PRESS RELEASE

From the University of Illinois Information Trust Institute

Information Trust Institute Offering New ICSSP Scholarship for Service Program for Undergraduates

The Information Trust Institute (ITI) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is now accepting applications for a new program of scholarships that will support undergraduate students who are working towards careers in information trust.

The Illinois Cyber Security Scholars Program (ICSSP) in ITI has just been created with $1.25 million in funding from the Federal Cyber Service: Scholarship for Service (SFS) program of the National Science Foundation. SFS's mission is to increase the number of students entering the fields of computer security and information assurance, with the ultimate objective of improving the U.S. government's ability to protect its own information infrastructure.

Under the terms of the ICSSP program, each participating student will receive a scholarship and stipend covering the last two years of undergraduate study, and in exchange will commit to work for two years following graduation as an information assurance specialist in the federal government. In order to qualify for scholarships, students must be U.S. citizens studying at, or transferring to, the Electrical & Computer Engineering or Computer Science program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

In addition to receiving financial support, each participating student will attend training that explains the government's information assurance needs, will perform a summer internship in a federal government or national lab setting, and will prepare a senior design project that addresses a security topic. The program will include active recruitment of students from underrepresented groups and transfer or community college students.

"This scholarship program gives Illinois students a unique opportunity to specialize in information assurance and security, which is an area of the job market that needs to attract many talented students from top institutions like ours," explained Dr. Masooda Bashir, ITI's Assistant Director for Social Trust Initiatives, who is the program manager of the new ICSSP program. ICSSP is being led by Professor Roy Campbell of the Department of Computer Science and ITI at Illinois; Professor William H. Sanders of ITI, the Coordinated Science Laboratory, and the Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering is serving as an additional co-leader.

"Information trust" consists of the study and practice of ensuring that networked information systems remain secure, dependable, correct, safe, and private, even in the face of accidents or malicious attacks. Skilled workforce development in the area of information trust is seen by experts as a crucial step in ensuring the trustworthiness of information systems that support critical areas of the U.S. economy, ranging from financial systems to homeland security defense.

Interested students can visit the ITI web site at www.iti.illinois.edu for more information and to apply online. May 1 is the application deadline for scholarships beginning in the fall.

About the Information Trust Institute (ITI)

The Information Trust Institute is a multidisciplinary cross-campus research unit housed in the College of Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. It is an international leader combining research and education with industrial outreach in trustworthy and secure information systems. ITI brings together over 90 faculty, many senior and graduate student researchers, and industry partners to conduct foundational and applied research to enable the creation of critical applications and cyber infrastructures. In doing so, ITI is creating computer systems, software, and networks that society can depend on to be trustworthy, that is, secure, dependable (reliable and available), correct, safe, private, and survivable. Instead of concentrating on narrow and focused technical solutions, ITI aims to create a new paradigm for designing trustworthy systems from the ground up and validating systems that are intended to be trustworthy. www.iti.uiuc.edu

Writer: Jenny Applequist, Information Trust Institute, 217/244-8920, applequi@iti.uiuc.edu.

Released April 15, 2009

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign