventing the use of climate-resilient/conservation best management science in production practices, policy, and to implement potential solutions to overcome them on a local level.

The framework tool will build upon the ranked barriers list to provide SWCDs with guidance on how to 1) summarize existing assets, 2) identify vulnerabilities, 3) set measurable goals, 4) leverage existing assets; and 5) develop county or watershed level roadmaps for implementation. The framework will organize and compile existing data sets and integrate accessible resources like CaRPE, COMET planner, and other geospatial and decision support tools. This framework will allow individual SWCDs to maximize

environmental outcomes and on-farm productivity by outlining strategies for enhanced partner collaboration, identification and leveraging of additional funding to implement best management practices.

The results from the collection of perceived barriers and the development of the framework tool are meant to not only guide short-term actions but also identify outstanding needs, gaps and services that policy makers should address. Once identified, communication and educational materials will be developed to highlight actions that can be taken to advance climate-smart ag opportunities across Illinois. This includes highlighting the GHG mitigation potential of climate smart practices, resilience benefits and other positive co-benefits that would result from further investment in climate-smart practices. These efforts will be supported through modeling expected environmental outcomes through tools like S.T.A.R (Saving Tomorrow's Agricultural Resources).

Project Activities

1. Assist with the development of barriers survey
2. Share survey with all 97 SWCDs through the Association of Illinois SWCD
3. Assist with conducting 10 follow-up interviews with a targeted group of SWCD staff and representatives
4. Utilize the advisory committee organized under the Illinois Climate Smart Agricultural Partnership to review survey results
5. Assist with establishing internal ranking utilizing an Interpretive Structural Model
6. Assist with hosting workshops with industry experts and SWCD representatives to validate identified barriers and share results

Create Framework Tool

1. Support the assembly of a statewide datasets downscaled to the county level, including
 - a. Estimates of current practice adoption and N, P and sediment loading;
 - b. Marginal cropland and areas with degraded soils including highly erodible lands, floodplains and riparian areas, etc.;
 - c. Grainsheds/ Sourcing regions for CPGS, Seed companies, etc. including identification of current programs/pilots;
 - d. Drinking water sourcing regions / municipalities to target for water quality trading investments, including current programs/pilots;
 - e. Directory of ag service providers currently offering or interested in expanding conservation services;
 - f. Local land trusts / natural areas / conservation easements, including current programs/pilots; and
 - g. Current research projects, efforts, demo sites, including existing partnerships and collaborators.
2. Assist with conducting overlay analysis to identify target areas for
 - a. State/federal investment, including existing partnerships, water quality and soil health planning efforts, funding trends, SWCD activity, etc.
 - b. Enhanced partnerships – Areas with a higher potential for private investment
 - Areas with the highest potential for soil carbon storage
3. Assist with the development of templates/guidebooks for resource prioritization, policy, fundraising, and outreach.

Host: [Illinois Board of Higher Education](#), Early Childhood Consortium

Location: Remote office, occasional travel may be required to meetings or events

Scholar Supervisor: Christi Chadwick, Project Director, *Early Childhood Consortium*

Start Date: June 1, 2022

Preferred Qualifications

Master's or Ph.D. level are both acceptable. Desire to learn about higher education, public policy, state agency processes and state level research projects is a must. Experience in data, education, or early childhood is optional.

Position Description (Brief): The Scholar will work closely with the Director of the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE or Consortium) and the ECACE team at the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), in partnership with the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). This position sits at the intersection of research and policy and has the potential to support institutions and state agencies to develop seamless pathways and structures to meet the needs of working adults. The Scholar will support this work through collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data from primarily colleges and universities on this work in order to meet legislative reporting requirements and to better understand the impact of the Consortium, the ECACE legislation, and the federal stimulus funding.

About the IBHE: The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) is responsible for overseeing the state's systems of colleges and universities that educate nearly 775,000 students a year, employ approximately 165,000 people across the state, and represent more than \$50 billion annual impact on the state's economy. The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), whose mission is to create and sustain a world-class educational system in Illinois that allows students from all communities and backgrounds to reach their full potential, recently released its Strategic Plan – A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth.

About ECACE: The Strategic Plan included the creation of a Consortium of higher education institutions, which was codified through legislation and is now known as the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE). Comprised of over 60 2- and 4-year institutions, ECACE is a multi-faceted, innovative, cross-agency initiative (directed by IBHE and ICCB) to address the early childhood workforce shortage, advance equity, and increase access to seamless educational pathways for working adults, while removing economic and geographical barriers. At its core, the initiative is designed to ensure working adults can access degrees and credentials. Through components such as a robust scholarship programs, supports from mentors and navigators, and redesigned higher education pathways, the Consortium seeks to significantly increase enrollment, persistence, and completion in programs over the next three years, while laying the foundation for a transformative higher education collaborative.

About the Position (Detailed): Key to the success of the initiative is better understanding the opportunities and challenges that stakeholders in the work face in working to transform programs while working to immediately upskill working adults and providing stakeholders with the technical assistance and supports needed to be successful. As an IBHE/ECACE team member, candidates will have the opportunity to both dive deep into the work of our institutions and to use the data and information to support short and long-term change, while documenting important areas of work. A significant piece of the work will be to work with the team to review reports submitted by our institutions to develop reports for the ECACE and the Advisory Committee, the Illinois Department of Human Services, and the Illinois General Assembly on the work of the Consortium and its member institutions. ECACE is required by statute to report annually on some items and twice annually on others, essentially requiring one large report and one small report each year. The candidate for this position will need to develop a project plan for completing the reports,

analyzing quantitative and qualitative information from participating institutions of higher education and others, and aggregating and reporting on key trends, work, and challenges. Reporting will be both informal to internal IBHE and ICCB team members and more formal to the General Assembly, the Governor's Office, and others. This may also include putting together slide decks and presentations for leadership and others to present reports to the legislative bodies. The primary deliverables for the work will be developing (and managing to) a project plan to produce the reports, draft reports, and accompanying presentation materials as needed (e.g., slide decks). In addition to the reports, the candidate will be asked to support the team to use data and information to both support continuous quality improvement on the initiative, understand where technical assistance and supports are needed. Lastly, the scholar will assist the ECACE team with day-to-day work to advance the work of the Consortium, which may include supporting grants to institutions, supporting technical assistance and communities of practices, seeking out resources, meeting planning and facilitation, and conducting web research.

Host: [Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Office of Broadband](#)

Location: Remote, with some travel required to offices in Springfield and Chicago, this should be discussed during your interview.

Scholar Supervisor: Adrienne Pickett, Visiting Coordinator for Broadband

Start Date: July 1, 2023

Preferred Qualifications

Minimum qualifications: advanced degree in an appropriate field (examples include Social Work, Public Policy, Urban Planning, Law, and Education).

Preferred qualifications: Community development experience, GIS experience, group facilitation, and/or DEI training.

Project Description *(may hire up to 2 Scholars)*

ISPP scholars will work in a hybrid format between their homes, and either Chicago, the Champaign-Urbana area, or Springfield, to assist full-time staff with the programming work of the Illinois Office of Broadband, housed in the Illinois Broadband Lab. ISPP scholars can expect to assist program managers in their work related to Digital Equity programming and Mapping and Data analysis.

For Digital Equity programming, scholars can expect to assist managers with project management, data analysis, and webinar presentations. Activities can include reviewing and assessing the quality of project deliverables. In addition, scholars might be called upon to help facilitate small and large group meetings hosted by the Illinois Broadband Lab (e.g. monthly state digital equity call) or the Illinois Office of Broadband (e.g. quarterly Broadband Advisory Council call).

For Mapping and Data analysis, scholars can expect to be called upon to contribute to quarterly state-driven activities conducted by the Illinois Office of Broadband, including the completion of preparation work needed for the Office to write and submit federal grant applications. Scholars can expect to be called upon to assist program managers, consultants, and grantees with the collection, compilation, and presentation of their data for purposes of making it available to a general public.

ISPP scholars will be expected to join weekly or semi-weekly office calls to check in on progress made toward assigned projects. In addition, scholars will be expected to participate in a joint Office of Broadband fellows call. Furthermore, scholars can expect to participate in person or virtually in program-related activities throughout the state, as well as profession-related webinars.

Finally, the ISPP scholars will be responsible for preparing for and staffing the Illinois Office of Broadband table at the annual Illinois State Fair's STEAM Expo in Springfield in August 2023.

Host: [Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology](#)

Location: Hybrid – negotiable days for working onsite (120 W. Jefferson Springfield, IL)

Scholar Supervisor: Mary Reynolds, CIO Education Group

Start Date: June 1, 2022

Preferred Qualification

- Familiarity and experience with Microsoft suite tools.
- Familiarity with K-12 education and post-secondary education systems in Illinois
- Understanding of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) education programs
- Familiarity with [DoIT STEAM website](#) and resources

Project Description

Background on DoIT

DoIT's mission is to empower the State of Illinois through high-value, customer-centric technology by delivering best-in-class innovation to client agencies fostering collaboration and empowering employees to provide better services to residents, businesses, and visitors. The Department of Innovation & Technology (DoIT) became an agency by statute on July 20, 2018 and is charged with responsibility for the information technology functions of agencies under the jurisdiction of the Governor.

DoIT is leading a digital transformation toward an enterprise approach to technology at the State of Illinois to gain efficiencies and improve service delivery for customer agencies who in turn, serve the residents of Illinois. This transformation is resulting in improved security and data protection, fewer redundant systems, more efficient technology spending, and greater interagency collaboration.

DoIT delivers statewide technology, innovation and telecommunication services to state government agencies, boards and commissions as well as policy and standards development, lifecycle investment planning, enterprise solutions, and privacy and security management.

DoIT manages the [Illinois Century Network \(ICN\)](#), a service that creates and maintains high speed telecommunications networks providing reliable communication links to and among Illinois schools, institutions of higher education, libraries, museums, research institutions, state agencies, units of local government and other entities that provide service to Illinois residents.

Goals and objectives for DoIT Illini Science Policy Scholar

- Provide professional contributions to inform research, policy, and management of issues within DoIT related to Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM) initiatives.
- Help guide development of STEAM policies for the State of Illinois.
- Collaborate with other state agencies and organizations to promote STEAM activities statewide and coordinate opportunities, including support for the [DoIT STEAM Newsletter](#).
- Assist in development and maintenance of web resources on the [DoIT STEAM website](#).
- Assist in gathering resources and developing model STEAM curriculum and activities for K-12 educators as well as connections with postsecondary education. Audience will also include students, parents, and youth organizations such as 4-H.

- Share employment opportunities in STEAM fields through potential development of improved pathways into government.
- Assist communications for DoIT through social media, website support, and outreach activities.
- Assist in the development and operations of the STEAM Expo at the 2023 Illinois State Fair.
- Assist DoIT's State Data Practice in developing and communicating data visualization standards.
- Assist DoIT's State Data Practice in ad hoc data visualization projects.

Mentorship and Engagement @ DoIT

DoIT intends to help guide the development and awareness of STEAM educational opportunities throughout Illinois through collaborative work with state agencies, K-12 schools, advocacy organizations, colleges and universities, business, and industry. This engagement work aligns closely with the Illinois Extension projects related to STEM 4-H youth development and will require coordination with Extension STEM Specialists. Development of expanded STEAM resources will cultivate opportunities through the U of I's public outreach and engagement network to expand educational programs throughout the state.

The Illini Science Policy Scholar at DoIT will be engaged directly with projects related to education technology coordination efforts and those initiatives specifically related to STEAM fields that integrate all five Extension critical issue areas. Active engagement with anticipated initiatives includes organization of a STEAM Expo event at the Illinois State Fair, coordination of online STEAM resources and activities for multiple audiences, and expansion of STEAM opportunities for youth throughout Illinois. Professional growth opportunities will enable the fellow to actively engage in public policy development, collaborate with a variety of advocacy organizations, focus on creative resource development, and explore innovative ways to communicate activities.

Host: Illinois Emergency Management Agency

Location:

Scholar Supervisor:

Start Date:

Preferred Qualification

- *Pending*

Project Description

- *Pending*

Illini Science Policy Program Host Information: Legislative Offices

Host: Illinois Black Caucus & [Illinois Legislative Black Caucus Foundation](#)

Location: Hybrid (Springfield or Chicago office 2 days/week – discuss during interview)

Scholar Supervisor: ILBC Joint Chairperson Carol Ammons & Tiffany Hightower, Executive Director, ILBCF

Start Date: August 2023

Preferred Qualifications

We need someone with strong analytical and research skills. The candidate will also need to exhibit an exceptional understanding of written and verbal communication. It would also be quite helpful if the candidate understood and has an aptitude for social media marketing.

Project Description

The Scholar for the Illinois Black Caucus / Black Caucus Foundation will:

Help promote, organize, and staff legislative events, such as annual meetings, government events, letter-writing campaigns, in-district meetings and ILBCF events. Attend committee hearings held by the state legislature, help with press conferences, take video and photo at events. Research legislative issues for members of the General Assembly or for upcoming articles including but limited to critical issues such as food, economy, environment, community, and/or health.

Create and upload content for social media networking sites and websites. Help develop and oversee the relationships with members and advocacy groups. Help create a plan to effectively engage constituents. Administrative duties such as answering phones, filing and assisting with mailings. Assist with various committee assignments, for example : Environment; Elem Sec Ed School Curricula Policies; Economic Development & Housing; Renewable Energy & Sustainability; Restorative Justice, Healthcare and Human Services.

Help create a plan to effectively engage constituents. Administrative duties such as answering phones, filing and assisting with mailings. Assist with various committee assignments, for example : Environment; Elem Sec Ed School Curricula Policies; Economic Development & Housing; Renewable Energy & Sustainability; Restorative Justice. In addition, the scholar will work with the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus Foundation (ILBCF) with a focus on the following: -empower the Illinois black community and increase access to federal, state and community programs in critical issue areas;-college access for black youth who need assistance to further their education.

Since its inception in 2002, the ILBCF has been dedicated to protecting, developing and advancing black communities around Illinois. To ensure our community is aware of legislative changes, the ILBCF regularly holds legislative forums where we inform residents about changes in state government, the ISP scholar will assist with events such as legislative forums. In addition, the scholar will work directly with joint chair of the ILBC and the executive director of the ILBCF. The scholar will benefit tremendously by their expertise and mentorship. The scholar will also lead our Brain Trust on Health work with our Institute arm. The scholar will also support the work of our policy institute and annual conference.

Host: [Illinois Latino Caucus | Illinois Latino Caucus Foundation](#)

Location: Hybrid with onsite in Chicago foundation office (discuss during interview)

Scholar Supervisor: Oswaldo Alvarez, Executive Director ILLCF

Start Date: August 2023

Preferred Qualifications

Preferred qualifications include an individual that is organized, excellent at time management, task-driven, able to switch between tasks efficiently, and is a creative thinker.

Scope of Work / Project Description

Founded in 2002, the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation (ILLCF) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit whose mission is to foster the next generation of Latino leadership in Illinois while advocating for the needs and wants of the community. Since its founding, the ILLCF has worked closely with the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus to serve as a public policy arm that informs and promotes equitable public policy that targets and promotes thriving Latino communities. The policy priorities are divided into five overarching issue areas: (1) Protecting immigrant and language access, (2) health equity, (3) education equity, (4) economic justice for Latinx workers and families, and (5) Latinx representation which are outlined in Raices.

In 2022, the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation hired an Executive Director and until then, programming was limited to the annual conference, and the scholarship program. Within the last year, the ILLCF has improved the scholarship program by expanding its' reach by nearly 70% and have increased the visibility of the foundation highlighting the commitment to fostering the next generation of Latino leaders.

With that said, the last year has been a year of building, expanding, and improving the work of the foundation across 3 areas: development, programming, and organizational management. The ILLCF sits in a unique position to inform policymakers that work on the board of the foundation. Through programming that ranges from the scholarship program to panel discussions and workshops that help inform the Raices document- the foundation is working to expand its' impact for Latinos across the state.

There is much work that is being done and will continue to be done even as the next scholar enters the foundation. The scholar who joins the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Team will be able to hone current skills while acquiring new skills and knowledge that can/will be useful in future endeavors including but not limited to; cross-organizational communications and collaboration, program development, community-research, governmental networking, and organizational development.

The scholar, depending on their background and interest, may be able to determine an area of interest but this can be discussed during the application, and interview process to determine if the ILLCF is a good fit. We invite all interested applicants to apply!

Host: [Illinois Office of the Lieutenant Governor, Juliana Stratton](#)

Location Hybrid with offices located at 100 W. Randolph in Chicago and 214 State House, Springfield, it is recommended location is discussed during your interview to determine if relocation is needed to a specific city or if remote work with travel is an option.

Scholar Supervisor: Dr. Susan Ogwal, Policy Director

Start Date: July 2023

Preferred Qualifications

- 1) Must have Interest in public policy ,State government or agency work and/or community centered experience
- 2) Masters, PhD or professional degree from an accredited university or college. In some instances, students who are ABD in PhD coursework will be considered and are encouraged to apply.
- 3) Must be willing to travel and be flexible with schedule.

Project Description

Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton serves Illinois as the state's 48th Lieutenant Governor. Her portfolio includes leading the Justice, Equity and Opportunity Initiative, and chairing the Illinois Council on Women and Girls, the Governor's Rural Affairs Council, the Military Economic Development Council, and the Illinois River Coordinating Council. Working under the guidance of the Policy Director, the Scholar will collaborate with colleagues in the Office of the Illinois Lt. Governor, other state agencies, local governments, colleges and universities, Illinois communities, community based organizations, and other stakeholders to research and assist in the development of strategies, policies and action plans to identify and address food insecurity and agricultural inequity in Illinois, diversity in education , and assist with coordination of our councils. The Scholar will support community outreach and engagement, event planning, preparing policy briefs, and other related work in the office.