

★ DAKOTA DEFENSE ALLIANCE ★

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DAKOTA DEFENSE ALLIANCE ANNOUNCES INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

On February 25th 2009 the Dakota Defense Alliance (DDA) is holding a public forum to bolster support for North Dakota's educational and employment needs. An IVN (Integrated Video Network) session will be hosted from Minot State University and will be broadcast to ten major campus locations throughout North Dakota. The IVN session will provide information on the DDA internship program, available internship opportunities, and the partnership between DDA and Operation Intern.

The IVN session will be from 11-12 pm (CST).

"As an alliance of North Dakota businesses, we want to do our part to help provide solutions to the challenge North Dakota faces when students leave the state after graduation. We are working to reverse this trend by introducing a statewide internship program developed with our member companies," said Kristin Hedger, Executive Director of the Dakota Defense Alliance.

The DDA has nearly 30 member companies in the fields of high-tech manufacturing, information technology, program management, business administration, and more. DDA is hosting this forum to announce an increase in the number of internships offered to North Dakota students and inform businesses about the benefits of communicating opportunities to universities. DDA members agree that it is critical for businesses to reach out and create more awareness of the opportunities students have right here in North Dakota.

"It is about reversing a trend that has often been referred to as the 'brain drain.' Our businesses need energetic, driven, young talent—we just need to reach out to our young people and let them know of the quality jobs available," stated Hedger. "We also want to provide them with North Dakota connected companies who may have opportunities for them to live, learn, and experience life elsewhere but maintain the quality connections to come back home with their talents."

One of those companies is DRS Technologies, Inc. Headquartered in Parsippany, NJ, DRS is a leading supplier of integrated products, services and support to military forces. The company is a wholly owned subsidiary of Finmeccanica S.p.A., which employs more than 73,000 people worldwide. As one of the fastest growing defense contractors in the world, DRS Technologies, Inc. will benefit by providing work experience for college students in ND.

We are particularly excited to work with DRS given that a North Dakota native is now serving as President of their Tactical Systems Group. Lt. General (R) Jerry Sinn from Garrison, North Dakota joined the Company in January 2007 after a stellar 38-year career with the U.S. Army. This year, under his guidance, the Tactical Systems Group of DRS has allotted three positions to ND college students through the DDA. The company typically offers over 20 internships each year.

The DDA will be partnering with Operation Intern, a program within the ND Department of Commerce that offers a matching dollars program to help pay the cost of the internship. This will encourage DDA members to offer more internships by cutting the cost if they contract through the Operation Intern program.

For more information contact Kristin Hedger at 701.426.9584.

***"National Security is job one for the U.S. Government. I can't think of many better ways for North Dakota's young people to support this than either through employment in the defense industry or in uniform service."
-LTG(R) Jerry Sinn***