



### **E54 The Opportunity of a Lifetime: The Educational Outreach Program at the Defense Forensic Science Center (DFSC)**

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After attending this presentation, attendees will learn about the DFSC's Educational Outreach Program. This presentation will inform students of the opportunities to participate in cutting-edge research at the DFSC.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by informing future forensic scientists about options to advance their careers while furthering forensic science capabilities at the DFSC.

The Educational Outreach Program is an integral part of enhancing current and developing future forensic science capabilities at the DFSC. The Educational Outreach Program allows students to participate in meaningful research and highlights careers in the military, while building partnerships between DFSC and academia. Students receive a wealth of experience in experimental design, test and evaluation efforts, validations, and analysis of complex data. The Office of the Chief Scientist participates in various programs that allow students to work at DFSC; including the Department of Defense Science, Mathematics, and Research for Transformation (SMART) program and the Research Associate program. This presentation will benefit prospective students as it will highlight these career-developing opportunities (a brief summary of each is provided below).

The Office of the Chief Scientist coordinates the Department of Defense-funded SMART program. The goal of the SMART program is to increase the number of civilian scientists and engineers who are employed by Department of Defense laboratories. To accomplish this, students at any level within their academic career (Bachelor's, Master's, or PhD) can apply to the SMART program to receive a full academic scholarship and employment at a Department of Defense laboratory upon degree completion.

Through the Research Associate program, undergraduate students can come to DFSC to work on research projects for a summer, a semester, or a year. The paid Research Associate program differs from traditional internship programs in that the Office of the Chief Scientist has the students participate directly on a research project under the guidance of a DFSC scientist. The Research Associate program allows students to gain valuable knowledge, skills, and abilities in experimental design, testing, and analysis from dedicated forensic mentors.

Since 2011, 101 Research Associates have worked more than 51,000 hours on 85 DFSC-led research projects and 15 SMART scholars have contributed more than 3,800 hours to 15 research projects. The Educational Outreach Program at DFSC has been growing annually and these numbers will continue to rise. Come learn more about the opportunities at DFSC and join the research team!

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#### **Education, Outreach, Intern**