(U) The IA Summer Intern Program

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(U) What did you do during the summer when you were in college? Did you work at a restaurant? Hang out on the beach? Work in an office? Go to summer school? Take a trip? For about 20 students a year, the answer is, "I worked at NSA!"

(S) NSA has developed an Intelligence Analyst Summer Intern Program. Students from all over the country have found out about this program, applied, and earned the opportunity to spend three months working at the Agency gaining exposure to many facets of the intelligence field. The program is designed to attract people with academic backgrounds to the Agency and to give them a chance to get a taste for the mission. For the three months, the students attend briefings, go on tours, and meet with people from their respective targets of interest. In addition, the students are responsible for two different projects. One is a research project which involves the use of software like Anchory and Plus. The second project is a Digital Network Intelligence (DNI) project which introduces them to network exploitation and other technical elements used for the mission.

(U//FOUO) Prospective attendants must fill out an application and complete a full background investigation prior to acceptance. Selected interns are then invited to participate in the program, the benefits of which include a GG-6 or GG-7 salary, the ability to earn sick leave and annual leave, and a stated conditional offer for future employment if successful completion of the program and their academic career ensues. After interviewing several students who participated in the program and have now joined NSA as full-time employees, the success of the program seems clear. They all enjoyed the program immensely and would highly recommend it to others. One woman stated that the program "was ultimately the reason I chose to return to the Agency after graduation."

(U) It is important to note that NSA is casting a fairly filtered net with this program. There is not an extensive advertising campaign to promote this program; rather this program serves to compete with similar programs at other intelligence agencies. CIA, DIA, and NIMA all have summer programs designed to entice students to accept employment after graduation. Students have learned about the programs via specific courses or departments at their universities. One student learned about it through an international security studies program, another through the Monterey Institute of International Studies, and another by simply logging on to the NSA website on his own volition. Thus, with this program, NSA is gaining students whose interest is already sparked when it comes to the Intelligence Community. The program seems to provide a well choreographed symbiotic relationship: students interested in intelligence get a head start on a career in their desired field, and NSA gets employees who are bright, motivated, and committed to the intelligence mission.

(U) SID Today note: Watch for a future article describing what the summer interns contributed to the mission while working in SID.