



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT  
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Thursday, January 13, 2000

**MEMORANDUM FOR: Heads Of Executive Departments And Agencies**

FROM: Janice R. Lachance Director U.S. Office of Personnel Management

Subject: Statement by OPM Director, Janice R. Lachance Responding to the Merit Systems Protection Board's Report on Two Special Hiring Programs

***Statement by U.S. Office of Personnel Management Director Janice R. Lachance Responding to the Merit Systems Protection Boards Report "Restoring Merit to Federal Hiring: Why Two Special Hiring Programs Should Be Ended"***

Today's MSPB report on the government's use of the Outstanding Scholar, Bilingual/Bicultural programs is wrong. I strongly disagree with its conclusion that these programs are not needed.

These programs are important tools to help agencies recruit and achieve a diverse workforce...one that looks like America, one that acknowledges that everyone has something to contribute. And at the end of the day, highly qualified people get the jobs.

They certainly do not undermine the merit system...a system that OPM has been given the responsibility to protect.

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*As Director of the federal government's lead human resources agency, Lachance serves as the chief advisor to the White House on federal HR issues, including personnel practices under the system of merit principles, recruiting and retaining a qualified and diverse federal work force, health and retirement benefits, training, labor and management relations, and the Senior Executive Service.*