

DoD Announces Plans to Stimulate Undergraduate Research

WASHINGTON (March 14, 2003)—The Department of Defense (DoD) today announced plans to award 19 grants, totaling \$4.7 million, that will support approximately 650 undergraduate students, in its first annual Awards to Stimulate and Support Undergraduate Research Experiences (ASSURE) program. The ASSURE program will be executed collaboratively with the National Science Foundation (NSF) through its Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) Sites Program. All awards are subject to the successful completion of negotiations between DoD, NSF, and the grantee institutions.

Undergraduate programs are critical to DoD's overall education investment strategy. The ASSURE program supports undergraduate research in DoD-relevant disciplines and is designed to increase the number of high-quality undergraduate science and engineering majors. ASSURE serves as a complementary program to the DoD National

Defense Science and Engineering Graduate (NDSEG) Fellowship Program for graduate students in science and engineering.

ASSURE aims to provide valuable research opportunities for undergraduates, typically through an eight- to 10-week summer research program, located at the grantee's institution. The program often draws students from institutions where access to research opportunities is limited. The program also emphasizes the recruitment of women and under-represented minorities.

Today's announcement is the result of a merit competition conducted by NSF in partnership with DoD. ASSURE grants will be used mainly for three-year sites, although a few sites will have a five-year duration.

Editor's Note: This DoD News Release is in the public domain at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news>.

UNIVERSITIES SELECTED FOR RESEARCH FUNDING

WASHINGTON (March 12, 2003)—The Department of Defense (DoD) today announced plans to award 17 grants to universities selected for research funding. The grants total approximately \$8.5 million in fiscal year 2003 and up to \$17 million per year starting in fiscal year 2004. Sixteen academic institutions will receive the grants to conduct multidisciplinary research in 12 topic areas of basic science and engineering. These grants will be made under the DoD Multidisciplinary University Research Initiative (MURI) program. All awards are subject to the successful completion of negotiations between DoD research offices and the academic institutions.

MURI is a program designed to address large multidisciplinary topic areas representing exceptional opportunities for future DoD applications and technology options. The awards will provide long-term support for research, graduate students, and laboratory instrumentation development that supports specific science and engineering research themes vital to national defense.

The average award will be \$1 million per year over a three-year period. Two additional years of funding will be possible as options to bring the total award to five years. Out-year funding is subject to satisfactory progress in the research and the availability of funding appropriations.

Today's announcement is the result of a rigorous merit competition over many months under the DoD MURI program. In response to the MURI broad agency announcement solicitation, many letters of intent to submit proposals were received leading to 83 full proposals requesting \$497 million for multidisciplinary research. After a thorough evaluation by DoD technical expert teams, 17 of these proposals were found to be suitable for funding.

Editor's Note: The list of projects selected for fiscal year 2003 funding may be found on the Web at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news>.