

# OTC interns gain valuable insight with cross training

For nearly 40 years, the U.S. Army Operational Test Command has trained and hired interns from various Army programs, providing the Army's only independent operational tester a competitive way to sustain and develop their civilian workforce.

Just last week, OTC promoted six interns — one in the safety career field and five in science, technology, engineering and mathematics disciplines. After one more year of field training, the interns will graduate and be eligible for full-time employment within the Defense Department, said Deborah Stimson, OTC human resource specialist.

“The Army Civilian Training, Education and Development System ensures the planned development of civilian members of the workforce through a blending of progressive and sequential work assignments, formal training and self-development as they progress from entry level to key positions,” said Stimson, who manages OTC's intern programs.

Gayle Shull, director of OTC's Test Technology Directorate, provides technical and professional supervision for the science-related interns. Reginald Jones, OTC safety officer, supervises the safety intern. Both agree that intern programs are a great way to prepare new hires to operate at full performance level, providing a variety of educational and cross-developmental opportunities.

“I started as a Department of the Army intern 38 years ago when OTC was the U.S. Army Project Mobile Army Sensor Systems Test, Evaluation and Review,” Shull said. “And I recall there was another intern finishing her second year in 1975. I don't have the exact number of interns we've trained here, but I do know all ... interns have been hired by the Army.”

Stimson said OTC hasn't hosted only science-related interns.

“OTC has also trained five Department of the Army public affairs interns who went on to attend the Defense Information school at Fort Meade, Md., before being hired into permanent assignments,” she said.

OTC's current crop of interns hail from all parts of America and appears to have assimilated seamlessly, not only into OTC but also into the Central Texas area.

“All five interns we gained from a STEM-focused recruiting program are some of the nation’s brightest scholars,” Shull said. “They’ve made a smooth transition ... providing many types of support.”

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