



We create chemistry

News Release

MANRRS and AFA create CORE Synergy powered by BASF to empower agriculture leaders

An idea that started on the back of a napkin is poised to empower generations of leaders in the agricultural industry

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC, September 17, 2024 – The agriculture industry faces increasing challenges, from feeding a growing global population to addressing sustainability. Meeting these challenges requires a steady stream of skilled, well-prepared individuals entering the workforce. To cultivate the talent needed, Agriculture Future of America (AFA) and MANRRS (Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences) have created CORE Synergy, a joint effort trailblazing in its approach to fuel and empower current and future agricultural and natural resource practitioners and leaders. Through CORE Synergy, the two organizations and BASF will provide transformational training opportunities that equip participants with practical skills and knowledge, preparing them to tackle the most pressing issues in agriculture.

The program's name stands for **Creative, Open, Responsible, and Entrepreneurial**—core values that are essential for driving future growth in agriculture. There is an urgent need to cultivate the current and next generations of agricultural leaders, and this challenge requires focused effort and collaboration across industry, academia, and student organizations. This strategic partnership is

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the first of its kind to bring together organizations like MANRRS, AFA and BASF, providing leadership to support opportunities for young people and professionals to thrive in an ever-changing and dynamic agriculture industry ensuring a sustainable, innovative future for the industry.

“BASF is proud to enable this new strategic partnership between MANRRS and AFA in the creation of CORE Synergy, which we see it as part of our social responsibility for the Ag industry” says Courtney White, head of human resources for Agricultural Solutions North America at BASF.

“BASF is committed to empowering young leaders who are not just the architects of tomorrow but also the stewards of today,” said Scott Kay, Vice President of U.S. Agricultural Solutions at BASF. “Their vision and energy shape the present and pave the way for future innovations that will continually demonstrate the love of farming. Through CORE Synergy we hope to enable all generations to help farmers do the [Biggest Job on Earth](#)”

With BASF’s support, MANRRS and AFA will synergize existing programs and efforts in new ways to amplify their impact, empowering agriculture students and professionals to transform the industry.

“At AFA, we believe that the future of agriculture is built by cultivating innovative leaders who are passionate about making a difference,” says Mark Stewart, AFA CEO. “CORE Synergy is an exciting collaboration that will allow us to deepen our impact by connecting students and professionals with critical resources and transformative training. Together with MANRRS and BASF, we are committed to empowering the next generation of agricultural leaders, equipping them with the skills, knowledge, and entrepreneurial spirit needed to address the challenges of tomorrow’s agriculture industry.”

This initiative is not just about today’s students — it’s shaping the industry’s future by empowering the next generation of diverse leaders to take on leadership roles and solve the challenges that lie ahead.

“At MANRRS, we believe that diversity and inclusion are critical to the success of agriculture,” says Ebony Webber, MANRRS CEO. “CORE Synergy represents a

powerful collaboration that brings together expertise, resources, and a shared vision for cultivating the next generation of leaders. Through this partnership, we're creating a unique opportunity for students and professionals to grow their skills and expand their networks. This initiative will help ensure that the agriculture industry is not only prepared for the challenges ahead but is also led by a workforce that reflects the rich diversity of our society.”

CORE Synergy will begin in January 2025, with plans for expanded programming through 2030. This investment will result in a larger community of competent and capable agriculture leaders, equipped participants who will deliver best practices. Together, BASF, MANNRS and AFA are creating opportunities for young people to thrive in agriculture and ensure a sustainable, innovative future for the industry.

About Agriculture Future of America

AFA builds bridges for young leaders to foster engagement and innovation in food and agriculture through premier leader and career development experiences. With program participation increasing 28% in the last five years, AFA has provided 26,000 leader development experiences to college leaders and young professionals from more than 200 colleges and universities throughout 43 states since its inception in 1996. AFA has awarded more than \$11.5 million in academic and leader development scholarships. For more information about AFA, visit agfuture.org.

About Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Science (MANRRS)

Headquartered in Atlanta, GA, MANRRS promotes academic and professional advancement by empowering minorities in agriculture, natural resources and related sciences. The organization's goal is to provide the student members (junior high school through doctoral programs) of our organization with the support to become productive citizens by engaging them in leadership development activities, educational opportunities, job readiness training, and facilitating internship placement and permanent employment, with special emphasis on agriculture, natural resources, and related sciences. MANRRS encourages and promotes Agriculture, Natural Resources, and related STEM programs in an effort to interest and attract underrepresented students and professionals into pursuing educational and career opportunities in these respective areas.

About BASF's Agricultural Solutions division

Everything we do, we do for the love of farming. Farming is fundamental to provide enough healthy and affordable food for a rapidly growing population, while reducing environmental impacts. That's why we are working with partners and experts to integrate sustainability criteria into all business decisions. With €900 million in 2023, we continue to invest in a strong R&D pipeline, combining innovative

thinking with practical action in the field. Our solutions are purpose-designed for different crop systems. Connecting seeds and traits, crop protection products, digital tools and sustainability approaches, to help deliver the best possible outcomes for farmers, growers and our other stakeholders along the value chain. With teams in the lab, field, office and in production, we do everything in our power to build a sustainable future for agriculture. In 2023, our division generated sales of €10.1 billion. For more information, please visit www.agriculture.basf.com or our social media channels.

About BASF

BASF Corporation, headquartered in Florham Park, New Jersey, is the North American affiliate of BASF SE, Ludwigshafen, Germany. BASF has approximately 16,000 employees in North America and had sales of \$20.5 billion in 2023. For more information about BASF's North American operations, visit www.basf.com/us.

At BASF, we create chemistry for a sustainable future. We combine economic success with environmental protection and social responsibility. Around 112,000 employees in the BASF Group contribute to the success of our customers in nearly all sectors and almost every country in the world. Our portfolio comprises six segments: Chemicals, Materials, Industrial Solutions, Surface Technologies, Nutrition & Care and Agricultural Solutions. BASF generated sales of €68.9 billion in 2023. BASF shares are traded on the stock exchange in Frankfurt (BAS) and as American Depositary Receipts (BASFY) in the United States. Further information at www.basf.com.