

backgrounds who will help further VA's mission to serve our Nation's Veterans with advanced healthcare.

Additionally, ORD is dedicated to increasing the representation of underserved communities in the VA Research workforce. These communities include Black, Latino, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Indigenous and Native Americans, members of religious minorities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons, people with disabilities, people who live in rural areas, and people otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequity. Veterans and children of Veterans are also encouraged to apply to the SRP program, which supports and is in compliance with Executive Order 13985, "Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government," of January 20, 2021.

## A Bridge to a Life-long Career in the VA

VA continues to support the development of promising scientists and VA healthcare leaders across the educational career continuum through its partnership with universities and innovative programs, which include (in addition to the SRP):

- » 1) **Research Supplements to Promote Diversity** provide mentored research experiences to underrepresented\*\* early career scientists who are less than three years past their terminal degree or last clinical training. These are supplements to currently funded awards and can provide up to two years of support for early career

scientists preparing for VA Career Development Awards.

- » 2) **VA Career Development Program and VA Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) Research Scientist Training Program** are mentored awards for both non-clinician and clinician scientists who are no more than five years past their terminal degree or last clinical training. These awards provide support for up to five years as the scientist transitions to an independent research career.

**For more information on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion programs scan QR code or click the link below.**



<https://www.research.va.gov/programs/dei/info.cfm>



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration  
Office of Research & Development

DISCOVERY INNOVATION ADVANCEMENT

# VA Summer Research Program

**This program is a cornerstone of efforts to strengthen and diversify the VA scientific workforce by offering summer research experiences to students who are underrepresented in scientific research.**



3.2023



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration  
Office of Research & Development

DISCOVERY INNOVATION ADVANCEMENT

## Overview

In June 2022, the VA Office of Research and Development (ORD) sponsored inaugural Summer Research Programs (SRPs) that welcomed 115 student participants at 21 VA Medical Center sites across the country. This three year pilot program is a cornerstone of ORD's efforts to strengthen and diversify the VA scientific workforce by offering research experiences to Veterans, children of Veterans, and students from underrepresented groups. Of note, this first cohort of students included 74 college students, 8 graduate students, 11 high school students, 17 medical students, 3 medical professional students, and 2 VA employees.

## Key Attributes and Goals

- Currently offered at 21 VA sites across the country
- Planned expansion in 2025
- Open to college, graduate, medical students, and some high school students.\*
- The Summer Research Program is a cornerstone of efforts to strengthen and diversify the VA scientific workforce by offering summer research experiences to students who are underrepresented in scientific research\*\*, including:
  - » Veterans
  - » Children of Veterans
  - » Students from underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities and backgrounds

» Students with disabilities

» LGBTQ+ students

\* High school programs are also available at select sites.

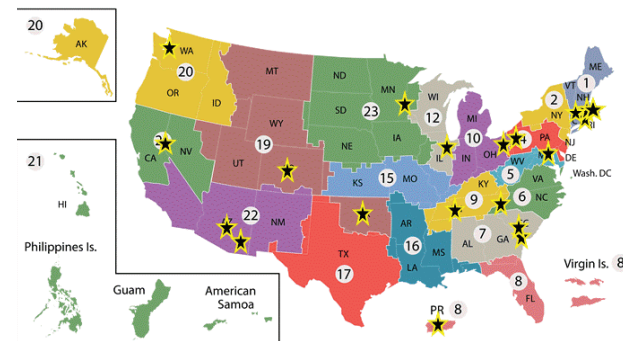
\*\* Definitions are intended solely to increase the pool of applicants and will not be used as final selection criteria.

The SRPs provide research experiences to a diverse cohort of students in order to expose them to the scientific method and potential careers in science and in the VA health care system. Numerous research focus areas are available at SRP sites nationwide, including but not limited to:

- Projects involving bench science, clinical research, health services, and rehabilitation research
- Mental health, including PTSD, substance use disorders, and suicide prevention
- Neurological research and stroke recovery
- Chronic health conditions and aging
- Women's health
- Data and artificial intelligence
- Whole health, nutrition and health services, and implementation research

The focus of each program is listed at:

<https://www.research.va.gov/programs/dei/srp.cfm/>



ORD Summer Research Program locations are indicated by stars.

## Application Process

Application deadlines: vary by site, but generally December-February.

Timing and program duration vary by site, but generally eight to 12 weeks, between May and September.

More information on participating sites and points of contacts for applications can be found at:

<https://www.research.va.gov/programs/dei/srp.cfm>

For questions, please contact:

[VHACOORDDEIWG@va.gov](mailto:VHACOORDDEIWG@va.gov).

## Developing a Diverse Research Workforce

Studies by VA and others has shown that research requires diversity in skillsets, experiences, and perspectives. ORD's ability to ensure innovations in healthcare is dependent upon fostering a pool of highly talented, motivated scientists from diverse