

Award for Excellence in Scholarship in the Sciences and Engineering

Contacts: Dave Wolcott, 243.2018, wolcott@virginia.edu
Roseanne Ford, 924.4865, roseanne@virginia.edu

The purpose of this program is to reward scholarship and improve retention among graduate students in the sciences and engineering, and to provide financial support to assist them in the timely completion of doctoral studies. This program complements the VPRGS *Fellowship Enhancement for Outstanding Doctoral Candidates*, which targets the recruitment of outstanding new students to U.Va. doctoral programs. The University's desire is to achieve excellence in all aspects of graduate education. One-time fellowship awards of up to \$5,000 will be made to reward current Ph.D. students in the sciences and engineering[†] who have demonstrated rigorous scholarship in their discipline. Departments with fewer than 50 Ph.D. students may nominate one student; departments with more than 50 Ph.D. students may nominate two students. VPRGS anticipates making 15-20 awards to a diverse group of students. The Commonwealth of Virginia, the source of funding for this program, requires that at least one-half of the awards be made to residents of the Commonwealth.

Criteria: Nominees should be Ph.D. students that are sufficiently advanced in their program to have demonstrated excellence in original scholarship. The purpose is to reward students that are bringing recognition to graduate programs at the University of Virginia as a result of their intellect, dedication, creativity, and passion. Students must also have strong academic credentials, as evidenced by performance in coursework and on comprehensive examinations. Students who have competed successfully for external fellowships are eligible. In fact, we encourage nomination of students who have been awarded national fellowships, especially in cases where the fellowship stipend does not meet a department's typical stipend level.

Application Materials: Applications must include a nomination cover letter from a departmental representative, curriculum vitae, and current transcript of the student. The nomination letter should describe the scholarship of the student and make the case for the award. Examples of scholarship may include journal publications, presentations at national meetings, computer software, patents, etc. Please note in the nomination letter whether or not the student is a Virginia resident.

Submission Deadlines: Application materials for nominees are due to the Office of the Vice President for Research & Graduate Studies by December 21, 2007. We anticipate announcing

[†] Science departments include Astronomy, Biochemistry & Molecular Genetics, Biology, Biophysics, Chemistry, Cell Biology, Environmental Sciences, Mathematics, Microbiology, Neuroscience, Nursing, Pharmacology, Physics, Physiology, Psychology, Statistics and programs in Biomedical Sciences. Engineering departments include Biomedical, Chemical, Civil, Computer, Computer Science, Electrical, Engineering Physics, Materials Science, Mechanical & Aerospace, and Systems. Underline indicates departments with more than 50 Ph.D. students, as of fall 2006.

award winners by January 25, 2008. Electronic submission of application materials to gradstudies@virginia.edu is encouraged. Paper materials may be hand delivered to Thornton Hall A123 or sent by messenger mail to P.O. Box 400882.

Questions:

1. *Will this award program continue next year?* YES.
2. *Does this award include the health insurance benefit?* NO.
3. *May the fellowship be used for travel or research?* The funds will be awarded as a fellowship. If students choose to use the fellowship to pay for travel, they may do so, but we will not award the funds as a travel reimbursement.
4. *How will this affect student financial aid?* Students should check with the Student Financial Services, prior to submission of their nomination, to determine what impact, if any, this award may have on their current aid situation and qualifications for future aid.

Prepared December 23, 2005

Revised September 14, 2006

Revised October 11, 2007