



## **West Point Preparatory Scholarship Program Of the West Point Association of Graduates**

### **PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION**

The West Point Preparatory Scholarship Program (WPPSP) was established in 1979 in conjunction with the United States Military Academy, Director of Admissions. The program is designed to provide partial scholarships for one year of post-secondary school education at USMA approved preparatory schools and military junior colleges for carefully selected and highly motivated young people seeking admission to the United States Military Academy.

Under NCAA rules, only the three service academies (USMA, USNA, and USAFA) may conduct this type of program. Candidates selected to participate WPPSP are divided into two categories: scholar/leaders and recruited athletes. One-fourth of the candidates in each year's program may be recruited athletes who, in the view of the USMA Admissions Committee, require an additional year of academics in order to play their sport and pass the rigorous courses at West Point.

WPPSP is administered and funded by the West Point Association of Graduates because NCAA rules require that such a program must be conducted by an "outside organization, representing the interests of the Academy."

Scholar/leader candidates must have a complete file with USMA Admissions, and must be "fully qualified" for admission to West Point. In every congressional district, there is usually more than one candidate who is "fully qualified" for admission, but only the "best qualified" candidate is awarded the appointment. Recruited athletes are not "fully qualified" for admission. But in the view of the Director of Admissions, they can become qualified after a year of academic preparation at a private preparatory school.

### **SCHOLAR/LEADERS**

In January of each year, the Director of Admissions prepares a list of those candidates who have shown outstanding qualities as scholars and leaders, but who are unlikely to be offered admission to West Point – usually, these candidates come from a highly competitive congressional district.

The USMA Director of Admissions then provides the names and Admissions files of these candidates to the WPPSP Director, who then offers the candidate a scholarship for the coming academic year.

Scholar/leader candidates may attend one of four military junior colleges or one of two college preparatory schools. The approved schools are: Marion Military Institute, New Mexico Military Institute, Georgia Military College, Hargrave Military Academy, Greystone Preparatory School at Schreiner University, and Northwestern Preparatory School.

Each of these schools provides financial aid to WPPSP candidates in addition to the funding provided by the scholarship program.

All candidates must take the courses prescribed by the USMA Academic Board. These are: American history, chemistry with a lab, the next level of mathematics beyond that taken in high school (either pre-calculus or calculus), and English composition.

## **RECRUITED ATHLETES**

Coaches of the individual varsity athletic teams at West Point recommend athletes to the Director of Admissions for participation in WPPSP. These recommendations, typically made early in the calendar year, must be approved by the Director of Admissions.

All recruited athletes must attend a private preparatory school as a post-secondary student. The majority of the schools that participate in the WPPSP are located in the Middle Atlantic States or New England. Each of them enrolls 5-10 post-secondary students each year. Total enrollment at each of these schools is 200-350 students.

WPPSP athlete candidates take the same academic courses as scholar/leaders, but at the post-secondary level. The major advantage of the private preparatory school is the small class size, intense and concentrated instruction, and required study five evenings a week. The level of academics is significantly higher than at a public high school, and is an excellent transition before coming to West Point.

Private preparatory schools all provide WPPSP candidates with financial aid equal to 1/3 the cost of room, board, and tuition. The scholarship program also provides a grant equal to at least 1/3 the total cost.

Athlete candidates are expected to maintain a “B” average in courses taken, with no grade below a “C.” Further, during the summer prior to enrolling in prep school, athlete candidates whose SAT scores are below 600-600 are required to take an SAT improvement course, usually either the Kaplan Course or the Princeton Review. The cost of the course will be paid for by WPPSP.

It should be noted that attending a private preparatory school permits the athlete candidate to play his or her sport at the post-graduate level without losing a year of college eligibility.

## **BENEFITS**

The West Point Preparatory Scholarship Program supplements the United States Military Academy Preparatory School (USMAPS), and provides a broader-based preparation than USMAPS. While USMAPS teaches only math, English, and the SAT, WPPSP requires candidates to take a full course load. WPPSP offers an alternative path to West Point for candidates who do not require the specialized preparation provided by USMAPS, but would benefit from an additional year of academics.

A major benefit of WPPSP is this: every candidate who completes the preparatory year with a “B” average and no grade below a “C” has an excellent chance of being offered admission to West Point by the USMA Director of Admissions.

## **COMMITMENT**

Candidates who are enrolled in the West Point Preparatory Scholarship Program have both a moral and legal commitment to accept admission to West Point if an offer is tendered. If a candidate fails to gain admission after the preparatory academic year due to poor grades, an injury, or is denied admission for some other reason, then the candidate is not required to repay the scholarship grant. However, if a candidate drops out of the program during the preparatory year, or is expelled for misconduct, then he or she must repay the scholarship grant.

## **SUCCESS RATE**

Each year, an extremely high percentage of WPPSP candidates are offered admission to USMA. While at West Point, the academic grades of WPPSP cadets are not statistically different from the average of their USMA class, their graduation rate is higher than cadets entering from all other sources.