SCHOLARSHIPAPPLICATION BACKGROUND & REQUIRMENTS
14 November 2003

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1. BACKGROUND

Information security (assurance) is considered so important to our national defense that a formal DoD Information Assurance Scholarship Program was established by the National Defense Authorization Act for 2001 (Public Law 106-398). The purpose is to promote the education, recruitment, and retention of *rising junior and senior undergraduate and graduate/doctoral students* in information security (assurance) studies and of students seeking graduate certificates in information assurance disciplines.

The Department of Defense is seeking *rising junior and senior undergraduate and graduate/doctoral students* who are interested in *full-ride scholarships* for concentrated studies in information security. Students selected for the program will receive scholarships. This requires the student to agree to serve one year of service for each year of scholarship, in addition to the internship identified below. An opportunity also exists for Reserve and National Guard participation. The time frame for pay back under these scenarios is a little different given the nature of the work for the Reserves and National Guard. The obligated service commitment here will be considered to be "two-for-one", rather than "one-for-one" as it is for those participating in the DoD Civilian workforce. If you are interested in the National Guard or Reserves, as a means to meeting your requirements, please indicate this in the application.

During breaks in their academic studies, Information Assurance Scholars will receive progressive, hands-on experience in information security *internships*. In return, scholars must agree to some restrictions and obligations regarding curriculum, GPA, and pre- and post-program employment.

If all conditions are met, Information Assurance Scholars will receive full-time *conditional/permanent positions* in agencies and components of the Department of Defense on program completion.

HOW TO APPLY
1. Only students at designated NSA Centers of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education (CAE/IAE) may apply. Review the list of schools included with this announcement for clarification.
2. Review all application instructions and materials included with this announcement. **Pay close attention to the mandatory conditions of financial assistance and employment**.
3. Check with the identified Point of Contact for your college or university to find out what you must do to apply and to obtain an augmented application package if your school requires one. (Application due dates and requirements may vary from school to school.)
4. Obtain all of the information required for a complete application package. You must provide all information that is requested in this announcement, plus any information that may be required by your school. (Application due dates and requirements may vary from school to school.)
5. Fill out and sign the required SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION, provide and sign all supplemental statements that are part of the package. Include name and SSN.
6. **DO NOT SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.** Submit your application package directly to the appropriate Point of Contact for your college or university. See the list included with this announcement for the identity of that person.

2. DESCRIPTION OF SCHOLARSHIP AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The National Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 106-398) directed the Department of Defense (DoD) to establish an Information Assurance Scholarship Program (IASP). The purposes of the program are to recruit and retain well-qualified personnel for work in the vital information assurance field and to cultivate continuing capacity for information assurance workforce development at select institutions of higher learning (called "Centers of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education (CAE/IAE)") throughout the United States. As directed by the Secretary of Defense, the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence) (OASD(C3I)) has delegated authority and responsibility to establish scholarship and institutional grant programs to achieve these purposes, including the authority to conduct civilian employee recruitment for these purposes. This is the third year of the program, which is executed by the National Information Assurance Education and Training Program (NIETP) of the National Security Agency (NSA).

Rising junior and senior undergraduates, masters and doctoral candidates, and graduate certificate program students who are U.S. citizens and are at least 18 years of age are eligible for consideration for the program. Information assurance scholarships will pay for the full cost of tuition, fees, books, lab expenses, supplies and equipment incurred by students selected for the program. In addition, students selected for the program will be provided a stipend to cover room and board expenses: undergraduate students will receive a stipend of $10,000, and graduate (masters and PhD) students will receive a stipend of $15,000, per academic year. Disabled students may receive additional allowances. There are no allowances for dependents. Additional years of scholarship awards are dependent upon satisfactory academic progress, internship performance, and the availability of funds. Returning students will be given first priority over new students to the program as

long as they continue to meet the IASP requirements. Scholarship recipients who successfully complete the terms of an initial one or two year scholarship (for example, complete an undergraduate degree), may apply for a second scholarship of up to two years for completing an advanced degree or graduate certificate program.

P.L. 106-398 anticipates that recipients of information assurance scholarships will participate in experiential learning assignments (called "internships" in the law) while completing their academic degree programs. The Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) appointment authority established by the Office of Personnel Management will be one of the means used to establish the relationship between scholarship and internship. Some agencies are eligible to participate through excepted service, and will bring students in to perform internships, in accordance with the regulations of their Agency. Under the SCEP appointment, scholarship recipients will receive federal civilian appointments in the General Schedule (GS) pay plan as "Student Trainees." This appointment authority also allows federal employers to offer prospective applicants the recruitment incentive of conversion to permanent, full-time status as federal employees without further competition upon successful completion of academic and internship program requirements. The SCEP is described in detail at 5 CFR 213.3202 (**http://www.opm.gov/employ/students/2133202.HTM**). For more information on the Student Employment Programs, please see **http://www.opm.gov/employ/students/index.htm**. Some of the DoD Agencies are exempt from the SCEP appointments, and will bring interns (and student hires) on board through their appropriate hiring authorities.

Information Assurance Scholars will be appointed at those General Schedule grade levels for which qualified and selected by DoD component officials. Since the Area of Consideration for scholarship and SCEP applicants includes rising junior and senior year undergraduates, masters and doctoral degree candidates, and graduate/doctoral certificate program students, it is anticipated that applicants will (variously) meet minimum qualification standards for Student Trainee appointments at GS-0099-4, GS-0099-5, GS-0099-7, and GS-0099-9. The Military Departments and DoD components that select and appoint students will decide at what grade levels successful Information Assurance Scholars will be appointed in light of any applicable component-unique factors such as the target occupations or full-performance position levels for the candidates. To obtain some information on the general salary schedules, please visit **http://www.opm.gov/oca/03tables/indexGS.asp**.

3. MINIMUM ELIGIBLITY FOR SCHOLARSHIP AND APPOINTMENT

To be eligible for the Information Assurance Scholarship and Student Career Experience Program opportunity described in this announcement, you must meet all of the following minimum requirements:

a) You must be 18 years of age or older.
b) You must be a citizen of the United States at the time of application. *Note, if family members are not U.S. Citizens, some Agencies may be unable to process the applicant (student) to the security clearance level required. Every effort will be made to assign eligible students at an Agency without such restrictions.*
c) You must be enrolled (or accepted for enrollment) in one of the identified CAE/IAE colleges or universities listed in this announcement, or enrolled (or accepted for enrollment) at an institution selected by a CAE/IAE as a collaborative partner for these purposes.
d) You must have completed (or by September 2004 will have completed) at a minimum the first two years of an undergraduate degree program and be eligible to (a) begin either the third or

fourth years of an undergraduate degree program; (b) begin the first or second year of a masters degree program; (c) pursue doctoral studies; or (d) complete a graduate certificate program in information assurance.

e) You must be pursuing a course of study and/or have a declared major in one of the scientific, technical or managerial disciplines related to computer and network security, with a concentration in an information assurance function.

    I. For these purposes, the scientific, technical and managerial disciplines related to computer and network security are:

        i. Mathematics
        ii. Biometrics
        iii. Electrical Engineering
        iv. Electronic Engineering
        v. Computer Science
        vi. Computer Engineering
        vii. Software Engineering
        viii. Computer Programming
        ix. Computer Support
        x. Data Base Administration
        xi. Computer Systems Analysis
        xii. Operations Research
        xiii. Information Security (Assurance)
        xiv. Business Management or Administration

    II. For these purposes, the information assurance functions are:

        i. System/Network Administration and Operations
        ii. Systems Security Engineering
        iii. Information Assurance Systems and Product Acquisition
        iv. Cryptography
        v. Threat and Vulnerability Assessment, to include Risk Management
        vi. Web Security
        vii. Operations of Computer Emergency Response Teams
        viii. Information Assurance Training, Education and Management
        ix. Computer Forensics
        x. Defensive Information Systems

f) See the web page information below, which provides resources as to what is necessary for you to fulfill the necessary security requirements. Failure to be able to obtain a security clearance is grounds for dismissal from the DoD IASP. You must be able to obtain the required security clearance for the position selected. You may be required to undergo certain tests, including drug and polygraph tests, to obtain and maintain a clearance. Before awarding you a scholarship or hiring you, you will be required to complete certain forms to initiate the security clearance process. Some of these forms will require that you reveal extensive information about your background, such as potentially sensitive information about your financial circumstances and any arrests and/or convictions for offenses of any kind. You must agree to all of these conditions of employment and you must complete these forms as a condition of financial assistance and appointment.

   I. *Current web pages from OPM and DSS are provided below. These are provided for your review and consideration in determining whether you believe you will be eligible for a security clearance. They may not be all inclusive, however, it is highly recommended you review and understand the requirements prior to signing up to participate in the DoD IASP.*

- **http://www.opm.gov/extra/investigate/security-clearance.asp**
- **http://www.dss.mil/psi/psifaq.pdf**

  II. *The following web page contains additional information from a U.S. military web site about security clearances which also may be useful to you when determining whether you will be eligible for a security clearance:*

- **http://usmilitary.about.com/library/milinfo/security/blsecuritymenu.htm**

g) Your school (CAE/IAE) must recommend you for scholarship.

4. AREA OF CONSIDERATION

  The Area of Consideration for the Information Assurance Scholarship and Student Career Experience Program consists of rising Junior and Senior undergraduate, master, doctorate and graduate-level certificate program students who are enrolled (or accepted for enrollment) at the colleges and universities listed in the Attachment D and Annex I to this application.

  Each CAE/IAE may select additional institutions of higher education as collaborating partners in implementation of the Information Assurance Scholarship Program. Students enrolled, or accepted for enrollment, at the collaborating institutions are also within the Area of Consideration. The identity of collaborating partner institutions, IF ANY, must be obtained from the CAE/IAEs.

  Each CAE/IAE has designated a campus liaison, or Principal Investigator (P.I.), for Information Assurance Scholarship Program management and administration. The above referenced Annex provides known points of contact for the current CAE/IAEs. You are responsible for identifying the applicable P.I. for the IASP on your campus.

5. GENERAL INFORMATION

a. Application Forms and Materials

  On the application and the following pages you will find instructions for preparing and submitting an application for the Information Assurance Scholarship and Student Career Experience Program, as well as application forms and materials. Please read all information and instructions for application preparation before you begin. The application itself consists of your resume and all of the OF612 supplements. **The OF612 Supplemental Competency Statement and Resume must be included or the package will be deemed non-responsive**.

  Please be aware that your school (CAE/IAE) is required by the Department of Defense to participate in the evaluation of your application for scholarship assistance under this program. Your school may fulfill its responsibilities to evaluate your application in a variety of ways. Your school might constitute a panel to review your application materials or conduct interviews with you or other applicants. To fulfill its responsibilities, your school may require that you obtain and submit information and/or materials in addition to those required in the application package. Any written information or material that your school requires shall become the CAE/IAE Supplement to your

OF612 and must be included in the final application package that your school transmits to the Department of Defense in order for you to receive consideration.

Therefore, if you are interested in applying for this opportunity, *you should check with the Information Assurance Scholarship Program Point of Contact for your school immediately* to learn of any additional application requirements (see the annex for numbers).

Privacy and Public Burden Statements

The Office of Personnel Management and other Federal agencies rate applicants for Federal jobs under the authority of sections 1104, 1302, 3301, 3304, 3320, 3361, 3393, and 3394 of title 5 of the United States Code. Section 1104 of Title 5 allows the Office of Personnel Management to authorize other federal agencies to rate applicants for Federal jobs. We need the information requested in this vacancy announcement to evaluate your qualifications, that is, to see how well your education and work skills qualify you for a Federal job and for tuition assistance pursuant to P.L. 106-398 and the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 5, Chapter 1, Part 213, Subpart C, Section 213.3202(b)(17). Other laws require us to ask about citizenship and military service, to see whether you are affected by laws we must follow in deciding whom the Federal Government may employ.

We must have your Social Security Number (SSN) to keep your records straight because other people may have the same name and birth date. The SSN has been used to keep records since 1943, when Executive Order 9397 asked agencies to do so. Giving us your SSN or any other information is voluntary. However, we cannot process your application if you do not give us the information we request. As allowed by law or Presidential directive, we use your SSN to seek information about you from employers, schools, banks, and others who know you. Your SSN may also be used in studies and computer matching with other Government files, for example, files on unpaid student loans. If you do not give us your SSN or any other information requested, we cannot process your application, which is the first step in getting a job. **Ensure your last name and social security number are contained on the top right of each application page.** We may give information from your records to: training facilities; organizations deciding claims for retirement, insurance, unemployment or health benefits; officials in litigation or administrative proceedings where the Government is a party; law enforcement agencies concerning violations of law or regulation; Federal agencies for statistical reports and studies; officials of labor organizations recognized by law in connection with representing employees; Federal agencies or other sources requesting information for Federal agencies in connection with hiring or retaining, security clearances, security or suitability investigations, classifying job contracting, or issuing licenses, grants, or other benefits; public or private organizations including news media that grant or publicize employee recognition and awards; and the Merit Systems Protection Board, the Office of Special Counsel, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Federal Labor Relations Authority, the National Archives, and congressional offices in connection with their official functions.

We may also give information from your records to: prospective nonfederal employers concerning tenure of employment, civil service status, length of service, and date and nature of action for separation as shown on personnel action forms of specifically identified individuals; requesting organizations or individuals concerning the home address and other relevant information on those who might have contracted an illness or been exposed to a health hazard; authorized Federal and nonfederal agencies for use in computer matching; spouses or dependent children asking whether an employee has changed from self-and-family to self-only health benefits enrollment; individuals working on a contract, service, grant, cooperative agreement or job for the Federal Government; non-agency

members of an agency's performance or other panel; and agency-appointed representatives of employees concerning information issued to an employee about fitness-for-duty or agency-filed disability retirement procedures.

We estimate the public burden for reporting the employment information will vary from 20 to 240 minutes with an average of 40 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering data, and completing and reviewing the information. You may send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of the collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Reports and Forms Management Officer, Washington, DC 20415-0001.

b. Veteran's Preference in Hiring

If you served on active duty in the United States Military and were separated under honorable conditions, you may be eligible for veteran's preference. For further details, call the Office of Personnel Management at 912-757-3000 or visit: http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp.

To claim 5-point veterans' preference, attach a copy of your DD-214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, or other proof of eligibility, to your Optional Form 612 - Optional Application for Federal Employment, as required at Item 15 of the application.

To claim 10-point veterans' preference, attach a SF 15, Application for 10-Point Veterans' Preference, plus the proof required by that form, to your Optional Form 612 - Optional Application for Federal Employment, as required at Item 15 of the application.

c. Applicants With Disabilities

You can find out about alternatives for submitting your application by calling the Office of Personnel Management at 912-757-3000. If you have a hearing disability, call TDD 912-744-2299. You can obtain case-by-case assistance by calling the Department of Defense point of contact for this announcement.   The name, address, and telephone number of the points of contact for this announcement are below:

> Ms. Christine Nickell, DoD IASP
> National Security Agency
> Attn: NIETP, I52, Suite 6752
> 9800 Savage Road
> Fort George G. Meade, MD 20755-6752
> Phone: 410-854-6206

d. Equal Employment Opportunity

The Department of Defense is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified persons shall receive consideration for this opportunity without regard to political, religious, labor organization affiliation or non-affiliation, marital status, race, color, sex, national origin, non-disqualifying physical disability, age, or sexual orientation.

5. OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THIS OPPORTUNITY

Before hiring you, the appointing agency will ask you to complete a Declaration for Federal Employment or other agency or component specific form to determine your suitability for Federal employment and to authorize a background investigation of your suitability. The agency will also ask you to sign and certify the accuracy of all the information in your application. If you make a false

statement in any part of your application, you may not be hired; you may be fired after you begin work; or you may be fined or jailed.

You will be required to obtain and maintain eligibility for a security clearance in order to receive financial (scholarship) assistance or an appointment under the Information Assurance Scholarship and Student Career Experience Program The appointing agency will ask you to complete certain forms to initiate the security clearance process. These forms require you to reveal many details about your background, including your financial circumstances, and other sensitive matters such as any arrests and/or convictions for offenses of any kind. You must complete these forms as a condition of financial assistance and appointment.

If you are a male over age 18 who was born after December 31, 1959, you must have registered with the Selective Service System (or have an exemption) to be eligible for a Federal job.

Federal law prohibits officials from appointing, promoting, or recommending their relatives.

Federal annuitants (military and civilian) may have their salaries or annuities reduced. All employees must pay any valid delinquent debts or the employee's payroll office may garnishee their salary.

APPLICATION CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

6. APPLICATION CONTENT REQUIREMENTS *for CURRENT IASP STUDENTS WHO ARE REAPPLYING:*
- An acceptable application package for the Information Assurance Scholarship and Student Career Experience Program consists of a letter and the maintenance of your grade point average.
  - One (1) Letter of Reference from the current Principal Investigator or key faculty member who is fully knowledgeable of your potential for successful learning, your knowledge, and your ability, *based upon this past year of effort.*
  - Official (certified) or unofficial (current and accurate, but not certified) copies of all of your transcripts from all the institutions of higher learning you have attended, *SINCE* your last submission. You are required to maintain the appropriate grade point average to maintain your status in the program.
- **Note regarding the Supplemental Statement of General Academic and Employment Conditions**. This form has been submitted under your previous application. Following the selection of students for scholarship, letters will be sent to selected students, containing similar information, which affirms the student's willingness to commit to the internship (if applicable) and the obligated service requirement. It will also note that failure to do so will require pay back of Scholarship to the U.S. Government. Once signed, this will be attached to previous documentation for the record. Therefore, it is not necessary to submit the supplemental statement again.

7. APPLICATION CONTENT REQUIREMENTS *for STUDENTS NOT CURRENTLY IN THE IASP:*
An acceptable application package for the Information Assurance Scholarship and Student Career Experience Program consists of a completed, signed, and dated **Resume,** all of the supplements

to the OF612 described below, AND all written information or materials required by your school (CAE/IAE):

- **Supplemental OF612 Continuation Sheets**. If the OF612 does not have sufficient space for you to provide complete answers to all questions asked, you must attach separate sheets of plain 81/2" X 11" paper on which you record your responses or the continuations of your responses. On each such page, indicate your name, your social security number, and the OF612 item numbers to which your responses apply.
- **Supplemental Academic Sufficiency Statement**. You must complete the Statement of Academic Sufficiency supplement to the OF612, to which you must attach the following additional supplemental statements:
    - One (1) Letter of Reference from a current faculty member who is fully knowledgeable of your potential for successful learning, your knowledge, and your ability. See remainder of application package for instructions about the content of this Letter of Reference.
    - One (1) additional Letter of Reference from either a current or former faculty member, or a current or former supervisor who is fully knowledgeable of your potential for successful learning, your knowledge, and your ability. See remainder of application package for instructions about the content of this Letter of Reference.
    - Official (certified) or unofficial (current and accurate, but not certified) copies of all of your transcripts from all the institutions of higher learning you have attended.
- **Supplemental Competency Statement**. **You must complete the OF612 Supplemental Competency Statement with narrative responses that describe the level of your attainment of the knowledge and ability factors indicated. See remainder of application package for instructions about the content of this supplemental statement.**
- **Supplemental Statement of General Academic and Employment Conditions**. If you agree with the all of the academic and employment conditions required for your receipt of scholarship assistance and appointment under the Information Assurance Scholarship and Student Career Experience Program, and wish to be considered for it, you must complete the OF612 Supplemental Statement of General Academic and Employment Conditions, and include it in your application package.

Your school (CAE/IAE) is required by the Department of Defense to assist in the evaluation of Information Assurance Scholarship Program applicants. *At its discretion, your school may require that you provide additional information or material to enable its evaluation of your eligibility and candidacy for scholarship assistance.* The school may not decrease the requirements of the DoD IASP. If your school requires written information or material in addition to that described above, that additional information or material shall constitute an OF612 **Optional Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education Supplement**, and must be included in your application package for you to receive full consideration. Contact the Information Assurance Scholarship Program liaison for your school to find out if your school has additional application requirements. (See the web annex titled "Centers of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education" for the points of contact.)