Antarctica… This land-based continent is the highest, driest, coldest, windiest, and remotest place on earth. An ice sheet covers approximately 98% of Antarctica’s 14 million square kilometers. At its thickest point the ice sheet is 4.776 meters deep. This ice is approximately 90% of all the world’s ice (by volume) and 70% of all the world’s fresh water. There are many penguins and abundant sea life along the coast — but there is little life on the continent, and there are no indigenous peoples.

Temperatures… The mean annual temperature at South Pole Station is minus 56°F. During the austral summer, temperatures at McMurdo Station may reach as high as 50°F while at South Pole Station the summer temperature may reach 0°F. Palmer Station has a milder climate, with summer temperatures reaching as high as 55°F.

Daylight and Darkness… Simply put, much of the area south of 60°S latitude experiences long night each year — with weeks of sunrise and sunset occurring during the austral winter. The atmosphere above the Southern Hemisphere during this time is characterized by high winds, low temperatures, and continuous darkness. The aurora australis (southern lights) during the winter darkness.

Science… Antarctica provides excellent conditions for scientific research on such topics as global warming, ocean changes, climatology, earth sciences, glaciology, astronomy, UV radiation, oceanic circulation, marine ecosystems, meteorite studies, etc.

History… The existence of Antarctica was only hypothesized until it was first sighted in 1820-21. No one set foot on the continent until 1895. The South Pole was first reached in 1911 and established as a year-round research station in 1912. Antarctica’s history is packed full of extraordinary stories of heroism and survival.

For more info go to: http://www.polarg.com/
Most jobs with Raytheon Polar Services require spending approximately five months in Antarctica during the austral summer season. While the vast majority of United States Antarctic Program participants travel to McMurdo Station for the busy summer season, a significant number work at South Pole Station or Palmer Station, in field camps, or on research vessels. The living and working conditions in Antarctica are very challenging. Program participants work six or seven days a week and are subject to unpredictable weather conditions that often impede work, transportation, schedules, and communications. Most participants are housed in dormitory-style rooms with roommates and shared bathroom facilities, and many spend significant time at remote field camps while others work on research vessels. Work environments vary depending on individual responsibilities.

Wherever they work and whatever they do on “The Ice,” all U.S. Antarctic Program participants will have the opportunity to share a unique experience. While surrounded by the pristine beauty of Antarctica, they are supporting valuable scientific research, and work with people from a variety of locations and backgrounds.

The research stations function like small communities—with a variety of jobs and activities. Several off-hour options are available at each station; hiking and cross-country skiing routes, crafts, sports, exercise equipment, libraries, movies, educational classes, and science lectures are available. Each station also has a small ‘general’ store that carries personal articles and souvenirs.

U.S. Antarctic Program participants are required to put safety and environmental protection first. Extra individual responsibility for personal behavior while living and working in Antarctica is also expected. These jobs require contact and close cooperation with academic researchers, military personnel, foreign nationals, and even Antarctic tourists. A handbook titled United States Antarctic Program Participant Guide is mailed during the employment process. It provides more detailed information on Antarctic history, international cooperation, preparation, packing, waste management, training, planning, etc.

As the National Science Foundation’s primary support contractor for the United States Antarctic Program, Raytheon Polar Services is committed to supporting the achievement of U.S. Antarctic Program goals. We are committed to total quality management practices, and to operating in a safe, environmentally conscious manner. Employees are expected to share these commitments.

Employment is contingent on passing thorough medical and dental exams. Winter-over personnel must also pass a psychiatric examination. Employees work under the terms of an Employment Agreement that is specific as to compensation, travel and expenses, rules and regulations, and conduct.

As part of the Agreement, employees are eligible for numerous benefits. They receive transportation from their airport of departure to their Antarctic work location and back. In addition to the travel and room and board, each employee can participate in group medical, dental, and life insurance plans for themselves and their legal dependents. Each employee who satisfactorily completes an employment term in Antarctica receives a performance-based completion bonus. Details of these and other benefits are provided in the Employment Agreement.

The performance of our employees has a direct bearing on the success of the contract, the overall success of the U.S. Antarctic Program, and the world’s perception of our national conduct in Antarctica.
Antarctica...

This land-based continent is the highest, driest, coldest, and windiest place on earth. An ice shelf covers 98 percent of the continent, and there are no indigenous peoples. The highest point on the continent is Mount Vinson, 4,776 meters deep. This ice is approximately 90% of the world's freshwater.

No nation owns Antarctica. The Antarctic Treaty of 1959 sets aside the continent, and there are no indigenous peoples.

Science...

Antarctica provides excellent conditions for scientific research on such topics as global warming, ozone changes, climatology, earth sciences, glaciology, astronomy, marine biology, meteorite studies, etc. The United States Antarctic Program has evolved to provide science, operations, and maintenance support to sustain year-round research programs at three U.S. locations in Antarctica and two research vessels in the Antarctic region. Among the functions we provide are:

- Research laboratory operations
- Remote field camp support and field safety training
- Research vessel operations
- Facilities engineering, maintenance, and construction
- Global communications operations and maintenance
- Medical clearance and clinic operations
- Acquisition of services, supplies, and equipment
- Transportation for cargo and passengers
- Food service, recreation, convenience store operations
- Airfield services, maintenance, equipment operations
- Power and water production and fuel operations
- Vehicle maintenance and waste management
- Human resource and financial management
- Data entry and inventory management
- Fire department and airfield crash rescue
- Housing management and janitorial services

The United States Antarctic Program has evolved from expeditionsary activities to a permanent presence that oversees U.S. scientific interests in the Antarctic.

Today, the principal goals of the United States Antarctic Program are (1) to understand the Antarctic region and its ecosystems, (2) to understand the effects of the region on global processes such as climate, as well as responses to those effects, and (3) to use the region as a platform to study the upper atmosphere and space.

To achieve these goals, the federal agency responsible for U.S. Antarctic Program activities, the National Science Foundation (NSF), annually evaluates and selects proposals from science and engineering researchers to conduct studies in the Antarctic and its surrounding ocean. Grants are awarded for research in the atmospheric sciences, the earth sciences, glaciology, biology, meteorology, oceanography, and other science and engineering disciplines.

The research is conducted at three permanent, year-round stations and on two research vessels:

- McMurdo Station
- Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station
- Palmer Station
- R/V Laurence M. Gould
- R/V Nathaniel B. Palmer

Additional temporary field stations are constructed and operated during the austral summer "field season," which runs for approximately 20 weeks, from October through February.

Peak activity in Antarctica occurs during this austral summer "field season," which is considerably reduced during the austral winter because of darkness, and because of generally adverse weather conditions that prohibit travel to or from McMurdo or South Pole Stations. Activity is also reduced at Palmer Station during the austral winter, although the station is reached by ship during most of the year.

The U.S. Antarctic Program represents a model of cooperation and teamwork in the support of science through the collaboration of numerous federal agencies, foreign governments, and commercial enterprises. Participants include the NSF, scientists from universities and other research institutions; the United States Department of Defense; the U.S. Coast Guard; and several U.S. private firms. Additional support is provided by the New Zealand Air Force and Army; the Chilean Air Force; and commercial agents in South America, New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa.

Visit our web site at: http://www.polar.org

Raytheon Polar Services Company is a business unit of the Raytheon Company, one of the largest industrial corporations in the United States, with more than 80,000 employees worldwide. Raytheon Polar Services is under contract to the National Science Foundation to provide science, operations, and maintenance support to sustain year-round research programs at three U.S. locations in Antarctica and two research vessels in the Antarctic region.

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