

West Point

FALL 2019

COL Andrew Morgan '98 MD
with Flat Cullum aboard the
International Space Station,
August 2019.

Grads Everywhere Celebrate
150th with Flat Cullum

A Publication of the West Point Association of Graduates



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West Point

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The mission of *West Point* magazine is to tell the West Point story and strengthen the grip of the Long Gray Line.

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ON THE COVER: NASA Astronaut COL Andrew Morgan '98, MD, with *West Point* magazine's Space Issue and Flat Cullum on the International Space Station, Expedition 60, August 2019. Photo by Astronaut Nick Hague, USAFA '98, courtesy of NASA

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Fellow Graduates:

"Honor the Past, Celebrate the Present, Embrace the Future."

This has been an exciting year for the West Point Association of Graduates. As all of you know by now, 2019 marks 150 years since a group of graduates met in the office of Horace Webster, Class of 1818, at the College of the City of New York to establish an "Association of the Graduates of the U.S. Military Academy." All year long we have been honoring AOG's past with our "On This Day" feature on social media and our website, with the "Flat Cullum" cutout, with historical articles in *West Point* magazine, with an around-the-world virtual toast on WPAOG's actual birthday, and with exclusive 150th memorabilia at alumni events.

But 2019 has been more than just "Honoring the Past," it has also been "Celebrating the Present." As I briefed the 311 attendees of the WPAOG Leaders Conference in August, there is a lot happening at Herbert Alumni Center and at the Academy that deserves acclaim. For example, WPAOG launched a new, enhanced Career Services program last spring, and as of October 1 it has placed more than 100 graduates who are transitioning into new careers. In April, WPAOG unveiled its latest gift to the Academy, the Ulysses S. Grant Monument, which was funded by a gift from the Honorable Robert A. McDonald '75 and his wife, Diane. Finally, WPAOG expects to raise over \$45 million for the U.S. Military Academy this year, with 36 percent participation from graduates—a rate that puts us ahead of most Ivy League institutions! How's that for "Celebrate the Present?"

There is much to celebrate at the Academy as well. In August, 1,187 new cadets from the Class of 2023 marched back from Camp Buckner to complete their summer training. During 2019, USMA's academic program unveiled two new majors: Applied Statistics-Data Analytics and Space Science. Finally, in the summer 2019, West Point added two new members to its Academy Leadership Team: Brigadier General Curtis Buzzard '92, the new commandant (whom you can read about on page 32), and Mike Buddie, the new Director of Athletics.

While honoring the past and celebrating the present are important, it is "Embracing the Future" that will make our aspirational vision—"For the Long Gray Line to be the most highly connected alumni body in the world"—a reality. Next year will be the last year of our "bridge period" (2016-20), the years in between campaigns during which we had three primary strategic goals: enhance services, maintain momentum in development, and invest in the Association. We have met our objectives in all areas and are now starting to develop the strategic plan for the next era of WPAOG, one that should take us to 2030. We are using a human-centered design approach to inform our alumni support strategy. We will also be planning for the next campaign in conjunction with USMA's strategic plan. We will stay focused on helping graduates stay connected with each other and West Point.

Serving West Point and the Long Gray Line,

Todd

Todd A. Browne '85
President and CEO
West Point Association of Graduates





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"We've hit the ground running on another fantastic academic year, following a summer of demanding military training both here and around the globe."



To the Long Gray Line:

We've hit the ground running on another fantastic academic year, following a summer of demanding military training both here and around the globe. Nearly 3,500 cadets were put through the paces out at Camp Buckner, with their grit and mettle tested across three major training evolutions (Cadet Basic Training, Cadet Field Training and Cadet Leader Development Training). Combined, cadets

rucked more than 240 kilometers, spent 30 nights in the field, and shot more than 2.5 million rounds, with more than 1,300 cadets achieving Sharpshooter or Expert status in Basic Rifle Marksmanship. Additionally, more than 850 cadets honed their leadership skills during various summer training details, with another 823 successfully completing Airborne, Air Assault and other military schools.

We also had more than 1,000 cadets complete internships throughout the United States and 42 different countries abroad. Nearly two-thirds of the domestic Advanced Individual Academic Development (AIADs) opportunities were with the Department of Defense or a national lab where our cadets tackled some tough problems. Wherever they went, these young men and women represented themselves, the Academy and the Army in an outstanding manner.

Now, with the acceptance of the Class of 2023, the Corps is ready for another great academic year, under the leadership of First Captain Daine Van De Wall of West Friendship, Maryland and Brigade Command Sergeant Major Kevin Shinnick of Milford, Massachusetts. Daine, Kevin and their team have confidently taken the reins of leadership, and I have no doubt they will lead the Corps to even greater successes this year.

This summer, we welcomed our new 78th Commandant of Cadets, Brigadier General Curtis Buzzard '92 and his wife, Teri, and our 30th Director of Athletics, Mike Buddie and his wife, Traci. Curtis recently served as 7th Infantry Division's Deputy Commander for Operations, and Mike comes to us from Furman University, where he served as its Athletic Director.

Our staff and faculty continue their great work toward our reaccreditation with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, preparing for the commission's visit in March 2020. Reaccreditation is an opportunity to demonstrate excellence and preeminence as a leadership institution and an institution of higher learning, while simultaneously focusing on continual improvement.

As you may know, General Jim McConville '81 recently assumed duties as the 40th Chief of Staff of the Army, after two years as the Vice Chief. Prior to becoming the Chief, he visited West Point and spent time with our cadets and leader team. General McConville views West Point as a national treasure and the "gold standard" for the nation's officer corps, and is expecting a lot from West Point and its graduates.

The Chief's number one priority is people, calling them the Army's greatest strength and "our most important weapons system." Additionally, winning matters to our new Chief. "We win by doing the right things, the right way," he said. "When the Army is sent somewhere, we go to win, and there is no honorable mention in combat."

As the preeminent leader development institution dedicated to preparing leaders for the crucible of ground combat, winning matters here at West Point. We emphasize a culture of winning and the continual, relentless pursuit of excellence in all we do, whether in the classroom, on the training range or on the fields of friendly strife. You can see excellence daily throughout West Point and, more importantly, across the Army, in the leaders of character who will fight and win on any battlefield.

However, the only way we will win and achieve excellence is through our people, and we have a great team that makes excellence part of the culture, from our cadets, to our staff and faculty and coaches. They commit themselves daily to going above and beyond to ensure our graduates are prepared to lead, fight and win. Just as people are the Army's greatest strength, they are our greatest strength at West Point.

Each of you—the members of the Long Gray Line—is an important part of the team. You play a critical role in our mission of developing leaders of character, whether through your support of the Margin of Excellence programs that sustain preeminence or through sharing the West Point story in your communities and helping us identify future candidates for admission.

More importantly, you serve as role models for our cadets. What has truly resonated with me is the resilience and timelessness of the Long Gray Line. Each of you serves as a link to the past for our current cadets, sharing our heritage and the numerous lessons about excellence and honorable leadership, both from your own experiences, as well as from the generations of "old grads" who came before you. You also serve as a bridge to the future. As each class graduates, they carry those lessons and your legacy forward to pass along and inspire future classes, creating an unbreakable bond that extends from generation to generation. This is the strength of the Long Gray Line.

Yours are the shoulders upon which today's and future generations stand, and because of your example and commitment to excellence, they will live and lead honorably and demonstrate excellence as leaders of character.

*"E'er may that line of gray
Increase from day to day
Live, serve, and die, we pray
West Point, for thee."*

Thank you for all you do. Beat Navy!

Darryl Williams '83

Lieutenant General, U.S. Army
60th Superintendent, U.S. Military Academy



Celebrate with Us!

150 Years | 1869 – 2019

Honor the Past. Prepare for the Future.



Throughout 2019, the West Point Association of Graduates has been celebrating its 150th Anniversary. As we move into the last part of our anniversary year, here's how you can continue to be part of the occasion!

Learn and Inspire: *Discover Our History*

Our website, **WestPointAOG.org/150th** is a communications hub for our celebration, containing a wealth of information on WPAOG history and events.

“On This Day”: Throughout 2019, WPAOG is sharing “On this Day” facts highlighting historic events or achievements of West Point graduates each day of the year. These facts can be found on a timeline on our website at **WestPointAOG.org/150thOnThisDay** and we are also sharing them on our social media platforms, so be sure to follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. WPAOG gratefully acknowledges the detailed historical research for “On This Day” done by Lieutenant Colonel Jennifer Voigtschild Minus '93 (Retired). For more than a year, Minus combed through West Point and WPAOG history to collect 365 facts, one for each day of the year.

West Point magazine is featuring articles in each issue of 2019 on WPAOG's history and the WPAOG of today, and how we continue to serve West Point and the Long Gray Line.

Our *First Call* newsletter and all WPAOG social media platforms are sharing 150th stories throughout the year.

Participate: *Celebrate with fellow graduates and share your stories and images*

- Share your 150th celebrations on social media using **#WPAOG150**. Follow WPAOG on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for more information.
- WPAOG's **Leaders Conference** in August 2019 featured a special 150th celebration. Read more on page 14.
- A special 150th anniversary video was created and shared at Founders Days around the world and the Leaders Conference, and may viewed at **vimeo.com/wpaog**.
- **Flat Cullum:** George W. Cullum (1833), one of West Point's most notable graduates, has been seen everywhere in 2019! The Spring issue of *West Point* magazine included a “Flat Cullum” cutout to incorporate in your photos and share with us. Flat Cullum is also available to download online at **WestPointAOG.org/150thparticipate**. See Flat Cullum photo highlights and read more on page 18.

Commemorate 150 Years *with Exclusive Memorabilia*

- A selection of exclusive 150th-themed memorabilia is available to order online at **WPAOGGiftShop.com** or by phone at **800.426.4725**.
- WPAOG has offered exclusive 150th banners to Societies and is proudly displaying our 150th logo, flag and building decorations throughout the year.

More information: *Need more information or have a fact you want to share? Contact us at **150@wpaog.org***

“As we move into the final months of WPAOG's 150th Anniversary year, I'd like to thank all my fellow graduates for your outstanding participation in commemorating this milestone. I invite you to continue to join me in renewing our bond with West Point and each other through this special year. I am grateful to each of you and to the 150th Planning Committee for contributing to the exceptional success of this celebration.”

—LTC(R) Deirdre Dixon '84, Ph.D.

Chair, 150th Anniversary Planning Committee, WPAOG Board of Directors



New Home, New Bylaws, Same Mission:

WPAOG History Part IV (1996-2019)

By Keith J. Hamel, WPAOG staff

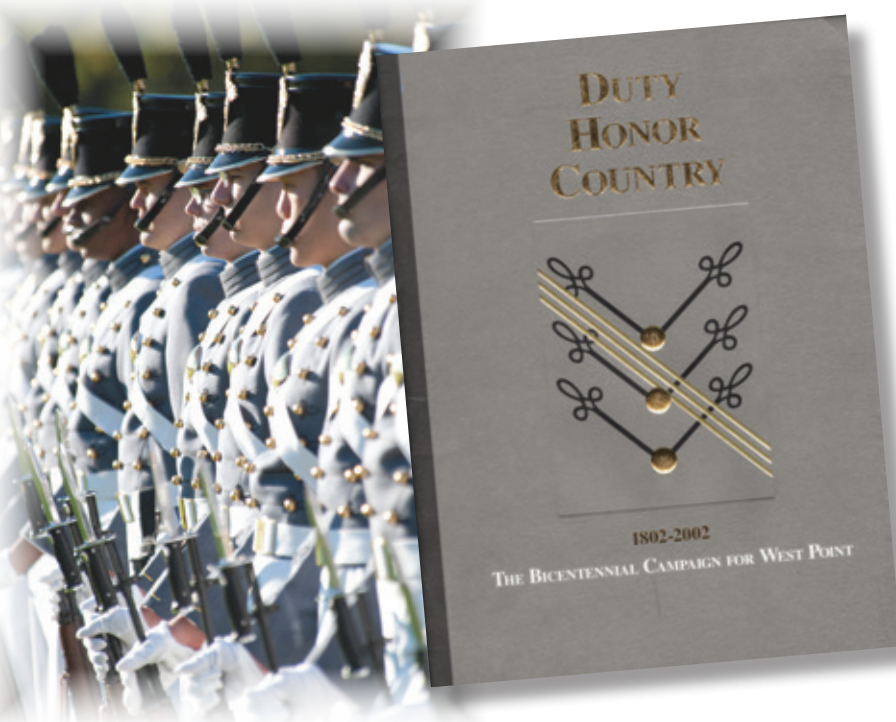
When the Association of Graduates of the U.S. Military Academy moved into the Herbert Alumni Center in the winter of 1995, it was primed to capitalize on its past and, in the process, make new history as well. The AOG began on May 22, 1869, when a group of graduates, upon a suggestion from Robert Anderson, Class of 1825, held its first organizational meeting in the office of Dr. Horace Webster, Class of 1818. Out of this meeting came the Association's mission: "...to cherish the memories of our Alma Mater, and to promote the social intercourse and fraternal fellowship of its graduates." Ever since then, the AOG mission has been about serving both West Point ("Alma Mater") and the Long Gray Line ("its graduates").

In the first stage of its history (1869-1900), covered in our Winter 2019 issue, AOG was instrumental in moving the

remains of the "Father of the Academy," Sylvanus Thayer, Class of 1808, to the West Point Cemetery and memorializing him with a statue. Also during this era, one of AOG's founding members, George Cullum, Class of 1833, bequeathed \$250,000 to build a memorial hall at West Point and \$10,000 for "necessary expenses" of the Association. In AOG's second stage (1901-45), outlined in our Spring 2019 issue, AOG raised money to purchase the Sanctuary Window in the newly built Cadet Chapel and introduced initiatives such as "Alumni Day" (first held on June 11, 1923) and *ASSEMBLY* magazine (which debuted in April 1942). The modern AOG (see the Summer 2019 issue) began to take shape in the late 1940s with the establishment of the West Point Alumni Foundation and the granting of tax-exempt status by the IRS. Thanks to these developments in AOG's third era (1946-95), fundraising for both the West Point Superintendent's Fund and AOG's annual appeal steadily grew, and in 1972, Major General William Knowlton '43JAN, the 49th Superintendent, removed the AOG active duty officer from the Office of Assistant to the Superintendent, freeing the Association to solicit money for the Academy and to establish new services for graduates. To meet these dual objectives, AOG created both a Directorate of Development (fundraising) and a Directorate of Alumni Affairs (fraternal fellowship) in the 1970s and 1980s, setting up the themes that dominate the present era of its 150-year history.

1997-2002: The Bicentennial Campaign

In 1996, after AOG had moved into Herbert Alumni Center, Edward "Shy" Meyer '51, Chairman of the Association, noted that it was time for the Association to refocus its fundraising efforts. "The bulk of money has gone into the Alumni Center and alumni type things rather than the Superintendent's projects," Meyer said, according to the minutes of the October 1996 Board of Trustees meeting. "With 2002 coming up for a target, we have a responsibility as alumni to do something for the Academy in the way of a gift." In June 1990, AOG's Long Range Planning Committee had agreed to raise \$100 million in



Left: The Bicentennial Campaign, WPAOG's first comprehensive campaign, ran from 1996 to 2002 and raised nearly \$220 million for the Academy.



Left: The 50-Year Affiliation Program began in 1999 when the Class of 1949 presented the Class of 1999 with engraved 2LT bars at graduation. **Center:** As part of the 50-Year Affiliation Program, the Class of 1965 presents the Class of 2015 with 2LT bars at graduation. **Right:** Members of the Class of 1960 present the class of 2010 with their class colors at the Cadet Field Training Promotion Ceremony at Camp Buckner. Known as the Yearling Flag Ceremony, this is one of the eight 50-Year Affiliation Program events.

10 years for USMA, based on a long-range analysis of Academy needs through 2002. However, debate over whether to run an Army Athletics Center Campaign or a Cadet Leadership Opportunities Campaign in conjunction with the Academy's Bicentennial in 2002 slowed efforts to get the Bicentennial Campaign fully underway. All that changed in 1996. Now with focus provided by Meyer and the West Point Fund Committee, chaired by Jack Hammack '49, and in partnership with Lieutenant General Dan Christman '65, USMA's 55th Superintendent, AOG's fundraising moved into high gear, thanks in large part to lessons learned in the campaign to raise funds for Herbert Alumni Center. The Bicentennial Campaign kicked off with a goal to raise \$150 million for West Point between 1997 and 2002.

In the six years preceding the Bicentennial Campaign, the average AOG annual collection was \$9.4 million, from fewer than 14,000 donors annually, but during the campaign, those numbers jumped to \$28.8 million and 21,000 donors per year. But even more than raising more money and growing the donor pool, the Bicentennial Campaign provided the vehicle to aid AOG's burgeoning maturity. It made it necessary for the Association to grow and professionalize, developing new office systems where none had existed, establishing gift acceptance and donor recognition policies and procedures, and educating graduates to overcome general objections of some alumni toward fundraising. It also transformed the physical, academic, and extracurricular landscape of West Point, because the result of the campaign was not just "something for the Academy in the way of a gift," but a collection of many significant and lasting gifts.

"The response to the Bicentennial Campaign was overwhelming," said Tom Dyer '67, who was Chairman of the West Point Fund during most of the Bicentennial Campaign, and who took over as AOG Chairman in January 2002. When the campaign closed on December 31, 2002, AOG had raised \$218.6 million for West Point, nearly \$70 million more than its initial goal. What's more, nearly half of all West Point graduates had given at least one gift. "Never in our wildest dreams did we think we would finish having raised nearly \$220 million!" said Dyer, addressing the success of the Bicentennial Campaign in his Chairman's Letter in the March/April 2003

issue of *ASSEMBLY*. "What a great tribute to [all graduates] and dear friends who recognized how much the 'margin of excellence' enriches the cadets' experience."

Expanding AOG Services

While AOG's Development team was busy raising funds for the Bicentennial Campaign, the AOG Alumni Support team was expanding services to graduates across a broad spectrum of programs. In fact, according to one Chairman and CEO Annual Report of this era, "the most rapidly expanding activity managed by the Association of Graduates is its Alumni Support Program."

In November 1996, the team hosted the first AOG Minority Alumni Conference. A year prior, the Association established the Minority Outreach Committee with the mission to enhance the participation of minority members in AOG programs and activities. More than 120 graduates and friends of West Point attended the first conference, raising and discussing issues of major concern to minority graduates. A second conference was held in April 1998. Attended by 107 participants, the objective of the conference was to translate those issues identified in 1996 into action plans to achieve specific objectives related to minority cadet recruiting, the experience of minority cadets at the Academy, AOG support of minority graduates, and fundraising for minority-related projects.

Another new initiative that emerged during this time was the 50-Year Affiliation Program. In 1999, the Class of 1949 asked the Superintendent if it could present second lieutenant bars, inscribed with "49-99," to the graduates of the Class of 1999. The Superintendent agreed, and four members of the Class of 1949 greeted each cadet as he or she left the dais, diploma in hand, and presented the bars. Called a "friend raising" program by the Alumni Support team, the 50-Year Affiliation Program later expanded to include a class flag presented to the yearling class as it completed summer training at Camp Buckner and a class coin presented to the cow class upon their taking the affirmation oath. Today, the 50-Year Affiliation Program features eight formal events and a handful of unofficial events at which cadets "Grip Hands" with those who preceded them a half-century earlier, including R-Day, A-Day, Plebe Class Crest Unveiling, Yearling CFT Class Flag Presentation, Cow Affirmation, Ring Weekend, Branch Night and Graduation.



Left: Graduates attending their reunion watch cadets pass in review at the 2019 Alumni Review. **Center:** The Class of 1964 “gripped hands” with the Class of 2014 at their Affirmation ceremony, one of eight 50-Year Affiliation Program events. **Right:** The First “Ring Melt” took place in November 2000 with rings donated for the Bicentennial Class of 2002. At left is Ron Turner ’58, who conceived the program.

Finally, in November 2000, AOG inaugurated the Class Ring Memorial Program. Proposed by Ron Turner ’58 in the May/June 1999 edition of *ASSEMBLY*, the “Ring Melt,” as it is more popularly known, has today become one of AOG’s most revered traditions. As described by Turner, the program involves “graduates bequeathing (or graduates’ descendants donating) West Point class rings for the specific purpose of incorporating the gold into the class rings of future graduates.”

Demonstrating that he had a long-term “tradition” in mind when he proposed his idea, Turner also recommended retaining some gold shavings after each melt so that these could be placed in the following year’s melt, thus ensuring each year’s “Memorial Gold ingot...would contain some of every ring donated.” To date, a total of 575 rings have been donated, spanning the classes of 1896 to 1997. All graduates’ rings from the classes of 2002-2020 contain this “legacy gold” from the Class Ring Memorial Program.

New Governance, New Operations

With growth in the number of services it offered and the amount of money it was raising, AOG began considering changes to its organizational structure soon after the conclusion of the Bicentennial Campaign. At the same time, legislation proposed by New York’s Attorney General requiring non-profit organizations in the state to follow practices similar to the Sarbanes-Oxley corporate reforms, which Congress enacted during this period, also prompted AOG to consider changes to its governance model. Thus, in 2003, AOG formed the 2020 Governance Committee, which presented the results of its yearlong study to the Board of Trustees in January 2005.

According to the Governance Committee’s findings, the AOG board structure of the time was inefficient: “too many people for effective ideas, too infrequent for full consideration, too little time for all issues, too cumbersome to act as needs demand.” Furthermore, in the opinion of AOG’s legal counsel at the time, the early 2000s governance model left its 54 Trustees exposed to potential personal liability. The Governance Committee’s solution was the creation of a smaller Board of Directors (12-16 members), plus Chairman and Vice-Chairman, who would be legally and fiduciarily responsible for the Association, supported by a larger 57-member (ultimately

reduced to 54-member) Advisory Council made up of a representative group of class, society, and at-large members. The Governance Committee believed that the Advisory Council would provide AOG with broad graduate representation and participation while also accessing a wide diversity of skills and experiences. They also felt that service on the Advisory Council would be excellent training for future Board of Directors members. An additional change to note, the Governance Committee concluded that role of Chief Executive Officer should not remain with the Chairman but transfer to the AOG President, the person on-site in Herbert Alumni Center, who would have authority over the day-to-day affairs of the Association and the management of its staff. After careful consideration and multiple compromises, the modernization and rewrite of AOG’s Bylaws was completed and voted on in March 2005, elections were held in the fall of 2005, and, for the first time since the 1920s, a new model of AOG governance took effect on January 1, 2006 under the chairmanship of Ted Stroup ’62.

A year after receiving its new streamlined model of governance, AOG received a new name: the “West Point Association of Graduates” (WPAOG). Board of Trustee minutes show that AOG’s Strategic Planning Committee had been considering the name change since 1998, as part of a larger effort to change the fundraising, marketing, and business organization efforts of the Association, but it wasn’t implemented until WPAOG launched its redesigned website in September 2007. The timing of this coincided with “AOG Strategic Plan 2010,” which the Board considered in May 2007. One of the considerations under discussion during this meeting was branding, and the Association’s new name now incorporated what many consider to be one of the world’s premiere brands—West Point.

The new website was the product of WPAOG’s Information Systems Department (ISD), which had been established in 1996 to build and maintain AOG’s hardware and software infrastructures. ISD also developed and executed the AOG Information Strategic Plan, which leveraged existing technology to enhance the ability to communicate information quickly via electronic means. In 1997, this plan led to a test program that provided classes with a notification of the death of one of its members within 24 hours after confirmation by AOG.



Left: The Class Ring Memorial Program, or “Ring Melt,” one of WPAOG’s most revered traditions, moved from Warwick, RI to West Point in 2019. **Center:** As part of the 50-Year Affiliation Program, the Class of 1967 presented the Class of 2017 with their “first brass” branch insignia pins on Branch Night. **Right:** The 2019 Distinguished Graduates (L to R): GEN(R) David Bramlett ’64, COL(R) Victor Garcia, M.D. ’68, LTG(R) Robert VanAntwerp ’72, GEN(R) Walter “Skip” Sharp ’74, and LTG(R) Robert Caslen Jr. ’75.

That same year, AOG purchased software that enabled it to create real-time distribution of news items and articles. This was the beginning of today’s Death Notification System (DNS), which each day receives and verifies death notifications and then sends out daily updates to Class and Society leaders (on average 400 per year).

Given the emphasis on improving communication with graduate members and on increasing awareness of the new WPAOG name change, it wasn’t long before the Association created a specific department to address both needs. Effective communication had been a decade-long goal of AOG by 2009, and in August of that year, the Association began to seriously consider establishing an integrated communications team. One of the questions facing WPAOG at the time was what to do with *ASSEMBLY* magazine. Although beloved by many graduates, by 2009, less than 20 percent were subscribing to the magazine, which meant that the majority of graduates were not receiving news from their alma mater. After much discussion and deliberation, WPAOG elected to follow the model of several peer alumni associations and produce a new quarterly magazine that would be mailed out free of charge to all graduates. *West Point* magazine debuted in January 2011, and in February WPAOG’s Publications Directorate became part of the new Department of Communications and Marketing, which was charged with mastering new communications technologies in the internet era, becoming an ongoing source of information for graduates and promoting participation in WPAOG services.

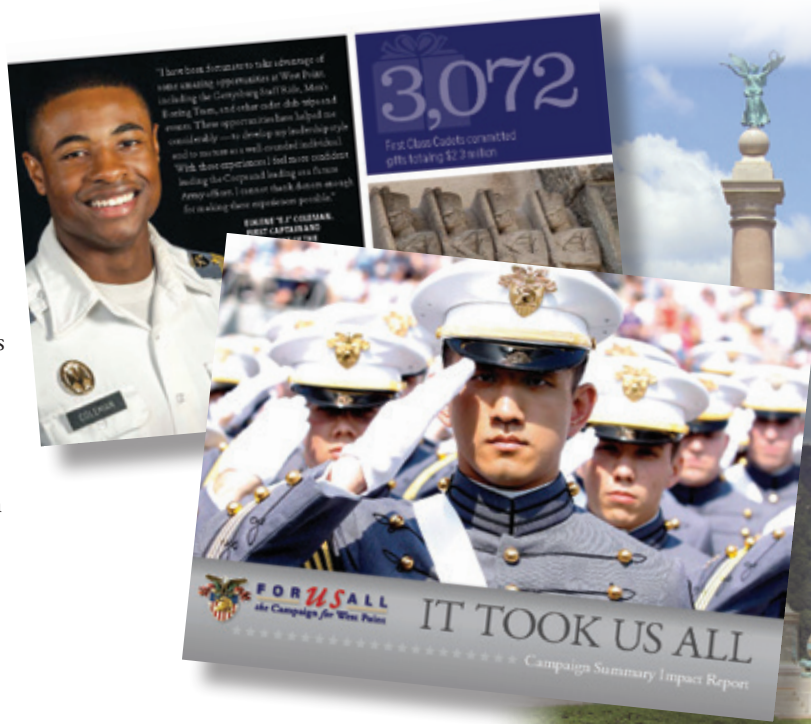
At the same time, WPAOG’s Finance Department continued its management of gift funds and endowments for West Point and the Long Gray Line, aided by expert advice from the Investment Committee. Today, WPAOG manages more than \$380 million in endowment funds, and the Association has received the highest rankings for transparency and efficient funds management from non-profit watchdogs Guidestar (Platinum) and Charity Navigator (4 stars).

In the early 2000s, AOG tried an innovative approach to building gift funded brick and mortar projects, which now encompass both new construction and renovation. WPAOG

successfully managed the planning, design and construction of the Hoffman Press Box in 2002-03 and proffered the completed project as a gift to the government. The success of this approach led to it becoming the new model for gift-funded construction at West Point, and by 2019 WPAOG had completed over 170 projects, representing more than \$250 million donated by members of the Long Gray Line.

2009-15: The *For Us All* Campaign Breaks Records

In the summer of 2008, the Association and the Academy began to consider a new comprehensive campaign for West Point. The campaign, called *For Us All: The Campaign for West Point*,



Right: The *For Us All* Campaign was highly successful, raising more than \$420 million for West Point.



Left: First Captain Jon Nielsen '07 applauds as MAJ Ryan L. Worthan '97, the first Nininger Award for Valor at Arms recipient in 2006, holds an autographed Rugby Ball presented by the Rugby Team and a cadet bust presented by the Corps of Cadets. **Center:** LTC Matthew Myer '01 (left) is congratulated by LTG Darryl Williams '83, Superintendent, upon receiving the 13th Annual Nininger Award for Valor at Arms. **Right:** The Dettre Memorial Assistance Program, which began in 2008, enables WPAOG to offer support to families for burials at West Point Cemetery.

officially launched in January 2009. By the time the campaign ended on December 31, 2015, more than \$420 million had been either pledged or received, well exceeding the original \$350 million campaign goal.

During the *For Us All* Campaign, WPAOG continued to achieve new levels of support for the Academy and the Long Gray Line. The average of total annual donations to West Point/WPAOG rose to \$40.7 million per year, more than 40 percent higher than the average annual donations during the Bicentennial Campaign. More impressively, 58 percent of living alumni made one or more donations. Approximately 50,000 graduates, families, and friends of West Point participated in the *For Us All* Campaign. The priorities for the *For Us All* Campaign were divided into five areas. With a goal of \$200 million, the largest category was designated as “For the Cadets” and sought gifts to fund scholarships (from research through Academic Individual Advanced Development or AIAD opportunities), endowments (in support of academic departments, cadet clubs and teams), and Academy Centers (e.g., the Combating Terrorism Center and the Center for Oral History).

Individuals and classes also committed gifts to numerous brick and mortar projects, including the Frederic V. Malek West Point Visitors Center, the Foley Enners Nathe Lacrosse Center, the West Point Cemetery Columbarium, and more. But, as George Gilmore '71, one of the members of the *For Us All* Campaign Cabinet said in 2013, “We will see the effects of this campaign not in new buildings or new playing fields but rather in how well prepared our junior officers arrive in the Army.” Indeed, in a world of increasing threats to the nation’s security, economic stability, and fundamental values, producing leaders of character became more important than ever, and the *For Us All* Campaign, above all, was focused on ensuring that the Academy had the resources available to fully prepare the next generation of leaders for the Army and the nation.

Since the *For Us All* Campaign concluded in 2015, WPAOG has continued to build on gains achieved, increasing donations to an average of \$49 million annually and raising graduate

participation to all-time highs, driven by innovative initiatives such as the All-Academy Challenge. During this period, WPAOG has also won the highest awards of recognition for management practices and transparency from Charity Navigator (four stars) and GuideStar (Platinum Seal of Transparency), and the Development team has earned “Overall Performance” and “Sustained Excellence” (a five-year award won by only 16 colleges) in fundraising awards from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), a 3,700-member global professional association focused on advancing education.

Further Expanding WPAOG Services

WPAOG continued to expand its Alumni Support activities and services into the new millennium as well. Today, WPAOG provides services to 82 classes, 141 West Point societies worldwide, and to more than 53,000 individual graduates. Since launching in 2011, WPAOG’s comprehensive reunion services have also proved popular with graduates: in 2019, WPAOG hosted 29 class reunions for more than 14,700 returning graduates and their guests. The WPAOG Gift Shop has steadily expanded its unique product line and services to reunion classes, graduates, cadets and their families, exceeding \$1 million in annual sales for the first time in 2005, and recently achieving \$2 million in sales. Profits from the Gift Shop support our alumni services.

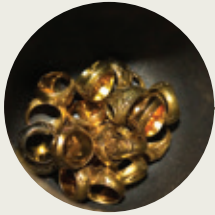
In September 2006, AOG premiered a new award initiative to engage cadets with the presentation of the inaugural Nininger Award for Valor at Arms to Major Ryan L. Worthan '97. Conceived by E. Doug Kenna '45 and funded in perpetuity by Kenna and his wife Jean, the award is named after First Lieutenant Alexander “Sandy” Nininger '41, who was killed in action in the Philippines during World War II and posthumously received the Medal of Honor (the first American army soldier to be so honored in the war). It is given to a recent graduate who has displayed heroic action in battle. Like AOG’s Distinguished Graduate Award, the Nininger is an award for which the recipient is meant to be representative of a larger

ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATES OF THE U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY

TIMELINE (1996-2019)

1996

- WPAOG's Bicentennial Fundraising Campaign kickoff.
- First AOG Minority Alumni Conference; in 2006 renamed Diversity Leadership Conference.



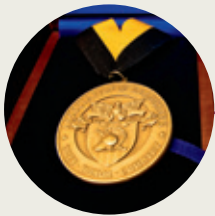
2000

"Ring Melt"/Class Ring Memorial Program inaugurated with Class of 2000 rings.



2004

Debut of *TAPS*, the official memorial magazine of the Long Gray Line.



2006

First Ninger Award for Valor at Arms presented.

2008

Launch of Dettre Memorial Assistance Program for funerals at West Point Cemetery.



2011

- Launch of *West Point* magazine.
- Launch of comprehensive reunion services.



2017

Launch of Rockbound Highland Home Program, including Grad Pass, Grad Perks and Grad Insider Tours.



West Point Association of Graduates
SALLYPORT

2019

- Ring Melt moved to West Point.
- Launch of Enhanced Career Services Program.
- Launch of Sallyport.
- WPAOG Celebrates its 150th Anniversary.

1999

Beginning of 50-Year Affiliation Program.



2002

West Point Bicentennial—WPAOG's Bicentennial Campaign ends, raising a record \$213 million.



2005

WPAOG By-Laws Modernization approved.

2007

- New Website launched.
- Rebranding as West Point Association of Graduates.



2009

For Us All Campaign launch.



FOR US ALL
the Campaign for West Point

2015

For Us All Campaign ends, raising a record \$420 million.

2018

Launch of Grad Link.





Left and Center: WPAOG's Grad Insider Tour program offers West Point grads and their guests exclusive access to locations around West Point with a personal tour guide and private van. **Right:** Scott Leishman '77 (left), Julia Ruddock '07, and Miguel Gutierrez '80, Director, comprise WPAOG's new enhanced Career Services Program.

body; in this case, of "all West Point-commissioned officers who have heroically led Soldiers in combat." However, unlike the DGA, which has been historically presented to senior members of the Long Gray Line, the recipient of the Nininger Award must be "a decorated and relatively recent graduate on Active Duty," according to the award's criteria. "Age is what makes the Nininger Award special," said Captain Anthony Fuscillaro '05, the 2013 recipient. "Cadets have an easier time connecting with the Nininger Award winners because they could be in their boots soon and see a lot of the same things they have seen."

There have been four board chairmen, Ted Stroup '62, Jodie Glore '69, Larry Jordan '68 and the current chair, Joe DeFrancisco '65, since the new governance model was adopted in 2006. These dedicated alumni servants, along with the WPAOG Board, have provided WPAOG with strong leadership and oversight that has allowed for a consistent upward trajectory in its service to both West Point and the Long Gray Line. Other major initiatives introduced by WPAOG in the last decade include the Dettre Memorial Assistance Program, started in 2008 upon a donation from Mrs. Betty Dettre in honor of her late husband, Major General Rexford H. Dettre '43JAN, which supports graduate burials at West Point cemetery; comprehensive reunion support services as previously mentioned, which debuted in 2011; and the Rockbound Highland Home Program, which launched in 2017 and offers personal benefits through its "Grad Pass," "Grad Perks," and "Grad Insider Tour" options so that each graduate who returns to West Point feels warmly welcomed back. A year later, the Rockbound Highland Home Program won two CASE "Gold" Awards in the categories of "Alumni Relations" and "Alumni Relations Events and Affinity Programs."

Just recently, WPAOG has unveiled a new, enhanced Career Services Program, which is designed to equip all West Point graduates with the confidence to successfully navigate each phase of their post-military career transition (see p. 50); Grad Link, a mobile app which expands upon the popular "Find a Grad" feature on WPAOG's website to offer the easiest and most powerful way to network with fellow grads; and Sallyport, a secure online portal that provides West Point Societies with three primary services; membership management, communications, and event management.

Preparing for the Future

Over the course of its 150-year existence, the Association of Graduates of the United States Military Academy has evolved into a truly one of a kind organization, one that is simultaneously an independent alumni association serving graduates with services and programs, and also a foundation that solicits and manages funds on behalf of the institution it supports. At many universities, alumni support is a subset of a that school's development operation and staffed by employees of the school. A few are independent organizations with their own board of directors, but they neither solicit nor manage money for their alma mater.

The delicate balance between the foundation side of AOG and its alumni support operations had been an issue of great concern for Robert Lamb '46, Secretary-Treasurer for AOG (1970-72) and then its first Executive Vice President (1972-90) in his 1990 essay "Two Decades of Change," but after reviewing the last two-plus decades of AOG history it is clear that the fundraising-fraternal fellowship duality of WPAOG's evolved nature has proved symbiotic: the more that bonds between members of the Long Gray Line are strengthened by WPAOG, the more graduates support their alma mater; and the more generously graduates give of their time, talent, and treasure, the more services WPAOG is able to offer to help make the Long Gray Line the most highly connected alumni body in the world.

With its new expansion of Alumni Support and communications to keep graduates connected and engaged, today's WPAOG stands poised to lead support for both graduates and West Point well into the 21st century. Or, going back to Anderson's original principles when he proposed the idea of an Association of Graduates in 1869 in his letter to Thayer: "to perfect and perpetuate this truly national institution" and "for the promotion of social and fraternal intercourse," later resolved in the Association's preliminary meeting in which he participated. ★

This article is the final installment of a series on the history of the West Point Association of Graduates printed in West Point magazine throughout 2019, our 150th Anniversary year.



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2019 WPAOG LEADERS CONFERENCE



Four Days of Honoring the Past, Celebrating the Present, and Embracing the Future

By Keith J. Hamel, WPAOG staff



LTC (R) Deirdre Dixon '84, Ph.D., Conference Chair

Each year, the West Point Association of Graduates Leaders Conference, sponsored by the Class of 1967, organizes its events and keynote speakers around a particular theme. Since this year marks the 150th anniversary of the Association, the WPAOG Alumni Support Committee selected “Honor the Past, Celebrate the Present, Embrace the Future” as the conference theme. “With 2019 being the sesquicentennial of WPAOG, we wanted to make sure that we came up with something that could connect the past 150 years to the next 150-plus years—connect all grads, past and future,” said Lieutenant Colonel Deirdre Dixon '84, Ph.D, (Retired), WPAOG Board Member and Chair of the Leaders

Conference, the Alumni Support Committee, and the 150th Anniversary Planning Committee. For four days, 311 volunteer leaders lived the theme, connecting with Old Grads ranging from the classes of 1949 to 2019 (and a current class leader from the Class of 2020), hearing from representatives about the state of the Academy and WPAOG, and learning lessons they can take back to their constituents and employ going forward.

Above: The 2019 Leaders Conference included a 150th Anniversary sunset cocktail reception and dinner aboard the *Atlantica* yacht as it cruised the Hudson River.



Honor the Past

“Just having everyone from the 50s grads to the 2010s grads and hearing all the stories people have from being here fulfilled the ‘honor the past’ part of the theme for me,” said Paul Ernst ’08, representing the West Point Society of South Texas.

Brigadier General John Brown ’71 (Retired), former Chief of Military History at the United States Army Center of Military History, also “honored the past” with a lecture about President Thomas Jefferson’s role in and rationalization for the founding of the U.S. Military Academy, as well as West Point’s early impact on the profession of arms, American education, and the nation as a whole.

Finally, WPAOG honored the past by inviting descendants of the Association’s founders to attend portions of the Leaders Conference.



Todd Browne ’85, WPAOG President and CEO



LTG (R) Joe DeFrancisco ’65, WPAOG Chairman

Relatives of Horace Webster, Class of 1818; George S. Greene, Class of 1823; George Cullum, Class of 1833; and Lovell Jerome, Class of 1870, accepted the invitation and were treated to a tour of West Point and a special viewing of historical materials pertaining to their family members in the USMA Archives. Lydia Jones—the great-great-great-granddaughter of Horace Webster—said her ancestor, whose office at the City College of New York City was home to the organizational meeting of the Association on May 22, 1869, would be immensely proud that the tradition he and some other graduates initiated has never stopped. “He also believed that everyone had a right to an education and would be pleased that the strong education West Point offers is now available to a diverse Corps of Cadets,” Jones said.

Celebrate The Present

The diversity of today’s Corps was on display during the Leaders Conference’s cadet panel, during which four cadets discussed research they conducted on various AIAD internships, supported by Margin of Excellence donations through WPAOG. One cadet also discussed the preparation he received for attending the Academy as part of the West Point AOG Preparatory Scholarship Program, which is supported through WPAOG. The Academy leadership team—Lieutenant General Darryl A. Williams ’83, Superintendent; Brigadier General Cindy Jebb ’82, Dean; Brigadier General Curtis Buzzard ’92, Commandant; Colonel Deborah McDonald ’85, Director of Admissions, and Athletic Director Mike Buddie—also briefed conference participants on the present happenings at West Point.



Descendants of four AOG founders—Horace Webster, Class of 1818; George S. Greene, Class of 1823; George Cullum, Class of 1833; and Lovell Jerome, Class of 1870—came to West Point during the 2019 Leaders Conference, invited as part of WPAOG’s yearlong 150th anniversary celebration.

Lieutenant General Joe DeFrancisco '65 (Retired), WPAOG Chairman, and Todd Browne '85, WPAOG President and CEO, also celebrated the present by highlighting the current state and achievements of the Association. Browne, for example, cited WPAOG's record fundraising numbers, "\$45 million per year and 35 percent alumni participation, the latter of which puts us ahead of most Ivy League schools," and detailed the success of its most recent initiative, WPAOG Enhanced Career Services. "Despite my roles with WPAOG, I myself was surprised to learn that WPAOG Career Services has already placed 103 graduates seeking career transitions into new positions," said Dixon.

Prepare for the Future

DeFrancisco and Browne also looked to the future in their presentations to alumni leaders. DeFrancisco lauded the 54 parent leaders attending the conference as the best resource to inspire cadets—"They are our future members," he said—while Browne answered the question "Where are we headed?" by introducing the topic of the 2030 Strategic Plan.

"The 'future' portion of this year's theme is perhaps the most important element," said Don Kopinski '79, representing the West Point Society of Central Ohio. "If we aren't forward-looking, and if we aren't helping West Point be forward-looking, there are always people who will say, 'Shut 'em down: They are no longer needed.'"

Perhaps the most forward-looking element of the Leaders Conference was the keynote address "The Long, Long, Long Gray Line," given by Brigadier General Ty Seidule (Retired), Professor Emeritus and former Chair of the Department of History at USMA, during the final evening's Hudson River dinner cruise. After detailing historical connections between contemporary cadets and George Washington, Seidule looked forward saying, "The Long Gray Line will continue to serve our country, and, decades after this old soldier has gone to Fiddlers Green, a plebe that starts classes on Monday will return to West Point as the oldest grad from the Class of 2023 and shake hands with a cadet from the Class of 2102, the tricentennial of West Point's founding."

"The 150th theme [honor the past, celebrate the present, prepare for the future] used by the Leaders Conference has always been an important theme at West Point," said Steve Mains '80, representing the West Point Society of Williamsburg. "Cadets are ingrained in the traditions of the Academy and the notion that they can't let earlier generations down; so, while we need new ideas, we develop them while building on the lessons of the past." ★

View the 2019 Leader's Conference video at bit.ly/leadersconference2019



Top: Representatives from 7 West Point Societies of the Western Region accept their "Distinguished Society Awards" at the 2019 Leaders Conference.

Middle: LTG Darryl Williams '83, Superintendent (left), Shari Seidule, and First Captain Daine Van De Wall '20 at the WPAOG 150th Celebratory Anniversary Dinner. BG(R) Ty Seidule delivered the keynote address at this event.

Left: Todd Browne '85, WPAOG President and CEO; Stan Shipley '73, WPAOG Vice-Chairman; BG(R) Ty Seidule, 2019 WPAOG Leaders Conference keynote speaker; LTC(R) Deirdre Dixon '84, Ph.D., 2019 WPAOG Leaders Conference Chair; LTG Darryl Williams '83, USMA Superintendent; and LTG(R) Joe DeFrancisco '65, WPAOG Chairman.

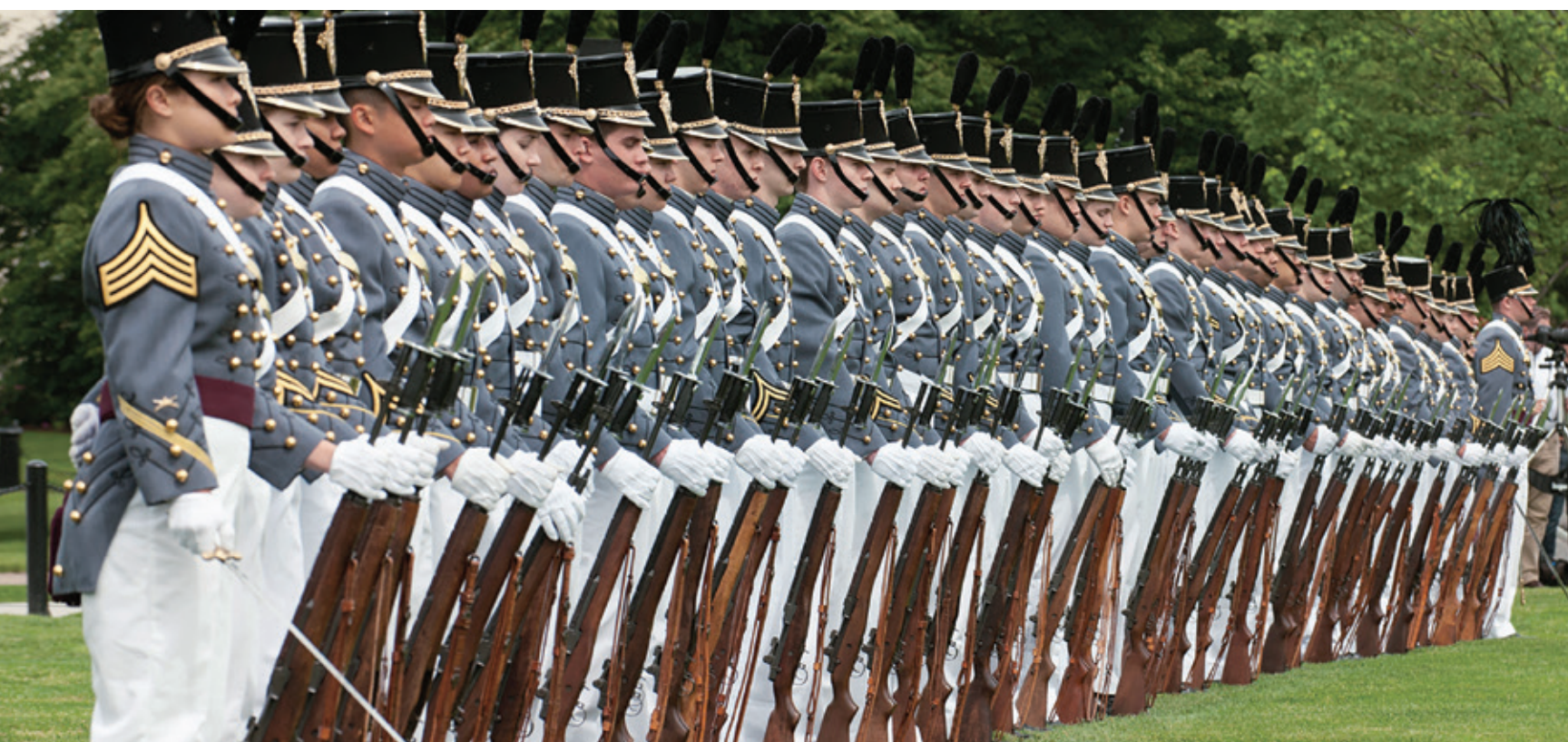


HONORING THE PAST, PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

The Long Gray Line Fund supports WPAOG programs and services, including this magazine, that keep all hearts in gray connected to the Academy, the Corps of Cadets, and each other. With your help, we can achieve our vision for the Long Gray Line to be the most highly connected alumni body in the world.

Grip Hands with fellow graduates and friends and support the **Long Gray Line** today.

For more information, visit us online or call: WestPointAOG.org/StrengthenTheLGL 845.446.1657





Flat Cullum was here!



150 YEARS



USMA '85, '97, SECDEF '86, '93, '66



A-2 Spartans, USMA 1988

Flat Cullum Shares 150th Celebrations Around the World!

George W. Cullum (1833) left an indelible legacy to West Point, the Association of Graduates, and the Long Gray Line. Throughout 2019, we have asked graduates, cadets, and friends of West Point to help us celebrate his legacy by including "Flat Cullum" in photos of their events and travels. Cullum's adventures can be found and shared on social media using #FlatCullum and #WPAOG150. In this issue of *West Point* magazine, we're featuring some of our favorite Cullum moments, from Kazakhstan to Kentucky, from Machu Picchu to Mount Rushmore, from Cuba to China, and at reunions, tailgates, weddings and parties. Even our oldest living graduate, MG (R) Neil Van Sickle '38*, the newly confirmed Secretary of Defense, Dr. Mark Esper '86, and NASA Astronaut Dr. Drew Morgan '98 joined in the spirit.

Thank you to the Long Gray Line for the more than 350 Flat Cullum photos you have shared with us so far! We love how you have shared your West Point pride and spirit!

View highlights of Flat Cullum photos we've received online at bit.ly/flatcullum and view a map of Flat Cullum's travels at bit.ly/flatcullummap. ★

*As this issue of *West Point* magazine went to press, MG (R) Van Sickle passed away on September 29, 2019. He will be greatly missed. *Be Thou At Peace.*



USMA 1938—Oldest Living Grad*



USMA 1993



USMA Sprint Football



Photos: Submitted





USMA 1967 & 2023



USMA 1965



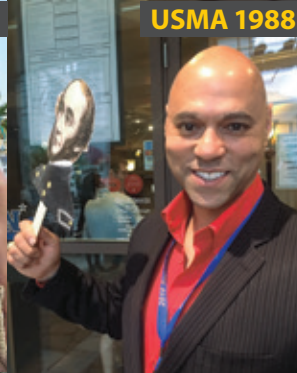
USMA 1968-Italy



USMA 2020 Parents- Berlin



USMA '84, '80, '86-Florida



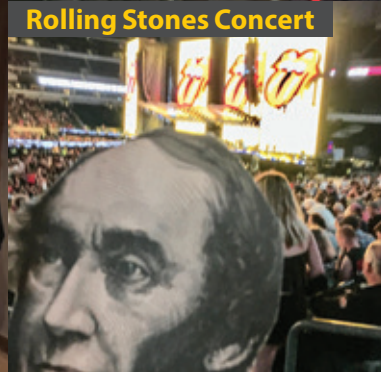
USMA 1988



USMA 1999 & 2002



USMA 1966-Shiloh Battlefield



Rolling Stones Concert



USMA 1961-Normandy



USMA 1983



USMA 2006-Spouse



WP Parents Club-Central Illinois



WP Parents Club-Maryland & DC

USMA 1995



WPS Northern California



USMA 1972 & 2019



Naples, Italy



USMA 1998 & 1990

USMA 2021 Parents-Sweden



USMA 1998 & 1999



USMA '96, '86, '84, '90, ex-'12



USMA 1973 & 1985



USMA 1983



USMA 1987

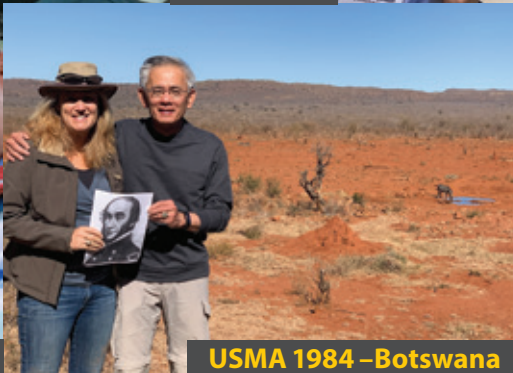
USMA 2002-Arizona



USMA 1981



USMA 1976-The Amazon



USMA 1984-Botswana



USMA 1969-Victoria Falls



USMA 2003 & 2009



USMA 1990-Honduras



Photos: Submitted



Be Thou at Peace, Henry O. Flipper

Gripping Hands from the Shadows

By Kim McDermott '87, WPAOG staff

In 1978, the remains of Henry O. Flipper, Class of 1877, were brought from Atlanta to his hometown of Thomasville, Georgia. (He was originally buried in Atlanta, where he had lived out his retirement years.) That same year, David Rich '78 graduated from West Point. This is the story of how the two—who graduated more than a century apart—developed a personal relationship. Over time, over divides, and literally, over blood, sweat and tears.

Above: A cemetery in his hometown of Thomasville, GA is named for West Point's first black graduate, Henry O. Flipper, Class of 1877.

Rich doesn't exactly remember the how he learned that Flipper was buried nearby, nor can he put his finger on why he decided to visit the grave, but he describes it as a "recurring compulsion." He says, "It hit me hard, but completely out of the blue" after relocating to Tallahassee, Florida's capital city (about 35 miles south of Thomasville) and hearing that Henry Flipper was buried there. After first having the thought, Rich said he'd put it aside for a week, a month, or more. But the thought always returned and urged him to visit.

I'd like to meet you, Dave. Stop by sometime.

Finally, on a weekend morning in March of 2004, Rich took what would turn out to be the first of many trips to Thomasville "to find a West Point brother and pay my respects." With no real idea where he was going, he eventually found the old Magnolia Cemetery which occupies a city block. The cemetery and gravesite were in complete disrepair, and there were abundant signs that it had been "unloved and unattended" for a very long time.

I am here, Dave.

Walking the cemetery, Rich found what he was looking for. Pushing back overgrown shrubs, he found a low wall enclosing the Flipper graves. Flipper is buried with his parents, his mother centered between her husband and her son. Rich observed that the concrete grave covers were sunk unevenly into the soil. Sticks and leaves formed piles where the winds had last pushed them. The gravel ground cover was mostly gone, leaving bare dirt around all three graves. Adding insult to injury, the large historical marker "honoring" Flipper outside the enclosure was so covered with lichen that it was nearly impossible to read.

Dave, have they forgotten me?

Rich drove home—to get hand tools, jugs of water, scrub brushes and cleansers — and started another 70-mile round trip to Thomasville. He spent a couple of hours that day doing what he could. "In retrospect," he says, "it wasn't that much...but it was a beginning." As he rested on that low wall (made of tan brick, so dirty it appeared black) and wiped away tears, Rich engaged in a silent dialogue with Flipper:

I promise I will be back, Henry. I'll keep coming back and we'll get this right.

He felt he could hear a whispering back on the breeze—over and over—that the place was not fitting, not proper, not just. He determined at that moment to do something but had no idea what that even meant. A line from the Cadet Prayer came to mind, the one asking for the grace to "always choose the harder right instead of the easier wrong."

Thank you, Dave. I know you feel a DUTY to restore my HONOR and remind our COUNTRY that I did my best.

Until 2009, Rich visited every four to six weeks, alone, continuing as best as possible, doing what he could. Relatively small changes—bushes trimmed even with the inner wall, Henry's historical marker cleaned, that filthy wall and the graves scrubbed, debris removed from the enclosure, and what remained of the gravel ground cover raked. Improvement was "painfully slow but discernible." Rich says, "The wonderful talks continued, Henry and me, and our friendship grew."

I really appreciate your efforts, Dave. Let's inspire some others to help.

In 2009, in the West Point Society of Tallahassee (WPST) monthly newsletter, Rich recapped his efforts and proposed a



A West Point Society of Tallahassee flag (right) and a West Point drape at Flipper's grave during the 2015 renaming of the Magnolia Cemetery to Lt. Henry O. Flipper Historic Cemetery.

community project to speed up the improvements. Volunteers stepped up, and that first trip became an annual service project each May, "to work, to connect, to honor." He said the group bonded over the hard work, and even had fun, but never once forgot the solemnity of the site, never left without leaving behind a memorial tribute, saying a prayer, playing "Taps," and rendering military honors. In between the annual team visits, he continued his monthly solo trips to maintain progress. He enjoyed his visits with Flipper.

I still don't know why I'm here, Henry, but I feel such a sense of purpose. You can see there's more to be done, and I've also found out that your grave marker is incorrect—we'll work on that.

In 2012, Tom Phillips, a Flipper historian from Mississippi, contacted Rich and told him to look closely at the plaque on Flipper's grave. The plaque said Flipper was a member of the 10th Oklahoma Cavalry—not the 10th United States Cavalry, the famed Buffalo Soldiers. This was a historically significant error, one in need of correction. Rich turned to the city of Thomasville for help to correct the plaque. He felt hindered by bureaucracy and was frustrated by one delay or unmet deadline after another.

Hang in there, Dave. Things take time, but always work out.

Rich and other volunteers persisted in their work and the City of Thomasville recognized the ongoing efforts. In 2015, the cemetery was renamed the Lt. Henry O. Flipper Historic Cemetery at an event where Rich met Kha McDonald, a city official who would become his biggest ally. Since 2007, she had been leading a project to restore Thomasville's historic cemeteries, and was interested to



Above, left: Dave Rich '78 and GEN(R) Lloyd J. Austin III '75 at the 2017 rededication of the Lt. Henry O. Flipper Historic Cemetery. **Above, right:** Dave Rich '78 holding Flipper's original grave marker which incorrectly identified Flipper's service with the 10th Oklahoma Cavalry. **Below, right:** Thomasville city official Kha McDonald, as the lead for restoring Thomasville's historic cemeteries, was instrumental in the restoration of the Flipper family gravesite.

hear about Rich's efforts through the years. At the end of their conversation, McDonald had one simple question, "What do you need from Thomasville, David?"

See, Dave? Didn't I say that change would come?

Rich's mind raced. There was so much to be done! Over time, McDonald came through on it all. New seed gravel for ground cover? She had it delivered. Rich told her about the problematic plaque. She had it produced locally. New headstones? Leveling the area? New granite grave caps? Done, done and done. Rich says, "Hand-in-hand we worked—Thomasville muscle, WPST leadership, and funding from both."

Henry, you were right! We're almost there.

Everything culminated on March 17, 2017 with a rededication of the cemetery and public unveiling of the new plaque reflecting the correct Cavalry assignment. Rich feels "it is now a final, honorable resting place suitable for our first black graduate." General Lloyd J. Austin III '75, another Thomasville native, and Rich were both invited to speak at the ceremony. Citing the inspiration of Flipper's

legacy on his own service, Austin said, "We cannot forget our history." Rich concluded his remarks by reminding the audience that the cooperative project had given the community, indeed America, a place that was finally fitting and honorable.

We did it, Henry!

McDonald is confident that Thomasville will not forget its historic cemeteries again and adds, "David and I will always have a very watchful eye on the cemetery no matter where we are!" She found the entire process to restore the Flipper grave, and inspire interest in what his legacy means to Thomasville, to be extremely gratifying.

You represented the best of Thomasville, Henry. Being a part of this is a career highlight I will hold close to my heart always.

Since 2017, Rich makes the round trip at least once a quarter to visit Flipper, often accompanied by his wife Jennifer. He does a bit of quality control maintenance and identifies any tasks beyond his ability to McDonald. He also tries to visit before major holidays to leave flowers. Each visit still ends with the playing of "Taps" and rendering honors. He hears Flipper in a gentle breeze as he works or rests quietly on the wall.

You occupy a place in my heart, Henry. I can't fully explain it but I suppose that's okay.

Rich and McDonald extend credit to WPST, the City of Thomasville staff, the Jack Hadley Black History Museum, the Thomasville History Center, and the greater Thomasville community—all partners in the endeavor. Rich believes that Flipper rests easy these days, certain that his resting place is now a proper one. He considers Flipper his true brother—in every manner but blood—and in gripping hands, they have built a relationship that transcends time, circumstance, and race.

Be thou at peace, Henry. ★



Dave Rich '78 working on the Flipper family gravesite in the early days of the cleanup project. Note the stained brick wall in background.



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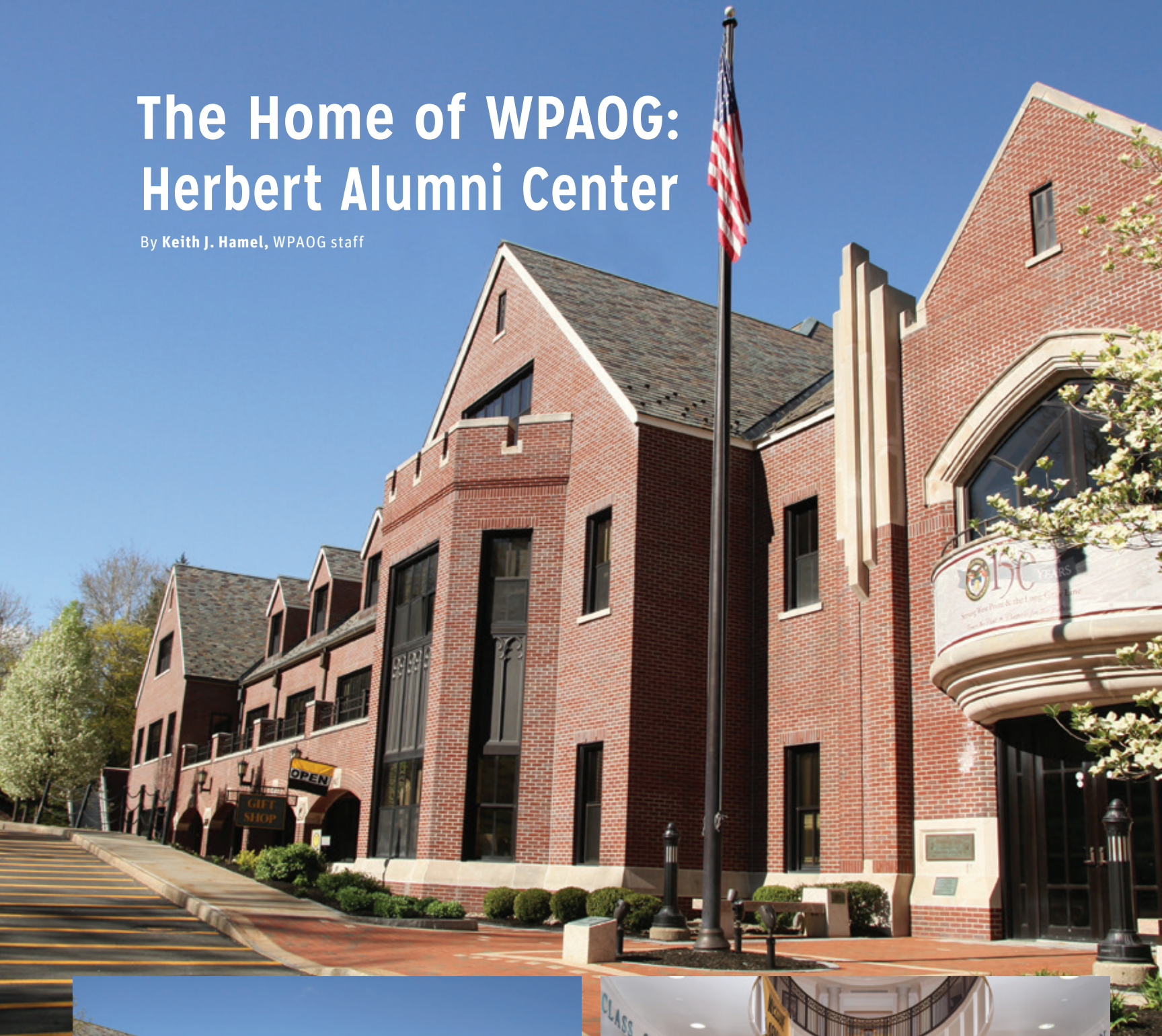
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The Home of WPAOG: Herbert Alumni Center

By Keith J. Hamel, WPAOG staff



Top and above: Front entrance of Herbert Alumni Center with Class of 1959 flagpole and Gift Shop entrance. **Above right:** Class of 1964 Reception Hall.

In 1931, William H. Donaldson Jr. '17AUG, then Secretary of the Association of Graduates of the United States Military Academy, wrote in the Annual Report that, "recently," AOG's office moved from the Administration Building to Cullum Hall, "where the Superintendent has provided two comfortable commodious rooms." As the Association grew and took on more and more employees, AOG's two rooms of office space expanded to encompass the bottom two floors of Cullum Hall, and while they might have been spacious, they became less and less satisfactory over the course of five decades. "It was old, dark, and loud," says one of four current WPAOG employees who have been with the Association since the Cullum Hall era. "We regularly had 'friends' on our desks that scattered when we turned the lights on in the morning," said another. "What's more, if it rained, the moisture came through the tiles in the ceiling, prompting us to put buckets everywhere—even in the President's Office!" said a third. One of those Presidents, Colonel Robert Lamb Jr. '46 (Retired), in his report on AOG's activities from 1970-1990, noted that the lower floors of Cullum Hall also still served as transient billets for returning graduates. "One old grad, who seemed to live there by the month, became an object of considerable interest to AOG employees as he frequently neglected to don his bathrobe over his underwear while moving from his room to the bathroom at the end of the hall," wrote Lamb.

In May 1982, recognizing that the working conditions of Cullum Hall were no longer viable, AOG's Executive Committee proposed the establishment of an "AOG Building Fund," which was subsequently approved by the Board of Trustees and funded with an allocation of \$20,000 from AOG's annual budget. A report in the 1982 September issue of *ASSEMBLY* on the establishment of this fund commented, "The space that is available in the almost 100-year-old building is sorely in need of major renovation and rehabilitation if the Association is to continue to use the space for its headquarters." But, in addition to "renovation and modification," the Executive Committee also posed two alternatives to solve the Cullum Hall quandary: moving AOG's headquarters to an already established site (e.g. a building on the recently acquired Ladycliff campus) or building a new facility for AOG offices.

Regarding a newly constructed facility, in 1983 Lieutenant General Willard Scott Jr. '48, West Point's 52nd Superintendent, reported to the AOG Board of Trustees on the establishment of a committee to study the feasibility of building an "alumni house" in the eastern vicinity of Trophy Point (near the site of the old Hotel). Later, this idea morphed into a combined museum/AOG headquarters, to be built using assets from AOG's Olmsted Fund. Scott ultimately rejected the idea of building on Trophy Point in 1985, but the proposed 20,000 square-foot "AOG-Museum Building" (at an estimated cost of \$3.2 million) was given eight other site options, including one between Cullum Hall and the Officers Club. The "Cullum Annex/Alumni Plaza Project," as it was called, gained traction over the next few years; a design contract with the architectural firm of Beyer Blinder Belle even came close to being signed. However, as highlighted in the notes for the February 1990 Executive Committee meeting, "Noting a report of the sharply increased projected cost of constructing the Cullum Hall/Officers Club Annex and the probability of receiving a sizeable gift restricted for the construction of a new alumni building, the Executive Committee decided to cancel further design of the Annex (10 percent completed) and to accept the building gift for an Association of Graduates building to be located other than in the Cullum Hall/Officers Club site."

The "sizeable gift" came from Brigadier General James K. Herbert '30 (Retired). Successful in banking and large-scale farming after retiring from the Army in 1946, Herbert was a generous donor to West Point. He gave approximately \$700,000 for the endowment of the West Point AOG Preparatory Scholarship Program, he purchased four stained glass windows for the Catholic Chapel of the Most Holy Trinity at West Point, and in late 1989, before undergoing brain surgery, he revised his will to include a \$3 million gift to AOG for a building to be named after him. Herbert died on January 22, 1990, a few days after his surgery, and with his lead gift, AOG set off to build its long-desired alumni home.

In October 1990, Frank A. Camm '43JAN, Chairman of the Alumni Center Committee, announced to the Board of Trustees that the new building would be erected on the site of the old Smith Rink, the home of Army's Hockey Team until Tate Rink opened in



Class of 1946 Great Hall.



WPAOG Gift Shop in Herbert Alumni Center.

1985. The Board then approved \$750,000 for design costs. Early on, AOG engaged the New York District of the Corps of Engineers to manage the project; however, the Army extended a 50-year lease (renewable), so the new building on 1.54 acres of land would be privately owned by AOG. On March 12, 1991, the Corps (with representatives from AOG, led by Brigadier General Elliot Cutler Jr. '42 [Retired], and the USMA Engineer) selected the architectural firm of Quinlivan, Pierik, and Krause (QP&K) to create floor plans for the 25,000-plus square-foot building. At the May 1991 Board Meeting, Camm reported that design plans were expected in nine months and that "construction should commence in the summer of 1992." QP&K actually submitted three designs in mid-June: a long and narrow building with reception and work spaces at opposite ends, a field house design topped by a clerestory, and a large structure with underground parking and with a gift shop and reception hall in semi-detached wings. The Board approved the first option, but with modifications (it vetoed a proposed porte-cochere and opted for a large chimney with stone Academy crest instead of a crenellated tower), and a study revealed that the new building would be 45 percent office space and 55 percent alumni-related space.

As the calendar turned to 1992, AOG began a \$6 million fund-raising campaign for what was now being called "Herbert Alumni Center" (Colonel Robert Strati '55 [Retired], AOG Vice President of Development, had actually been contacting class presidents about the funding needs and requirements for the new building months earlier). By September 1992, AOG reported that four classes (1924, 1945, 1946, and 1964) had contributed or pledged more than \$2 million toward the project and that several graduates decided to sponsor selected features in the building. In February 1993, AOG announced its "Alumni Center Paver Program," for which graduates and friends of West Point could purchase one of three levels of bricks or pavers that could be inscribed with names and "placed in the outdoor area surrounding Herbert Hall."

In February 1993, AOG awarded the building contract to Suffolk Construction Company of Boston and a "Notice to Proceed" was given in March, with a prospective completion date of December 6, 1994. Suffolk broke ground for the project on April 8, 1993. In a ceremony featuring General Edward "Shy" Meyer '51 (Retired), Chairman of the Association, Colonel Seth Hudgins '64 (Retired), AOG President, Camm, and several major donors, the cornerstone

of Herbert Hall was laid on October 15, 1993. By spring 1994, over half of the concrete, stone and metalwork had been completed and one third of the electrical, mechanical and plumbing was done. As more and more classes and donors learned about the project, proposals for embellishments began to come in (an Embellishment Committee chaired by Brigadier General Peter Stromberg '59 [Retired] oversaw changes to the lower reception hall, the fountain, and exterior chimney crest). In the end, more than 2,000 "Generous contributions by graduates and friends of the United States Military Academy paid for the construction and furnishing of this building" (as quoted from a plaque just outside Herbert Hall's front entrance).

On February 25, 1995, Herbert Hall officially opened its doors with a special ceremony involving USMA staff, alumni, cadets, and distinguished guests; and on March 1 the AOG staff moved out of Cullum Hall and into their new offices. "It was clean, fresh, and it had windows!" said one of the four current AOG employees who made the move. Perhaps most appreciated by AOG employees, with more than 40 spots available, Herbert Hall now had ample parking. "Parking at Cullum Hall was always such a struggle," said another employee.

During its first several weeks of operation, Herbert Hall hosted 19 social events, including wedding receptions for several graduates of the classes of 1994 and 1995, and it had future reservations on its book extending out for many months. One of its early social events was a dedication ceremony on June 23, 1995 honoring the donors who had funded the construction of Herbert Hall and endowed its maintenance. According to the Final Report of the Alumni Center Committee, submitted on May 1, 1997, "The stunning beauty of Hebert Hall has prompted questions about how many tax dollars have gone into [its construction]," presumably asked by many earlier visitors to the building. And, as Committee Chairman Camm told the donors at the 1995 dedication ceremony, "We are proud to reply that there is not a single federal dollar in Herbert Hall." Calling it a "superb project," Camm later said in his final report, "The impressive and beautiful Herbert Hall will be a gathering place for West Point alumni for generations to come." ★

In 2019, over 170 events were booked in the Great Hall. For information on renting the Alumni Center for your special event, contact great-hall@wpaog.org or phone 845.446.1603.



Above, left to right: Hudgins '64, York, Graves '61, Mullane '52, Camm '43JAN, Roy Greenhalgh (Vice President, Suffolk Construction) and Cutler '42, at Herbert Alumni Center groundbreaking in April 1993.



Superintendent Graves '61 and Chairman Meyer '51 after unveiling the cornerstone of Herbert Alumni Center.



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Meet the 78th Commandant of Cadets

BRIGADIER GENERAL CURTIS BUZZARD '92

By Kim McDermott '87, WPAOG staff

On June 28, Colonel Curtis A. Buzzard '92 assumed command of the United States Corps of Cadets as USMA's 78th Commandant, having most recently served as the Deputy Commander for Operations for the 7th Infantry Division. West Point magazine caught up with him and his wife Teri at the Commandant's Quarters in mid-August. On September 26, the U.S. Senate confirmed his promotion to the rank of Brigadier General.

Brigadier General Curtis Buzzard '92 had not been assigned at West Point in his 27-year career, so he says when he found out he would return as the Commandant, "I was very excited and very humbled." Buzzard has a deep appreciation for the USMA mission to produce leaders of character who are prepared to lead in the crucible of ground combat. "As you look at where our Army's going," he says, "our officers have to be disciplined and they have to be fit. They have to have mastered foundational military competencies, have a warrior ethos, and be adaptable." They also must be great teammates and know how to build *esprit de corps*. Bottom line, they must be leaders of character.

Buzzard got an immediate sense of how the Academy has adjusted from an attrition model of the past to today's developmental model, and says, "It's more about being a mentor than it is about a rite of passage. I think [cadets] have adapted and it's fulfilling to see it in action." He is also very impressed with how the cadet leadership has taken ownership of a lot of the standards and discipline issues.



Then-COL Curtis Buzzard '92 addresses the Class of 2020 at Ring Weekend in August 2019.

From his perspective, one of the biggest challenges he'll face is providing operational context and explaining the "why" to cadets. He says, "Sometimes people complain that this younger generation asks 'why.'" "This is nothing new," Buzzard says, referencing *Crusade in Europe*, in which General Dwight D. Eisenhower (1915) described how the American soldier then also wanted and needed to know why. Eisenhower cited General von Steuben who, during the American Revolution, wrote to a friend in Europe, "You tell a soldier to do this, and he does it; and [in] America it is necessary also to tell him why he does it." To facilitate both context and the "why," Buzzard plans to leverage the junior officers and NCOs in USCC and also bring in leaders from the operational force—across all echelons—to share their experiences with cadets and reinforce the importance of their training.

Buzzard wants to emphasize what he calls "life skills." It is crucial that cadets develop good routines and habits such as time management, sleep, nutrition, and fitness. He wants to develop these skills in cadets because they'll need to demonstrate them as leaders to be most effective and also develop them in their soldiers. With respect to the importance of sleep to cognitive ability, he recalls the story of a former brigade commander and later four-star general who made an impression on him during a combat training center rotation by saying, "I need to get at least five hours of sleep a night or I'm going to make bad decisions that will get soldiers killed in combat."

Finally, Buzzard is also focused on what the Academy refers to as "the second graduating class," which is the rotating faculty, both officers and non-commissioned officers. "I need to spend time with them and ensure our leader development helps prepare them for future jobs that they're going to have." When the Superintendent said, "Curtis' rucksack just got a little heavier," at the assumption of command Buzzard interprets that as the 4,400 cadets and the rotating faculty that he now leads.

When he was notified of the assignment, Buzzard reached out to some previous Commandants and other senior mentors for their insights on serving at West Point. From their combined input he found about five commonalities to inform his tenure. The first theme is presence, as this will be the only way to truly understand the pulse of the Corps. The second is about teamwork, particularly with the Dean and the Athletic Director as they collectively must support the Superintendent. Their efforts must first and foremost be about achieving the Superintendent's vision. Third is maintaining standards and discipline—because that is the "cornerstone of character." He says the best units, best leaders, and best teams are disciplined. Fourth is akin to the context issue—he'll have to find ways to teach the cadets to view everything through an Army lens and explain the "why."



Then-COL Curtis Buzzard '92 and wife Teri at their new home—the Commandant's Quarters at West Point in August 2019.

The final common piece of advice? Have fun. “What an awesome place to serve. What a great group of young people to be behind—and just live off their energy, intelligence and all the great things these young cadets bring,” Teri Buzzard adds that one piece of advice from Betsy Gilland '90 (the previous Commandant's wife) was, “Set boundaries. Find what you're passionate about and focus on that.” She found that very helpful, adding, “It is easy to feel overwhelmed and want to be involved with everything.”

Buzzard also appreciates that insight. “Coming from Joint Base Lewis McChord—as the Deputy Commander for Operations at 7th ID—I had less of a social role and commitment to do those things. But here, you want to. These cadets are so incredible. They invite you to everything, and you want to be part of everything. There's a tremendous pace here.”

Noting their recent transition to empty-nester status, Teri Buzzard is most excited to have the chance to continue “mothering.” “Bringing cadets into the house and giving them a home away from home is something that really means a lot to me,” she says. Her focus will be making sure they know that they are welcome. Growing up in a military family (including a brother who went to West Point) and then serving herself in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps, she understands the need for military members to create their own unique families.


We asked the Commandant who he would invite if he could have dinner with anyone in the Long Gray Line. He said, “This is a really hard question because there are so many tremendous graduates.” The first two that came to mind were General Grant (1843) and General Gavin (1929) for, among other things, their extraordinary leadership. But he says, “The guy I really think would be neat to have dinner with is a gentleman named Major General Fox Conner, Class of 1898 (shown at right). He's renowned as the mentor for Marshall, Eisenhower (1915) and Patton (1909). I'd love to talk to him about how he identified talent, how he mentored these three to become the leaders they became. He also had tremendous foresight. He largely anticipated some of the command challenges that would occur in World War II, the enormity of the missions. He saw the dark cloud coming and really had an appreciation for the importance of commanding allied forces and mentored these officers in that regard. He had a tremendous impact on three future phenomenal leaders of the U.S. Army.”



The Buzzards' two youngest daughters both attend the U.S. Naval Academy. (The third, and oldest, daughter is currently pursuing a doctorate in physical therapy and is engaged to a 2018 USMA graduate.) While they often have fun with it, they mainly downplay the Army-Navy family dynamic. Buzzard says, “What I'm most proud of is the fact that they want to serve and that they want to do it their own way. They could have come into the Army, something they were familiar with to some degree, but they decided to pursue a life of selfless service in a different venue and we're enormously proud of them.”

What does Buzzard expect his legacy to be? “I just hope to make us a little bit better across my areas of responsibility: character, military and physical development. I definitely need to have some humility in any legacy because [USMA's] been doing a pretty extraordinary job of this for 217 years. I've been fortunate to be a ‘consumer’ of our graduates out in the operational forces as a commander at multiple levels, and have been extraordinarily impressed with what we're producing.”

He says, “Hopefully the cadets internalize the outcomes that we're seeking—to live honorably, lead honorably and really demonstrate excellence.” Buzzard also wants the cadets to remember him as a leader who set the example, prepared them to be leaders of character, and who truly cared about them. He says, “I hope once they're out in the Army, they'll look back and appreciate the experience they had here.” ★



“Don’t wish it were easier.
Wish you were better.”

– Jim Rohn





What did you do this summer? Carreen down a 150-foot cable slide and plunge into water? Rappel out of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter? Fire 105mm rounds from a M119A3 howitzer? No? These were some of the everyday activities occurring around West Point this past summer.

Rising firsties and some rising cows completed Cadet Leader Development Training (CLDT), an intensive three-week course focused on warrior skills and field leadership. During CLDT, cadets participated in a combined-arms live-fire exercise with Short Range Air Defense (SHORAD) soldiers from the 2-44th Air Defense Artillery Battalion, 108th ADA Brigade at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, learning how the employment of the Avenger, an Air Defense weapon system, creates opportunities of air superiority and defends maneuver forces as they engage enemy on the battlefield. While hunkered down in bunkers of West Point's Range 13, CLDT cadets observed the maneuver forces of the 1-28th Infantry conducting call-for-fire with two AH-64 Apaches flying overhead and listened to the thunder of artillery and mortar rounds adjusting fire competing with the blasting of the Avenger guns during the exercise.

Summer Training | 2019





Summer Training | 2019

Rising yearlings—joined by ROTC cadets, Navy midshipmen, and international cadets from five countries—executed Cadet Field Training (CFT), a four-week program that reinforced individual tasks such as land navigation, rifle marksmanship, and call-for-fire; developed toughness with the slide for life, a 12-mile foot march, and a five-mile Recondo run; and introduced the future officers to combat leadership with a 96-hour field problem, culminating in a squad maneuver live-fire exercise.

Finally, the new cadets of the Class of 2023 slayed the “Beast,” Cadet Basic Training, learning basic soldiering skills (marksmanship, combat casualty care, land navigation) and transforming over the course of six weeks from civilians to cadets. They were led by hundreds of cadets from the classes of 2020 and 2021, who served as squad leaders, platoon leaders, and company personnel as part of their summer detail graduation requirement.

Outside of West Point’s three major training events, nearly 800 cadets this summer graduated from various military schools, including the 101st Airborne Division’s Air Assault School, Fort Benning’s Airborne School, Sapper School, Combat Diver, Military Free Fall, and Survival Resistance Evasion and Escape (SERE), as well as a handful of international schools such as the Georgian and Brazilian Mountain Schools and the International Space Operations Training Center in Germany. In addition to training with the regular Army, 39 West Point cadets integrated with their ROTC peers at Advanced Camp, Fort Knox, Kentucky. Lastly, a select group of rising firsties and cows (38 cadets total) conducted three weeks of training with the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, training in both England and Germany and partnering with Sandhurst cadets during platoon and company situational and live-fire training exercises. ★

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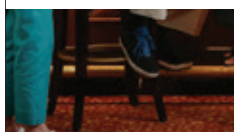
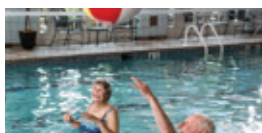
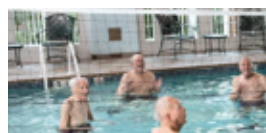
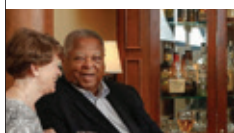
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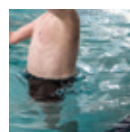
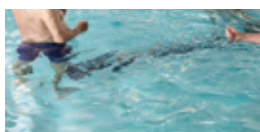
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WPAOG's Publications & Communications:



Evolving to Better Serve West Point and its Graduates

By Keith J. Hamel and Kim McDermott '87

In his March 1993 President's letter in *ASSEMBLY*, Denis Mullane '52 reported on some areas of focus under consideration by the AOG Strategic Planning Committee. One of those was "How to maintain and enhance communications..." Two issues later, Edward "Shy" Meyer '51, in his first letter after being elected Chairman, wrote, "We [AOG] must communicate better—not only by improving our communication means but also by tailoring the information we disseminate to the appropriate means." Coincidentally, just around this time, the world was undergoing a technological communications revolution. On April 22, 1993, version 1.0 of Mosaic, the first web browser to gain widespread use, was released, fueling the internet boom of the 1990s. Eight days later, the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) put world wide web software, a basic server and library code in the public domain, granting permission "for anyone to use, duplicate, modify and redistribute it," also laying the groundwork for huge growth in internet use.

At that time, in 1993, communication at AOG meant two things (outside of direct mailings): *ASSEMBLY* magazine, which had turned 50 years old in 1992, and the *Register of Graduates*, which can trace its lineage to the *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, NY* that George Cullum, Class of 1833, started in 1868. If the Association was going to make communications a priority in the new age of the internet and world wide web, it was going to need new material and new communications platforms.

One of AOG's earliest attempts to capitalize on the internet was to create an electronic bulletin board service (EBBS) in the fall of 1993. Run by the Communications arm of the Alumni Support Program, this service was available to all societies, classes, and individual graduates at no cost. One of the first uses of this service involved listing job openings and other news of interest to graduates transitioning from the military to the civilian sector. It also provided grads the opportunity to network with other grads via "electronic mail," taking AOG's original fraternal mission online. In its first year of existence, the EBBS grew at a rate of 10 new users per week. Also, in 1993, AOG's Directorate of Publications converted to computerized desktop publishing and created a new print newsletter for West Point Societies in 1993. Called First Call (which is still going out to grads today), this newsletter provided "topical or perishable information about West Point, the AOG, and related activities to societies and classes." Because it was event driven and not dictated by calendar deadlines, the four-page First Call was published "when news happens" (approximately 10-12 times per year). Thanks to these advances in its communication channels, AOG was able to disseminate timely information to societies, classes, and approximately 5,000 individual graduates during 1994.

In May 1995, Meyer asked Mullane to start a Communications Advisory Committee and advise the Board of Trustees on all matters pertaining to communications between the Association and its individual and organizational constituencies. A year later, that committee recommended to the Board that AOG should activate an Information Systems Department (ISD), which it did on July 1, 1996, naming Thomas Mulyca '73, then Director of Communications for Alumni Support, as its first Vice President. Months earlier, Mulyca had successfully launched AOG's first website, which provided information to approximately 1,500 visitors

a week in its first year. In addition to running and supporting the website, ISD was responsible for AOG's database. ISD worked diligently to maintain an accurate database, which it then shared appropriately with societies, classes, and other related organizations so that they could communicate electronically with graduates.

Content for the nascent website came from both existing and emerging sources. First Call started publishing electronically in January 1995, reaching 32,000 readers each month by 2004, and *ASSEMBLY* was posted online starting with its March/April 1997 issue. New material included Perspectives, "an AOG update for USMA class leaders" (which was prepared by AOG's Development Program and focused on fundraising); Front & Center, "the newsletter for class leaders" (which was prepared by AOG's Class Support Program and Publications Staff and contained announcements and previews to upcoming *ASSEMBLY* articles);

Gray Matter, a weekly newsletter that offered accounts of both historical and contemporary happenings at West Point (which was first written by Jackie (Kalata) Whiteside '93 and then several others before being taken over by "J. Phoenix," aka Julian Olejniczak '61, AOG Vice President for Publications); and Herbert On Sports, a summary of Army sports activities (prepared by Morris J. Herbert '50, a longtime AOG staff member and later consultant). The website also featured occasional "homepage" stories concerning timely AOG news events, such as the fall 1997 story on the presentation of the Thayer Award to Walter Cronkite, or announcements, such as the 2005 passing of General William Westmoreland '36.

On September 29, 2007, AOG launched a new, state-of-the-art, feature-rich website, beginning a new era for the Association's communication and publication efforts. In the September/October 2007 issue of *ASSEMBLY*, AOG promoted its new website saying it was "more images, less text," "more dynamic and fresh," and "more West Point and more grads." The new website combined then-cutting edge software with AOG's database to create a secure platform for real time information access and updates, allowing AOG to be more efficient. It also included an enhanced Academy



and alumni news feature (still available today as “Cadet News” and “Grad News”) with content directly supplied by USMA and graduates. WPAOG’s current website, now in its fourth iteration, remains a busy connection and information hub for the Long Gray Line. The pages with the most visits have consistently been “Be Thou at Peace,” “Find a Grad,” “Classes/Class Notes”, “Grad News,” and “Update My Profile.”

Also, around this time, AOG began to seriously consider alternatives to its flagship publication, *ASSEMBLY* magazine, which, like many print publications, was experiencing a decline in subscription rates, especially among younger classes. Arguably, the most significant change to the publication, which occurred in 2004, involved removing the Memorial Articles to a supplement to the magazine. *TAPS*, the official memorial publication of the Long Gray Line, debuted with the January/February 2004 issue of *ASSEMBLY*.

By 2009, WPAOG CEO Robert McClure ’76 and his staff presented the concept of *West Point* magazine to the Board as way of “building pride and passion” among West Point graduates. Within a year, there was a fully formed plan for an entirely new publication, *West Point*, to replace *ASSEMBLY*. With a completely new look and editorial focus, *West Point* magazine would feature articles on cadets, programs, teams, and facility developments at the U.S. Military Academy.

West Point magazine launched in January 2011, with the mission to tell the West Point story and strengthen the grip of the Long Gray

Line. Concurrent with the launch of *West Point*, Class Notes (which accounted for one-third of *ASSEMBLY*) moved to an online format and could now be posted in “real time” with color photos and no word limit. According to the leadership at the time, “*West Point* magazine was embraced by the Long Gray Line because it kept them informed, and the Military Academy’s leadership, because it greatly assisted them in public outreach.”

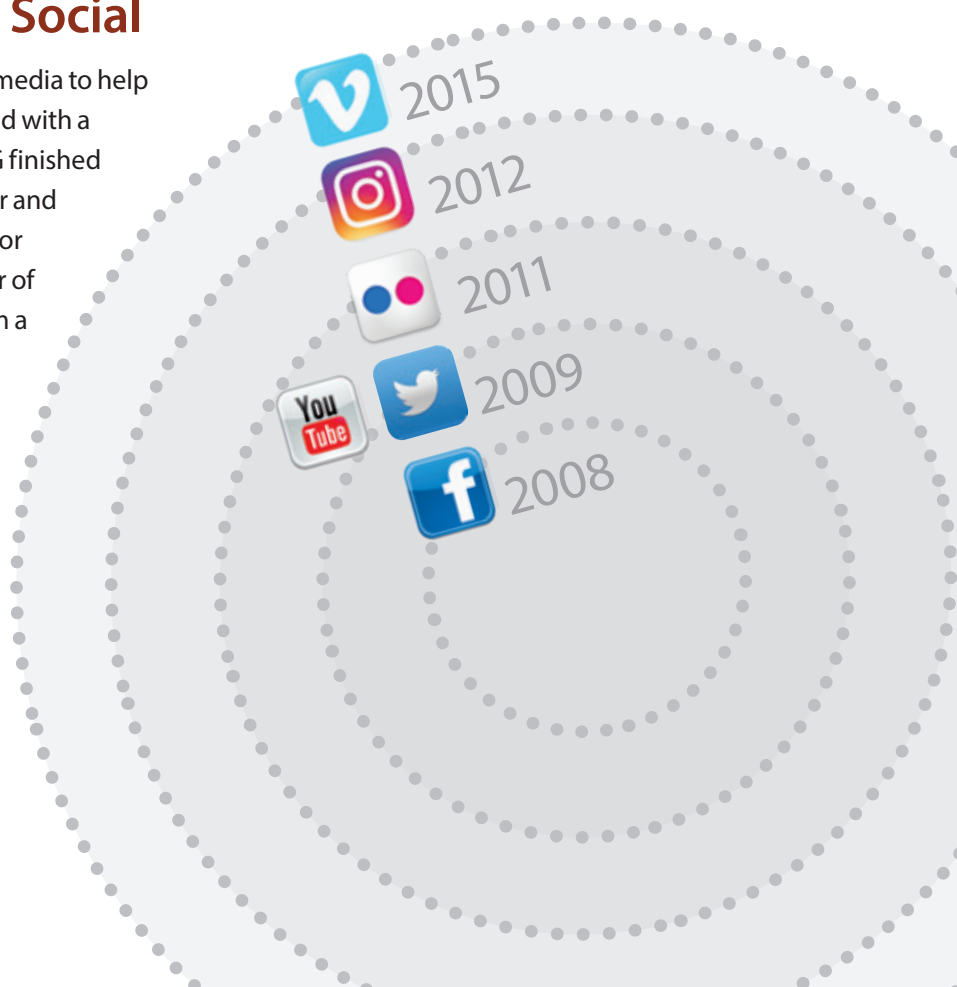
Those who had subscribed to *ASSEMBLY* continued to receive issues of that magazine until it ceased publication in July 2011, along with the final *TAPS* supplement. In 2012, archival Memorial Articles dating back to the first issue of *ASSEMBLY*, in 1942, were posted to a new online portal, “Be Thou At Peace,” on WPAOG’s website, and *TAPS* became a separate annual publication.

To date, 36 issues of *West Point* magazine have been published. Last year, WPAOG conducted a readership survey in which 91 percent of graduates responded that *West Point* magazine made them feel connected to West Point and 95 percent said that the magazine helps them understand cadet life, academics, military training, and the extra-curricular opportunities at today’s USMA.

A quarter century after reinventing its communication and publication efforts, WPAOG now has a full, comprehensive suite of fully integrated communications channels (website, email, social media, and print publications) that help keep the Long Gray Line connected and informed, and support the vision to make WPAOG the mostly highly connected alumni body in the world.★

The Long Gray Line Gets Social

WPAOG has found tremendous value in social media to help tell the West Point story. Entering this new world with a Facebook page in the summer of 2008, WPAOG finished that year with 850 “fans.” WPAOG joined Twitter and YouTube in 2009. In 2011, WPAOG joined Flickr for photo sharing, and agreed to manage a merger of two separate LinkedIn groups of alumni to form a single discussion group, now the West Point Association of Graduates LI Discussion Group with more than 17,000 members. WPAOG joined Instagram in 2012, and even experimented with Foursquare, Vine, and Pinterest for a short while. The most recent addition to the full suite of WPAOG social media was Vimeo in 2015. By mid-2019, WPAOG’s Facebook audience exceeded 48,800, @WPAOG Twitter followers numbered more than 15,000, and WPAOG’s Instagram page had grown to more than 7,200 followers. Won’t you join us?





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ARMY WEST POINT PISTOL On Target with Success

By **Kim McDermott '87**, WPAOG staff

In the late summer of 1993, a Daily Bulletin item caught the attention of Lieutenant Colonel Duston Saunders '72 (Retired) (then working at the West Point Association of Graduates). The Academy was seeking a volunteer coach for the Pistol Team. During an assignment at West Point in the 1980s, Saunders and his wife had sponsored four cadets from the Class of 1984 and found it to be a very rewarding experience. He hoped that coaching the Pistol Team would be equally so. He says, "I had no background in competitive shooting. Along with picking the brain of the outgoing coach, Jack McJunkin, I attended several NRA firearms instructor courses and coach certification courses."

The leadership at AOG supported Saunders' desire to coach, and he is now entering his 27th year. Prior to 1993, Army Pistol had been a Corps Squad, or varsity, sport. Budgetary cuts affecting the Academy at the time meant some things had to change, and downgrading the program to a club status was one of them. Despite the change, the team still competes against many of the same opponents each year. Primary competition includes: U.S. Naval Academy, U.S. Coast Guard Academy, The Citadel, Virginia Military Institute, Texas A&M, and Ohio State University.

Saunders recruits new team members during the annual Club Night held early in the academic year. He has 20 spots on the team, and, for the 2019-2020 season, he had the chance to pick up nine cadets. (He lost seven to graduation in 2019 and had two vacant spots.) Still, 60 to 80 cadets try out on any given year—so the competition to make it is tough. The club roster needs to be set and on file by Labor Day weekend, so the cuts are also quick—interested new shooters have to make a good first impression. The team is primarily men, but usually has four to five women on the roster each year. Many become successful competitors, even though they usually don't have previous experience.

Cadet Emily Schultz '20 is a perfect example. Schultz had never fired a weapon until she came to West Point and had no experience shooting at all, never mind shooting Olympic or Steel style of pistols. A neighbor, a competitive shooter for decades, happened to be a Range Safety for Collegiate Nationals at Fort Benning, Georgia and heard through the grapevine that West Point's team needed more female members. He reached out to her and invited her to go shooting in his barn. "From the very first shot I was hooked," she says.

The team is co-sponsored by the Department of Military Instruction (officially, it is considered a military club) and the Department of Physical Education (because it is technically a competitive club). While the bulk of training takes place at the

Tronsrue Indoor Marksmanship Center (a 2002 gift from George M. Tronsrue III, Class of 1978 and his wife, Cindy), the team also leverages training at the Tactical Defense Institute (TDI) in West Union, Ohio each year. The TDI offers three-day, two-night pistol and rifle training. There is a live fire stress-shoot which elevates both adrenaline levels and heart rate of the shooters. Performing well under those conditions bodes well for the more controlled Olympic-style shooting the team normally competes in.

While competing and winning at the intercollegiate level is important as cadets, competing and winning on the battlefield after graduation is much more important. TDI also gives Pistol Team members the combat marksmanship skills and tactics that are critical on today's battlefield. Whether a Team member branches Infantry or Quartermaster, Saunders wants them well prepared to defeat any enemy on any battlefield.

Competing in three to five matches per semester, the Army West Point Pistol Team typically makes it to Nationals in March. In fact, the team has been overall National Champions 12 times since Saunders has been coach: nine Open (men and women) National Championships, two Women's National Championships, and one Scholastic Action Shooting National Championship. This is a remarkable record, considering that for most of Army's opponents, Pistol is a varsity sport. This means they can try to recruit the best shooters they can find. One of Army's strongest rivals is the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, which has the added advantages of not requiring a congressional appointment, and head coach Richard N. Hawkins '76—a West Point graduate!

Last year, Saunders' team produced five All-Americans. (This accolade averages the scores of all matches shot.) West Point has historically made the Top 10 (overall champions are determined by aggregate score) in all shooting categories. Men have competed in three categories: Free, Standard, and Air. Women shoot in Air and Sport categories. Free Pistol was recently dropped for men, though, as it will no longer be a form of competition in the Olympics. In its place, teams are now adding Sport Pistol.

Saunders assigns three primary competitive goals for the team each year: win Nationals, BEAT NAVY, and go undefeated. Last year the team placed third overall at Nationals, defeated Navy, and ended with a 9-4 season—losing only to Ohio State University and Coast Guard (twice each). "We want to win," he says, but he believes the ultimate goal is that participation on the Pistol Team should make each cadet a better officer.

The means to this end is a simple, yet purposeful, approach to coaching. He pairs the experienced shooters with the newer team members. Mentors stay with their charges for at least one



Academic Year 2018-2019 Pistol Team. Front (left to right): Hyun Yim '19, Austin Myers '20, Eric Dragland '19, Sean Min '20, Emily Schultz '20, Chia-Chi Hu '22, Liz Irving '19, Ben Meure '22, Austin Morock '20. Back (left to right): Quin Cochran '19, Ethan Wilson '22, Christian Mardaga '21, Mac Heric '21, Brandon Hottois '19, Caleb Roth '19 (Team Captain), Keegan Buros '20, Taylor Schorlemmer '22, Coach Duston Saunders '72. (Not pictured: Garrett Plant '19.)

The President's Hundred Tab

is one of four permanent individual skill/marksmanship tabs authorized for wear by the U.S. Army. The tab is highest in order of precedence on the uniform, followed by the Special Forces Tab, the Ranger Tab, and the Sapper Tab. Cadets on the Pistol team may have an opportunity to compete in the President's Hundred Match at Camp Perry, Ohio. It is very competitive and is not a top priority, so they get limited opportunity to train for it. While no cadet has earned the President's Hundred Tab, it exposes them to the competition and they get invaluable experience for the future. Several Pistol Team alumni have earned the Tab.



Cadet Austin Myers '20 competing in the Scholastic Action Shooting Program—Steel Challenge.

semester, if not a full year. This method develops coaching and leadership skills in the cadets which can be leveraged within the Corps, and more importantly, at their first unit. Often cadets are asked to be trainers or evaluators during their visits to TDI, a sign that this approach is effective.

Saunders says, “We toe the line at all times.” This means stringent enforcement of all standards. Uniform, appearance, policies, regulations, etc. Team members must demonstrate a strong work ethic and have high expectations of themselves and each other. “Maybe it’s the Old Grad in me,” he says. Schultz says, “We have a lot of solid people on the team and because of that our team has an extremely good reputation throughout the Corps.”

The team practices each weekday from 4:30 to 6:30pm. “If you walked through the Range during practice, you would think it looks disorganized and chaotic,” Saunders says. Insisting it is actually very controlled, he adds, “Pistol requires intense mental focus.” Shooters must spend a lot of time learning how to shoot well, which means focusing on the sight, not the target. Cadet Keegan Buros ’20 says, “[Pistol] has helped identify and fix some of my greatest mental weaknesses,” so the discipline extends beyond the range.

Despite the intensity of the work required to excel in the sport, cadets say that practice is one of the best parts of their day. Cadet Sean Min ’20 says, “Olympic-based shooting requires you to be relaxed. Therefore, going to practice every day gives me a chance to wind down from the regular stresses of West Point and re-charges me to continue pushing on.” Schultz says, “Coach has built a team [on mutual respect] so practice is more of a relief than a chore.”

Schultz also credits the team’s success to adaptability. “We are always willing to try something new, and we constantly strive to be better than the day before. We are all willing to go out of our

comfort zone and try something new when what we are doing is not working.” Buros cites Saunders’ coaching experience and style as another key factor to success. “Seeing how much time and effort he dedicates to the team makes me want to push my own limits.”

Min considers Saunders as one of his life coaches. “He wants us to shoot well and gives us pointed advice as to why we aren’t shooting straight; however, I think he wants to help us develop into more thoughtful and competent officers even more. My conversations with coach usually aren’t shooting-related. I’m always asking for his thoughts/experiences regarding specific issues, life, and much more.”

The cadets know how much Saunders cares about them and they believe that the family environment is a huge factor in the success of the Pistol Team. Schultz says, “As soon as I joined, I gained a family. We are all extremely close, and even though we can be a little bit tough on each other every once in a while, I believe that we all have each other’s best interests at heart.” When asked which one word best describes the Pistol Team, both Buros and Min say, “Family.” In fact, Min joined the team initially thinking it’d be “cool” to be able to shoot pistols after class; however, he remained on the team after discovering a family in his coach and teammates.

In another example of how much he enjoys coaching, as well as how highly regarded he is within the sport, Saunders was selected to Coach Pistol Team USA at the World University Games in Naples, Italy this summer. From June 30 to July 10, he coached one cadet and three other students (two Coast Guard, one Ohio State) at the annual collegiate competition.

Saunders, too, appreciates that he has built a culture of family within the team. “I truly believe they are better officers having been members of the Pistol Team. Many keep me involved in their lives long after they graduate. Once a Pistolero, always a

Pistolero! We look after each other.” What Saunders may not realize is how much his team appreciates it. According to Buros, “Being a part of the Pistol Team is like being a son or daughter to the Saunders family. [They] foster a positive team environment that is focused on improvement and winning.” ★



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The Excel Scholars Program:

Promoting Diversity, Excellence and Success Across the Four West Point Pillars and Beyond

By **Keith J. Hamel**, WPAOG staff

As readers are thumbing through this issue of *West Point* magazine, faculty and tactical officers associated with the Excel Scholars Program are monitoring the six-week grades of African-American and Latino cadets from the Class of 2023. This is not the first time this year that the 12-member team has examined these groups. They started tracking them during Cadet Basic Training via their CEER (college entrance examination rank) scores, and they will review their grades again at the end of the semester. Their goal is select 40 African-American and Latino plebes by January and invite them to join the Excel Scholars Program, a Dean's-sponsored initiative that promotes the personal and professional growth of underrepresented cadets who are excelling at the Academy in all pillars (academic, military, physical and character) and

seeks to increase the number of post-graduate fellowships awarded to them.

The Excel Scholars program has its roots in the Academy's National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE). In 2010, that club's faculty advisor was departing, and Dr. Ericka Rovira, Professor of Engineering Psychology with the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership, who was working with cadets from NSBE, was invited to take over the advisor role. At the time, Rovira and then Major Timothy Gatlin '99 had been discussing the lack of minority representation in the Department of Social Sciences scholarship program, which grooms gold star cadets to compete for prestigious graduate scholarship awards such as the Marshall Scholarship, the Rhodes Scholarship, and the Truman Scholarship. "Data

Above: Simone Askew '18 and Lauren Moses (holding sign), Certified Professional Co-Active Coach and founder of the Moses Group, were the guest speakers for the 2019 Excel Scholars Fall Academic Year Kick-Off Reception, an annual event during which all Excel Scholars meet their new cohort leaders, mingle with fellow Excel Scholars and recalibrate their goals for the upcoming academic year.

showed that only one percent of African-American cadets and less than three percent of Latinos were part of the SOSH scholarship program from 2000 to 2010,” Rovira says. She and Gatlin, along with some cadets from NSBE, then worked together to establish a program for underrepresented cadets that would not just be about “going to a conference,” but instead “changing the Academy.”

The result was the Excel Scholars Program, which was officially established in 2012 and whose current vision statement is to “Promote excellence among cadets from underrepresented groups, strive for a higher standard, and be an instrument for change at the Academy and in the Army.” In that founding year, Sam Ellis ’12 was awarded a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship and became the first African-American male cadet in 10 years to attend graduate school directly upon graduation, studying industrial engineering at Northwestern University’s McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science. A year later, Antonia Allen ’13 became the first female African-American cadet to go directly to graduate school (MIT) upon graduation. The program grew steadily after that, with two Excel cadets receiving scholarships in 2014 to seven earning awards this past academic year. The Academy’s last two Rhodes Scholars were part of the program (Christian Nattiel ’17 and Simone Askew ’18), and two of the last four USCC Brigade Commanders were Excel Scholars (Eugene Coleman III ’16 and Askew).

Come January, approximately 32 to 35 African-American and Latino cadets, all of whom are academically within the top 25 percent of their ethnic demographic, will accept the invitation to join the Excel Scholars Program. This cohort will then be prepared and mentored through their time at West Point to excel in all four pillars. “By the end of their time in the program, we have three major goals for them,” says Rovira: “First, we want to see 20 percent of an Excel cohort compete and win postgraduate educational opportunities; next, 25 percent of this year-group should be eligible to be interviewed for the West Point Graduate Scholarship Program offered through SOSH (that is, they have to meet SOSH’s 3.85 cumulative GPA cutoff); and, lastly, 25 percent should be selected for key leadership positions in the Corps.” The last two years have shown that the Excel Scholars Program is meeting, and in some cases exceeding, its goals: in 2018, 24 percent of the cohort won scholarships and 8 of 17 were interviewed for key leadership positions; and, in 2019, 32 percent won scholarships and 6 of 22 Excel firsties earned leadership positions in the Corps.

The Excel Scholars Program begins training each year’s cohort by enrolling them in the Center for Enhanced Performance’s critical thinking course during the spring semester of their plebe year.

Cohorts also meet with their faculty and tactical leader team once a month to discuss topics pertinent to their development, namely academics, networking, time management, and life themes. In addition, the four cohorts of the Excel Scholars Program come together each month to participate in “fireside chats,” during which they meet successful African-American and Latino leaders from academia, the military, and corporate America and listen to their life journeys. Recent speakers include Lieutenant General Stephen Twitty, Deputy Commander of United States Europe Command, and Dr. Leslie Fenwick, Dean Emerita of the Howard University School of Education. “In addition to a networking opportunity, we want them to listen to how people tell their life story, as they themselves will have to think about the threads of their own life story when it comes time to write the personal statement for their scholarship application,” says Rovira. The cadets spend their cow year writing and perfecting these statements. The program also encourages cadets to front load Military Individual Advancement Development (MIAD) opportunities early in their cadet career so they can later focus on academic internships (essential for the research portion of their scholarship application) and apply for key leader positions during summer training.

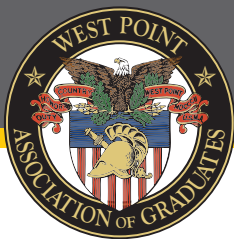
“Ultimately, I think the program is about self-efficacy,” says Rovira. “We, the Excel Scholars faculty and tactical team, are constantly instilling in the cadets the belief that they can achieve their goals and that we are here to help them reach that next level.” Data maintained by the program demonstrates that its overall strategy is working. For example, while Excel Scholar cadets tend to enter the Academy with lower CEER scores, their academic performance relative to their peers who enter with higher CEER scores is elevated to a greater extent over the course of four years in a correlative study between the two variables.

While individual cadets are the direct beneficiaries of the Excel Scholar Program, it also benefits the Academy at large. “The program participates in candidate visits through Admissions,” says Rovira, “during which we are able to communicate that West Point has a long-term plan for its students from historically underrepresented groups.” The Excel Scholars Program also helps with cadet retention and faculty recruitment. “Changing the Academy,” indeed. ★

The Excel Scholars Program is funded by generous support from the Hearst Foundation, the Boeing Company, Mr. H. Patrick Swygert and Dr. Leslie Fenwick, Bruce and Gabriella Thorn ’89, Rick and MaryEllen Thibodeau ’70, and other individual donors. Those wishing to support this Margin of Excellence initiative are encouraged to contact the West Point Association of Graduates’ Development Department.

“We have three major goals for them: first, we want to see 20 percent of an Excel cohort compete and win postgraduate educational opportunities; next, 25 percent of this year-group should be eligible to be interviewed for the West Point Graduate Scholarship Program; and, lastly, 25 percent should be selected for key leadership positions in the Corps.”

—Dr. Ericka Rovira, Professor of Engineering Psychology,
Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership



Growing Your Network: *How WPAOG Enhanced Career Services Can Help You Connect to Your Next Job*

In mid-April, Todd Browne '85, President and CEO of the West Point Association of Graduates, sent an email to the Long Gray Line announcing the official launch of the new WPAOG enhanced Career Services program. The letter highlighted the new Career Services team of three West Point graduates with more than 40 years of relevant experience, promoted WPAOG's new partnership program with Korn Ferry, a premier executive search firm, and announced the launch of **WPAOGcareers.org**, the new Career Services website.

The launch of a new high-caliber career services program was an innovation that WPAOG created in response to a growing number of graduate requests for career assistance at all stages of life, whether transitioning from the military to a civilian career or moving between jobs within the civilian sector. WPAOG's enhanced program offers a highly personalized level of career services for graduates, with more choices for grads to tailor career services to meet their needs at all ages and phases of career development.

Three West Point graduates form the core of WPAOG's new Career Services team: Director Miguel Gutierrez '80, Assistant Director Scott Leishman '77, and Assistant Director Julia Ruddock '07.

Based on their own West Point and Army experiences, they are all deeply aware of USMA job candidates' strengths and are familiar with the challenges and opportunities candidates are likely to encounter while looking for a job, based on their extensive experience in recruiting and placement.

Complementing the new team of career services experts is a variety of supports that leverage the power of the West Point network across corporations, industries, and in regions worldwide. The WPAOG team is hard at work building relationships with employers seeking to hire our grads. In addition, WPAOG is building an **Industry Network**, a corps of graduate "industry advisors" who can offer tailored advice to job-seeking grads, as well as leveraging its **Geographic Network** of regional graduate advisors operating through local West Point Societies. In this way, WPAOG serves as the "hub" of the network, forging connections between job seekers, employers, and grads who serve as industry and geographic advisors willing to help fellow members of the Long Gray Line.

"Networks deliver unique advantages for your career and professional development, such as private or 'inside' information, access to a wide variety of skill sets, and power," says Ruddock, WPAOG's Assistant Director of Career Services. "Building and growing a diverse network is even more important during the job search process, since an overwhelming majority of employers rate referrals as the number one source of top talent. Think about it: people want to hire other people who they can trust and rely on to enable their success."

"To ensure you're recognized as such, you need to cultivate and maintain your position as the best remembered professional—whatever your area of expertise—among a large and diverse group of relevant people across multiple forums," says Ruddock.

Through a new partnership program with Korn Ferry called "Korn Ferry Advance," grads have access to top caliber career coaches and tools designed to help navigate towards a new job, a promotion, or a new industry. Korn Ferry Advance offers a portfolio of customized services designed to prepare candidates for every aspect of the job search: self-assessment (psychometric analysis), resume preparation, personal coaching, interview preparation and compensation counseling.

WPAOG Enhanced Career Services integrates these new initiatives with its longest-running and most successful program, the Service Academy Career Conference (SACC). Since 1994, the quarterly SACC job fairs—hosted exclusively for West Point graduates and alumni of the other four service academies—allow



WPAOG Career Services Team (l to r): Director Miguel Gutierrez '80, Julia Ruddock '07, and Scott Leishman '77.

attendees to develop and grow relationships with recruiting professionals and hiring managers at companies across all different kinds of industries.

Throughout every SACC, companies and universities are encouraged to have in-depth conversations with candidates in order to evaluate their skill sets, and semi-private booths are provided at each venue for same-day interviews. These opportunities allow attendees to speak with employer contacts personally about their unique value proposition, even if the job they want is not yet officially posted. Candidates also can have their resumes reviewed by the companies prior to SACC.

Whether a grad is a junior or senior military officer, or in a mid-civilian career transition, attending a SACC can help build one's network of relevant company insiders, including fellow Old Grads, who can help those in transition to navigate toward opportunities appropriate for their level of expertise.

SACC is the perfect opportunity to have in-depth conversations with employers who share an affinity for West Point and recognize the value of our grads in the workplace. The four current SACC locations are San Antonio, Texas; Jacksonville, Florida; Washington, DC and San Diego, California.

Most of the companies in attendance are national and global employers with multiple locations, so employers at each SACC are not just hiring for those locations where the event is held. The Washington, DC SACC, for example, draws the largest and most diverse slate of companies looking to hire for thousands of jobs across the United States.

Over the last four SACCs, more than 600 USMA graduates attended and met with over 200 unique employers. Briana Bailey, a Class of 2012 graduate with six years of service as an active duty Transportation and Logistics Officer, took advantage of the resources offered by WPAOG Career Services, including attending the SACC in Washington, DC this past June. Using the WPAOG Career Services team's guidance and the opportunities for networking at the SACC, she landed a new job and is now working at one of the largest cloud-computing companies in the world. "I participated in the SACC prep webinar, attended the SACC in DC, and also received assistance from Scott Leishman (Assistant Director at WPAOG Career Services)," Bailey said. "I would recommend utilizing all resources afforded to you but with extra emphasis on WPAOG Career Services."

According to Ruddock, most employers actively interview grads who are within two to three months of their availability date, so attending a SACC closest to that date would be the most appropriate. However, if an attendee is looking for a new opportunity and won't be available until after six months or more, attending a SACC offers a resource for career discovery and exploration while building your professional network.

So far, 103 West Point graduates have been successfully hired with the assistance of WPAOG Career Services, including David Watts, a 2010 USMA graduate with nine years of service experience as a military engineer. "The mentorship and feedback that I received from AOG Career Services helped to give me the

tools and confidence to put myself out there when I was leaving the Army," Watts said. "They set me up not only with a network of graduate advisors in the industries I was interested in, but also provided enrollment in the Korn Ferry training program which helped to refine my resume and interviewing skills. AOG Career Services and the USMA Grad network assisted me in making industry connections and landing an outstanding civilian job in an ideal location for my family."

Douglas Kim '95, a recent success story of a mid-civilian career transition, summed it up this way: "I was very surprised by how personalized WPAOG Career Services was. I received a phone call in London within one day of signing up online. Not sure why I hadn't done it earlier...I should have." ★

WPAOG's new enhanced Career Services have been made possible through the generous support of Roland C. Smith '78, Robb E. Turner '84, Ken C. Hicks '74, Darcy G. Anderson '78 and Michael Franzino '71. A special thanks to Korn Ferry for its support of the program.

SACC Service Academy Career Conference



West Point
ASSOCIATION
OF GRADUATES
CAREER SERVICES

For more information on this program, please contact a member of WPAOG's Career Services team at careers@wpaog.org



USMA 2023 Joins the Corps



Marchback



R-Day

R-DAY, MARCHBACK AND A-DAY

More than 1,200 cadet candidates of the Class of 2023 reported to West Point for Reception Day on July 1, 2019. Throughout the day, candidates became new cadets, and at the end of the day repeated their Oath of Allegiance in their first parade. They then began an intense six weeks of Cadet Basic Training. On the last night of the training, the class unveiled its motto: Freedom Is Not Free. On August 12, the new cadets completed the 12-mile March Back from Cadet Basic Training at Camp Buckner accompanied by more than 250 Old Grads, representing 46 West Point classes spanning 62 years (from 1958 through 2019). Eighty members of the Class of 1973, the Class of 2023's 50-Year Affiliation class, participated in the March Back to show their support of the new cadets and to demonstrate that being a West Pointer does not end with graduation. The last two miles of the march were on post, where the new cadets were cheered on by community and family members lining the roads. On August 17, the Class of 2023 was officially accepted into the United States Corps of Cadets at the Acceptance Day parade in front of hundreds of proud family members and friends. ★



R-Day

R-Day



Marchback



R-Day



R-Day



Marchback



A-Day



USMA 2020 Ring Weekend

"With Vision We Lead"

On August 23, during a ceremony at Trophy Point, cadets from the Class of 2020 received their West Point class rings. Ring donors and members of the 50-Year Affiliation Class of 1970 gripped hands with cadets, and family and friends greeted their firsties to celebrate their new "crass mass of brass and glass." At the WPAOG Ring Memorial program or "Ring Melt" earlier this year, 55 donated West Point class rings were melted into a single gold bar that was incorporated into these rings, ensuring that the Long Gray Line remains physically and symbolically connected with the Class of 2020 as they wear their class rings. View WPAOG's Ring Weekend video at: bit.ly/USMA2020ringweekend. ★



USMA 1971 Supports Affirmation for the Class of 2021

"Until the Battle is Won"

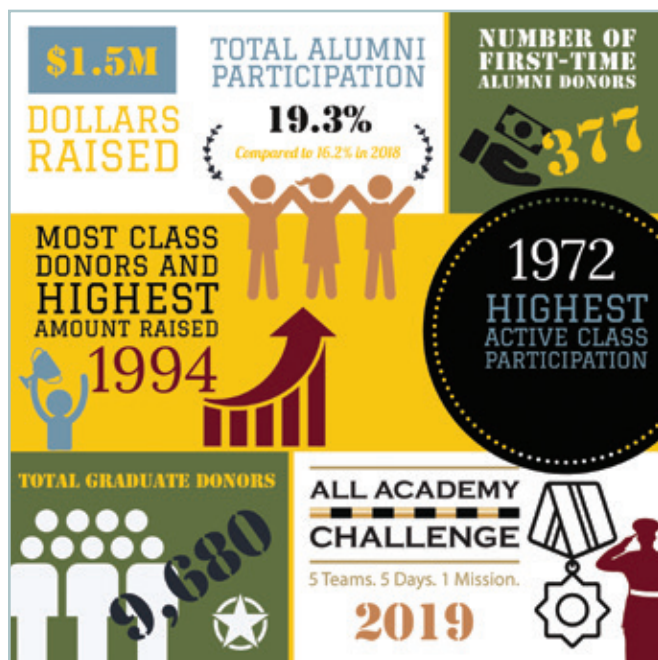


USMA 2021

On August 18, 2019, the Class of 2021 affirmed their commitment to service in the U.S. Army during a ceremony at West Point. Cadets took the Oath of Affirmation, binding them to complete their next two years of study and a minimum of five years of active-duty military service thereafter. Lieutenant General Franklin L. "Buster" Hagenbeck '71 (Retired), 57th USMA Superintendent, was the guest speaker for the evening. At the conclusion of the ceremony, members of the Class of 1971, the 50-year affiliates of the Class of 2021, presented the cadets with commemorative coins to mark the occasion. Present at the Affirmation ceremony were more than 40 members of the Class of 1971 and their guests. ★



All Academy Challenge 2019: USMA Beats Navy, Achieves Record Participation



During the five-day 2019 All Academy Challenge from May 30 to June 3, the Long Gray Line came together in record numbers to strengthen the Margin of Excellence: 9,680 alumni, including 377 first time donors to West Point, donated gifts totaling \$1.5 million. For the sixth time, West Point competed against the Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marine Academies to see which academy could get the highest alumni participation rate. It was a close race with Merchant Marine and West Point narrowly came in second. This year 19.3 percent of the Long Gray Line supported the Challenge, which will have a profound impact on the entire Corps of Cadets and further the mission of West Point.

See the 2019 All Academy Challenge results and final class standings online at WestPointAOG.org/AcademyChallenge.

Class of 2022 Receives Class Colors from USMA 1972

As part of the 50-Year Affiliation Program, the Class of 1972 presented a class flag to the Class of 2022 on July 27 at the Cadet Field Training graduation ceremony at Camp Buckner. The president of the Class of 2022, Cadet Xavier Williams, received the class flag from COL(R) Jerry Hamilton '72. From this day forward, the flag will remain with the Class of 2022 and will be displayed at class events at West Point. Additional members from the 50-Year Affiliate Class of 1972 in attendance at the ceremony were: Mr. Michael Aldrich, COL(R) William R Phillips, LTC(R) Duston Saunders, Mr. Gary Sarpen, Mr. Jim Barnes, LTC(R) Tim Lupfer and LTC(R) Paul Capofari.



WPAOG Annual Meeting and Election

All USMA graduates are encouraged to vote in the WPAOG 2019 Annual Election. Not later than October 19, 2019, proxies will be emailed or mailed to each graduate. Graduates whose email address is on file at WPAOG will receive an email that contains a link to a personalized, confidential online voting site maintained by Amplitude Research, Inc.

Other graduates will receive paper proxies via the U.S. Postal Service. Voting closes at 5pm on November 18, 2019, the evening before the WPAOG Annual Meeting and Election, which will take place at 5pm Eastern Time on November 19, 2019 in the Herbert Alumni Center, West Point, New York.

OFFICIAL CLASS RING SUPPLIER OF THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY

1943 1944 1945 1946 1947 1948 1950 1951 1952 1953 1954 1955
1956 1958 1960 1961 1962 1963 1964 1965 1966 1968 1969 1970
1971 1975 1976 1977 1979 1981 1982 1984 1985 1986 1988 1999
2003 2004 2005 2006 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2020



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- Get peer advice on managing the challenges of career transitions.
- Learn how to get your foot in the door for your desired civilian career.
- Explore graduate school options.



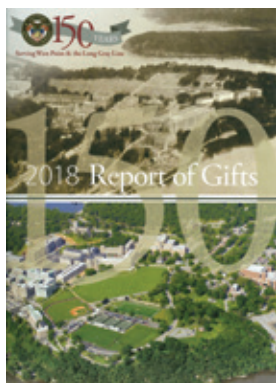
San Antonio, TX Nov 14-15, 2019
Jacksonville, FL Mar 26-27, 2020
Washington, DC Jun 11-12, 2020
San Diego, CA Aug 13-14, 2020

To register for any SACC as an attendee or exhibitor, go to sacc-jobfair.com.



WPAOG Career Services
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WPAOG Career Services can help!
If you would like more information about WPAOG
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2018 Annual Report of Gifts: Thank You!

WPAOG would like to thank all the individuals, organizations and classes who supported West Point in 2018. The 2018 Annual Report of Gifts recognizes our generous donors and highlights cadets, programs and projects supported through Margin of Excellence donations. In 2018, our alumni participation rate reached 35 percent, our highest level yet. A critical indicator in determining a university's annual national ranking, the alumni participation rate helps increase the prestige of the institution while enhancing the development of future leaders. Thank you to all who support West Point. View the report online at impelcreative.com/publications/wpaog/rog2018

Update Your *Register of Graduates Biography*

WPAOG's 150th Celebration year is a good time to update your career biography in the *Register of Graduates*. All graduates are now able to review their biographies and submit updates online! We need your help to continue the project initiated by General George W. Cullum, Class of 1833, to chronicle the careers and service to the nation of all West Point graduates. Visit WestPointAOG.org/RegisterofGraduates to learn more.

Class of 1973 Hosts R-Day Breakfast for New Cadet Families

Members of the Class of 1973, the 50-Year Affiliate class for USMA 2023, attended activities in support of the incoming class of new cadets on R-Day. The 50-Year Affiliates were proud to welcome the Class of 2023 and their families to West Point, and hosted an R-Day breakfast in Eisenhower Hall.



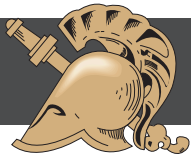
Class Notes

Class Notes are online at WestPointAOG.org/Classes for you to read at your convenience. Catch up with what your classmates and fellow graduates are doing, no subscription required! There is an email link on each class page to send your updates to your Class Scribe. We post an item in Grad News each Friday to list which classes have posted updates.



Visiting West Point? Book Your Grad Insider Tour Now!

The Rockbound Highland Home Grad Insider Tour allows graduates to share unique experiences of West Point with their families and guests. Take an exclusive guided tour of the Cadet Mess in Washington Hall, Jefferson Library, Thayer Award Room, Army Sports Hall of Fame in Kenna Hall/Kimsey Center, Arvin Cadet Physical Development Center, or the Cadet Uniform Factory. Book your tour online today at WestPointAOG.org/GradInsiderTour or email RockboundHighlandHome@wpaog.org for more information.



WPAOG Welcomes USMA 2023 New Cadets and Families at Pre-R-Day Social

On June 30, the day before R-Day for USMA 2023, a few showers didn't stop more than 1,150 families and friends of cadet candidates from stopping by WPAOG for our third annual Pre-R-Day Ice Cream Social. WPAOG Staff were on hand to answer questions and provide a warm welcome. Nothing like ice cream to relax on a hot day!



Parent Leaders Honored at WPAOG Leaders Conference



More than 50 West Point Parents Club Leaders attended WPAOG's annual Leaders Conference, August 14-17, at West Point. For four days, 311 volunteer leaders heard from WPAOG and USMA officials about the state of the Academy and WPAOG, and learned lessons they can take back to their constituents. WPAOG Chairman LTG(R) Joe DeFrancisco '65 lauded the parent leaders attending the conference as the best resource to inspire cadets—"They are our future members." In addition, 15 Parents Clubs were recognized as Distinguished Parents Clubs.

What is the West Point Parents Fund?

While the Academy receives federal funding to support its core programs, which provide the basic requirements to earn a Bachelor of Science degree and a commission in the United States Army, many cadet projects and activities that are of great value but outside the "core" designation receive minimal to no funding from the government. West Point needs these programs to recruit and educate the very best candidates in a highly competitive environment. This is why private funding from our alumni, parents and friends is so important—it supports unique experiences and extraordinary developmental programs for cadets that go above and beyond the Academy's core programming to create the Margin of Excellence, making a West Point education like no other. Please consider supporting West Point by giving a gift at WestPointAOG.org/GiveOnline.

Resources for Cadet Parents

WPAOG's website hosts a Parent Portal packed full of useful resources for cadet parents at WestPointAOG.org/ParentResources, including:

- Listings for more than 75 West Point Parent Clubs nationwide
- Annual *Parent Handbook* distributed free by WPAOG and available online
- *West Point* magazine is complimentary to parents for four years
- *Parent Review* eNewsletter published monthly
- USMA and Cadet News about cadet clubs and activities, academic achievements, athletic achievements and more is posted on our website at WestPointAOG.org/CadetNews. You can subscribe to have all the news delivered right to your email inbox: just look for the link at the top of the page
- Social Media: Follow WPAOG on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for the latest West Point updates

Gripping Hands

“Grip hands—though it be from the shadows—while we swear as you did of yore, or living or dying, to honor the Corps, and the Corps, and the Corps.” —Bishop Shipman, 1902

1974

Klimow named Ambassador to Turkmenistan

The U.S. Senate voted on May 23, 2019 to confirm COL(R) Matthew S. Klimow as the eighth Ambassador of the United States to Turkmenistan.



2012

Heisler is 2019 recipient of Nininger Award

CPT Lindsay Gordon Heisler is the 2019 recipient of the Alexander R. Nininger Award for Valor at Arms, to be presented at West Point on October 24, 2019. Heisler is currently the Commander of Delta Company, 1st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade. For more information, visit WestPointAOG.org/NiningerAward.



1986

Esper Named Secretary of Defense

The U.S. Senate voted on July 23, 2019 to confirm Dr. Mark T. Esper as the 27th Secretary of Defense.



★ ★ General Officer Announcements ★ ★

The following officers were confirmed by the Senate:

Lieutenant General Paul J. LaCamera '85 for appointment to the rank of general and assignment as Commanding General, U.S. Army Pacific

Major General Michael E. Kurilla '88 to for appointment to the rank of lieutenant general and assignment as Commanding General, XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg, Fort Bragg, North Carolina

The Chief of Staff of the Army announces the following officer assignments:

Major General John A. George '88 to Commanding General, Combat Capabilities Development Command, U.S. Army Futures Command, Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD

Major General Frederick R. Maiocco Jr. '86, USAR to Commanding General (Troop Program Unit), 76th Operational Response Command, Salt Lake City, UT

The following Army National Guard officers have been confirmed by the Senate for Federal recognition in the next higher grade:

Brigadier General Pablo Estrada Jr. '88 to Major General

START^{the}DAYS!

NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY
<p>2 <i>BEAT AIR FORCE!</i></p>	<p>12 <i>BEAT NAVY!</i></p>	<p>8 Second Semester Begins</p>
<p>8 WPAOG Advisory Council Meeting</p>	<p>16-21 Term End Examinations</p>	<p>14 Honorable Living Stand Down Day</p>
<p>13 Branch Night for the Class of 2020</p> 	<p>20 Class of December 2019 Graduation</p> 	<p>24 Ring Memorial Program for the Class of 2021</p>
<p>19 WPAOG Annual Meeting & Election</p>		<p>25 500th Night for the Class of 2021</p>

Upcoming events suggested by West Point staff & faculty.

Events for Feb 2020—Apr 2020 should be sent to editor@wpaog.org by Nov 15, 2019.

For the entire calendar, go to
WestPointAOG.org/calendar

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WPAOG TODAY | BY THE NUMBERS



Complimentary issues of
West Point Magazine per
year to 56,000+ graduates,
parents, families & friends
[2011–2019]



FIRST CALL
enewsletters/year **24**

14,700+ Reunion grads
& guests in 2019

575

RINGS DONATED TO RING MELT [2000–2019]
[Classes of 1896–1997]

\$49

average of
million/yr
fundraised



3,080+
Posts on Social Media
[2018]

53,643

LIVING GRADUATES
as of 10/1/19

76,432

TOTAL GRADUATES
[1802–2019]
** as of 8/9/19*

thirteen

NININGER AWARDS
FOR VALOR AT ARMS
[2006–2018]

2019

**ALL ACADEMY
CHALLENGE**



1 ANNUAL
ALUMNI LEADER
CONFERENCE

9,680 donors
[19.3%]

76 FOUNDERS DAYS
ATTENDED BY
WPAOG STAFF
[2019]



48,846 Facebook followers
as of 10/1/19

1,087 Register of Graduates updates [2019 YTD]



243

Memorial Articles in
2019 TAPS magazine



15,182 Twitter followers
as of 10/1/19

55

RINGS DONATED TO THE RING
MEMORIAL PROGRAM
[for class of 2020]

61

THAYER AWARDS [1958-2018]



fourteen

CASE AWARDS
FOR FUNDRAISING
EXCELLENCE [1997-2018]

FOUR HUNDRED

On This Day History Trivia Posts

35%

GRADUATE GIVING
*[2018 record
high participation]*

915

CLASS NOTES POSTED
[2018]



7,697 Instagram followers
as of 9/17/19



82 LIVING USMA
CLASSES

Death
notifications
[2018]

634



137

DISTINGUISHED
GRADUATE AWARDS
[1992-2019]



2018

2,127

GRAD PASSES ISSUED

191

GRAD INSIDER TOURS TAKEN

1,200

TOTAL TOUR ATTENDEES

two

STEVIE
AWARDS

29

CLASS REUNIONS IN 2019

141

West Point Societies

9,510

GRAD LINK USERS [17.8%]



ONE

New statue erected
on the Plain
at West Point
Ulysses S. Grant
Class of 1843

Grad **Link**

twelve

PARENT REVIEW
newsletters/year

MAILBOX *West Point*



We regret that because of limited space, we cannot publish all letters received.

Letters may be edited and shortened for space. Submit comments or questions to Editor@wpaog.org, or chat with us on one of our WPAOG social media channels.

FROM: Nancy B. Graves (widow,
LTG Ernest Graves Jr. '44)

I wish to voice my disappointment that the article "Symbols of Devotion to our Alma Mater" in the summer issue did not highlight the stained glass windows above the entrance to Washington Hall, which were the gift of the Class of 1944, the D-Day Class, at the time of their 30th Reunion, as was a \$350K endowment at their 60th Reunion for upkeep of the windows. Although I realize the article could not name all the class gifts individually, these spectacular windows rate more than the unnamed reference "Mess Hall ornamentations" that the article used.

RESPONSE:

Thank you for your letter. As you suspected, the article could not name all class gifts individually. Because of space limitations, other than the Class of 1915, which is mentioned in the introduction, no other individual class gift was highlighted in that article. The intent was to focus on the overall Class Giving Program at West Point and how it has grown and changed over the years.

As to the "Mess Hall ornamentations" description, it includes not only the Class of 1944 Stained Glass Windows, but also several other gifts in the Cadet Mess, namely the Class of 1976 Cadet Mess Mural Restoration and the Class of 1981 Restoration of the Superintendents Portraits. Numerous projects mentioned in the article were united class giving efforts, but were only summarized under the main project or building name. For example, the "Arvin Physical Development Center enhancements" refer to the Class of 1957 Hallway, the Class of 1962 Fitness Room, the Class of 1965 Gymnasium Entrance, and the Class of 1979 Climbing Wall, all located in the same building. Although it's imperfect, we have traditionally used the word "ornamentations" to describe the way that the classes of 1944, 1976, and 1981 added to a facility (Washington Hall) already built with appropriated funds. Like you, we find the Class of 1944 Stained Glass Windows "spectacular." They are the perfect backdrop when the USMA Cadet Glee Club sings the "Alma Mater" at the close of the Thayer Award ceremony.

A complete listing of all Class Gifts to West Point may be found on the WPAOG website at WestPointAOG.org/Historyofclassgifts. ★

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Military Retiree Recognition Program

WPAOG’s new Military Retiree Recognition Program honors our military retirees for their service and sacrifice. If you retired on October 1, 2017 or later, you are eligible for a free Grad Insider Tour for you and three guests, as well as a free night at The Hotel Thayer, subject to restrictions. We will also publish your name in *West Point* magazine, with your permission. If you wish to participate, please contact retiree@wpaog.org to learn more.

The following graduates retired from active, reserve, or National Guard duty. We thank them for serving this great nation, and the Association looks forward to serving you. ★

<i>Name</i>	<i>Class</i>
COL Craig W. Cox	1985
LTC Tina S. Kracke	1987
COL Raymond K. Elderd III	1988
COL Lawrence M. Iwanski	1988
COL Michael J. Wise	1988
COL Christopher J. Pflanz	1994
LTC Erin A. Whitney	1996
COL David M. Ashley	1997
MAJ Kyle D. Wheeler	2002



Be Thou at Peace

Deaths reported from June 4 — September 9, 2019

Col Andrew Boreske Jr. USAF, Retired	1943 JUN	LTC Thomas W. Dowler USA, Retired	1952	Mr. Ralph J. Campbell	1964
Col Teague G. Harris Jr. USAF, Retired	1943 JUN	COL Peter C. Hains USA, Retired	1952	COL Thomas F. Reese USA, Retired	1964
Lt Col Thomas K. Oliver USAF, Retired	1943 JUN	MG Edmund R. Thompson USA, Retired	1952	Mr. Stephen C. Darrah	1965
Mr. George W. Thompson Jr.	1943 JUN	Mr. Richard W. Cordill	1953	LTC Carl W. Gentine USA, Retired	1965
Lt Col Robert P. Reagan USAF, Retired	1944	Mr. Victor Luby	1953	Mr. Steven E. Philo	1965
COL Colin M. Carter Jr. USA, Retired	1945	LTC Jerome H. Anderson USA, Retired	1954	COL Daniel E. Spielman USA, Retired	1965
COL Henry E. Kelly Jr. USA, Retired	1945	Mr. Judson S. Matthias	1954	Mr. Jerry R. Stockton	1965
LTC Frank E. Mehner USA, Retired	1945	LTC Lindsey B. Minturn Jr. USA, Retired	1954	LTC Edward N. Hathaway II USA, Retired	1966
Mr. Paul C. Whelan	1945	1LT Thomas J. Bell USA, Retired	1955	BG Raymond T. Roe USA, Retired	1967
LTC Alvin Ash USA, Retired	1946	LTC John P. Doyle USA, Retired	1955	Professor Harold L. Wilhite Jr.	1968
COL Edgar G. Braun Jr. USA, Retired	1946	COL John A. Feagin Jr., MD USA, Retired	1955	Mr. William D. Jackson	1970
CPT Corbin J. Davis USA, Retired	1946	COL James C. Blewster USA, Retired	1956	Maj Patrick M. Cron USAF, Retired	1971
Lt Col Philip H. Fryberger USAF, Retired	1946	Col William C. Carey Sr. USAF, Retired	1956	COL Gary E. Heuser USA, Retired	1971
COL George E. Hall Jr. USA, Retired	1946	Mr. David M. Corderman	1956	Mr. Robert G. Kail	1972
COL Kibbey M. Horne USA, Retired	1946	Dr. Carl L. Croft	1956	Mr. Steven A. Zurian	1972
Col Joseph T. McKinney USAF, Retired	1946	Mr. David F. Horton	1956	Mr. Steven G. Carlson	1973
Mr. Matthew D. Lampell	1949	COL Eugene S. Lynch USA, Retired	1956	COL Kurt D. Norman USA, Retired	1974
COL John T. Marley USA, Retired	1949	LTC Thomas J. McAniff USA, Retired	1956	Mr. Keith E. Herrington	1978
COL George A. Pollin Jr. USA, Retired	1949	COL Willard M. Christenson USA, Retired	1957	Mr. Sanford D. Lyons	1979
LTC David M. Monihan USA, Retired	1950	MG George R. Robertson USA, Retired	1958	Mr. Alan A. Hamill	1980
Lt Col Richard W. Nelson USAF, Retired	1950	COL Dick T. LeClere USA, Retired	1959	Mr. William F. Skoda	1980
LTC Howard N. Parks USA, Retired	1950	Mr. Harry N. Walters	1959	Mr. Mark W. Conforti	1981
Col Harvey W. Prosser Jr. USAF, Retired	1950	LTC Henry Lee USA, Retired	1960	Mr. Juan C. Chaves	1983
Mr. Merton J. Bangerter	1951	Mr. Joseph B. Amlong	1961	Mr. Joseph M. Donahue	1984
Col Julius R. Conti Jr. USAF, Retired	1951	Mr. James A. Goldstine	1961	LTC Jeffrey M. Erickson USA, Retired	1984
MG Joseph L. Fant III USA, Retired	1951	The Reverend Roy W. Cole III	1962	Mr. Gregory L. Morgan	1984
Mr. Lawrence L. Mintz	1951	Mr. Rufus C. Crow Jr.	1962	CPT Alexander O. Smith USA	2014
COL Arthur P. Deverill Jr. USA, Retired	1952	LTG Thomas P. Carney USA, Retired	1963	Mr. Richard Glover Jr.	2015

Past in Review

150 Years of AOG Leadership: Connecting DeFrancisco, Class of 1965 to Thayer, Class of 1818

By **Keith J. Hamel**, WPAOG staff

Since the formation of the Association of Graduates of the U.S. Military Academy in 1869, when 16 graduates gathered in the College of the City of New York office of Dr. Horace Webster, Class of 1818, for that first organizational meeting, membership in the Association has grown to more than 53,500 members. But during these 150 years, only 58 graduates have had the privilege of leading those dedicated to, as noted in AOG's founding mission statement, "cherishing the memories of our Alma Mater and promoting the social intercourse and fraternal fellowship of its graduates."

The first President of the Association was Sylvanus Thayer, Class of 1808. Robert Anderson, Class of 1825, of Fort Sumter fame, wrote to him on January 28, 1869 to propose the formation of "an association of the graduates of the Military Academy," to which Thayer gave his "hearty approval." But it wasn't Thayer's blessing that made him the first President, it was his age. According to Article III, paragraph 2 of the Association's Constitution, drafted June 16, 1869, "The oldest graduate belonging to the Association shall be President." At 83 years old, Thayer, was the oldest living West Point graduate in 1869, and even though he never attended a meeting (and, interestingly, his name does not appear on the roll of members until the publication of AOG's Third Annual Reunion), Thayer was recognized as AOG's President until his death on September 7, 1872.

For the next 25 years, the next oldest member of the Association assumed the mantle when the President died. This happened a total of seven times (including the three-month headship of Thomas J. Leslie, Class of 1815, which is actually not the shortest tenure of an AOG President). Then, in 1897, the Executive Committee voted to change AOG's Constitution so that the President would now have to be annually elected. George Greene, Class of 1823, was the first graduate to be nominated to the position, and he was unanimously elected President on June 10, 1897 (ironically, Greene was also the oldest graduate on the Association's membership roll). With annual elections now a factor, AOG's Presidents served much shorter terms than before. In fact, from 1897 until 1919, only John Schofield, Class of 1853, served more than one term (1900-06).

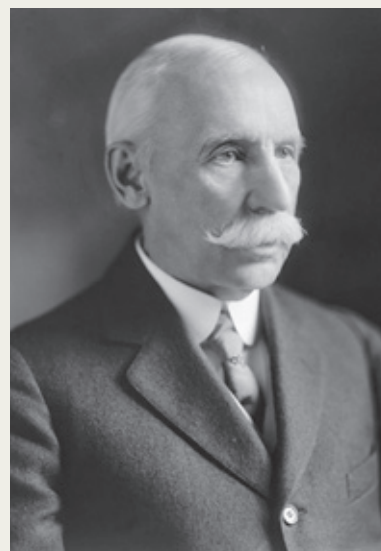
One of the members of the Executive Committee that nominated Greene for President in 1897 was Samuel Tillman, Class of 1869, who at the time was serving as Professor of Chemistry, Mineralogy, and Geology at the Academy. Tillman retired from military service in 1911, but in 1917 he was appointed Superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy, when he offered his services to the War Department after the United States became involved in World War I. Tillman retired again in March 1919 after being promoted to brigadier general, and three months later he was unanimously elected AOG President. He thus became one of only four USMA



Sylvanus Thayer, Class of 1808



George Greene, Class of 1823



Samuel Tillman, Class of 1869

Superintendents—Thayer, Schofield, and Lampert, Class of 1936 (who will be mentioned again soon)—to serve as the Association's President. Tillman is also one of two elected AOG Presidents who later held the distinction of being USMA's Oldest Graduate, as he was from June 4, 1941 until his death on June 24, 1942. Horatio Gibson, Class of 1847, who was AOG's 20th President (1914-15), is the other.

As Superintendent, Tillman presided over one of the most turbulent periods in Academy history, when World War I forced five classes to graduate early. One of those was the War Emergency Course Class of November 1918, and perhaps one of its most notable graduates was Leslie Groves, the Army Corps of Engineers officer who oversaw the construction of the Pentagon and who was the commanding general of the Manhattan Project. Groves became a member of the AOG Board of Trustees in 1955 and was elected the Association's President in 1961, holding the position for four years.

While Groves was commanding the Manhattan Project, his executive officer was Lieutenant Colonel James B. Lampert '36. Lampert had a distinguished military career, culminating as the 46th Superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy (1963-66). In 1978, he was elected (coincidentally) as the 46th AOG President. Due to illness, Lampert was not present when members of the Association elected him at the annual meeting on June 2, 1978, but he wrote a letter, which then President Charles Saltzman '25 read to the members, stating that he had undergone some medical tests but "expected to resume his normal activities in the near future." Unfortunately, Lampert passed away 10 days after assuming office. His death prompted a special meeting of AOG's Executive Committee on August 1, 1978 "to consider issues concerning the President of the Association which had resulted from the death of General Lampert." Determining that both Robert's Rules of Order and the AOG Constitution provide that the senior Vice-President is

to assume the role in the event of the President's death, Luke Finlay '28 was designated to serve (and he was duly elected as President at the 1979 Board meeting). Interestingly, Lampert was not the first AOG President to die while in office. In 1944, Robert Davis, Class of 1898, the 36th AOG President, did as well. After Davis's death, Edward McGlachlin, Class of 1889, signed the "Report of the President of the Association of Graduates, 1944-45," while William B. Ladue, Class of 1894, was recognized as "Acting President" of the Association at AOG's 76th Annual Meeting.

On February 26, 1993, the Board approved the Executive Committee's recommendation to change the title of President to Chairman (an idea that actually originated from AOG's Strategic Planning Committee). The executive who ran AOG's day-to-day business operations now took on the title of President. Starting with Edward "Shy" Meyer '51, there have been seven AOG Chairmen, including the current Chairman of the West Point Association of Graduates, Joseph E. DeFrancisco '65.

In a recent correspondence with this article's author, DeFrancisco remembers speaking with Lampert at the Superintendent's Garden Reception for First Classmen during June Week 1965, and he also noted that Lampert signed and presented him with his diploma on June 9 of that year. Similarly, Lampert's commanding general for the Manhattan Project, Groves, had his diploma signed by his Superintendent, Tillman. Tillman was on the committee that nominated Greene as AOG's first elected President, and Green had his diploma signed by Thayer, AOG's first President per the Association's constitutional age provision. It's not a parlor game, but when examined in these "six degrees of separation" the leadership of the Association of Graduates shows that the history of the Long Gray Line is indeed long but the connections between its members have been always as intended—fraternal. "Grip Hands!" ★



Leslie Groves, Class of November 1918



James B. Lampert '36



Joseph E. DeFrancisco '65



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