MDA Entry Level Workforce Initiatives: SMART Scholarship for Service and the Missile Defense Career Development Program (MDCDP)

To: University Innovation Summit

By: Vicki Kitchens
Missile Defense Agency
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DoD SMART Scholarship for Service

- Science, Mathematics and Research for Transformation (SMART) Scholarship for Service
  - MDA has participated as a Sponsoring Facility since 2016
  - SMART Scholars are competitively selected annually
  - Allocations are aligned to MDA Engineering, Test & Evaluation, Information Technology, and Quality, Safety & Mission Assurance
  - SMART Scholars intern with MDA while pursuing STEM related disciplines
    - BS, MS and PhD
    - Scholars are partnered with a MDA Sponsor/Mentor
  - Scholarship for Service Program - Graduates are hired into the Missile Defense Career Development Program (MDCDP)
What is SMART’s Goal?

To increase the Department of Defense (DoD) workforce with highly skilled STEM scholars pursuing disciplines that are critical to national security functions.
Eligibility
Requirements

- U.S. Citizen
- Obtain/Maintain Security Clearance
- 18 Years or Older
- 8-12 Weeks Summer Internship
- 3.0 Minimum GPA
- Employment with DoD
- Degree in STEM
- 1.5 Year Requirement

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Award

Benefits

- Full Tuition
- Annual Stipend
- Summer Internships
- Book and Health Allowance
- Experienced Mentor
- Employment

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Scholar Benefits

Full tuition and fees (minimum 1.5, maximum 5 years funding) BS, MS, and PhD degrees at any accredited college or university in the U.S.

Annual stipend provided

- $25,000 Bachelor’s
- $33,000 Master’s
- $38,000 PhD

Book and Health Insurance allowances

Summer Internship Experience (8-12 weeks)

Experienced mentor at a DoD Facility

Post-graduation employment at DoD Facility

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SMART Scholarship
Disciplines

- Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering
- Biomedical Engineering
- Biosciences
- Chemical Engineering
- Chemistry
- Civil Engineering
- Cognitive, Neural, and Behavioral Sciences
- Computer and Computational Sciences/Engineering
- Electrical Engineering
- Environmental Sciences

- Geosciences
- Industrial and Systems Engineering
- Information Sciences
- Materials Science and Engineering
- Mathematics
- Mechanical Engineering
- Naval Architecture and Ocean Engineering
- Nuclear Engineering
- Oceanography
- Operations Research
- Physics
SMART Timeline
APPLICATION CYCLE

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<td>APPLICATION AUGUST: SMART Application OPENS!</td>
<td>APPLICATION DECEMBER: SMART Application CLOSES!</td>
<td>EVALUATION JANUARY: Applications ranked by evaluation panel through online portal</td>
<td>SELECTION FEB-MARCH: Final applicant list available online for DoD facility selection</td>
<td>AWARDS &amp; SECURITY APRIL: Award offers made. Awardees notified to accept or decline award. Clearance processing begins upon acceptance.</td>
<td>SITE VISIT MAY-JUN: New awardees visit DoD facility (option to opt out).</td>
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MDA participates as a sponsoring facility in the areas of Engineering, Information Technology and Cyber; Application Window August 1 to December 1

For more Information: visit https://smartscholarship.org

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SMART Timeline

SCHOLAR CYCLE

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**ACADEMIC PURSUIT (PHASE 1)**

**AUG-JUN:**
New cohort begins academic pursuit. Continuing scholars progress through Phase 1. Monthly stipends provided to awardees and scholars.

**SECURITY**
Continued processing of clearances as needed.

**GRADUATION/HIRING - Transition to Phase 2**
Hiring process begins upon graduation.

**INTERNSHIPS**
**MAY-JUL:**
Scholars intern with their DoD Sponsoring Facility

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• The Missile Defense Career Development Program (MDCDP) is a 3-year developmental program for entry level employees that is constructed to provide a variety of technical, acquisition, and training experiences within their career field.
  ─ Multiple Rotational Assignments
  ─ DAU Level I Certification in Career Field
  ─ Additional training from a variety of sources
    • Technical Competencies
    • MDA Core Competencies
    • Leadership Competencies
    • Acquisition Certifications
  ─ Extensive On-the Job Training Opportunities

Focus on Career Development NOT Staff Augmentation

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MDCDP Developmental Program

- Gain a broad knowledge of MDA
  - Variety of work experiences
  - Multiple Functional Areas
- Level I DAU certification in designated career field
- Develop Basic to Intermediate Proficiencies in the Core Competencies as defined in each Career Guide

Agency Mission Needs

- Develop a diverse and skilled workforce
- Establish a pipeline to recruit and train entry-level employees for careers with MDA
- Leverage the existing expertise to ‘grow’ our own subject matter experts from within MDA

The key to a successful program is maintaining balance between the three major program stakeholders- MDA, FM’s & Supervisors, and the CDPs.

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MDCDP Development Program Consists of:

- **Developmental Rotations (On-the-Job Training)**
  - Rotational Assignments defined by each Career Field Functional Manager
  - Rotational Training Plans developed by Supervisors and Rotational Leads
  - MDCDP Standard Objectives which focus on Career Development, Developmental Training, and Rotational Experiences
  - Stand-alone projects/products are encouraged to be completed during each rotation

- **Developmental Training Program**
  - A five-part 3-year curriculum plan to provide competency development to the CDPs with mandatory and optional components
    - Mandatory DAU, early Immersive Leadership Series program, and soft skill training throughout the 3-years
    - Continuous Mentor/Mentee training during the 3-years
    - Involvement of the Functional Career Managers for career series specific training to match the development program

Goals are to:
1. Integrate the MDCDPs into MDA, Federal Government, and Career Field
2. Develop MDCDPs as Federal employees and career field specialists
3. Transition MDCDPs seamlessly into the post-MDCDP workforce