Cyber Corps: SCHOLARSHIP FOR SERVICE

The SFS program is managed by the National Science Foundation (NSF), in collaboration with the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and, in accordance with the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2014 (Public Law No: 113-274). This initiative reflects the critical need for Information Technology (IT) professionals, industrial control system security professionals, and security managers in Federal, State, local and tribal governments. Students identified by their institutions for SFS Scholarships must meet selection criteria based on prior academic performance, likelihood of success in obtaining the degree, and suitability for government employment. Upon graduation, scholarship recipients are required to work a period equal to the length of their scholarship in Federal, State, Local or Tribal Government or in other approved organization as cybersecurity professionals. Since 2001, SFS scholarships have been awarded to more than 2,800 students and there are over 60 institutions currently offering SFS scholarships to students in undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

Program costs and Agency Responsibility

While the SFS program covers the costs of study, the employing agency is responsible for the student's salary and applicable benefits during the internship and employment periods, as well as any costs associated with acquiring the required level of security clearance.

Recruiting

Finding the talent needed to protect information systems can be challenging. The SFS program helps hiring managers by providing scholarships to the finest candidates from institutions with some of the top cybersecurity programs in the country. Many are National Centers of Academic Excellence (CAE) designated institutions and institutions with equivalent designation. Agencies may recruit SFS students for internships during their academic term and permanent placement after graduation.

Hiring Managers and Human Resources Consultants interested in recruiting from the SFS can gain access to this talented IA candidate pool by visiting www.sfs.opm.gov and registering as an agency official or contacting the program office at sfs@opm.gov. We can distribute job information for you, provide information on students available and their degree information so you can contact them directly, you can work directly with a participating institution, or we can work directly with you to determine other methods that may work better for you.

Hiring Procedures

Federal Government:

In December, 2014, the President signed into law the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-274), https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/senate-bill/1353/text. Section 302 addresses SFS specifically and states that federal agencies may appoint CyberCorps® SFS participants into the excepted service and then once they complete their obligation they can be noncompetitively converted to career conditional status. Because this law does not state that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) will

regulate this procedure, OPM will provide no additional guidance/policy to enable agencies to apply this. When making appointments (for both internships and post-graduation employment) Federal agencies will cite the statute as the legal authority, and use the general Nature of Action (NOA) code for excepted appointments based on a law (these are described in the guide to processing personnel actions (GPPA)). When converting the students, agencies would again cite the statute as the legal authority and consult the GPPA for the appropriate NOA for conversions. It would be left to the agency to track the appointments to know when they can convert them. It would also be left to agencies to set any internal policy on making appointments under this law.

State, Local, and Tribal, or Territorial Government agencies and other approved organizations:
You will use whatever appointing authorities are appropriate under the regulations that govern their employment practices.

Contact: Kathy Roberson, Program Manager, (405) 259-8277, kathy.roberson@opm.gov; sfs@opm.gov