

NPS TO ADMINISTER KEY CIVILIAN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

By Barbara Honegger

The Department of Defense has selected NPS as executive agent for its critical new Science, Mathematics and Research for Transformation (SMART) Defense Scholarship Program. The program's mission is to increase and ensure the number of highly qualified scientists and engineers in the future DoD workforce.

SMART is primarily a graduate education scholarship-for-service program, funding tuition, cost reimbursement and stipend for master and Ph.D. candidates, and some undergraduates, who have been accepted by an accredited college or university in science, engineering or mathematics.

Applicants must be U.S. citizens who are eligible for security clearances. Scholarship recipients obligate one year at a DoD research lab for each funded year in an academic program.

"The stimulus for SMART was the upcoming personnel crisis in the DoD labs," said NPS Deputy Director of Programs Lt. Cmdr. Lynn O'Neil, acting program manager for SMART.


"With baby boomers quickly reaching retirement age, there will soon be a bow wave of retirees across the federal government, including the defense labs. SMART was created to proactively mitigate that intellectual capital short fall."

Keith Thompson, the OSD official who heads the program, directs Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematical Education and Workforce Development in the Office of the Director for Basic Research, Director of Defense Research and Engineering.

At the Worldwide Human Resources Conference in July, he revealed that DoD

laboratories are expected to lose 13,000 scientists and engineers over the next ten years at the same time that demand for scientists is projected to increase by 17 percent, and engineers by 22 percent.

"Congress considers SMART so important to maintaining the nation's scientific and technological edge that it made the program permanent in the National Defense Authorization Act for 2006," said O'Neil. NPS currently administers about \$8.5 million in program funds, distributed in approximately equal segments to the Navy, Army, Air Force and other DoD agencies.

Prof. Knox Millsaps is the Executive Agent Officer for SMART at NPS, with Capt. Paula Jordanek, Director of Programs, overseeing program operations. Deborah Shifflett is the SMART program manager. 



SMART cohort members attended their orientation session at NPS on August 10. Members will spend the next year in science, engineering or mathematics programs. Standing with them are NPS Director of Programs Capt. Paula Jordanek (back right), Deputy Director of Programs and acting program manager for SMART Lt. Cmdr. Lynn O'Neil, (third from back right), SMART Executive Agent Officer Prof. Knox Millsaps, (far left) and SMART Program Manager Deborah Shifflett (fifth from back right).