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The U.S. Department of Defense is showing University of Dayton students Andrew Fist and Megan Miller it pays to be SMART.

Fist and Miller won SMART scholarships — Science, Math and Research for Transformation — that will provide funding for full tuition, a $1,000 book allowance, other education-related fees, paid summer internships, health insurance and a job after graduation.

Fewer than 10 percent of applicants received SMART scholarships in 2008. Winners must work full-time as civil servants for the Department of Defense after graduation for at least the same duration they held a SMART scholarship in college.

"Many of the other students who were awarded scholarships attended schools such as Worcester Polytechnic Institute, MIT and Stanford," said Fist who just returned from scholarship orientation in Monterey, Calif. "It was neat that UD students were there with other kids from the most nationally recognized engineering schools in the country."

Fist, a senior mechanical engineering major, will intern next summer at the Arnold Engineering Development Center in Tennessee before graduating in December 2009. The U.S. Air Force promotes the center as the most advanced and largest complex of flight simulation test facilities in the world.

Miller, a sophomore math major, will intern the next two summers at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton. She also will work there after she graduates in 2011.

Fist and Miller are the second and third UD students to win SMART scholarships in the last two years.

UD ranks 27th among all colleges and universities nationally for all sponsored engineering research and development.

For more information, contact Shawn Robinson, associate director of media relations, at 937-229-3391 or srobinson@udayton.edu.