Hampton University STEM Students Receive High Honor

HAMPTON, Va. – The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Education has awarded two Hampton University students, David Barnes and Maurice Roots, with the prestigious Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship.

The Hollings Scholarship Program provides Barnes and Roots with a two-year scholarship, a stipend and a paid 10-week summer internship at a NOAA facility. The internship will provide them hands-on experience in NOAA-related science, research, technology, policy, management, and education activities.

Barnes is a junior pursuing his bachelor’s in mathematics with a minor in nanoscience at Hampton University. He has conducted research in synthetic biochemistry for the Partnership for Research and Education in Materials (PREM) program. He was recruited from the Honors College at Hampton University by the Department of Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences (DAPS) NOAA Educational Partnership Programs (EPP) Cooperative Remote Sensing Science and Technology Center (CREST) team.

"I am grateful to have been selected as a participant in such a prestigious program," Barnes said. "I am hoping that I can use this opportunity to further develop my skills as a scientific researcher and explore my options for employment after completing my Ph.D."

Roots is also a junior at Hampton where he’s pursuing his bachelor’s in physics with a minor in nanoscience and mathematics. He also was recruited from the Honors College to conduct research in DAPS. He was first introduced to atmospheric remote sensing and weather through the CREST Undergraduate Research Experience program at Hampton University in the summer of 2016.

"I am very excited and honored to receive this award," Roots said. "I hope to gain more knowledge, networking opportunities, and skills to apply to my professional career development."

Both students attended the NOAA EPP Education and Science Forum in August, 2016.

And, both students have high praise from Hampton University Associate Research Professor Dr. John Anderson in the School of Science and Co-Director of the Center for Atmospheric Science Dr. Pat McCormick.

"Noticing the strong work ethic and communications skills Roots and Barnes shared, I felt both students were prime candidates for the scholarship and encouraged them to apply," Anderson said. "They are able to think outside the box, which is an important ingredient to do well in science."

"I am beyond proud of both young men. They are bright, hard working, and disciplined," McCormick said. "Being honored with the Hollings Scholarship speaks volumes, not only of their knowledge, skills and abilities, but of the professors in this department who helped foster those talents."

The Hollings Scholarship is named in honor of Ernest “Fritz” Hollings, the South Carolina senator who was a champion for ocean policy and conservation. In 2005, the scholarship was established in his honor to bolster undergraduate training in NOAA mission sciences as well as increase environmental literacy.