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# **Making the Difference: The Presidential Management Fellows Program**

Owen Highfill  
Federal Housing Finance Agency

University of Georgia  
September 7, 2011

# Partnership for Public Service

The Partnership works to revitalize our federal government by inspiring a new generation to serve and by transforming the way government works.



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# A Great Moment in Government

- ★ On July 30, 2008, President Bush signed the Housing and Economic Recovery Act (HERA)



# Agenda

- ★ Government Mythbusting
- ★ My Federal Story
- ★ The Presidential Management Fellows Program
  - Requirements, Application, Nomination, Assessment, Appointment
- ★ Resources for Students and Jobseekers
- ★ Q&A



# Federal Employment Myths

- ★ The political science major myth
- ★ The low pay myth
- ★ The Washington, D.C. myth
- ★ The bureaucracy myth



# Myth #1: The Political Science Major Myth

- ★ Federal employees are all social sciences majors. The government doesn't need people with other backgrounds.



# Busting Myth #1: Find Your Federal Fit

## 2010 Entry-level Hires (GS-5, GS-6, GS-7, GS-9)

<b>Occupation</b>	<b># Employees</b>
Administration	11,503
Medical and Public Health	7,495
Legal	6,201
Accounting and Budget	5,301
Investigation	4,177
Business	3,722
Social Science and Psychology	2,881
Engineering and Architecture	2,519



# Myth #2: The Low Pay Myth

- ★ Salaries for federal employees are low, low, low. You're better off going to work for the private sector.



# Busting Myth #2: General Schedule

- ★ Federal salaries are set by the General Schedule (GS)
  - Grades 1-15
- ★ Each pay grade has 10 steps
- ★ Varies by geographic location
- ★ Within a few years, you can progress through several grades



# Busting Myth #2: Pay Criteria

Grade	Qualifying education
GS-5	4 academic years above high school leading to a bachelor's degree OR a bachelor's degree
GS-7	Bachelor's degree with one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Class standing (upper third of class)</li><li>• 3.0 or higher GPA; 3.5 or higher GPA in major</li><li>• Honor society membership</li></ul>
GS-9	Master's degree (or equivalent)
GS-11	Doctorate degree

Source: [opm.gov/qualifications/SEC/s2-e5.asp](https://www.opm.gov/qualifications/SEC/s2-e5.asp)

**PMFs are usually hired  
at GS-9 or GS-11**



# Busting Myth #2: Sample 2011 Starting Salaries

City	GS-5	GS-7	GS-9	GS-11
Atlanta	\$32,722	\$40,534	\$49,581	\$59,987
Chicago	\$34,316	\$42,508	\$51,995	\$62,909
Seattle	\$33,414	\$41,390	\$50,628	\$61,255
New York City	\$35,309	\$43,738	\$53,500	\$64,729
San Francisco	\$37,073	\$45,923	\$56,172	\$67,963
Washington, D.C.	\$34,075	\$42,209	\$51,630	\$62,467

Source: <http://opm.gov/oca/10tables/indexGS.asp>

**Then, 1-2 years later...  
possible PMF career  
progression**

# Busting Myth #2: Benefits of Government Service

- ★ Student loan repayment assistance
  - Some agencies may repay up to \$10,000 of your student loans each year
  - In 2009, 36 agencies provided 8,454 employees with \$61.8 million in assistance
- ★ Flexible schedules and generous vacation packages
- ★ Training and professional development
- ★ Competitive health and retirement benefits
- ★ Excellent advancement opportunities

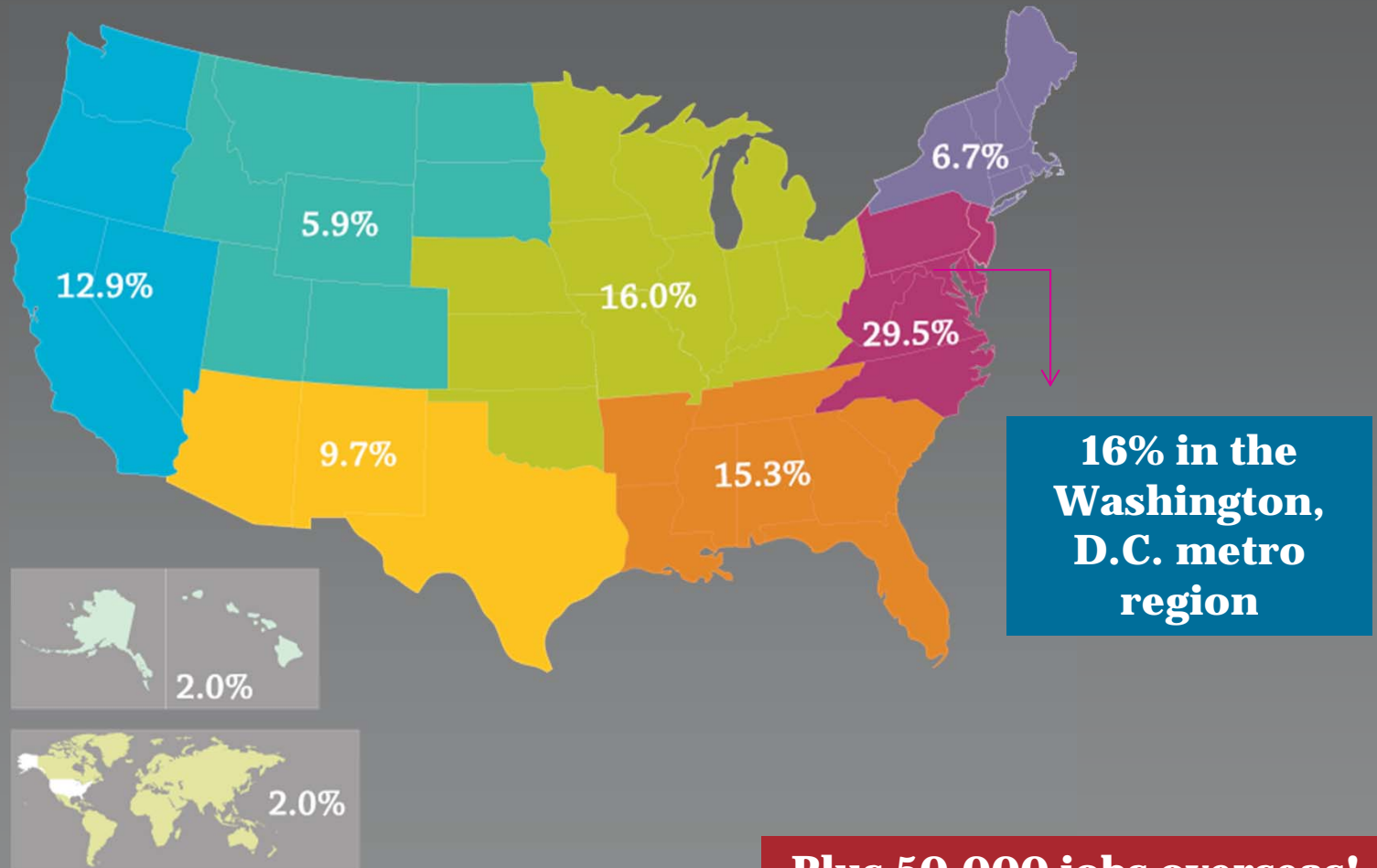


# Myth #3: The Washington, D.C. Myth

- ★ If you work for the federal government, you have to work in Washington, D.C. Say goodbye to your friends and family.



# Busting Myth #3: Federal Jobs Are Everywhere!



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# Myth #4: The Bureaucracy Myth

- ★ Federal employees are paper pushers who are caught up in bureaucracy. Your work as a federal employee doesn't make a difference.



# Busting Myth #4: My Federal Story

- ★ Conservatorship Operations Specialist at the Federal Housing Finance Agency
  - Conservatorship of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac



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# Busting Myth #4: My Career Path

- ★ How does someone with a Master's degree in Contemporary American Literature end up working for the federal government as a Presidential Management Fellow?



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# Busting Myth #4: My Favorite Federal Moment

- ★ Presidential Management Fellows Orientation, Gettysburg, PA



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# Current PMF Program in Place through the end of 2011

## ★ Presidential Management Fellowship (PMF)

- Federal government's most prestigious fellowship ([www.pmf.gov](http://www.pmf.gov))
- Students must apply during fall semester of senior year of graduate school (**September 15-25, 2011**)
- Students must be nominated by their schools
- PMFs can be non-competitively converted to permanent positions



# Recent Changes to the Federal Hiring Process

## ★ Pathways Programs

- December 2010 Executive Order
- Proposed rule currently in comment period until October 4, 2011

★ For more information, visit  
[www.opm.gov/hiringreform/pathways](http://www.opm.gov/hiringreform/pathways) or  
[www.ourpublicservice.org](http://www.ourpublicservice.org)



# Pathways Programs: PMF

## ★ Presidential Management Fellowship (PMF)

- Open to current graduate students and ones who have completed a graduate degree within the past two years
- Rigorous assessment process
- Paid, two-year program
- PMFs can be non-competitively converted to permanent positions



# PMF Requirements

- ★ Individual Development Plan (IDP)
- ★ Performance plan
- ★ 80 hours of training per year
- ★ Developmental assignment



# Benefits of the PMF Program

- ★ Rotational assignments
- ★ Mentoring
- ★ Executive interviews/shadowing
- ★ Additional training opportunities



# PMF Application Process

## ★ USAjobs.gov

- Upload resume
- Fill out questionnaire
- Submit Veteran's Preference documents
- Print Nomination form
- Submit application



## USAJOBS<sup>®</sup>

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This is a United States Office of Personnel Management website.  
USAJOBS is the Federal Government's official one-stop source for Federal jobs and employment information.



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# Keys to Creating a Federal Resume

- ★ USAjobs.gov Resume Builder
- ★ Use keywords/action words
- ★ Be specific
- ★ Check status



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OURPUBLICSERVICE.ORG

# PMF Nomination Process

- ★ Check with your department head or dean
- ★ Submit nomination form to your nominating official
- ★ Application is not complete until nomination form is submitted!



# Common Mistakes When Applying

- ★ Eligibility: Must graduate between September 1, 2011 and August 31, 2012
- ★ Application Timeframe: September 15-25, 2011
- ★ Be prepared before you start



# PMF Assessment Process

## ★ Online assessment

- Email invitation
- Timed assessment

## ★ In-person assessment

- November-December 2011
- 1 hour
- Locations: Atlanta, Washington, Boston, Chicago, Denver, San Francisco



# PMF Appointment Process

- ★ Finalist status lasts 1 year
- ★ Online job search
- ★ 3-day job fair
  - Washington, DC
  - February or March 2012



# Resources for Students and Jobseekers

★ [Bestplacestowork.org](http://Bestplacestowork.org)

★ [USA.gov](http://USA.gov)



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# Bestplacestowork.org

RANKINGS ABOUT BEST PLACES ANALYSIS FOR JOB SEEKERS FOR AGENCIES FAQs CONTACT US

## The Best Places to Work

### What Are You Interested In?

You can assign a rating to the categories below to indicate their importance. Select the item you want to include in the report, and then click the dots in the row to add or remove stars.

Employee Skills/Mission Match	. . .	Training and Development	. . .
Strategic Management	. . .	Support for Diversity	. . .
Teamwork	. . .	Pay	. . .
Effective Leadership	. . .	Family Friendly Culture and Benefits	. . .
Performance Based Rewards and Advancement	. . .	Work/Life Balance	. . .

Generate Custom Report

Employee Skills/Mission Match	2	Government Accountability Office	81.6	76.6	6.60
Strategic Management	4	Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation	76.2	0.00	
Teamwork		Smithsonian Institution			



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- [Agriculture Department \(USDA\)](#)

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# Q&A?

## ★ Owen Highfill

- [Owen.highfill@fhfa.gov](mailto:Owen.highfill@fhfa.gov)

## ★ *Call to Serve* Team

- [calltoserve@ourpublicservice.org](mailto:calltoserve@ourpublicservice.org)





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[makingthedifference.org](http://makingthedifference.org)