

Educational Partnership Program with Minority Serving Institutions (EPP/MSI) Undergraduate Scholarship Program (USP)

Frequently Asked Question (FAQs)

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Purpose of Scholarship

What is NOAA and what is NOAA's mission?

Established in 1970, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is a Federal science agency within the Department of Commerce (www.doc.gov). NOAA's mission is:

To understand and predict changes in Earth's environment and conserve and manage coastal and marine resources to meet our Nation's economic, social, and environmental needs.

To achieve this mission, NOAA has identified four goals in which to focus agency activities:

- Climate Adaptation and Mitigation: An informed society anticipating and responding to climate and its impacts.
- Weather-Ready Nation: Society is prepared for and responds to weather-related events.
- Healthy Oceans: Marine fisheries, habitats, and biodiversity are sustained within healthy and productive ecosystems.
- Resilient Coastal Communities and Economies: Coastal and Great Lake communities are environmentally and economically sustainable.

NOAA has also identified "promoting environmental literacy" as a cross-cutting priority essential to achieving NOAA's mission in all four of the goal areas. To learn more about the broad range of NOAA sciences, services, and stewardship activities that contribute to the agency's mission, goals, and priorities, explore the NOAA web site (<http://www.noaa.gov>).

What is the purpose of the Educational Partnership Program with Minority Serving Institutions, Undergraduate Scholarship Program?

The Educational Partnership Program with Minority Serving Institutions, Undergraduate Scholarship Program is designed to: (1) increase the number of students who undertake coursework and graduate with degrees in the target areas integral to NOAA's mission; (2) recruit and train students, with an emphasis on traditionally under-represented minority communities, in NOAA-related sciences; and, (3) recruit and prepare students for careers in research, management and operational occupations related to NOAA's overall mission.

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Scholarship Provisions

What does an EPP/MSI USP Scholarship include?

The Educational Partnership Program with Minority Serving Institutions (EPP/MSI) /Undergraduate Scholarship Program (USP) provides selected undergraduate applicants with a scholarship award that includes: a maximum of \$9,500 per year for two academic years of full-time study; two 10-week,full-time internships (\$700/week) during the summer at a NOAA facility; a housing subsidy of \$200 per week for student scholars who do not reside at home during the summer internship; round-trip travel to the internship site including reimbursement for incidentals; travel funds for attendance and participation at a NOAA Scholarship Symposium at the completion of the internships; and, participation in two professional conference to present the results of their summer project each year. During the first year of the scholarship, a 2-week mandatory orientation is conducted at NOAA Headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland. During the first year, the internship component of the award begins upon completion of the 2-week orientation. The internship components are designed to provide student scholars with "hands-on" research training involving in NOAA-related science, research, technology, and policy activities.

How can I get more information about the EPP/MSI USP?

For more information about the EPP/MSI USP Scholarship, contact: NOAA Office of Education, EPP/MSI at epp.usp@noaa.gov or call (301) 628-2913.

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Eligibility Requirements

Who is eligible to apply for an EPP/MSI USP Scholarship?

To be eligible to apply for an EPP/MSI USP Scholarship, at the time of application (annually September through January) you must:

- be a U.S. citizen;
- attend a minority serving institution as defined by the U.S. Department of Education to include: Historically Black Colleges and Universities; Hispanic Serving Institutions*; Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian Institutions; and, Tribal Colleges and Universities? * Applicants who attend **Hispanic Serving Institutions** must submit an official letter from their schools verifying the institution is a U.S. Department of Education recognized Hispanic Serving Institution at the time of application. If an applicant transfers to another school during the scholarship period, verification of the institution's MSI status is also required. The verification letter from the school must be uploaded in PDF format along with the transcript, as part of the scholarship application process.
- be currently enrolled or accepted as a full-time 2nd year student in a four-year academic program or as a full-time 3rd year student in a five-year program at an accredited minority serving institution (college or university within the United States or U.S. territories);
- earn and maintain a minimum 3.2 grade point average on a 4.0 scale (or equivalent on other identified scale) in all completed undergraduate courses each semester or quarter, as well as have and maintain a cumulative 3.2 GPA in your major field of study. The grade point average requirement applies for every semester or quarter, cumulative, and in your major field of study prior to and at the time of application for a scholarship, for the period between application and award notification, and after award distribution; and,
- have and maintain a declared major in a discipline including, but not limited to, oceanic, environmental, biological, and atmospheric sciences, mathematics, engineering, remote sensing technology, physical and social sciences including geography, physics, hydrology, or geomatics that support NOAA's programs and mission.

Related discipline areas of study may include: biological, social, and physical sciences; mathematics; and computer and information sciences.

The eligibility requirements state that applicants must have full-time sophomore academic status in the Fall term, at the time of application. If I am a senior in the Fall term (at time of application), am I eligible to apply?

Eligible EPP/MSIUSP applicants include 2nd year students in a four-year academic program and 3rd year students in a five-year academic program. To maintain eligibility, students must demonstrate full-time status for both academic years during which they are EPP/MSI USP scholars. Applicants entering their 4th academic year in the Fall and expecting to graduate at the end of the same academic year are **not** eligible.

This academic term I am having difficulty with a particular course and would like to drop it. Will I be dropped from the EPP/MSI USP?

EPP/MSI USP student scholars are required to maintain a full-time status each academic term. Full-time status varies depending on the academic institution. If a scholar is enrolled in a less than full-time status, **yes**, they will be terminated from the EPP/USP.

If I receive another NOAA scholarship, am I still eligible to receive an EPP/MSI USP Scholarship?

Yes. Providing the program requirements do not conflict with those of the EPP/MSI USP Scholarship.

If my major is not listed under the areas of discipline on the application, am I still eligible to receive an EPP/MSI USP Scholarship?

If a particular major is not listed on the application under "Field of Study," you may still be eligible. Scholarships are limited to the fields of study identified on the application, NOT to the majors listed under those fields. A wide variety of general undergraduate academic programs can be applicable to NOAA's mission. Application reviewers will look specifically at applicant's coursework and statements of academic and career interest to assess how a particular course of study relates to NOAA and how it provides the training necessary to pursue a NOAA-related career.

If I am a student intern in the Pathways Program, am I eligible to receive an EPP/MSI Undergraduate Scholarship?
No, student interns in the Pathways Program are Federal employees and are **not** eligible to receive an EPP/MSI undergraduate scholarship. Federal employees are not eligible to receive scholarship funds from the Federal government. A student intern in the Pathways Program must choose either that appointment **or** the scholarship.

I want to participate in a university sponsored Certified Cooperative Education Program for one academic term; will my EPP/MSI USP eligibility status change; and will I continue to receive the EPP/MSI USP academic stipend?
Student scholars are required to enroll in credit earning courses that earn Quality Points. Each academic term a scholar is required to earn a minimum 3.2 grade point average (GPA). A student scholar receives the academic stipend during each academic term they are enrolled "full-time" in credit earning courses and receive Quality Points (GPA).

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Application Process

How do I apply for an EPP/MSI USP Scholarship?

To apply for an EPP/MSI USP Scholarship, students can visit <https://oedwebapps.iso.noaa.gov/uspa>. The application is available annually September through January. If you do not have Internet access, hard-copy applications can be requested by contacting: NOAA/Office of Education (OEd), 1315 East West Highway, 10th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910-6233, Attn: EPP/MSI USP Team, or you may email: epp.usp@noaa.gov.

What must I submit to apply?

Applicants are required to submit ALL of the following items for an application to be deemed complete and eligible:

- A completed scholarship application;
- One essay;
- Unofficial college transcript(s) (one for each institution attended; uploaded into the on-line application; and,
- Two academic references sent from the applicant's university/college faculty member. References from employers, parent's friends, neighbors, high school teachers, teaching assistants, etc. will not be accepted.

When are the EPP/MSI USP Scholarship applications due to NOAA?

All applications and supporting materials must be received by the end of January. If supporting documents (i.e. academic reference forms, official transcripts, etc.) are not received by the deadline, the application will be incomplete and, therefore, deemed ineligible for consideration.

What if I miss the deadline date?

NOAA's Office of Education **will not** review scholarship applications or supporting materials received after the deadline date. Applications and materials that are received **after** the application deadline will be deemed ineligible. Due to the large number of applications received annually, NOAA strictly adheres to the application deadline date. Therefore, NOAA strongly encourages scholarship applicants to check the status of their on-application to confirm that the submitted application and all supporting materials have been received prior to the deadline date. This may be accomplished by checking the status box in the application system. NOAA's OEd strongly advises applicants to ensure that their two academic references have also submitted recommendations.

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Evaluation Process

What is the Administrative Review?

NOAA's Office of Education EPP/MSI scholarship team conducts an initial administrative review of scholarship applications (which includes the application form, one essay, two academic references, and all official transcripts) to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of applications. Only complete applications that meet all eligibility requirements, described under the Eligibility Requirements, will be considered for a merit review. Applications identified as incomplete or that do not meet the eligibility requirements will be deemed ineligible.

What is the Merit Review?

All complete and eligible scholarship applications undergo a review by a panel of scientific experts in the areas of study related to the EPP/MSI USP Scholarship. Panel members rate applications based on the evaluation criteria described below.

How will my scholarship application be evaluated?

Total evaluation points for the EPP/MSI USP are 110 points. Applications are evaluated by a review panel on the following criteria:

1. Relevant course work (30 points).
2. College education plan and career goals (30 points).
3. References and/or endorsements (reference forms) (20 points).
4. Additional relevant experience related to diversity of education; extracurricular activities; honors and awards; non-academic, entrepreneurship and volunteer work; interpersonal, written, and oral communications skills (20 points).
5. Interview (10 points).

How is my scholarship application scored?

Each application is reviewed by three independent panel members. A numerical score ranging from 0 to 110 is assigned to each application based on the average of the panelist's individual ratings and the interview score. The Deputy Director of NOAA Education will determine the final scholarship award recipients.

Are advanced placement (AP) credit hours used to determine academic status?

No. Only undergraduate coursework that received a grade will be considered to determine academic status because grade point average (GPA) is an eligibility criterion.

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Selection Process

Are there additional selection factors NOAA considers when determining EPP/MSI USP Scholarship Awards?

In determining final awards, the NOAA selection official reserves the right to select student candidates out of rank order based on program-specific objectives and to ensure distribution across academic disciplines, type of institution, and geographic location.

When will I be notified with a decision?

If selected, EPP/MSI USP scholarship recipients are notified by e-mail and/or a telephone call the first week of April. Applicants not selected for the EPP/MSI USP scholarship are notified by e-mail by the end of April.

Can I receive my scores and the review panel's comments?

Scores will not be released. All applicants who received a merit review may receive reviewer comments by the end of April, upon request.

How many EPP/MSI USP recipients are selected?

Approximately, 10 EPP/USP Undergraduate scholars are awarded based on appropriated funds from Congress.

- In 2001, 8 EPP/MSI USP scholars were selected.
- In 2002, 8 EPP/MSI USP scholars were selected.
- In 2003, 10 EPP/MSI USP scholars were selected.
- In 2004, 20 EPP/MSI USP scholars were selected.
- In 2005, 28 EPP/MSI USP scholars were selected.
- In 2006, 15 EPP/MSI USP scholars were selected.
- In 2007, 15 EPP/MSI USP scholars were selected.
- In 2008, 16 EPP/MSI USP scholars were selected.
- In 2009, 11 EPP/MSI USP scholars were selected.
- In 2010, 10 EPP/MSI USP scholars were selected.
- In 2011, 11 EPP/MSI USP scholars were selected.
- In 2012, 12 EPP/MSI USP scholars were selected.
- In 2013, 11 EPP/MSI USP scholars were selected.
- In 2014, 7 EPP/MSI USP scholars were selected.
- In 2015, 12 EPP/MSI USP scholars were selected

How many EPP/MSI USP applications does NOAA receive annually?

NOAA receives an average of 75 EPP/MSI USP Undergraduate Scholarship applications each year.

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Scholarship Recipients

What happens once I am selected as an EPP/MSI USP recipient?

Scholarship recipients will be notified by NOAA via an email. NOAA will follow-up with an appointment letter which must be signed and returned indicating acceptance of the student scholarship award. All student scholars, during the first summer, must participate in an eleven-week summer internship which includes a 2-week **mandatory** orientation program at the NOAA Silver Spring Metro Center Campus in Silver Spring, Maryland beginning mid- May.

A NOAA support contractor will coordinate the student scholarship recipient's travel and apartment housing arrangements for the first summer internship in Silver Spring, Maryland. All flights arrive at Washington National Airport on the Sunday prior to the start of the mandatory orientation program. NOAA pays for all pre-approved costs associated with the student scholarship recipients' travel. Pre-approved taxi and metro fares are reimbursed when accompanied by the appropriate paperwork and receipts. A recipient who chooses to drive a personal vehicle to Silver Spring, Maryland after receiving prior approval from NOAA will be reimbursed up to the cost of a round-trip airline ticket. NOAA does not recommend nor encourage recipients to drive due to limited local parking in Silver Spring, Maryland.

1st Summer Internship: NOAA EPP/MSI USP scholars participate in two summer internships at NOAA facilities. The program pays for scholar's travel to the NOAA Orientation at NOAA Headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, and to approved NOAA offices and facilities where scholars conduct research and development activities. The first summer internship is spent at NOAA Headquarter Offices in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The scholars will be housed in a complex in close proximity to the NOAA Silver Spring campus.

Scholars are provided a list of internship opportunities located in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area at the start

of the first summer. It is the student's responsibility to identify an internship opportunity of interest and to contact the NOAA mentor to discuss a summer project. If the scholar and the mentor are in agreement, a description of the project is submitted to the NOAA program staff. Scholars may also develop an internship opportunity, in coordination with a NOAA scientist and with the approval of the Program Office, based on their research interest.

2nd Summer Internship: A list of NOAA internship opportunities located nationwide is made available to all Office of Education scholarship recipients during the early fall semester. The program requires scholar, in their 2nd year of the program, travel during their winter term break to an approved NOAA site to interview and negotiate the second summer internship. The site visit (not to exceed three days) provides the scholar with the opportunity to meet with the NOAA scientist and discuss a research project of interest to both NOAA and the scholar for the student's second summer internship. The scholar is also allowed time to identify potential housing for the summer internship during the site visit. Scholars are provided a Site Visit Form to complete and submit to the NOAA EPP/MSI program team for review and approval. The scholar begins the second ten-week summer internship the last week of May.

As part of the summer internship, scholars are required to complete a project plan, submit a bi-weekly training record and an evaluation of the program.

What are the responsibilities of an EPP/MSI USP student scholar?

Undergraduate student scholars are responsible for:

1. Attending the 2-week mandatory orientation program in May during the first year of the appointment;
2. Completing an agreed upon summer project within 9 weeks;
3. Submitting the Research Training record through an online system every 2 weeks during the summer internship;
4. Presenting their project each summer to the NOAA community in Silver Spring, MD 10 weeks after the internship begins;
5. Conducting a site visit during their winter or quarter break.

What is the purpose of NOAA's mandatory orientation program?

NOAA provides student scholars the opportunity to learn about the agency, meet senior managers and understand the mission of the agency. NOAA organizations and selected staff offices present their research program activities during the mandatory orientation program. In addition, NOAA organizations describe the types of projects that are/may be available for the summer internships.

During the mandatory orientation program NOAA program staff present more detailed information about the student scholarship programs including finding a summer internship, selecting a NOAA mentor, travel procedures, student scholar's and NOAA mentor's responsibilities, stipend payments, and meeting the administrative support contractor. Tours of NOAA facilities will also be provided.

Also during the mandatory orientation program, scholars will be assigned NOAA E-mail accounts, which will be used for all official electronic communication between student scholars and the student scholarship for the duration of the scholarship appointment, and have photos taken for NOAA ID badges to be used during the summer internships.

What is the dress code for NOAA's mandatory orientation program?

During the mandatory orientation program and the final presentation week student scholarship recipients are required to dress in business casual attire. There will be photo opportunities with NOAA senior staff that may appear on NOAA web sites, in video clips and print media, brochures, etc. Examples of business casual attire include:

For Males:

- Sports jackets
- Slacks (dress and khaki)
- Shirts with collars
- Ties

For Females:

- Suits
- Skirts, slacks and blouses
- Sweaters

The dress code on tours is casual (sneakers, jeans, t-shirts, etc), however, sagging pants are not acceptable.

At no time are cut-off jeans, shirts or blouses displaying midriffs, micro/miniskirts or flip flops appropriate.

Will I be paid for attending NOAA's mandatory orientation program?

Yes. The orientation program is part of the 1st summer internship.

When will I start receiving scholarship payments?

Student scholarship recipients receive bi-weekly stipends beginning the last week of May. Payments are deposited directly into the student scholar's checking or savings account every other Friday following the orientation program and upon receipt of the signed formal written acceptance of the scholarship award.

Will I be paid for attending the Final Presentation Week?

Yes. Student scholars are required to present their summary project reports during the final week and will be paid. The Presentation Week is considered the 10th week of the summer internship.

How does NOAA ensure students are enrolled full-time at a College/University?

At the start of each term student scholars are required to submit a Certification of Enrollment to NOAA to ensure that the student scholars continue their major field of study related to NOAA's mission and are enrolled full-time.

Can I transfer to another University after I accept a EPP/MSI USP Scholarship?

Yes. If a scholar transfers to another university or changes their major, NOAA and the support contractor must be notified in writing prior to the transfer or change in major to obtain approval for continued scholarship funds. EPP/MSI USP scholars must attend an MSI for the duration of the scholarship appointment.

May I study abroad during my junior or senior year?

Yes. A student scholar may study abroad during their junior or senior year and still receive the scholarship. To study abroad and maintain their scholarship the student scholar is required to provide the following documentation: (1) a letter from their university indicating they have been approved to study abroad and that the university is an accredited program from which their units will transfer; (2) a letter from their study abroad program indicating that the student scholar will be a full-time student, the duration of their study abroad program, and the courses the student scholar will be taking will receive letter grades and will be transferred; and, (3) upon their arrival at their study abroad institution, a letter from that institution certifying full-time status with a copy of the student scholar's course schedule and an updated contact information sheet will be sent to the EPP/MSI Undergraduate Program staff. Student scholars must complete their site-visit and finalize all logistics for the upcoming summer internship **prior to** departing from the U.S. for the study abroad academic term.

Will my Scholarship be affected by other student scholarship or internship programs in which I am involved?

No. Student scholars are allowed to participate in other student scholarship and internship programs while receiving a NOAA scholarship. However, they must fulfill the requirements of the NOAA EPP/MSI USP which are: participation in the mandatory orientation program and final week of presentations; maintaining a full-time student status of enrollment; receiving a minimum 3.2 grade point average per academic term, as well as cumulatively; continuing their degree in a major field related to NOAA's mission; and, participation in the 2 10-week summer internships. Student scholars are not permitted to receive the scholarship if they are employed by the Federal Government. There are no exceptions or substitutions to these program requirements.

Is my financial scholarship subject to taxes?

NOAA recommends that all student scholars contact a tax professional to determine tax obligations of financial scholarships.

What is the process of obtaining a NOAA ID Badge?

The NOAA ID Badge is required to enter all NOAA facilities during the 10-week summer internships. Therefore, student scholars must adhere to Federal Security Procedures to obtain a NOAA ID Badge. The EPP/MSI USP program team will arrange for the scholar's fingerprinting in the Silver Spring security office during their 1st week of orientation. All student scholars must bring two forms of picture ID (i.e., state driver's license, student campus ID) to Silver Spring when reporting for the mandatory May orientation.

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Summer Internship

How do I find a Summer Internship?

The purpose of the internship is to provide "hands-on" research experience involving scholars in NOAA-related science, research, technology, and policy activities. Opportunities to complete the internship are available throughout the United States and U.S. territories. NOAA offices, programs, and laboratories offer a wide variety of options for the internship experience. Contact the NOAA Office of Education or visit the NOAA website at <http://www.noaa.gov> to explore the range of NOAA opportunities available at a desired location. If an internship requires relocation for the summer, scholars receive travel and housing subsidies under the terms of the scholarship.

NOAA EPP/MSI will provide a username and password to scholars to access the on-line Student Scholarship Internship Opportunities (SSIO) system that identifies available internships nationwide. The summer internship opportunities include a brief description of each project, contact information for the NOAA mentor and location, and a summary of the tasks associated with the project. NOAA program staff is available to assist scholars as needed. However, the scholars are advised to contact the NOAA mentor to discuss the project further to determine their interest. If a mutual agreement is reached, the scholar may e-mail the mentor an updated resume and must e-mail the NOAA Student Scholarship Program information about the summer internship opportunity. After the NOAA EPP/MSI Team approves the scholar's participation in a project, the scholar and the mentor will select the date and time (not to exceed three days) for the site visit. The scholar must submit a Travel Request electronically to the NOAA EPP/MSI USP team for approval of a site visit. NOAA will e-mail the scholar and NOAA mentor to confirm or disapprove the selection of the summer internship. If approved, EPP/MSI will contact the administrative support contractor, NOAA mentor, and scholar to proceed with travel arrangements. All scholars must finalize their internship selections by March 31.

What happens once I have identified a potential Summer Internship?

Once a scholar has identified an internship and received approval from the NOAA EPP/MSI Team, scholars must submit a Travel Request Form to NOAA at epp.usp@noaa.gov for approval of a site visit. NOAA will approve or deny the Travel Request and copy the NOAA mentor and support contractor. If approved, the support contractor will contact the scholar to coordinate travel arrangements for the site visit. Funds will be made available for students to conduct only one site visit. The purpose of the site visit is to allow the Scholar to meet the NOAA mentor, their staff, tour the facility, and discuss the project to be conducted, identify summer housing and assess transportation needs.

The NOAA support contractor will purchase an airline or train ticket, pre-pay the hotel, and reimburse the scholar for pre-approved car rental and meals while in a travel status. Under no circumstances should scholars purchase their own airline, bus, or train ticket to or from their internship site or NOAA Headquarters. Scholars will not be reimbursed for airline, bus, or other unapproved travel costs.

Scholars must submit all original travel receipts for reimbursement to the NOAA administrative support contractor. Only receipts in the scholar's name will be reimbursed by the administrative support contractor. Receipts for meals are not required.

All site visits must be completed by April 15. Scholars are encouraged to complete the site visit during their winter or quarter break.

Upon the completion of the site visit, all scholars are required to submit the completed Site Survey Form to the NOAA Program Staff.

Can I drive my personal vehicle to my 10-week Summer Internship?

NOAA recommends that scholars do not drive to their summer internship if it is more than 500 miles (a one-day trip) from their departure city/town. If a scholar does drive, scholars will be reimbursed up to the cost of a round-trip airline ticket for mileage.

Pre-approval must be received from NOAA EPP/MSI for scholars to drive their vehicles (no more than 8 hours recommended).

A vehicle is not required during the internships in Silver Spring, Maryland. The Silver Spring, Maryland apartment complex will charge a parking fee to the scholar that NOAA will not reimburse.

Can I drive a government vehicle during my 10-week Summer Internship?

The NOAA Office of Education, EPP/MSI USP program **does not permit scholars to drive government vehicles.** In the event an EPP/MSI USP scholar is permitted to drive a government vehicle by their NOAA mentor, the Office of Education will not accept any responsibility or liability to cover insurance or repair claims if the scholar is involved in an accident.

If I rent a vehicle during my 10-week Summer Internship, will I be reimbursed for the cost?

NOAA **will not** approve or pay the cost for rental vehicles for use during the summer internship. It is highly recommended that scholars select a summer internship site where a car is not needed if a scholar does not own a vehicle. Transportation needs should be assessed during the site visit.

When will my Summer Internship begin?

For students attending colleges and universities on the semester system, summer internships begin around the last week of May and end 10 weeks thereafter. For students on the quarter system, internships may begin mid-June and end by mid-August.

When do summer payments begin and how much are they?

During the summer internships scholars receive bi-weekly payments which are deposited into the scholar's account in the amount of \$1,400.00 for scholarship and \$200.00 per week as a housing allowance. The housing allowance is provided only if the scholar does not live at their permanent residence and the scholar's permanent residence is more than 50 miles from their summer internship. The housing allowance is provided to supplement, not entirely cover, and the cost of summer housing.

If I work on my project for more than 40 hours a week, will I be paid overtime?

No. Scholars receive \$700.00 per week during the summer internship periods in bi-weekly stipend payments for the training they receive during the internship. Undergraduate scholars are not hired as Federal employees.

How do I find summer housing during the 10-week Summer Internship?

During the first summer, scholars are required to live in Silver Spring, Maryland. The NOAA Student Scholarship Program office is located in Silver Spring, Maryland and will coordinate housing arrangements.

During the second summer scholars may select from NOAA laboratories and field sites and are required to identify summer housing during their site visit. NOAA has compiled a list of summer housing used by previous program participants. The EPP/MSI team will make that information available prior to your site visit. NOAA will not enter into a lease agreement for the scholars.

For all scholars, the housing allowance is \$200.00 per week provided you do not live at your permanent residence or your permanent residence is more than 50 miles away from your summer internship. **The housing allowance is not intended to cover all summer housing costs, rather to offset the costs associated with housing.** Scholars

residing in Silver Spring, Maryland, or other NOAA funded housing will not receive the housing allowance regardless of its cost.

What are the requirements for the Final Presentation Week?

Scholars' participation in the final week Symposium in Silver Spring, Maryland, is mandatory each year of the program. The NOAA mentor and scholar will determine if the summer project presentation is either oral or in a poster format.

During the second summer internship, the program requires all scholars to travel to Silver Spring, Maryland, during the tenth week of the internship to present their project in a poster or Power Point format to the NOAA scientific community. Travel will be coordinated by the NOAA administrative support contractor. NOAA will not reimburse scholars who purchase their own airline, bus, or train ticket, hotel, or car rental without pre-approval from NOAA. Scholars will travel home at the end of their 9th week to deposit their personal effects and will depart their homes on Sunday and travel to Silver Spring, Maryland. On Monday all scholars will either load their PowerPoint presentations onto designated laptops and check the video/graphics or mount the poster displays.

Will NOAA provide printing services for posters during Final Presentation Week?

Scholars will be reimbursed for the cost of printing posters for their project summary presentation upon submission of the original receipt.

Will I be paid for attending the Science and Education Symposium?

Yes. Scholars are required to present their summary project reports during the final week and will receive their stipend payment. The Science and Education Symposium is considered the 10th week of the summer internship.

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Mentors / Potential Mentors

What is the role of the EPP/MSI USP mentor?

The EPP/MSI USP mentor selected by the student scholar is responsible for: providing the student scholar with a NOAA-related research project in support of the student scholar's academic field of study that can be completed in 10-weeks; day-to-day guidance as needed; office space; a computer; and, access to a telephone, fax, and the internet. EPP/MSI USP mentors are also required to provide guidance on the research, science, operations, outreach, or policy topic, as well as assist the student scholar as needed in the selection of appropriate course work related to NOAA's mission for the duration of the student scholar's participation in the program. The EPP/MSI USP mentor will assess the student scholar's progress during a mid-term and final evaluation; and provide constructive feedback.

First Summer: Within the first week of selecting a mentor, the EPP/MSI USP mentor and intern should complete and sign a Project Plan for the EPP/MSI USP program and e-mail the signed plan to the NOAA program staff at epp.usp@noaa.gov.

Second Summer: By the second week of the summer internship the EPP/MSI USP mentor and intern should complete and sign a Project Plan. The **EPP/MSI USP** mentor is responsible for:

- completing the Mentor training at <https://doc.csod.com/client/doc/>;
- signing the student scholar's Research Training Report every two weeks;
- providing guidance on technology, science, policy, operations, and/or research activities, as related to a specific project;
- conducting a mid-term assessment and providing the student scholar and NOAA support staff with your comments;
- supporting the student scholar's presentation during the 10th week of the internship; and,
- completing an evaluation form upon completion of the internship and e-mail it to epp.usp@noaa.gov.

How do EPP/MSI USP scholars select a mentor for the 2nd Summer Internship?

Student scholars are provided a list of nationwide NOAA internship opportunities during the early-fall. Student scholars contact the prospective NOAA mentor to discuss the project further to determine their interest. If a mutual agreement is reached, the student may e-mail the mentor an updated resume and e-mail the EPP/MSI Team information about the summer internship opportunity. After NOAA approves the student scholar's participation in a project, the student scholar, mentor and the EPP/MSI Team will select the date and time (not to exceed three days) for the site visit.

As a potential mentor with a single opportunity and several inquiries, how do I determine which student scholar is best suited for the position?

The selection process should be approached like a job interview. Potential student scholars may be asked questions about their skills; their academic, scientific, and research interests; and their overall success in courses relevant to the NOAA mentor's project, etc. Be mindful of the information exchange between you and the potential scholar and note that student scholars are contacting several potential mentors, who must also agree to the selection.

Is there training available for EPP/MSI USP mentors?

Yes. Mentor training is required. Mentor training is available at <https://doc.csod.com/client/doc/>. After completing the training, please send the EPP/MSI Team a copy of the training certificate to epp.usp@noaa.gov.

Can EPP/MSI USP mentors have more than one student scholar?

Yes. EPP/MSI USP mentor's may host more than one student scholar per summer providing each student scholar has a discreet project assigned to him/her; hence, student scholars **may not** share a NOAA project, unless the project has definite discrete components.

Do EPP/MSI USP mentors provide a NOAA Badge?

No. NOAA Badges are provided to the student scholars during the mandatory orientation program by the Office of Education

Will NOAA mentors create an e-mail account for the student scholar?

No. NOAA OEd creates and maintains NOAA e-mail accounts for all student scholars for their 2-year term in the scholarship program. The student scholars are fully supported (monthly academic stipend, summer bi-weekly stipend, housing allowance) by NOAA's OEd. The student scholars' email accounts will be maintained by the OFA Mail Admin Group and will **not** be transferred to the host office operating units.

Can the mentor change the summer project?

If the mentor determines a change is required for the summer project, the mentor may request to change the project with the student scholar in coordination with OEd EPP/MSI. Project changes must be agreed upon by the NOAA mentor, student scholar and EPP/MSI. If the new project is found to be unsuitable for the student scholar, the student scholar is required to select another EPP/USP project for the remainder of the summer internship.

Can the mentor assign multiple projects to the EPP/MSI student scholar?

No. Each student scholar must have one project which can be completed in 9-weeks. At the end of the 9 weeks, the student scholar must present the results of that project to the NOAA community in Silver Spring, Maryland. Awards are given for the best presentations.

As the scholar's mentor can I allow the EPP/MSI USP scholar to drive our government vehicle during the Summer Internship?

The NOAA Office of Education has consulted the NOAA Office of Finance and Administration who has advised the program of the following: if a scholar drives a government vehicle and has an accident, the office that the scholar is assigned to, namely OEd is responsible for the cost associated with the vehicle repairs. Therefore, **OEd does not approve EPP/MSI USP scholars to drive government vehicles.** The NOAA Office of Education does not budget funds to cover vehicle repairs or insurance claims due to personal injury or liability.

Can the NOAA mentor pay for the student scholar's travel to NOAA field sites and/or conferences?

Yes. If funds are available, a mentor may cover travel costs for the student scholar to NOAA field sites, conferences and meetings that would enhance the student scholar's summer internship experience and add value to their project. The EPP/MSI USP program budgets funds to support the travel for the student scholar to two conferences during their term in the program. EPP/MSI USP mentors are encouraged to work with their student scholar to submit an abstract to a professional conference where the student scholar presents the results of their summer internship.

Can the scholar's mentor attend the final presentations? Will OEd pay for the mentor's travel?

OEd is unable to provide any travel support to Silver Spring, Maryland, for the student's mentor to attend the final week of presentations. However, mentors are encouraged to attend the final presentations both to support their student scholar as well as to assist with the judging process.

What is the EPP/MSI USP program evaluation process?

At the end of the summer internship EPP/MSI scholar mentors will receive an evaluation form and are asked to assess the student scholar's preparedness, contribution, and performance during the summer internship. Student scholars are also provided a separate evaluation form to provide feedback on their experience with the project and the NOAA mentor.

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