

WEST POINT ACADEMY SCHOLARS



West Point
READY 
READY TO SERVE. READY TO LEAD.



Academic Scholarship Program (ASP) and Spring Break educational opportunities offer cadets a wide range of diverse experiences from cultural immersion opportunities in foreign countries, from first-hand explorations of historical or unique geographical sites to internships in other governmental agencies.



Intellectual training at West Point is underpinned by the belief that the best officers are created from a broad-based education, which is heavily supported by the Academy Scholars Program. Cadets, regardless of academic concentration, must split their 30 core courses evenly between humanistic and scientific endeavors. From this liberal learning comes officers well suited to approaching problems or questions from a variety of perspectives. But, we also know that much of what cadets learn from their education and studies will be applied outside of the classroom, long after their four years at West Point have come to an end. Indeed, knowing how to take what one has learned and apply that knowledge in unknown or changing circumstances is a skill required of any player in our increasingly interconnected world.

Yet bridging the classroom-“real world” divide is arguably more important for West Point cadets, who eventually will be called upon to make decisions and interpretations not just in their personal lives, but within the military structure, often while serving internationally and perhaps even in times of war or national crisis.

WEST POINT ACADEMY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Through the Academy Scholars Program, cadets understand that learning is not only a purely academic pursuit, but something experienced as well; something steeped in the classroom but given a fuller life outside the Academy gates. Moving outside the classroom, cadets learn unexpected things—about themselves and others—in unexpected ways. West Point believes that cadets should have the chance to engage in these rewarding opportunities—and not simply for the personal experience, but because our Army and our world today demands this broader training.

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

West Point cadets spent an unforgettable 11 days exploring the Great Plains and Southwest United States to experience and learn about severe weather thanks to support from the Academy Scholar Class of '64 gift fund. Unlike typical military training, the Severe Weather Preparedness and Training AIAD was mostly unscripted to allow the team to follow severe thunderstorm activity across the region and witness a variety of weather phenomena including supercells, rotating wall clouds, shelf clouds, mammatus clouds, dramatic lightning, large hail, gustnadoes, intense downdrafts, and the varying temperature of warm inflow versus cold outflow.

The trip provided an immersive experience to witness severe weather, while also fostering an appreciation of how severe weather impacts both Army and Air Force installations. Furthermore, the cadets learned about the Air Force's essential role to provide weather support to the Army, which will inform them as leaders in the Army. The visit to Biggs Army Airfield at Fort Bliss, Texas, was particularly relevant for the cadets, as they gained insight on weather support to Army aviation from active-duty personnel. Cadet feedback showed the value of learning in this immersive context, with Cammack Shepler '23 noting that, “This AIAD helped solidify concepts learned in a classroom environment by providing real-life examples. Also, this helped to contextualize class content in new and personal ways.”

BACK TO CLASS

Overseas and domestic experiences can include academic study, leadership roles, community service, and research with foreign militaries and government agencies, educational institutions, and non-governmental organizations. The relationships cadets build and the understanding they gain from these experiences will grow the skill set needed as they become Army officers. All Academy Scholar Program experiences are designed to provide cadets with out-of-classroom opportunities that reinforce

academic subjects. These programs provide invaluable opportunities for cadets to apply the skills and knowledge learned in the classroom to “real world” situations, and as a result they bring back that expertise to their studies at West Point. Often a cadet’s senior capstone project is directly augmented or informed by an Academy Scholar experience.

ACADEMY PRIORITY

The Dean of the Academic Board’s strategic vision is to expand access to these opportunities — allowing every cadet to take advantage of at least one Academy Scholar experience over the course of their career at West Point. Gifts to the Academy Scholars Program will support cadet scholarships and the administration thereof of these scholarships for both:

- Cultural Immersion Programs: comprehensive three-week cultural immersion in a foreign country
- Domestic Internships: programs at the U.S. Supreme Court, the House of Representatives, the Senate, the FBI, other government agencies, and corporations

CULTURAL IMMERSION

Cultural Immersion Opportunities are a key component of West Point’s Academy Scholars Program, as they enhance cadets’ academic and leadership development. Through these invaluable opportunities, cadets learn to apply the skills and knowledge learned in the classroom to “real world” situations, all the while increasing their global exposure and broadening their perspectives. In addition, cadets strengthen language proficiency, cultural awareness, and regional expertise, enabling them to develop into adaptive leaders, effective problem solvers, and culturally sensitive global Army officers. This Margin of Excellence program directly augments classroom work and adds to the wide knowledge base expected of junior Army officers.

Class of 2023 cadets observe the Tactical Meteorological Observing System at McConnell Air Force Base in Wichita, Kansas.



The relationships cadets build and the understanding they gain from these experiences develop the skillset needed to become Army officers. The following examples demonstrate the variety and depth of work conducted by cadets while abroad:

- Developing water treatment systems for a village in Ghana without access to clean water
- Working at a lab in Australia to research malaria detection methods and other tropical diseases
- Observing and participating in medical procedures in a Tanzanian hospital
- Creating daily lesson plans for English instruction for kindergarten students in China
- Researching maritime piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and write policy paper that will be published by the Kofi Annan Center
- Studying American and international politics at Education City in Doha, Qatar to increase language fluency
- Collecting and assessing data on Liberia’s rule of law through meetings with Liberian senators, cabinet ministers, and former child soldiers

Partner organizations include George C. Marshall Center, Tufts University, NATO HQ, U.S. Embassy in Liberia, Operations Crossroads Africa, American Institute on Political and Economic Systems, among others.

DOMESTIC INTERNSHIP

Domestic Internships offer experiential learning experiences that enhance cadets’ education and leadership development. Through these invaluable opportunities, cadets learn to apply the skills and knowledge learned in the classroom to “real world” situations. Often these internships facilitate advanced cadet research that leads to his or her final capstone project. These academically enriching opportunities also provide necessary components to compete for national scholarships. Recent opportunities included:

- George W. Bush Institute, TX
- Encountering Indigenous Cultures: Denali National Park, AK
- Disease Biophysics Group: Harvard University
- Cyber Security: MIT
- SEEK Mentor: National Society of Black Engineers, MI
- Philmount Scout Ranch: Boy Scouts of America, NM
- Future Military Capabilities Modeling and Simulation: Boeing Research & Technology, MI
- U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute: Army War College, PA
- The Auschwitz Jewish Center, New York, D.C., Poland
- Combat-Related Traumatic Brain Injury: Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, D.C.
- Secret Service: Department of Defense, D.C.



Photo: Lee Ross '73

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

GENEROUS GRADUATES AND FRIENDS OF THE ACADEMY WHO SUPPORT WEST POINT ACADEMY SCHOLARS WILL TAKE PRIDE IN THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF THEIR GIFTS.

Funding & Recognition Opportunities

Academy Scholars Program Endowment (13 departments) \$250,000 each

Cultural Immersion Opportunities

Individual Cadet Endowment \$200,000

Funding for one cadet for one year \$8,000

Domestic Internships

Individual Cadet Endowment \$150,000

Funding for one cadet for one year \$6,000

MARGIN OF
EXCELLENCE



West Point Association of Graduates
698 Mills Road, West Point, NY 10996
Phone 845.446.1650
WestPointAOG.org

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