Office of University Programs (OUP)
Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) Program

The Office of University Programs (OUP) Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) Program provides opportunities that foster and cultivate a diverse university-based research capability and talented workforce and prepares motivated students to launch successful homeland security-related careers. MSI Program offerings are designed to:

- ☑ Advance the research capabilities of students and faculty that contribute to MSI capacity building,
- ☑ Cultivate scientific leadership in areas of study critical to homeland security,
- ☑ Recruit and diversify the next generation of the Homeland Security Workforce, and
- ☑ Provide opportunities for students and junior faculty to directly engage with professionals in their areas of interest.

Scientific Leadership Award (SLA)

Grants up to $1M are competitively awarded to MSIs to help build institutional capacity through research and collaboration. Grants enable awardees to establish homeland security-related curricula and/or courses of study while supporting the development of student mentorship and recruitment activities, science and engineering research, and teaching initiatives. These awards significantly contribute to the development of and cultivation of relationships and networks across private industry, university, federal and local government, and DHS Centers of Excellence (COE). *(Next anticipated releases in spring 2024 and 2026. Available to faculty).*

Border protection is inherently dangerous for those on the front lines. To help ensure the safety of those charged with protecting U.S. borders, the **Scientific Leadership Award (SLA)** research team at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley developed a system of wheeled ground robots and flying drones capable of working together to search, patrol, and detect threats. These cutting-edge vehicles are autonomous and incorporate the latest advances in machine learning and computer vision to maximize their adaptability which allows them to intelligently navigate challenges without human operators having to constantly oversee and intervene. In addition to being a game-changer on the front lines, this project also advanced research, resulting in five publications and conference presentations, four student graduations, and helped students in the Rio Grande Valley secure jobs in the security and defense fields.

Homeland Security Workforce Opportunities to Increase Research Engagement and Diversity (HS-WIRED)

An 8-12-week internship program for graduate and undergraduate MSI students interested in supporting cutting-edge research with leading scientists and engineers. Participants conduct research at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL), providing an opportunity to establish connections with Department of Energy professionals working on homeland security-related research. *(Applications accepted November – March. Stipend, housing, and transportation provided).*

Current MSI Partners

Arizona State University
Bethune-Cookman University
Bowie State University
California State University Dominguez Hills
California State University Northridge
California State University San Marcos
City University of New York
CUNY/Baruch College
CUNY/John Jay College of Criminal Justice
CUNY/New York City College of Technology
Diné College
Eastern New Mexico University
Elizabeth City State university
Fayetteville State University
Florida International University
Georgia State University
Ilisagvik College
Jackson State University
Johnson C. Smith University
Lincoln University
Mercy College
Morgan State University
Norfolk State University
North Carolina Agricultural
 and Technical State University
North Carolina Central University
Prairie View A&M University
San Jacinto College
Southern University and A&M College
St. Mary's University
Sul Ross State University
Tennessee State University
Texas A&M University - College Station
Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi
Texas A&M University - Kingsville
Texas State University
Texas Southern University
Texas Tech University
Trinity Washington University
Tougaloo College
University of Alaska Anchorage
University of Alaska Fairbanks
University of Alaska Northwest Campus
University of Baltimore
University of California - Davis
University of California - Irvine
University of Central Florida
University of the District of Columbia
University of Houston
University of Nevada Las Vegas
University of New Mexico
University of North Texas
University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez
University of Texas at Arlington
University of Texas Austin
University of Texas El Paso
University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
University of Texas San Antonio
Virginia Commonwealth University
Virginia Tech

Science and Technology

Summer Research Team Program (SRT)

A team of early career faculty and up to two students are paired with a DHS COE to conduct full-time collaborative summer research at one of 10 DHS COEs. Over the course of 10 weeks during the summer, this opportunity increases and enhances scientific leadership at MSIs in research areas that support the mission and goals of DHS. Upon successful completion of the summer session, teams are eligible to receive up to $100k of follow-on funding to continue their research for an additional year. *(Applications accepted September – December. Available to faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students. Stipend, housing, and transportation provided).*

Cross-Border Threat Screening and Supply Chain Defense (CBTS), a DHS COE led by Texas A&M, supported a **Summer Research Team (SRT)** effort to detect harmful chemicals in shrimp supplies. Dr. Harshica Fernando and her students used gas-chromatography, an analytical technique used to separate, detect, and quantify chemical components of a given sample, to detect polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in shrimp. This SRT opportunity has substantially contributed to both science and student development: the findings will help ensure the integrity of shrimp imports – the most popular seafood in the U.S.– while training a new generation of skilled researchers.

Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) STEM Research and Development Consortium (MSRDC)

A funding pathway that enables DHS HQ and Components to directly access member MSIs. The MSI must serve as the prime performer for research, development, test, and/or evaluation efforts. Through MSRDC, DHS can access fore than 80 MSIs, including 15 R1 universities, and 37 partnering private industry organizations. *(Accepting applications on an ongoing basis).*