

Deondra Short



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Student Trainee, Department of Defense
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DSU: You're beginning your career with an exciting position at the Department of Defense. How did you get started on this path?

DEONDRA: Actually from the moment I started out freshman year, I had freshman seminar classes that helped in the area of professional development. I was able to build a resume that detailed all of my skills and areas of expertise, which put me in the mindset to start preparing for my career. After that, my advisor referred me to a forensic science research program at Pennsylvania State University, which helped me hone my research skills and figure out which areas interested me. I also did research at DSU as a student worker through the Smile Program. My job now is largely research-based, so all of those experiences gave me a head start.

DSU: What other things were you involved in on campus?

DEONDRA: I'm a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, the National Society for Collegiate Scholars and the Forensic Biology Club. It was great to have a mix of social activities and academic ones, because each brought something different to my college experience. I also served as the president of the Honors Program from 2009 through 2011.

DSU: Can you speak a bit more about your experience in the Honors Program?

DEONDRA: The Honors Program was something that had a big impact on me. It not only helped me focus academically, but prepared me for life after college. The program's advisor was a role model for me, and was a great help when I was applying for jobs and graduate schools. I also lived in the Towers, which houses Honors students, my freshman year. That really added to my experience and was a great way for me to get to know other students with my same academic goals.

DSU: Is there anything else that stands out about your time at DSU?

DEONDRA: Well, one of the first things I noticed about the school was that so many people went out of their way to help me. With such small class sizes, it's much easier to build a one-on-one relationship with professors. It felt like, by the time I was a sophomore, everyone in the department knew my name. I was especially thankful for that when I needed some extra help with my classwork and, ultimately, when it came time to get recommendation letters. Also, regarding scholarships, my professors and other faculty were always telling me to apply for awards that I qualified for. Thanks to that, I earned the Departmental Scholarship through the Department of Biological Sciences, along with the Silver Scholarship and a few other privately funded scholarships. It was obvious that the faculty and administration were all dedicated to helping the students get ahead.

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