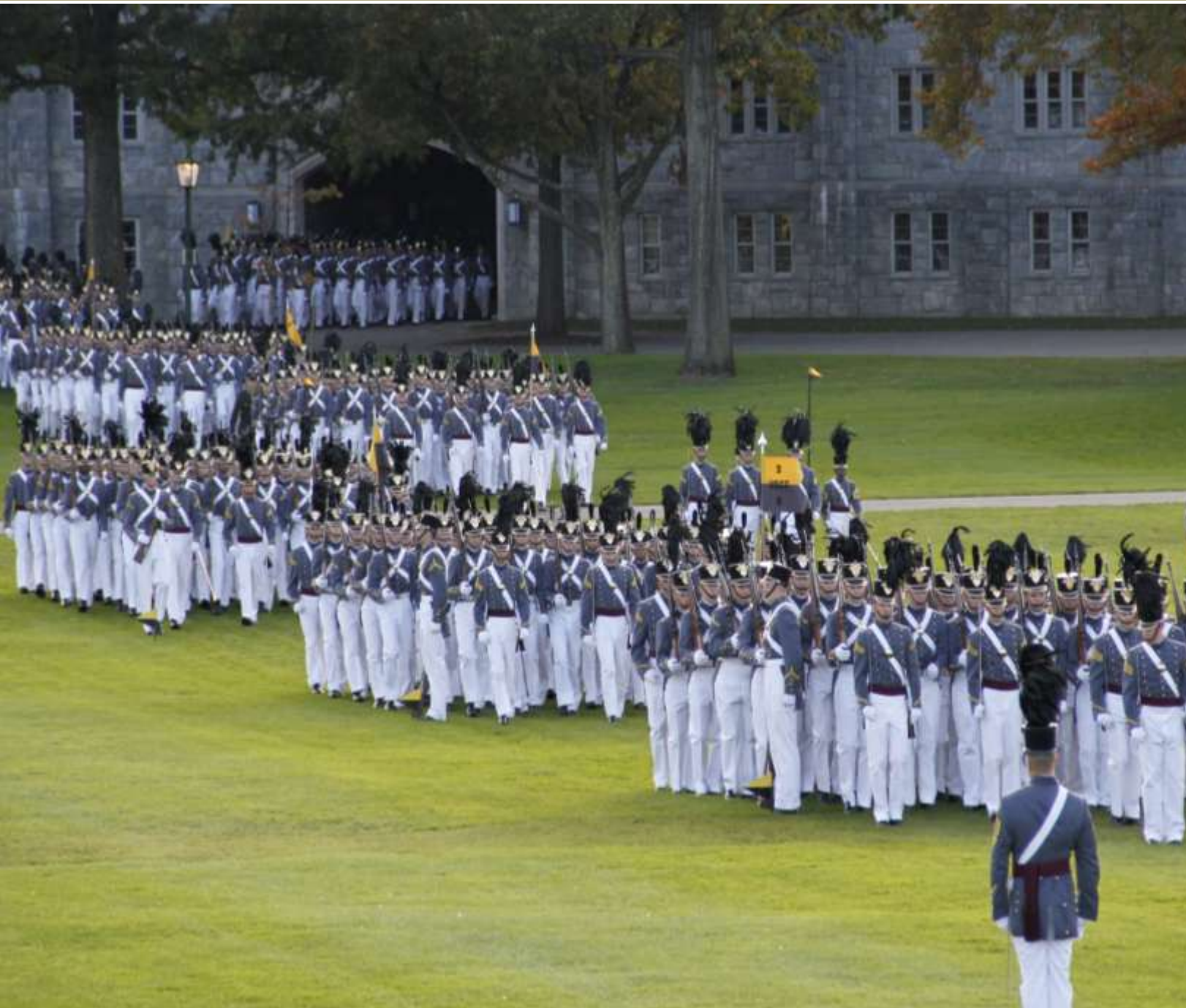




United States Military Academy Field Force



Standard Operating Procedures

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Chapter 1 Introduction

The United States Military Academy at West Point is renowned as a leading, progressive institution of higher learning and leader development attracting outstanding young men and women from across our nation. Prospective West Point candidates enjoy the assistance nationwide of representatives in their local areas, the West Point Field Force. The Field Force includes West Point graduates, both in and out of the Active Duty military, U.S. Army Reserve liaisons, and other dedicated volunteers who have been trained to assist prospective candidates through the admissions process and help prepare them for the rigors of West Point.

The mission of the United States Military Academy is:

To educate, train and inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character committed to the values of Duty, Honor, Country and prepared for a career of professional excellence and service to the Nation as an officer in the United States Army.

In order accomplish this mission, a new class of young Americans must report to West Point each summer to begin the training and education that will culminate with their commissioning as Active Duty 2nd Lieutenants in the United States Army.

The Directorate of Admissions (DAD) was established to bring in outstanding young men and women to the Academy each year. Our mission is:

- To recruit and enroll outstanding men and women each year who are motivated towards completion of West Point and a military career.
- To recruit and enroll a class of desired composition and diversity: Scholars, Leaders, Athletes, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Women, and Soldiers.

In our society, a totally volunteer Armed Forces has resulted in many American families having no recent history of military service, so most of today's high school students have no knowledge of the opportunities and challenges offered by uniformed service to the country. As our military forces grow smaller and our presence in the general population continues to decrease, this lack of knowledge will be more pervasive.

Chapter 2 Organization

The Directorate of Admissions (DAD) is one of seven Major Activity Directorates (MAD) at the United States Military Academy (USMA). Each reports to the Superintendent.

DAD is responsible to the Superintendent for promoting the West Point experience, identifying prospective candidates, assisting interested candidates in the application process and presenting fully qualified candidates to the Academic Board for admission. To best assist candidates, the Admissions Directorate is organized into various teams to manage candidate applications:

The **Command Group** consists of the Director, Associate Director for Enrollment and Recruiting, Associate Director for Support, Executive Officer, and immediate staff. This unit oversees operation of the Directorate, provides strategic vision and planning, and allocates resources within DAD.

The **Geographic Teams** are organized into five regions. Each team is expected to maintain the candidate files in their region, keep the candidates informed of their status, prepare the files for appropriate action through the Admissions Committee, recruit and maintain the regional Field Force, and keep all authorized members of the Admissions team apprised as to candidate status. This team is responsible for an annual travel plan that allows the officer to cover the area of responsibility in order to conduct candidate meetings; training for our Field Force, Congressional staffers, and educators; and present the West Point and Army opportunities to other potential candidates and influencers. The geographic areas are determined by the density of candidates and population estimates, with each area having approximately the same number of files when extra duties are included in the equation.

The **Soldier and Preparatory Team** recruits throughout the world in order to help qualified soldiers from the Active and Reserve components attend West Point. Additionally, this section is our liaison element with the United States Military Academy Preparatory School (USMAPS) and the West Point Preparatory Scholarship Program (WPPSP or Civil Prep). These programs also represent significant work for this section in that selections for each of these programs are overseen by this team; additionally, candidates who are currently enrolled in USMAPS or WPPSP are assigned for appropriate preparation.

The **Athletic Team** is responsible for all admissions activities related to candidates that the West Point varsity athletic teams are interested in recruiting as college athletes. This officer works closely with the Office of the Directorate of Intercollegiate Activities (ODIA) in order to ensure that all appropriate activities are accomplished in accordance with the admissions rules as published by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). While responsible for the activities of the file, the files are maintained by the geographic team that the candidates reside in. As an additional duty, this officer is our liaison with the United States Congress.

The **Minority Team** is responsible for conducting programs that encourage minority candidates to consider USMA as a college option. Like the athletic team, the files are maintained by the geographic sections but all admissions related activities are handled by the minority team. Additionally, this team is tasked to maintain links with minority graduates and appropriate national minority organizations.

The **Medical Team** has two primary missions: Liaison with the Department of Defense Medical Evaluation Review Board (DODMERB) and the USMA Surgeon, and keeping the various teams updated on the medical status of their candidates. Additionally, all requests for medical waivers are routed through the medical coordinator to the Director. The medical coordinator monitors all waiver requests and maintains current status in this critical area for all candidates.

Public Relations Team is the organization that makes the first impression on any candidate or family that visits West Point. This team handles the responsibility of making sure this is a good first impression. They coordinate all candidate visits, the orientations, and all Cadet Public Relations Council activities and special trips.

Information Management Team is responsible for areas of information collection, data interface with USMA agencies, and the collating and consolidation of data into appropriate decision areas. Specific areas include internal networking of automation equipment that allows for electronic communication within the DAD family, external networking that allows DAD to share appropriate information with various constituencies and telephonic communications. This is an increasingly important arena as we continue to move to electronic collection and transfer of data in the admissions business.

Budget and Administration is responsible for all areas of budget and financial planning and operations of DAD. This section also controls the flow of mail and publications, and manages the DAD warehouse.

DAD MAIN SWITCHBOARD: (845) 938-4041
WEST POINT 'S DSN: 688-XXXX

WEB SITE: www.admissions.westpoint.edu



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Candidate Tech Patricia Higgins 5746
Support Asst. Laura Lanier 5755

Southwest (MAAR-ER-SW) Fax: 3021

Regional Cdr MAJ Andrew Yang 5717
Candidate Tech Gladys Grady 5756
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Chapter 3 Field Force

The driving force in Admissions is the dedicated men and women of the USMA Field Force.

The Field Force consists of Military Academy Liaison Officers (MALOs), Points Only Liaison Officers (POLOs), and Military Academy Admissions Representatives (MAARs). For internal purposes, we will maintain the POLO, MALO, and MAAR descriptions. All three are presented to their candidates and communities as West Point Field Force Liaisons. MALOs and POLOs are US Army Reserve officers currently assigned to the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR), attached to USMA, and awarded drill credit for admissions related/recruiting activities. MAARs are volunteers who serve as West Point representatives committed to assisting the young people in their communities to learn about West Point, Army ROTC and the opportunity to serve our nation as an Army officer. For purposes of simplicity, all of these individuals will be trained and referred to as West Point Field Force Liaisons.

It should almost go without saying that other members of the Army team are an extension of the Field Force since we are the Army's service academy. A successful grassroots program requires communication, coordination, and the effective use of all resources available in your area. A variety of resources can be used, singularly or in combination. Primarily, liaison should be established with military installations, Army ROTC at both the junior level (high school) and senior level (colleges and universities); Army recruiting stations; local Army Reserve and National Guard units; Member of Congress and their staff; retired officers; West Point Parents Clubs (WPPC); and West Point Societies (WPS). The Field Force must be pro-active in establishing these relationships. In many cases they can provide administrative, equipment, and facility support for your events.

Many members of the Field Force are also members or former members of these organizations and are energetic in their commitment to USMA. It's imperative to capitalize on the talents of those who already have a vital interest in West Point and our Army. Maintaining strong relationships with Army ROTC, military installations, recruiting stations, Congressional staff members, retired officers, WPPC, and WPS usually leads to increased candidate service. For example, most Americans have very little first hand knowledge of West Point. As a result, they are somewhat apprehensive to even move forward with the application process. Interaction with a USMA graduate, current cadet, and/or their parents can personalize the experience and facilitate good candidate decision making during the admissions cycle. Furthermore, graduates from all classes represent the *rich* heritage and esprit associated with West Point and we want to share that with others. It is generally a good idea to include representatives from both WPPC and WPS organizations in candidate meetings. Seek volunteers from them to contact schools and work as points of contact with local congressional offices.

Ideally, all community leaders, educators, and of course, congressional staff assistants, are informal members of the Field Force as well. We need as much information and support across an America that increasingly lacks a connection with military service.

The Field Force continues to distinguish itself as a body of trained admissions representatives who assume ownership of their area and represent USMA in a variety of forums. This group truly drives USMA admissions.

Organization. Field force activity is focused on candidate interaction and facilitating the admissions process. As a result, we organize the field force around congressional districts to best align with the admissions process. Individual state organizations should be designated by the regional commander (RC) at West Point, in concert with the assigned state or regional coordinator. These senior leadership positions within the organizations are filled by the individual with the most experience, knowledge, and enthusiasm to accomplish the mission and are not rank dependent. Indeed, many key leadership positions are held by junior officers and MAARs because they are the best fit for the challenges of the job. Finally, it must be stressed that all program participants are leaders and take responsibility for admissions related activities and programs in their sphere of influence.

State/Regional Coordinator. The lead Field Force liaison for a specific state or region. Responsible for

working in concert with the Regional Commander to establish the state/regional organization and coordinating the activities and resources of all congressional districts in order to maximize their effectiveness. Each coordinator has the responsibility to mentor and develop their team while identifying key performers for increased responsibility as they gain more experience.

Congressional District Coordinator. The lead Field Force liaison for a specific congressional district. Responsible for coordinating efforts to assist all interested candidates and community leaders within the congressional district and assigning responsibilities to local admissions representatives within the congressional district.

Admissions Representative. The key Field Force liaison for establishing and maintaining a grassroots effort within their community and the surrounding communities. Responsible for assisting local candidates, promoting USMA and the Army within the community, coordinating efforts with the Congressional District Coordinator, and assisting the Congressional District Coordinator as needed.

Training. Field Force liaisons are provided the requisite training and latest information to ensure they are adequately prepared to assist prospective candidates. There are three levels of training provided to all Field Force liaisons: basic, annual, and advanced. Basic training is required for all new Field Force liaisons to initiate their service. This required training is provided in the form of a tutorial and addresses the very basic aspects of the admissions process. After completion of the basic training, new Field Force liaisons have 90 days to complete annual training. Annual training is provided by RCs over the internet or in person at local Field Force workshops. All Field Force are required to complete refresher training on a bi-annual basis. This training serves to provide more in-depth information and discussion allowing liaisons to ask questions and interact with those taking part. Annual training will be scheduled and available to liaisons on a monthly basis. Advanced training is specialized instruction provided for all State and Regional Coordinators. Additionally, the Admissions team will prepare quarterly newsletters keep Field Force liaisons informed of the latest information and address any recent changes/issues.

Ethics Clause. Field Force membership is a privilege extended only to those willing to extol the values and virtues of the United States Military Academy in assisting, without prejudice, prospective candidates. Liaisons are expected to disclose any conflicts of interest and recuse themselves in situations where they cannot impartially execute the responsibilities of a Field Force liaison. Additionally, liaisons are expected to exercise discretion in the use of privileged or private information that should not be shared publicly in conversation or over the internet. The Director of Admissions retains the right to remove any member that cannot meet these expectations.

Under this clause, Field Force liaisons must be willing to provide unbiased assistance to all prospective candidates. To avoid the perception of partiality, liaisons with sons or daughters seeking admission to the incoming class will be expected to recuse themselves from any direct Field Force responsibilities for that area's incoming class. This is the minimum expectation regarding partiality and the standard of conduct should always be guided by the perception that Field Force behavior reflects directly upon the United States Military Academy. Their general involvement or assistance with candidates seeking admission to future classes or from another area is certainly welcome.

The Director of Admissions places special trust in our Field Force liaisons and strives to provide timely and accurate information necessary for effective operations. It is imperative that our Field Force liaisons understand that much of this information, especially the personal information of our candidates or any information specifically identified as "close hold", is privileged and not meant for use on social media sites or in the public domain. Please help continue the free flow of information and exercise proper discretion when using information that is provided through admission channels.

Chapter 4 Purpose of Admissions

Generally, the purpose of admissions is easily broken down into (1) find candidates; (2) inform, motivate, and inspire candidates; and (3) prepare candidates for qualification.

Finding candidates takes place through two general means: candidates seeking West Point and West Point seeking candidates. The Admissions Office runs a comprehensive marketing campaign on a continual basis to get the message out and keep the flow of information at peak efficiency. The primary tool for identifying prospective candidates is the Pre Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) mailing. The names of high performing candidates on the PSAT are secured through the Student Search Service. A similar search is conducted using the results of the PLAN, NCCRUA, the SAT and ACT to target prospective students and inform them about West Point.

Other methods of contacting prospective candidates are through products distributed to high schools. Often, prospective candidates will call or email the Admissions Office. When a request for information is received from a student, it is screened for age eligibility and an appropriate response is mailed. If the student provides their age or school level, they are either enrolled in our pre-junior contact program or provided a Prospectus with the link to our candidate questionnaire (CQ).

Upon receipt of their CQ, the candidate file **is officially open**. Once in the database, candidate information will be available on all Admissions reports and an initial assessment of the candidate's competitiveness is completed by the Regional Commander (RC). This initial estimate provides one of four basic ratings for the candidate pool: Admissible, Competitive, Risk, or Unknown.

Admissible. This is the portion of the candidate pool that deserves close scrutiny and mentorship. These are prime candidates for admission. Interviewing all admissible candidates is our goal and should be a priority for Field Force liaisons. When a new candidate appears on the system with a Whole Candidate Score (WCS) at the admissible level, the geographic regional team responsible for maintaining the file will evaluate and in many instances send a Letter of Encouragement. This letter notifies the candidate that he or she appears to be a good match for admission; informs them of scheduling actions for candidate kits, and the Cadet Fitness Assessment (CFA). Additionally, it provides the name, telephone number, and email address of the Regional Commander responsible for the file in the Admissions office as well as the responsible Congressional District Coordinator (local Field Force representative).

Competitive. This is our largest group. It includes candidates with an initial WCS that has all the predictors above risk, but a WCS lower than the currently enrolled classes. While a large number of candidates will be qualified within this category, the chances for an offer of admission normally depends upon the competitiveness of individual candidates within their nomination categories. There is no expectation that any of these candidates will be selected for an offer of admission until nominations are received. Candidates who fall into this category receive a Non-Committal Letter acknowledging their application, informing them of scheduling actions for candidate kit and CFA, and encouraging them to apply for all available nominations. Once the candidate submits their application and takes the CFA, the Regional Commander will re-evaluate the candidate's file to determine if scheduling the medical examination is warranted.

Risk. This term is used for candidates who are a risk for qualification in any area as defined by our Academic Board directive. This risk could be in academic, leadership, physical, or overall WCS. Depending upon the level of the risk, these candidates will receive one of two letters. Those with single risks that are not too deep may still receive a Non-Committal Letter acknowledging receipt of the application and scheduling instructions. However, those with deep risks will likely receive a letter acknowledging receipt of the application and will be informed that their file will not be opened until some improvement occurs in the area of risk.

Unknown. When a candidate submits a CQ that is incomplete so that predictors and a WCS cannot be calculated, a letter will be mailed stating what specific items are missing. The letter informs the candidate that no further action will be taken until appropriate information is received.

It is imperative that all concerned parties: candidates/parents, field force, congressional staffs and counselors understand that this assessment (and its accompanying correspondence) is intended to be informative, not punitive. USMA is one of the nation's most selective colleges and not all candidates are competitive to receive offers of admission. Our candor enables candidates to sort through their college options. Candidates are done a grave disservice if they are not provided a frank assessment of their true potential to be offered admission to USMA. We maintain a consistency of service and sense of compassion to all candidates as long as we communicate in a straight forward, yet sensitive manner their realistic prospects for admission.

The RC will conduct periodic inquiries to determine candidate progress through the admissions process. This is the period of informing, motivating, and inspiring. The RC and Field Force contacts with the candidate are extremely useful in helping the candidate complete the file and perform well on the CFA. Frequent correspondence and updates through the candidate portal will notify the candidate of *key* items still needed for their file. During this period, a file may be vacated under the following categories: Screened, Closed, or Withdrawn.

Screened. When an RC closes a file before it is complete due to performance quality, it will show up on the Field Force website as Screened. The most common of these are for multiple/deep risk candidates right after they submit a CQ (summer or later), but also occurs when a candidate fails a CFA or fails to obtain a nomination before the 31 January deadline.

Closed. When an RC closes a file before it is complete due to lack of file activity, it will show up on the Field Force website as Closed. The most common of these are for candidates that receive a candidate kit but do not submit the required forms in a timely manner because they lack either the focus or desire to attend USMA.

Withdrawn. When a candidate contacts Admissions and closes their file, it will show up on the Field Force website as Withdrawn.

Candidates with a strong desire to attend USMA will be motivated to not allow their files to be vacated but rather work diligently through the admissions process. For those candidates, once their required forms and CFA are complete, the RC can present the file to the Admissions Committee for qualification. This qualifying process occurs simultaneously with the medical qualification and nomination processes. Assuming a candidate is qualified through the Admissions Committee, the candidate must also be found medically qualified and obtain a nomination before an offer of admission can be granted. A candidate that has completed their admissions file and medical evaluation will be listed as either Qualified or Disqualified by the Admissions Committee on the Field Force website.

Qualified. Once a candidate is fully qualified: found medically qualified by DODMERB and found academically and physically qualified by the Admissions Committee; then their status on the Field Force website will reflect as Qualified.

Disqualified. Any candidate not meeting the standard medically, academically, or physically will be formally disqualified by DODMERB or the Admissions Committee and their status on the Field Force website updated as Disqualified.

During the period of file completion, *all* candidates should actively seek nominations from *all* authorized sources. Nominations are available from each Member of Congress, the President of the United States, the Regular Army and Reserve Components, Honor Military/Navy Schools, ROTC, Sons and Daughters of Deceased or Disabled Veterans, and Sons and Daughters of Persons Awarded the Medal of Honor.

In order to build the class, the Director of Admissions fills each authorized vacancy by considering only fully

qualified candidates with corresponding nominations to that vacancy. After all vacancies have been resolved, the National Waiting List is opened to complete the class. Qualified Alternates (QA) are appointed in order off the National Waiting List. These are the top 150 candidates based purely on the competitiveness of their files nationwide. The final group brought in are the Additional Appointees (AA). The Director of Admissions has latitude in this area to select candidates out of sequence off the National Waiting List in order to achieve the desired class diversity. There is great emphasis placed on achieving class composition goals. The diversity of the class is an important consideration as we build a mix of scholars, leaders, athletes, African-Americans, Hispanics, women, and soldiers. The guiding rule for AA is the 3 to 1 rule. For every 1 candidate brought in without a Congressional nomination, 3 candidates must be brought in with a Congressional nomination. The Director uses AA to fill the class to the desired end strength. The status of selected candidates are updated on the Field Force website with the following categories:

Offered. The status of candidates selected for an appointment to USMA are updated in the Field Force website as Offered.

Accepted. The status of candidates accepting an appointment to USMA are updated in the Field Force website as Accepted.

Declined. The status of candidates declining an appointment to USMA are updated in the Field Force website as Declined.

Chapter 5 Find Candidates

In order to accomplish the DAD mission, our main responsibility is to identify enough talented young Americans who qualify and possess the desire to successfully complete West Point, so USMA can provide the requisite number of future active duty lieutenants.

To identify and nurture candidates, DAD uses any method that allows information to pass into the hands of the public and inform them of the great leadership and educational opportunity that USMA offers as an undergraduate institution preparing America's young men and women for careers as commissioned officers in the Army.

Every year many young Americans who are a perfect fit for our program and service as Army officers never apply to West Point because they are not informed. By participating and supporting the following initiatives, it's possible to reach the vast majority of our qualified potential applicants.

PLAN / NCRRUA / PSAT Mail-out. Every year the USMA admissions office conducts a mass mailing in late March to over 100,000 potential applicants. We strive to be one of the first in the country with this mailing because studies show that the average top scholar receives over 100 mailings and tend to delete or discard them after the first ten. With the assistance of the ETS, we identify high scorers on the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) to form the base of our candidate pool. At the same time, we fulfill our commitment to the Nation by exposing many young people to the challenges and rewards of Army officership with this contact. This mailing is also a key to local program initiatives. Every person on this list expressing interest will be added to the candidate database and should be contacted by the USMA Field Force with either an email introduction or an invitation to a candidate meeting. This step is critical in fleshing out the candidate pool and availing ourselves to interested applicants.

High School Contact/Visits. The USMA admissions goal is to visit every high school in America at least once every five years, more often if possible. This lofty goal is attainable with organization and dedication. It is essential to use the expanded Field Force in this endeavor. In addition, every school should be contacted by an admissions representative annually by phone or email. This correspondence serves as an introduction to new school personnel and a renewed offer of assistance. Target high schools (those with numerous PSAT high scorers and those with a tradition of interest in service academies) should be contacted by phone or visited annually. When used correctly, these cohorts are even more productive because these referrals are made from personal knowledge. Moreover, the parameters are wider: scholarship, leadership and citizenship.

College Days/Nights. There are several different types of these and all require USMA representation. Two national college fairs, the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) and National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students (NSFFNS) warrant either RC or Outreach coverage, with the Field Force in a supporting role. State, local, or high school sponsored events are the responsibility of the Field Force. Establishing yourself as a point of contact with these event organizers as well as participating in all events pays many dividends, considering both the recruiting and service aspects.

Educator Breakfast/Lunch. The Educator Breakfast/Luncheon is an excellent program that maximizes Regional Commander/Field Force contact with a large number of school counselors. The breakfast/luncheon can be set up to precede the evening "Admissions Information Meeting" candidate brief in order to have your West Point representatives available. What makes this event so attractive is the ability to provide information about West Point to a large number of school counselors during one presentation.

Cadet Public Relations Council (CPRC). A primary force multiplier. The CPRC program identifies and funds local cadets to provide support for admissions related events, to include Candidate Orientation Visits, Hometown Visits, and Special Trips. Any time an articulate cadet in uniform can address school groups, parents, specific candidate or civic organizations, USMA and the Army benefit. Funds are provided for Special Trips to cover the cost of travel only. The Cadet does not receive per diem unless there are specific requirements. Hometown Visits (Thanksgiving and Spring Break CPRC) are no cost to USMA as Cadets spend their own money to travel home and conduct the

Field Force endorsed events in exchange for additional days of leave.

ROTC Liaison. It is important to emphasize that USMA and Army ROTC are on the same team. Both are trying to locate, counsel and enroll outstanding young Americans who desire to serve their country as commissioned officers in the Army. West Point and Army ROTC are parallel paths to officership and need to be represented as such, highlighting that commonality as well as the distinct differences of the two experiences. Often Army ROTC detachments are contacted about admission to West Point and lack current information about the Academy and our admissions process. Furthermore, many students that you meet lack the same current information about the ROTC experience. By working together we can bridge the gaps and enhance the effectiveness of both sources of commission in support of America's Army.

It is also important to note the significance of junior ROTC programs that encompass all services. Traditionally, these programs have been discounted as a source of competitive USMA candidates. In many cases, this is presumptuous because these programs contain students at all ends of the academic spectrum, from the selective college-bound through those headed for our enlisted ranks. We can serve all needs: encourage the college bound to pursue USMA and ROTC and encourage all to pursue national service through joining the Army (or another service). The benefits of maintaining contact with these programs can be substantial.

Army Recruiters. Typically this group serves as the focal point for providing information about military service. By maintaining liaison we can ensure that competitive candidates are directed to us and all receive accurate information about the admissions process and USMA/ROTC experience. Additionally, Army Recruiters can also help with High School access and maintain the most up-to-date contacts with schools.

Chapter 6 Inform/Motivate/Inspire Candidates

Counseling Theme for 11th and 12 graders:

- In considering college, take a good look at West Point.
- Start a file at the end of your Junior year and apply for nominations.
- Make an effort to learn all there is to know about West Point and the Army:
 - View the West Point website and available videos.
 - Read about West Point and the role of an officer in the Army.
 - Visit West Point as a guest of DAD to learn more about the cadet experience
 - Discuss opportunities and challenges with cadets and graduates.
- Seriously consider an offer of admission to West Point based on factual information about the Military Academy, the Army, selfless service as an officer, and yourself.
- Accept an offer of admission if:
 - what West Point has to offer seems to be a good match for your abilities and aspirations.
 - you have the desire to give the Army your best effort as an officer leading soldiers.

At first glance our counseling theme is a straight forward, common-sense guide to facilitate good decision making. It employs a methodology that most college-bound students, or at least their parents, should use throughout this critical process. However, be prepared for the fact that most applicants fail to use this methodology, or for that matter, any other, when undergoing this crucial process. Therefore, your role becomes even more critical because you must coach students and parents through it. Your application of this theme will depend on your particular background (i.e. grad, former officer, parent etc...) but some of the basic tenets are outlined below.

Starting a file at the end of the junior year is critical. It allows ample time to apply for nominations and helps the student focus research and travel efforts during the summer months. Many schools center their student visitation during this period because it is more manageable for the staff and faculty. At USMA, we resist this temptation because our visitation is centered around cadet interaction and West Point cadets are training at West Point and throughout the world during the summer. Therefore, this is the time for individual preparation concerning West Point. We highly encourage students to read about the Academy itself, study graduates and their contributions to the Army and society, speak with graduates about their experience, and begin to learn what Army officership is all about. While we unabashedly seek the most talented and motivated young Americans to fill our classes, we want candidates to make informed choices. Informed choices are the result of research, visitation, introspection, and pursuit of options. We genuinely want and need candidates to make the right admissions decision, even if it might not be USMA.

This is a learning and developmental process, one that takes some students more time than others. Some candidates will want to focus solely on the cadet experience, while others concentrate on the profession. Students must do both, because the duality of the decision to attend West Point is very real. They must be energized and enthusiastic for both experiences. Applicants must realize that West Point is an institution with a glorious past, a vibrant present and a limitless future. However, they cannot be so consumed with these that they lose sight of present day realities of life as a West Point cadet and service as an Army officer. Clear to all of us is that West Point is a very challenging environment: physically, intellectually and mentally. It is a college leading to a career choice that is not right for everyone. The key is to get the right candidate enrolled! In short, focus students on the West Point experience, first, and ensure they know the end-state is Army officership.

When considering Army officership as a career choice many students focus on the extremes: misery and ceremony. Of course, both are part of the profession, but there is so much more to consider. The bottom line is that Army officers are leaders. Many young people tend to think of leadership as doctrinal theory that has little to do with real life. They must understand that leadership is taking responsibility and influencing people to accomplish difficult things no matter what the circumstances. Selfless service doesn't mean that you lose your individuality, it means that you often must subjugate your needs to those of the group. Openly share your experience of service, good and bad, combat and peacetime to paint a realistic picture of the profession. Educate your candidates on the multitude of

different basic branches available to them upon graduation as well as West Point's commissioning requirements currently with a focus of Combat Arms, no options for Special Forces until a certain degree of proficiency in the Army is achieved, and only limited spots for Medical School each year.

Probably the toughest piece of the counseling theme is encouraging self study by candidates. These young people are still defining themselves and it is very difficult for them to truly know or understand their strengths, weaknesses and aspirations. They must establish realistic, yet challenging goals. Difficult at any age!

Finally, we want our applicants to appreciate the special role our military has played throughout history and understand its relevancy for the future. It must be very clear that the opportunity to be officers who lead America's treasure, its sons and daughters, is a rare and special privilege that demands the very best from all who undertake it.

RC Travel. The Regional Commander's travel schedule is a result of bottom-up input from the Field Force in concert with the demographics of the candidate pool. While the actual sequence of visits is controlled by the RC as commitments are balanced throughout the region, the concept of the operation is yours to plan. RC travel to your area should be considered an enhancement to your ongoing admissions operations and not a starting, nor a stopping point. Remember, you are not supporting his travel, in as much as you are driving it. He is a force multiplier on your recruiting/admissions battlefield! With this in mind you must determine, based on a thorough analysis of your area, what events should be conducted during visits by members of the resident DAD team.

The Spring Travel schedule is focused on making initial contact with as many potential candidates as possible for the next admissions cycle. As Regional Commanders are "wrapping up" the enrollment and final Admissions Committee meetings for the previous class, they must now turn part of their attention to telling the "West Point Story" to high school juniors in their region during the March-April-May timeframe. Regional Commanders will typically focus their travel on several key events with a focus on penetrating "new markets" where little USMA interest has been shown in the past, but the potential for strong candidates has increased.

Key events for the Regional Commander during this travel period include the candidate admissions information meetings, Field Force/educator/congressional workshops, high school visits, and Congressional Academy Days. Through these planned events, the Regional Commander intends to interest prospective candidates, inspire educators and community influencers to support USMA's efforts, and inform Field Force members of any admissions or USMA updates they should be aware of in their contacts with candidates and parents.

Many times, the success or failure of an admissions event can be traced to the communication and planning between the Regional Commander and the local Field Force. Typically, Regional Commanders will publish their travel plans at least 90 days in advance along with a resource requirement plan. Travel plans should include the dates and types of events the Regional Commander will conduct. From a resource perspective, Regional Commanders travel with a laptop computer and projection device. The only immediate need from the Field Force in the way of resources is a venue with a projection screen and sound system at the events.

Admissions Information Meeting (AIM). This venue provides the best and most efficient opportunity to bring together a large group of West Point supporters and interested candidates. Meetings of this type are for select high school students and provide a much needed window into West Point. In many cases, it also serves as the beginning of the personal relationship between the candidate and the Field Force. When conducted properly the AIM produces an excitement and synergy among prospective candidates. These meetings should be conducted annually whether or not the RC can attend. Although not preferred, the RC may join the meeting via the internet in order to address candidates.

If conducting an AIM without the RC, it is still essential to coordinate with your RC to ensure the date is publicized and sufficient resources are provided, to include information packets for the candidates. The candidates should primarily be high school juniors and seniors. At the end of the Spring AIM, each candidate should have an in-depth understanding of our admissions process, the nomination process, the medical process, and know their local West Point Field Force representatives. Parents will also get an opportunity to meet other parents who have cadets at USMA and they will be able to talk about shared experiences and alleviate some of the fears involved in this process. The Fall AIM is focused in on those who have opened files at West Point.

The Fall AIM will usually occur in the early fall, September-October time frame. Our goal is to try to make sure that each candidate who has opened a file is provided the necessary information to adequately meet the deadlines for their respective nomination committees. Because the audience is going to be smaller and initial contact has been made with the candidates, a more congenial, intimate location may be sought with the approval of the RC. The RC or other USMA representative should be present at the Fall AIM in order to talk first-hand about file status. If unable to attend, the RC may choose to provide the lead Field Force member updates for each candidate attending. An abridged admissions presentation will be delivered, after which candidates will have the opportunity to review their file and seek advice on what steps they should take next. If planned for a weekend, we will request to have a cadet there to support because of their inherent selling ability.

Congressional Academy Days/Nights. These high visibility events are sponsored by a member of congress (MOC) with the intent of supplying information to potential applicants about all their service academy options. Generally, after opening remarks from the MOC or designated representative, each service academy makes a brief presentation and then participates in a question and answer session to conclude the formal program. Following the formal program students approach service academy representatives with individual questions and requests for additional information/literature. Ideally these will be attended by the RC/outreach officer, Field Force member, and current West Point cadet. Support of these events by the Field Force is critical.

College Fairs. Usually conducted in the Fall and Spring, there are several types of College Fairs that the Field Force needs to take advantage of in their quest for maximum candidate contact. Coverage of these fairs by the Field Force represents a major priority for USMA Admissions. Your presence at these key college events in your area not only reinforces your image as the local USMA representative, but will serve to develop relationships with strong candidates for admission. Provide all College Fair fees to the RC at least 30 days in advance of the application deadline and they will provide the required payment. Three types of college fairs:

- **NACAC College Fairs:** National Fairs where USMA has a major interest. These are very large fairs where USMA may send cadets to help answer questions and attract highly qualified students to the USMA booth. These fairs are held in major cities across the country and attract thousands of potential college students.
- **Regional College Fairs (i.e., WACAC College Fairs):** These regional fairs are designed for specific areas or states. Again, these fairs are held in major cities and will attract thousands of high school students.
- **School District/High School College Fairs:** These are the local college programs run by the School District or a group of high schools working together to attract colleges to present information at one location. Although the attendance numbers may not be as high, you can make key contacts with highly qualified students and provide one-on-one counsel.

Interviews. Ideally, every candidate with an open file should be interviewed in the following priority: Admissible candidates, Competitive candidates, and other nominated candidates, excluding recruited athletes. Clearly, the most competitive and active candidates should receive the most attention. The interview should be the central piece of the personal relationship between the Field Force liaison and the candidate. Ideally, the initial introduction is made at a Spring AIM, if not, then over the summer. The interview should be an exchange of information between the admission representative and the candidate that personalizes the process. Coordination of the interview continues the necessary line of communication with the applicant that is so vital throughout the admission process. In addition to counseling the student about West Point, the interview and subsequent follow-up, are used to ensure understanding of and compliance with the nomination and medical requirements, which despite our best efforts, are often unclear to candidates. The interview should be conducted as early in the admissions process as feasible. A good interview done earlier is better than a great interview much later. The interview does not end Field Force involvement as we must maintain contact with each competitive candidate until the admissions process is complete.

Appointment Presentations. These high visibility events are the culmination of great personal achievement and support from the Field Force and should be commemorated as such. Appointment presentations are vivid demonstrations of the achievability of a West Point cadetship. These events often inspire other students and provide

USMA much needed exposure. An appointment should be formally awarded as part of the students' high school awards or graduation ceremony.

The presentation of an appointment to West Point has a tremendous impact on all in attendance. All efforts should be taken to present the appointment during an awards presentation at the end of the school year. Needless to say, this moment serves as an especially rewarding time for Field Force members who now reap the rewards of their months of work with prospective candidates.

When candidates are offered an appointment, they receive a letter from the Superintendent of West Point along with an individual certificate of appointment in a certificate folder. Ensure you contact the candidate ahead of time to get the folder and certificate for the actual presentation. MALOs should make all their presentations in uniform while their civilian Field Force members should dress appropriately to provide a professional appearance. Army retirees who serve in the Field Force are encouraged to make presentations in uniform, if practicable.

Here is a recommended script for a West Point Appointment Presentation.

"Good Evening. My name is (Admissions Representative). I am the local West Point representative for this area. It is a pleasure to be here at (Candidate's high school) to present (candidate) with an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

For those of you who may not know, West Point graduates have served our country for over two centuries. We have provided the nation with military leaders such as Generals Grant, Lee, Patton, Eisenhower, and MacArthur. Of the first 30 NASA astronauts, six were West Pointers including Ed White, the first American to walk in space and Buzz Aldrin, the second man to walk on the moon. We have seen West Pointers as Presidents, Members of Congress, Business Executives, and Community leaders. Indeed, at West Point, much of the history we teach was made by those we taught. West Point has provided our nation with leaders of character and will continue to do so in the generations to come.

The West Point experience prepares our graduates well, culminating in a Bachelor of Science degree and a commission as a 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Army. West Point demands a particular kind of student, one who is extremely motivated; physically fit, possesses high academic acumen, and is interested in a military career. This student must receive a nomination from a Member of Congress and realize that at West Point, excelling in military leadership is as important to class standing as understanding quantum physics.

This year over 15,000 highly qualified students from across the country competed for an appointment to West Point. With so many applicants and only 1200 cadetships available, the Admissions Committee was highly selective. (Candidate's High School) is honored to have one of these successful applicants in its graduating class. For the aspiring candidate, West Point offers a fully paid four year college scholarship, military training in the best Army in the world, and leadership development by the premier institution of its kind in the world.

At this time, it gives me great pleasure to award one of these prestigious scholarships to a deserving (Candidate's High School) student. On behalf of the President of the United States, I am pleased to award this appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York to (Candidate's name)."

Excellent Appointment presentations provide crowd pleasing recognition for the successful candidate and parents, as well as spectacular visibility for the worth of the West Point experience. The presentation you command will build momentum for interest in the Military Academy and will plant the seeds for future successful candidates. Conversely, a poorly executed appointment presentation can destroy years of work in a school and a community. This event can be a huge payoff, take the time to set it up and then come prepared to give a professional presentation.

Field Force Workshops. Workshops are held periodically to provide Field Force liaisons with the most current information concerning USMA admissions. These workshops are often held in locations conducive to the

Regional Commander's travel schedule, Army away football games, USMA Founder's Day Events, and other scheduled USMA activities. For those unable to attend, workshops will also be provided online to increase participation and convenience. The Workshop is a valuable event that provides an excellent opportunity for Field Force members to meet one another, meet the RC, discuss mutual concerns, and to exchange current information.

Congressional Liaison. Members of Congress (MOC) and their staffs rely on you for accurate information concerning West Point and our admissions process. Similar to high school coverage, congressional office coverage is critical. Each MOC should have at least one Field Force representative to turn to for assistance. This assistance ranges from informal advisor to participating on the MOC's nomination selection committee. This service balances the many Field Force roles: USMA field representative, subject matter expert, and candidate advocate. No conflict of interest exists and the roles should complement one another.

Summary. Your role in candidate service is a multi-faceted. Primarily, you must serve as the subject matter expert, role model, coach, mentor, and counselor. Effective and frequent communication is essential. It is imperative that you make yourself available to candidates and families. Your RC cannot absorb your role, since he has more than 2500 candidates. We encourage a "soft-sell" philosophy. Keep in mind that not every young person is right for West Point or Army officership, even those who show intense interest. Be frank with the candidates and assist them in framing the decision and the experience properly.

As a general rule, Field Force liaisons should not involve themselves with athletic recruits, unless to provide them the admissions contact information, provided in Chapter 2. This rule is important so as not to violate NCAA recruiting rules. However, these candidates typically have open lines of communication with the coaching staff and the admissions athletic team.

Finally, you must remember that you are not a policy maker. Refrain from committing West Point to anything; you do not have this authority. No candidate is a "sure thing." When in doubt call your RC. By keeping in mind the fundamentals of your service, you should find your role to be rewarding and fulfilling.

Chapter 7 Prepare Candidates for Qualification

Ultimately, our goal is to assist interested candidates so they may become qualified and compete for an appointment. We advocate the following recipe for success:

- Meet the Basic Requirements
- Earn Academic and Physical Qualification
- Attain Medical Qualification
- Obtain a Nomination
- Earn an Appointment
- Visit West Point
- Prepare for R-Day

Meet the Basic Requirements. Title 10, US Code and USMA Regulations establish the legal requirements for admission to the United States Military Academy. There are four basic requirements all candidates must meet. Each candidate must:

- Be at least 17 years old but not beyond their 23rd birthday on July 1st of the year admitted.
- Be a United States citizen at the time of enrollment (exception: foreign students nominated by agreement between the U.S. and another country).
- Be unmarried.
- Not be pregnant or have an obligation to support a child or children.

Since the basic requirements are not waiverable, please ensure all candidates meet the basic requirements. Candidates who are pending citizenship may open a file at West Point. However, no offer of admission can be made until proof of citizenship is provided to the Admissions Office.

Earn Academic and Physical Qualification. If a prospective candidate meets the basic requirements, West Point will initiate their file upon receipt of a completed Candidate Questionnaire (CQ). Candidates may complete a CQ at www.usma.edu/admissions/sitepages/apply.aspx. Candidates should open a file in the spring of their junior year of high school or as soon thereafter as possible. Please advise that all candidates must have a social security number in order to open a file. Candidate files are reviewed and the candidate is notified if they lack the qualifications to compete for admission.

Candidates who pass the initial screening will receive a complete application packet (candidate kit) beginning in Late Summer/Early Fall. The candidate kit contains all the administrative forms that must be completed in order for the Admissions Committee to consider a candidate for admission. Candidates should promptly complete and submit all forms to the Admissions Office.

The Admissions Committee will consider the forms in evaluating the candidate. Each candidate must be qualified academically by the Admissions Committee in order to be eligible for admission. Encourage candidates to attain:

- An above average high school and/or college academic record.
- Strong performance on the standardized test (ACT or SAT). We do not have strict cutoff scores.

We recommend that candidates take both the ACT and SAT several times. West Point does not accept non-standardized (untimed) test scores for academic evaluation.

West Point encourages a strong college preparatory academic curriculum as a prerequisite for admission. Recommended areas of preparation are: four years of English - with an emphasis on composition, grammar, literature, speech; four years of math – with courses in trigonometry or pre-calculus; two years of a foreign language, two years of a laboratory science with one year including chemistry or physics; and one year of U.S. history. Additionally, courses in geography, government, and economics are very helpful. College courses taken prior to entrance to West Point may be substituted for similar courses in the Military Academy curriculum. The Office of the Dean will review and evaluate all admitted candidates previous college work (to include AP and IB results) to determine if the candidate will receive validation credit for USMA course requirements.

Additionally, each candidate must be qualified physically by the Admissions Committee in order to be eligible for admission. They should strive to attain:

- Above average strength, endurance, and agility
- Strong performance on the USMA Candidate Fitness Assessment (CFA)

Attain Medical Qualification. Each candidate must be qualified medically through the Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DODMERB). One Qualifying Medical Examination meets the application requirements of all service academies and all ROTC Scholarship programs. DODMERB based in Colorado Springs, Colorado will contract a candidate for an examination upon request from one of the commissioning sources and evaluate the results. Candidates receive instructions for taking the Qualifying Medical Examination directly from DODMERB or Concorde. It is important to complete the medical exam as quickly as possible to allow sufficient time to resolve potential medical issues. In order to be qualified by DODMERB, the candidate must be in good physical and mental health, while meeting all commissioning and retention standards. Candidates need to be aware of their Department of Defense Medical Examination Testing Service (DODMETS) portal and track all aspects of their medical qualification in there, not their candidate portal which will only show a finalized status from DODMERB.

If DODMERB medically disqualifies a candidate, there are two recourses. First, for some medical disqualifications, candidates can rebut DODMERB's findings by submitting additional information to DODMERB. This option is not available for all disqualifications. DODMERB will notify the candidate at the time of disqualification if a rebuttal is possible. If a rebuttal is not appropriate or disapproved, DODMERB then notifies the candidate by letter that the final decision rests with the commissioning authority.

The second recourse is a medical waiver. Candidates do not request medical waivers, rather West Point automatically evaluates every medically disqualified candidate for a waiver. West Point initiates medical waivers based on candidate qualifications and the medically disqualifying condition. Only candidates that are competitive for an offer of admission (or who have already received one) and have submitted a complete application will be supported for a medical waiver. The medical waiver process can be a long and arduous one that delays a final decision for the candidate. Unless an appointment is in the balance, it is unnecessary for a candidate to undergo this process. Medical authorities determine if a disqualification is waivable by applying appropriate Army regulations concerning commissioning and retention standards. It is not an Admissions decision. West Point has already demonstrated considerable interest and support for the candidate by pursuing a medical waiver.

Candidates need to understand that one medical exam is sufficient for the multitude of military commissioning options, but that different standards are used to determine medical qualification. Therefore it is imperative that candidates follow up on their medical status for each option they are pursuing.

Candidates will be considered fully qualified once the Admissions Committee confirms adherence to the basic requirements as well as, Academic, Physical, and Medical qualification.

Obtain a Nomination. During the spring of their junior year, every candidate should apply for a nomination from every eligible source. A nomination is the legal authority for West Point to offer admission and is therefore

a critical step in the admissions process. One cannot earn an appointment (offer of admission) to USMA without a nomination but a nomination, regardless of type, does not guarantee an appointment. This being said, the type and number of nominations earned does have a dramatic impact. The two types of nominations are congressional and service-connected. Since candidates compete for appointments within each nominating category, candidates are encouraged to pursue all nominations they are eligible for to enhance their chances for admission.

Congressional Nominations. All candidates can compete for at least four sources of nominations:

- their member of the US House of Representatives
- their two US Senators
- the Vice President of the US

Persons living outside their domicile, chiefly military and embassy personnel, are to pursue nominations from congressional district and state in which they vote.

Each Member of Congress is authorized five cadetships at West Point at any one time. Each member may nominate up to ten young people to fill each vacancy. The Vice President has the same authority.

Members typically use one vacancy a year and are authorized to use one of three nominating methods: competitive, principal with competing alternates, and principal with numbered alternates. Each method dramatically affects offers of admission.

The competitive method is the predominant method used and the most straight forward. It rank orders the fully qualified candidates on the member's nomination slate by their Admissions generated Whole Candidate Score (WCS). The WCS is a predictor that distinguishes well-rounded young men and women that demonstrate excellence in academics, leadership potential and physical fitness. Using the competitive method, the candidate on the nomination slate with the highest WCS is offered admission for that nomination vacancy.

The principal with competing alternates method requires that the principal nominee, if fully qualified, be offered admission for that nomination vacancy. If the principal nominee is disqualified or declines, the competing alternate who is fully qualified and has the highest WCS is offered admission against that vacancy.

In the principal with numbered alternates method, the member stipulates the order in which candidates are offered admission in the event of candidate disqualification/declination. The member designates a principal nominee with numbered alternates 1 through 9. Under this method, Admissions must offer admission to fully qualified candidates in the order provided. This sequence continues until an offer of admission is accepted.

The Member of Congress (MOC) as the nominating authority decides which method of nomination to employ. While we might want to provide some guidance, it is not our role to question the method of nomination used or the reasons behind it. Additionally, the MOC determines requirements, deadlines and all procedures relating to the nomination. While we all stand ready to assist, it is imperative to understand that this falls within the members purview and they are the final authority. Unless authorized specifically by the MOC, we do not disclose to the candidates the nominating method used.

Service-Connected Nominations. This type of nomination must be requested and approved by 31 January of the year of admission. You do not compete for these nominations; they are awarded if eligibility criteria is met. Candidates may apply directly to the Director of Admissions, U.S. Military Academy for service-connected nominations by completing the designated forms provided on their candidate portal.

There are six categories for candidates to apply: Presidential, Enlisted Members of the Regular, Enlisted Members of the Army Reserve/National Guard, ROTC and Honor Military Schools, Sons and Daughters of Deceased and 100% Disabled Veterans, and Sons and Daughters of Persons Awarded the Medal of Honor.

The number of candidates who can qualify for a nomination in these categories is not limited. However, appointments (offers of admission) are limited to the numbers set forth in Title 10, US Code. These appointments are awarded to the best-qualified candidates competing in each Army category. The following is a detailed description of the nomination category and procedures.

Presidential Nomination. Available to children of career military personnel; active, retired or deceased, are nominated through this category. The term "career" includes members of the Reserve Component currently serving the equivalent of eight or more years of continuous active duty, and reserve retirees receiving either retirement or retainer pay. (if adopted, a certified copy of the court order decreeing adoption must accompany the application.)

Regular Army and Reserve Components. This category is for enlisted members of the Regular Army, Army Reserve and Army National Guard. Enlisted members should apply directly to the Director of Admissions, U. S. Military Academy with their completed Commander's Endorsement form (USMA Form 351-12). Soldiers who are not offered an appointment are automatically considered for enrollment in the U.S. Military Academy Preparatory School (USMAPS). Some applicants who fail to obtain admission on their first try, enlist in the Army and win an appointment through this category. To be considered a Soldier for enrollment, the candidate must have completed Basic and have the Company Commander's Endorsement. The Commander is not required to give their endorsement and any candidate that enlists in hopes of receiving an appointment to West Point must be prepared to serve out the entirety of their enlistment contract.

ROTC and Honor Military Schools. Applicants enrolled in junior or senior Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program are eligible for a nomination in this category. Certain JROTC schools are designated by Department of the Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps as Honor Units with Distinction and may recommend three of their honor graduates for a nomination to USMA annually. Applications should be made through the Professor of Military Science or the Senior Instructor at such a school to the Director of Admissions. The best qualified candidates are selected for admission. ROTC nominations only are in effect for the current year of enrollment. We will not process a ROTC nomination until 1 September.

Children of Deceased and 100% Disabled Veterans. This category is for children of deceased or 100% disabled Armed Forces Veterans whose death or disability was determined to be service-connected, and for children of military personnel of federally employed civilians who are in a missing or captured status. There are 60 vacancies in total associated with this nomination which translates to 15 used annually.

Children of Persons Awarded the Medal of Honor. All children of persons awarded the Medal of Honor who seek admissions and are fully qualified will be offered an appointment.

Earn an Appointment. A candidate deemed fully qualified with a nomination competes for an appointment within each earned nomination category. Initial offers of admission for candidates winning their nomination category are presented beginning on 28 February. Additional offers will be extended as offered candidates decline or vacancies become available due to medical disqualification. Files not completed by the application deadline, 28 February, will be closed from further consideration. It is possible that a few candidates will not be notified of acceptance until shortly before entrance in June/July. Offers of admission are conditional from the time of offer to arrival on R-Day, this is explained to each candidate in a personal letter from the USMA Superintendent.

Visit West Point. Candidate orientation visits are offered Monday through Friday beginning at 8:45 am during the academic year or 10:00 am during the summer. The Admissions Office offers two types of visits during the academic year, daily and overnight visits. Both visits begin at 8:45 am at the Admissions Office (606 Thayer Road) with a short orientation briefing from an Admissions Officer. Daily visitors return to the Admissions Office at 12:30 pm after having lunch with the Corps of Cadets. Overnight visits are only for admissible/offered/accepted candidates. All visitors are paired with a Cadet escort to provide an orientation including class attendance, a visit to the barracks, lunch in the Cadet Mess, and an admission briefing. We highly encourage all offered candidates to visit and experience West Point first hand before accepting. A visit to West Point offers invaluable insight into cadet life and can greatly assist in the college decision making process.

Prepare for R-Day. Candidates should continuously prepare themselves for the academic, physical and leadership demands of West Point. Candidates are urged to physically train before entering the Military Academy. Those who report for R-Day outside the AR 40-501 body composition standards or unable to meet physical fitness standards are at risk of being turned away. Push-ups, pull-ups, and a vigorous conditioning regimen (swimming and cross-country running) are highly recommended.

Additional Opportunities. For those candidates deemed to be exceptionally strong leaders and not selected for direct admission to USMA, Admissions has a set of highly selective options available:

United States Military Academy Preparatory School. An important avenue of opportunity. The U.S. Military Academy Preparatory School, known as USMAPS, is located at West Point. The Prep School exists to provide an opportunity to a carefully selected group of soldiers and students from diverse backgrounds and prepares them to meet the academic, leadership and physical rigors at the United States Military Academy.

As a military school with a career focus, USMAPS develops the foundation of professional and physical attributes needed for growth as an officer in the U.S. Army. One of the primary purposes of USMAPS is to assist USMA in meeting its class composition goals. Typically, cadet candidates are ranked in the upper portion of their high school class, have good physical and athletic abilities, and have demonstrated strong potential for leadership. All candidates share a strong desire to attend West Point and serve their Nation. USMAPS provides these cadet candidates an avenue to attend West Point with required academic preparation for USMA.

Having lived in the Prep School environment for ten months, cadet candidates are accustomed to the military lifestyle. "Prepsters," as they are known at West Point, have continually provided each new West Point class with a valuable backbone of cadets with prior military experience and leadership.

Selection is determined through the regular USMA application. All candidates for USMAPS are disqualified for admission and present at least one academic risk. Field Force should be aware and advise that fully qualified candidates who are not selected for admission are not eligible for USMAPS.

Association of Graduates West Point Preparatory Scholarship Program. The purpose of the West Point Preparatory Scholarship Program (WPPSP) is to provide financial assistance in the form of partial scholarships for one year of post-secondary school education at preparatory schools, military junior colleges, and four year colleges for carefully selected and highly motivated candidates seeking admission to the United States Military Academy.

To be considered for a scholarship, candidates must be fully qualified for admission to West Point. Essentially, this means that he or she must have a complete candidate file with USMA Admissions. Most candidates selected for the program are chosen from a pool of candidates who were qualified for admission, but not selected.

Scholarships are awarded in the recipient's name to the school mutually selected by the candidate and the Director, WPPSP at AOG. Scholarship amounts are determined by the Director of the WPPSP.

Approximately 60 candidates are selected for the WPPSP annually. The goal is to select 45 scholar/leaders and 15 recruited athletes. Under NCAA rules, one-fourth of the total candidates in each year's program may be recruited athletes. Recruited athletes normally attend a preparatory school for a post-graduate academic year. Some Prep Schools provide a scholarship grant in addition to the WPPSP scholarship. Scholar/Leader candidates may attend a prep school, a military junior college, or a four-year college. The following military junior colleges always provide an additional scholarship grant to WPPSP recipients.

Greystone Preparatory School	Kerrville, Texas
Hargrave Military Academy	Chatham, Virginia
New Mexico Military Institute	Roswell, New Mexico
Marion Military Institute	Marion, Alabama
Valley Forge Military Academy	Wayne, Pennsylvania

All fully qualified WPPSP recipients agree to accept an offer to USMA if tendered. Participation in the WPPSP does not guarantee admission to USMA. Historically, over 80 % of the candidates who complete the program have been offered admission. A candidate's academic performance is the major factor in determining whether an offer of admission will be made. Our intent is to admit all students in the program providing they complete all requirements, receive another nomination, and perform well academically.

Chapter 8 Financial and Publication Support

Financial Support. Field Force liaisons may request financial support from their RC to cover the cost of admissions functions such as AIMS, Field Force/Educator/Congressional Workshops, or College Fairs. The initial request should be submitted to the RC at least 45 days in advance. This request should identify the type of event, the scope of resources required, and estimated costs. RCs can pay for the event with his/her Government purchase card (preferred method) or with Government check (direct to the vender) once a detailed invoice is provided. Ensure approval by the RC prior to committing funds to an event. In all cases, a copy of the invoice with receipt must be provided to the RC.

Field Force liaisons may claim direct expenses, including mileage, on their income taxes as an expense to a 501C tax exempt organization since the Association of Graduates is chartered in part to support recruiting for USMA.

Publication Support. Field Force liaisons may order supplies and publications online over the Field Force website. If problems are encountered, RCs are your point of contact and are able to request publications. Please order supplies and publications well in advance. As a normal rule, Field Force liaisons should allow a minimum of three weeks for delivery of supplies and publications. This allows Admissions to take advantage of lower mail rates and still meet Field Force requirements. Please avoid stockpiling publications, as they go out of date and we then have no means to ensure that only current information is reaching the potential candidate.