Government bankrolls future workers from OSU

By James Stoer
Lantern staff writer

The Department of Defense is offering 10 to 14 graduate scholarships and fellowships for Ohio State students in Environmental Restoration.

The Defense Department hopes the scholarship money will pay off later in the form of well-qualified federal employees.

The scholarships will provide full tuition and $1,000 a month, said Christena Cox, an instructional materials associate.

"The more Ph.D. students we have who apply for scholarships, the fewer will be given out because the Ph.D. program is a longer program than the master's and we only have a fixed amount of money," said Frank Schwartz, an eminent scholar in hydrogeology.

In order to be eligible, students must be enrolled or have been accepted into the environmental science program and be a permanent U.S. citizen, Cox said.

Recipients of the scholarships must agree to serve as full-time civilian employees for the department in an environmental position, Cox said.

For each year of a scholarship, the individual must work for the department for two years, Cox said.

Though the jobs assigned depend on the needs of the department, they are all entry-level positions, Cox said.

Internship job options include environmental technician, secretary, and military base cleanup, she said. The jobs assignments for the students picked by the Department of Defense depend on the student's education level, Cox said. Ph.D. program graduates receive more complex assignments than master's program candidates, Cox said.

If the department has no positions available, the student still gets the scholarship money without obligation, Schwartz said.

Most of the positions are available in the continental United States, but it depends on where help is needed, he said.

"In essence, you're their meat as to where they send you," Schwartz said.

Job preference will be given to existing or former defense department employees or former members of the Armed Forces, Cox said.

There are 16 other schools participating in the program, Schwartz said.

Recipients have the option of paying back the defense department after graduation rather than working the balance off with the internship, Schwartz said.

"I think it's a pretty good deal for the students. They get a free ride and have a job lined up when they're done," Schwartz said.

The deadline for applications is Dec. 1 and the program goes into effect April 1, 1996, Cox said.