WEST POINT DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVES

West Point is the world’s premiere leader development institution and ranks among the top five public colleges in the country. Annually, the United States Military Academy graduates approximately 1,000 leaders who will take their place in the “Long Gray Line” to serve the Army and the nation. It is critical that these graduates reflect the diversity and vibrancy of the Army they will lead, and are representative of the American citizenry they will protect. An inclusive West Point that welcomes the diverse backgrounds from across the society it serves will attract America’s best talent to the Corps of Cadets and USMA staff and faculty.

High-performing people are those who are highly capable, are willing to apply that capacity in an inspired manner in support of the mission, and are empowered to make those contributions by inclusive leaders. It is important that West Point be able to attract the best our country has to offer. As America becomes more diverse, that best talent will be spread across a more diverse population. We must have an environment, resources, and a strategy to attract and retain that talent and ensure every cadet’s success at the Academy.

The Academy and the Army are committed to creating and sustaining a resourced (via appropriated dollars and private funding) institutional infrastructure that effectively and efficiently supports progress in achieving diversity and inclusion strategic outcomes.

The Superintendent has established three main priorities:
1. Recruitment and admission of cadets from diverse backgrounds
2. Ensuring an inclusive environment at West Point that supports development and retention of cadets from diverse backgrounds
3. Recruitment and retention of cadets, staff, and faculty from diverse backgrounds

Private funding is necessary in the following areas to help the Academy achieve its strategic diversity objectives.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ENDOWMENT (FUNDING PRIORITY)

Funding from the Army fluctuates from year to year. The West Point Diversity & Inclusion Endowment will ensure that vital diversity and inclusion programs and Margin of Excellence initiatives continue to thrive, even during uncertain funding scenarios. This funding priority is a subset of the Superintendent’s Endowment, as the Superintendent has the authority to allocate funds across all spectrums of the Academy. His authority will ensure that the objectives of the Diversity & Inclusion Endowment are being met. The Diversity & Inclusion Endowment, by way of...
investment income from the principal amount of the endowment, will provide Margin of Excellence support for all three of the Superintendent’s priority focus areas of admission of cadets from diverse backgrounds, an inclusive environment, and a diverse staff and faculty. Specific programs supported by the Diversity and Inclusion Endowment include:

**Leadership, Ethics, and Diversity in STEM (LEADS)**

Provides funding for at least 6 LEADS workshops per year (for middle school and high school aged youth) in identified underserved areas and cities (3 anchor cities and 3 rotating cities each year). These workshops are identified and managed by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and the office of Admissions as part of the Diversity & Inclusion Strategy.

**Diversity & Inclusion Cadet Clubs**

Provides extracurricular, educational, cultural, spiritual, and social outlets that play a part in the development of cadets—militarily, physically, academically, moral-ethically, spiritually, and socially. The CDO has oversight over the 20 cadet clubs and activities support understanding of cultural and other differences and support sustainment of an inclusive Corps of Cadets. The Diversity & Inclusion Clubs include: National Society of Black Engineers, Asian-Pacific Forum, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Corbin Leadership Forum, Cultural Affairs Seminar, Gospel Choir, Japanese Forum, Korean-American Relations Seminar, Native American Heritage Forum, West Point Humanist Society, Society of Women Engineers, and Spectrum.

**Diversity & Inclusion Academy Scholars Program**

Provides experiential learning opportunities, including cadet research, internships with members of the Congressional Tri-Caucus, and mission trips to Haiti and Puerto Rico.

**DIVERSITY & INCLUSION FUND**

The Diversity & Inclusion Fund provides annual operating funds that supplement the endowment and support ODIEO needs, both planned and unanticipated.

**EXCEL SCHOLARS PROGRAM**

The Excel Scholars Program is a Dean’s-sponsored initiative started in 2010 to promote the personal and professional excellence of high performing cadets from underrepresented groups by encouraging them to strive for a higher standard and be an instrument for change. Excel accomplishes this mission through mentoring and promoting diversity of the cadet leadership participant pool; identifying promising cadets from historically underrepresented groups to participate in Excel; encouraging ongoing excellence in the academic, military, and physical dimensions of the West Point Leader Development System (WPLDS); and nurturing these cadets to compete for post-graduate scholarship opportunities. Excel provides targeted enrichment aimed at improving writing, communication skills, technical expertise, research opportunities, and leader development. As of May 2018, 22 underrepresented cadets have earned post graduate scholarships. Both Christian Nattiel ’17 and Simone Askew ’18, our two most recent Rhodes Scholars, began as Excel Scholars.

**WEST POINT DIVERSITY & INCLUSION LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE**

The West Point Diversity & Inclusion Leadership Conference brings together the West Point community, alumni, Army leaders, and nationally recognized diversity and inclusion experts to advance the collective knowledge of diversity and inclusion principles and practices in support of the West Point Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Plan and the Army Diversity Roadmap. This annual event is critical to ensuring commitment to diversity and inclusion throughout the West Point community and the U.S. Army.
WEST POINT ADMISSIONS

West Point seeks regional, socioeconomic, religious and cultural diversity, as well as racial and ethnic diversity in its admissions. Effective and relevant admissions outcomes will continue to ensure that West Point cadets reflect the America for which these exceptional men and women will someday serve as leaders. Through resolute recruitment and mentoring of prospective students of all backgrounds, we can ensure that cadets are provided with an experience and environment that offer myriad perspectives and learning opportunities—things that distinguish West Point from other institutions and help build leaders of character. West Point must expand its recruitment efforts to make certain we obtain the mix of experiences and backgrounds that we know enhances education for all cadets. West Point is achieving its diversity and recruitment goals through the following successful scholarship initiatives:

Cadet Public Relations Council (CPRC) Special Trips
Many congressional offices and prominent civic organizations request cadets attend their community events, allowing potential candidates an opportunity to interact with cadets and to learn more about cadet life, academics, and student activities.

Minority Visitation Program (MVP) — Sessions
The visitation program pays for highly qualified candidates and an accompanying parent to travel to West Point and experience cadet life, including the barracks, academic classes/labs, athletics, and cadet clubs. Not only does the visitation program give qualified minority students the opportunity to experience West Point, but it also directly addresses many parents’ misconceptions about West Point. In recent years, 88 percent of minorities who took part in this program, and were qualified for admission, attended West Point once offered admission. Both Christian Nattiel ’17 and Simone Askew ’18 learned about West Point thanks to the Minority Visitation Program.

Summer Leaders Experience (SLE) (funded)
This is a unique opportunity for approximately 1,000 promising high school juniors to spend a week at West Point and take part in academic workshops, military training, physical fitness training, and intramural athletics, all led by cadets. It is an important recruitment initiative that immerses students in the “West Point experience” and is later cited by students as a key variable in their decision making when choosing West Point. In 2014, 90 percent of the minorities who attended SLE accepted West Point’s offer of admission.

WEST POINT CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP & DIVERSITY IN (STEM)
The center aims to increase the representation and improve the academic performance of underrepresented minority cadets in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math. The United States is experiencing a shortage of mathematicians, scientists, and engineers that threatens our nation’s ability to develop and advance its industrial base and compete internationally. Furthermore, data show that minority populations comprise a very small percentage of these professions. In response, the Center will provide the outreach, guidance, and resources needed to effectively encourage and prepare minority cadets who pursue studies in STEM to apply to WP. Through faculty recruitment and development, cadet mentoring opportunities, and curriculum development, among other aspects, the Center endeavors to play a leading national role in reforming and enriching diversity within STEM to more accurately reflect the needs of our changing society. The Center is the lead entity executing the Mobile STEM Workshops and supports the missions of the LEADS Workshops.

Cadet Candidates who received their “Conditional Offer” from Colonel Mark Bieger ’91 (right, USMA Chief of Staff).
Superintendent’s Diversity & Inclusion Endowment*  
(Admission, Inclusion, Retention) ................................................... $7 million

The purpose of this endowment is to support programs and activities that promote a diverse and inclusive environment within the Corps of Cadets and across the Academy. This endowment serves as an umbrella fund that supports ALL diversity & inclusion margin of excellence programs as well as provides funding for NEW diversity & inclusion opportunities and programs. As an example, the funding generated from this endowment facilitated the creation of the NEW Diversity & Inclusion Academic Minor and allows cadets the opportunity to attend conferences and events that promote diversity & inclusion principles. Funding generated from this endowment also augments other margin of excellence needs like:

- the Academy’s minority recruitment and retention programs for cadets and faculty
- the Excel Scholars Program
- Leadership, Ethics, and Diversity in STEM (LEADS)
- the Civil Rights Staff Ride
- Academy Scholars (summer internship) opportunities
- Cadet Clubs (20)
  - African American Arts/Literature Forum
  - Asian Pacific Forum
  - Army West Point Dance Team
  - Big Brothers & Big Sisters Club
  - Cadet Gospel Choir
  - Chinese Language Forum
  - Cultural Affairs Seminar (CAS)
  - International Cadets of West Point
  - Japanese Forum
  - Korean American Relations Seminar (KARS)
  - Margaret Corbin Forum Club
  - Native American Heritage Forum
  - National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE)
  - Persian Forum
  - Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE)
  - Society of Women Engineers
  - Spectrum Club
  - Vietnamese American Cadet Association
  - West Point Humanist Society

The Superintendent’s Diversity & Inclusion Fund provides supplemental annual support for all these diversity & inclusion activities and programs. When funded, this endowment will provide approximately $250,000 annually, sustain diversity & inclusion programs in perpetuity at West Point.

For more information, please contact Lisa Benitez ’88 at lisa.benitez@wpaog.org.

* Top Funding Priority
## Diversity & Inclusion Initiatives

### Center for Leadership & Diversity in STEM

*(Admission, Inclusion, Retention)*

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### Excel Scholars Program (Admission, Inclusion, Retention)

*Annual Funding*

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### Diversity & Inclusion Leadership Conference

*(Admission, Inclusion, Retention, Recruitment)*

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### Minority Visitation Program Endowment (Admission, Inclusion)

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### Summer Leaders Experience Endowment (funded)

As of September 17, 2018