D4D got me out of the classroom and into the “real world”, enabling me to collaborate with professional subject matter experts and DoD personnel on a very meaningful issue with an interdisciplinary team, providing me new perspectives on how to approach and solve problems.”

Andrew Zhu,
Bachelor’s in Electrical Engineering ’20

DESIGNING FOR DEFENSE (D4D) is a new form of national service, engaging some of CU’s finest students to solve some of the toughest security challenges facing our Nation and military. D4D teams are interdisciplinary, made primarily from honors Engineering and Business students, selected through competitive admission. We get them closer to their national security community than they have ever been, closing the gap between students and Service Members in a way that benefits them both.

Every spring, CU teams learn Lean methods, work closely with mentors and national security sponsors, and produce a viable prototype or solution for their government sponsor. Your investment funds these prototypes, and supports student travel to the Pentagon, Ft. Bragg, and other locations to brief Defense leaders. Since its inception in 2016, D4D has expanded to over 33 universities nationally, with CU Boulder recognized as one of the Nation’s leading programs. Our students all share three common characteristics: Excellence, Interdisciplinary Engineering/Business Training, and Real-World Defense Project Experience.

In addition to supporting our CU students and our Service Members, sponsoring Designing for Defense provides a unique opportunity for your company to network with future talent, and build brand awareness among students, faculty, and other members of the national security community. There are many opportunities during the cycle of the course for your company to engage with the D4D community, including our May Finale, attended by more than 200 people from the technology, startup, and national security sectors.
D4D was easily the best class I took while getting my MBA at the Leeds School of Business, and pushed me to use all of the skills I have acquired and apply them quickly and rigorously to a significant real-world problem. It was a privilege to present at the Pentagon.”

Mariah Baerend
Master’s of Business Administration ’19