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PRESS RELEASE

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**NSA ANNOUNCES CENTERS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN INFORMATION
ASSURANCE EDUCATION FOR THE YEAR 2000**

The National Security Agency has designated the following universities as Centers of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education. They join the list of seven universities across the country to be awarded this distinction. The newly designated Centers of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education are:

- Carnegie Mellon University
- Florida State University
- Information Resources Management College, National Defense University
- Naval Postgraduate School
- Stanford University
- University of Illinois at Urbana - Champaign
- University of Tulsa

Universities will be formally recognized during a presentation at the Fourth Annual Conference of the National Colloquium for Information Systems Security Education, which will be held in the Doyle Hotel, Washington, D.C., May 23-25, 2000. The colloquium conference provides a forum for key figures in government, industry, and academia to address current and emerging requirements in information assurance education, and to encourage the development and expansion of curricula, especially at the graduate and undergraduate levels. For more information about the event, please refer to <http://www.infosec.jmu.edu/ncisse>.

Designations were granted following a rigorous review of University applications by review board members from NSA, industry, and academia. The board assessed applications against established criteria that measure the depth and maturity of information assurance programs, and are rooted in National Security Telecommunications and Information Systems Security Committee (NSTISSC) Training Standards. The NSTISSC is an intergovernmental organization that sets policy for the security of national security systems. For more information about the NSTISSC, please see <http://www.nstissc.gov>.

Last year, George Mason University, James Madison University, Purdue University, Idaho State University, Iowa State University, University of California at Davis, and the University of Idaho were named Centers of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education during the first annual program offering. Universities receiving this distinction are

eligible to participate in the Scholarship for Service (SFS) Program announced in the President's National Plan for Information Systems Protection, released in January 2000 (<http://www.ciao.gov>). Under the SFS Program, the government pays for graduate or undergraduate studies meeting established information assurance standards, in return for a predetermined student commitment to federal government service.

The NSA established the Centers of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education Program in an effort to promote higher education in information assurance, and increase the number of individuals with this expertise. A June 1999 Department of Commerce Report, *The Digital Workforce*, estimates that the U.S. will require more than 1.3 million new highly-skilled information technology workers between 1996 and 2006. The National Plan for Information Systems Protection also addresses this critical shortage, and further highlights the acute shortage in the subset of trained information systems security personnel. The National Plan recognizes training and education as key solutions in defending America's cyberspace and establishes the Federal Cyber Services Training and Education Initiative to address the shortage. The Centers of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education Program is an example of the outreach and partnership efforts called for in the National Plan.

Additional information on the Centers of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education Program may be found at <http://www.nsa.gov:8080/isso/>. The program is managed by the Information Systems Security Organization of NSA, which provides the solutions, products and services, and conducts defensive information operations to achieve information assurance for information infrastructures critical to U.S. national security interests.