

# USDA Pathways Program: Adel A. Malak Scholarship

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is the public health agency in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Within FSIS, the Office of Field Operations (OFO) is the **frontline in inspecting** meat, poultry, and processed egg products. OFO coordinates inspection and enforcement activities in more than 6,000 federally inspected establishments nationwide, as well as at import establishments, ensuring that the products that FSIS regulates are **safe, wholesome, and properly labeled**.

Our Agency protects the public from foodborne illness. Assisting in this mission are approximately 1,100 dedicated **Public Health Veterinarians** (Veterinary Medical Officers) who are trained in public health and regulatory medicine. FSIS is the largest federal employer of veterinarians in the United States.

The USDA Pathways Program offers different "pathway" opportunities for students and recent graduates to work in agriculture, science, technology, math, environment, management, business, and many other fields. FSIS' OFO participates in this program, offering the Adel A. Malak Scholarship to create a pipeline to attract and retain talented veterinarians to protect public health through food safety.

## Who Is Adel A. Malak?

Dr. Adel A. Malak started his professional career with FSIS in 1985 as an in-plant Public Health Veterinarian in Phoenix, AZ. He quickly moved up the ranks to become a staff officer in the Western Regional Office in Alameda, CA, and later became the Deputy District Manager of the Alameda District Office. Dr. Malak was also instrumental in recruiting and mentoring many students from the University of Fresno and California Polytechnic State University. FSIS lost a beloved friend and colleague when Dr. Malak died in 2012. He was a giving and caring employee, and contributed greatly to the mission of food safety.

## Scholarship Experiences

As an Adel A. Malak Scholarship recipient, you will experience and take on a variety of Public Health Veterinarian responsibilities to more fully understand the great work FSIS does to protect public health through food safety. Working in the plants, you may:

- Assist in the examination of livestock and poultry for the purpose of detecting diseases or abnormalities which would render the meat unfit for human food purposes. Work with line inspectors to perform visual, tactile and incisory inspections of heads, viscera, carcasses, and edible offal.
- Assist a program veterinarian in making dispositions on abnormal animals, carcasses, or birds retained for veterinary examination. These dispositions will include infectious diseases, neoplasms, trauma, contamination, poisonings, residues, metabolic disorders, etc.
- Assist a program veterinarian in performing activities to verify that animals are handled and treated humanely.
- Observe conditions in the plant to ensure that sanitary conditions meet prescribed requirements.
- Observe conditions in the plant to ensure the plant is following its Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (SSOPs).





## Scholarship Benefits

The Adel A. Malak Scholarship provides students:

1. \$15,000 scholarship funding for tuition, books, tutors and laboratory fees awarded for each year in the program.
2. Paid employment during summer and school breaks as a Veterinary Student Trainee while you complete your DVM. The work schedule during the academic year is negotiable. The Adel A. Malak Scholarship provides the opportunity to work up to 640 hours to meet Pathways Programs requirements for conversion.
3. Conversion without further competition to a permanent appointment at the GS-12 level with FSIS' OFO upon successful completion of the program with a DVM degree, training, and other work requirement(s). Note, upon conversion, the employee may be assigned supervisory responsibilities.
4. Comprehensive mentorship and professional development program.
5. Participation in the Federal Employees Retirement System and Thrift Savings Plan (401K plan) and paid vacation and sick leave.

After completing all of the mandatory requirements for the program, the student must convert to a full-time, in-plant Public Health Veterinarian, GS-701-11/12, for at least 1 calendar year (12 months) for each school year (2 semesters, 3 quarters, or the equivalent) that the student was covered by the scholarship. If the student does not accept an employment offer from FSIS' OFO, he or she must reimburse all financial assistance received under the Adel A. Malak Scholarship. Anyone who fails to serve the entire length of the mandatory employment period must reimburse the agency a prorated share of the funds awarded.



## Application and Eligibility

Interested students must apply online via [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov). Locate the announcement using the key words "Adel A. Malak" in the search engine under the "Student and Recent Graduates" tab. Please note that you must have a USAJOBS account to apply. The announcement will open in the spring for approximately a 2-week period. Upon entrance on duty, you must:

1. Be a U.S. citizen;
2. Be enrolled full-time in a degree-seeking DVM program in an accredited veterinary college or university within the United States;
3. Have completed not more than 2 full academic years of study in veterinary medicine;
4. Be in good academic standing;
5. Agree to work for FSIS' OFO during school breaks for 640 hours prior to completion of studies.

## Required Documents

The online application system will prompt you to answer self-assessment questions and to submit the following:

1. Résumé;
2. Transcripts for all completed college work to date;
3. Proof of current enrollment on a full-time basis and/or, if applicable, a letter of acceptance to veterinary school;
4. A copy of your DD-214, if you are claiming Veterans' Preference.

Additional supplemental information and documentation will be requested at a later date if you meet eligibility and initial application requirements.

## For More Information

To check availability or learn more, call Arriell Garner at (202) 720-4086 or email [Adel.A.MalakScholarship@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:Adel.A.MalakScholarship@fsis.usda.gov).