

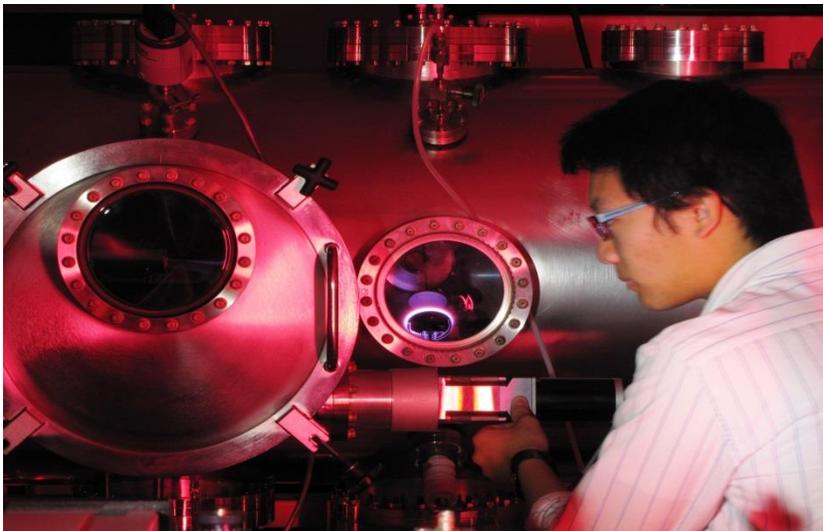
Wright Scholar Research Assistant

Minimum Age: 16 years by program start.

Qualification Standards: High school junior or senior at time of application, interest in STEM career fields, U.S. citizen, and GPA of 3.5 or greater.

Tenure: 05 June – 04 August 2017

The Wright Scholar Research Assistant program is an Air Force Research Laboratory initiative designed to expose high school juniors and seniors to various disciplines of engineering and science in an effort to further their interest in future STEM career options. Wright Scholars are employed as full-time, paid interns for 9 weeks during the summer. A panel of scientists, engineers, and educators will use a “blind” review system to select the students (names and other personal data are removed from applications prior to review to prevent biases). Students are competitively selected to work on a research project under the guidance of their assigned mentors. They also participate in weekly workshops, lectures, and tours to expand their knowledge of potential science and engineering career fields. At the end of the program, Wright Scholars are required to present their project work to their peers and mentors, and a program certificate is awarded.



The Air Force Institute of Technology provides a jet propulsion course for Wright Scholars. Students also travel to the University of Dayton to participate in a variety of classes and workshops through their Summer Science and Engineering Enrichment program. Wright State University's College of Engineering & Computer Science offers an engineering workshop, while the College of Science and Mathematics offers a Pre-Health programs lecture and tour of the medical school. Other tours, such as the C-17, AF Museum, and various AFRL locations, are also popular. Additionally, students attend weekly lecture series featuring prominent scientists and engineers who share their expertise.

Applicants are solicited from local high schools, but the program is open to any students outside the area or out-of-state who meet the criteria. No travel allowances are available, and the student is responsible for housing, meals, and transportation to/from work.

Some of the program features this year's class of Wright Scholars liked best included: "hands-on, real-world STEM applications;" "working with some of the best researchers in the world;" "the breadth of experiences we were exposed to;" "the collaboration with scientists and engineers;" "being in a real work place and gaining professional experience;" "the vast number of topics covered at work and through Wright Scholar activities;" "opportunity to do actual research and meet amazing people;" "exploring different STEM fields and listening to expert lectures;" "one of the best summer experiences I've ever had."

Since program onset in 2002, approximately 487 Wright Scholars have been hired from 75 school districts. Most have graduated from college or are attending college in engineering and science (including medical) career fields. Upon college graduation, several have been hired as AFRL researchers and some are Air Force officers with engineering degrees, while others have received SMART scholarships, including paid college tuition with government service payback. Of students tracked over the years, 87% have pursued or are pursuing STEM careers and 8% have pursued or are pursuing medical careers.

So how do I become a Wright Scholar? An eligible student applicant must meet the following qualification requirements:

- Applicants must have an expressed interest in STEM fields
- Applications will be accepted from 14 Nov 2016 through 9 Jan 2017
- Home-school students will be considered if they score in the top 20% on a national standardized test such as the PSAT/NMSQT, SAT or ACT
- Must be 16 years of age by program start
- Must be a U.S. citizen
- Must be a high school junior or senior at time of application
- Must have minimum 3.5 overall GPA
- Must be available to start program on 5 June 2017 and attend mandatory first-day orientation. If the last day of school is extended due to calamity days, the program start date may be delayed, and selected students will be notified.
- Must have transportation or a means to get to various locations on base throughout the summer
- Must commit to mandatory attendance policy during first week and also during student out briefings (presentations) at end of program
- Must be able to participate 40 hours/week for 9 weeks during the summer--this is a full-time commitment.
- May request no more than 5 days of excused absence during the program (illness is excluded). Excessive or unexcused absences can be grounds for dismissal from the program.

Those students who cannot meet the minimum work requirement or adhere to the attendance policy are ineligible for the program.

Additional Information/Links:

- [Wright Scholar photos](#)
- [Wright Scholar Criteria and Procedures](#)
- [Wright Scholar Career Descriptions](#)
- [Wright Scholar Application & Essay](#)

For more information about the Wright Scholar Research Assistant program, contact the Wright Scholar Program Manager at (937) 938-4866.