

September 15-16, 2025
NASHVILLE, TN



WEST POINT ENTREPRENEUR SUMMIT

Reimagining America through Veteran Entrepreneurship

Sheraton Grand Nashville Downtown
623 Union St, Nashville, TN 37219



West Point Entrepreneur Summit | 2025



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The Wang Group



Dear West Point Alumni,



Welcome to the sixth West Point Entrepreneur Summit! Your West Point Association of Graduates is proud to host this event in close partnership and collaboration with the West Point Entrepreneurs Shared Interest Group. We are honored to highlight the strength of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Nashville while welcoming members of the Long Gray Line from all across the world. Thank you for giving your time and energy to reinforce this powerful network of both established and aspiring veteran entrepreneurs.

This year's Summit theme is "Reimagining America through Veteran Entrepreneurship." Gatherings like this Summit invest in our American service members and economy, while inspiring future generations of our military to continue to lead, innovate, and serve after our time in uniform.

As forward-thinking leaders in the business community, you understand the value of an engaged network and appreciate the importance of experience. As West Point graduates, you bring a unique and valuable perspective to everything you do; you are tried and tested in leading high-performing teams and you carry with you the very special ideals of Duty, Honor, and Country. As we continue to identify alumni at all stages of their careers and entrepreneurship, we hope to create new opportunities for partnership and collaboration.

We are confident that gatherings like this Summit continue to have a long-lasting impact not just on yourselves and your families, but also on the prosperity and security of our great Nation.

Together, we will empower and increase the positive impact of West Point graduates nationwide and strengthen the connections between each other and our alma mater.

Grip Hands,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Mark D. Bieger '91
Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired)
President & CEO

*A position generously supported by
the Honorable & Mrs. Robert A. McDonald '75*



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Summit Co-Chairs:



Brad Harrison, USMA '94
*Founder & Managing Partner,
Scout Ventures*
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/bradharrison/>



Sean Patton, USMA '05
Founder & President, No Limit Leaders
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/seanpattonpresents/>



Dean Wegner, USMA '93
Founder & CEO, Authentically American
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/deanwegner93/>



MAJ Nargis Kabiri, USMA '10
Founder, Zanzaban
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/nargis-k-ab168b5a/>



Tye Reedy, USMA '05
*Director of Business Development,
Adams Keegan, Inc.*
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Lane Rhodes
*Vice President, SBA Lending,
Live Oak Banking Company*
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Planning Staff:



Austin Hunt
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Terence Sinkfield '99
terence.sinkfield@wpaog.org
Vice President Alumni Support, WPAOG
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West Point Entrepreneur Summit | 2025

Logistics

Parking During the Summit: The Sheraton Grand Nashville Downtown has on-site parking at \$55 per day with an increased cost for valet. There are multiple parking garages nearby that may be more cost-effective. [Click here](#) to view additional options close by.

Attire: Entrepreneur attire (wear what makes you most comfortable). Please wear clothing that you conduct your normal day-to-day business in. Your business-branded clothing and West Point/Army spirit wear are encouraged.

Contact Information: Should you need assistance during the Summit, please visit the registration table in the Platinum Foyer and find a West Point Association of Graduates staff member. Call or email the following people for any questions.

Austin Hunt: 845-476-0659 | austin.hunt@wpaog.org

Alumni Conferences Team: 845-446-1649 | alumniconferences@wpaog.org

Public Transportation: All educational sessions will take place at the Sheraton Grand Nashville Downtown hotel. Both off-site reception venues are within walking distance. Rideshare apps and local taxi services are recommended for any travel downtown.

Food & Entertainment: The following meals are included with your Summit registration. Downtown Nashville has additional food, shopping and entertainment within walking distance of the hotel. [Click here for some close by shopping and dining options at Fifth & Broadway.](#)

Monday Opening Reception & Dinner

Monday Networking Mixer & Founder's Reception at Friends in Low Places Bar & Honky-Tonk: Rooftop

Tuesday Breakfast, Lunch, and Break Time Snacks

Tuesday Closing Reception & Networking Mixer at AllianceBernstein (This is available via online registration as an additional \$50 fee. You may add this item on-site with our registration staff members)



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Sharing a commitment to service, integrity, and our communities across the Long Gray Line.

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WEST POINT ENTREPRENEUR SUMMIT

Celebrating over **38 years** and **predominantly veteran/academy-owned**, Adams Keegan is a national HR, payroll, benefits, recruiting and employer services firm based in Memphis, TN with offices in Nashville, Atlanta, and around the country.

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Keynote Speakers:



Major General Brett G. Sylvia

Special Assistant at Headquarters, U.S. Army
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/sylviabg/>

Major General Brett G. Sylvia recently completed command of the historic 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and is Senate confirmed for promotion to Lieutenant General and to the position of the Joint Staff J5 (Strategy, Plans, and Policy). While awaiting to assume this position, he currently serves as a Special Assistant at Headquarters, Department of the Army working Continuous Transformation and Army Process Reform initiatives.

A 1994 graduate of the United States Military Academy, he commanded at all levels through Division command, primarily in the 101st and 82nd Airborne Divisions. He also served multiple tours in Washington D.C. working various National Security issues. He has over five years deployed in combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, earning the Purple Heart and two valor awards, in addition to other operational tours in Europe. He and his wife of 31 years have five children, two daughters-in-law and a beautiful grandson.



Sean Henry

CEO, Nashville Predators
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/sean-henry-297129b/>

Sean Henry is the CEO, “PREDSident” and Alternate Governor of the National Hockey League’s Nashville Predators and Bridgestone Arena.

Under his leadership the Predators qualified for the Stanley Cup Playoffs in eight of the last nine seasons, a run headlined by a trip to the Stanley Cup Final in 2017, winning the Presidents’ Trophy in 2017-18 and earning a second consecutive Central Division title in 2018-19.

He also elevated Bridgestone Arena from the 50th to 1st in terms of number of events in a year.

Previously, Sean also served as Executive Vice President and COO of the Tampa Bay Lightning (the Lightning won their 1st Stanley Cup in 2004 while Sean was an executive) and also in senior leadership roles at Unity Motion and Volume Services Inc., where he worked with the Detroit Pistons, St. Louis Rams and the Washington Redskins.

He serves on the boards of the Nashville Predators Foundation, YWCA of Nashville and Middle Tennessee, Nashville Downtown Partnership, Nashville Sports Council, Nashville Chamber of Commerce, the Monroe Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt, and The Sports Fund. He has been married to his wife for 31 years and they have 4 children.

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Featured Speakers:



Lindsey Chrismon, USMA '14
Co-Founder & CEO, Oply
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/lindsey-danilack-chrismon/>



Chip Mahan
CEO at Live Oak Banking Company
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/chipmahan/>



Gabe Chrismon, USMA '14
Co-Founder, Oply
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/gabe-chrismon/>



Lee Williams III
Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors at Live Oak Banking Company
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/lee-williams-03472a14/>



LTC Nicole Miner, USMA '05
Director of Marketing Execution, Army Enterprise Marketing Office (AEMO), U.S. Army
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/nicole-miner/>



Rashad McCloud, USNA '01
Investment Manager, Vanderbilt University
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/rashadmcloud/>



Phillip Simpson, USMA '05
CEO of SFM & Serva Security
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/phillip-simpson-b60a6432/>



BG (R) Scott E. Brower '89
Director, Bass Military Scholars Program at Vanderbilt University
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/scott-e-brower/>



David Frazier, USNA '96
CEO & Owner, Hardaway Construction Corp.
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/david-frazier-0428662a/>



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Funding Room:



Brad Harrison, USMA '94

*Founder & Managing Partner,
Scout Ventures*

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/bradharrison/>

Cody Huggins, USMA '12

Partner, Scout Ventures

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/cody-h-96bb2a14a/>



Chris Bachl, USMA '97

Operating Partner, Spring Rock Capital

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/cbachl-usma/>



Doug Doan, USMA '79

Founder & General Partner, Hivers & Strivers Capital

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/doug-doan-75156bb/>



Lane Rhodes

*Vice President, SBA Lending,
Live Oak Banking Company*

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/lanerhodes/>

Morgan Stanley

PRIVATE WEALTH MANAGEMENT

Ben Rodgers, USMA '96

Senior Vice President, Morgan Stanley Private Wealth Management

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/bcroddgers/>



Matt Matthews

SBA Business Development Officer, Sr., Old National Bank

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/matthewsmatt/>

West Point Entrepreneur Summit | 2025

DAY ONE: Monday, September 15, 2025		
Time	Event	Location
10:00am - 2:00pm	<p>Nashville Entrepreneurial “Staff Ride” with Lunch & Tasting Tour: 10:00am – 12:00pm Lunch: 12:00pm – 2:00pm</p> <p>Guided by Nashville Adventures</p>	<p>Pickup/Dropoff: <i>Sheraton Grand Downtown</i></p> <p>Private Lunch: <i>Big Machine Distillery & Honky-Tonk</i></p>
4:00pm - 7:00pm	<p>Summit Registration & Check-in Sponsor Exhibits & Resource Booths Open</p>	<p>Platinum Foyer <i>Sheraton Grand Downtown</i></p>
4:00pm - 4:45pm	<p>Deal Huddles</p>	<p>Broadway Room <i>Sheraton Grand Downtown</i></p>
4:00pm - 5:00pm	<p>Presentation Coaching & Storytelling Workshop Coached by Matthew Pavelek, President & CEO, The National Veteran Owned Business Association (NaVOBA) <i>(Optional for all attendees but highly recommended for all Startup Showcase presenters)</i></p>	<p>Studio 5 <i>Sheraton Grand Downtown</i></p>
4:30pm - 5:30pm	<p>Opening Day Networking Reception</p>	<p>Legislative Terrace <i>Sheraton Grand Downtown</i></p>
5:30pm - 6:00pm	<p>West Point Entrepreneur Icebreaker: Pass the Mic Featuring Various West Point & Veteran Entrepreneurs</p>	<p>Platinum Ballroom (2-4) <i>Sheraton Grand Downtown</i></p>
6:00pm – 6:30pm	<p>How AI Is Reshaping Startups Lindsey Chrismon, USMA '14, Co-Founder & CEO, Oply Gabe Chrismon, USMA '14, Co-Founder, Oply</p>	<p>Platinum Ballroom (2-4) <i>Sheraton Grand Downtown</i></p>
6:30pm - 8:00pm	<p>Keynote Dinner & Fireside Chat (with Q&A) Welcome Remarks by Matt Caldwell, USMA '02, President & CEO, Florida Panthers</p> <p>Featuring MG Brett G. Sylvia, USMA '94, Special Assistant at Headquarters, U.S. Army</p> <p>Moderated by Brad Harrison, USMA '94, Founder & Managing Partner, Scout Ventures</p> <p>Sponsored by Adams Keegan, the Official HR/Payroll/Benefits Partner of the West Point Entrepreneurs</p>	<p>Platinum Ballroom (2-4) <i>Sheraton Grand Downtown</i></p>
8:30pm - 11:00pm	<p>Entrepreneur Networking Mixer & Evening Founder’s Reception on Broadway Hosted by <i>The Hunt Family Foundation</i> and Veterans Collaborative, in partnership with Morgan Stanley PWM</p>	<p>Rooftop: Friends in Low Places Bar & Honky-Tonk <i>(411 Broadway, Nashville, TN 37203)</i></p>

West Point Entrepreneur Summit | 2025

DAY TWO: Tuesday, September 16, 2025		
Time	Event	Location
7:30am - 12:00pm	<p>Summit Registration & Check-in</p> <p>Sponsor Exhibits & Resource Booths Open</p>	<p>Platinum Foyer Sheraton Grand Downtown</p>
8:00am - 9:00am	<p>Business Networking Breakfast</p>	<p>Platinum Ballroom (2-4) Sheraton Grand Downtown</p>
8:20am - 8:30am	<p>Opening Welcome West Point Entrepreneurs Overview Brad Harrison, USMA '94, Founder & Managing Partner, Scout Ventures</p>	<p>Platinum Ballroom (2-4) Sheraton Grand Downtown</p>
8:30am - 9:00am	<p>Be All You Can Be Presented by LTC Nicole Miner, USMA '05, Director of Marketing Execution, Army Enterprise Marketing Office (AEMO), U.S. Army</p>	<p>Platinum Ballroom (2-4) Sheraton Grand Downtown</p>
9:00am - 2:00pm	<p>Funding Room (Appointments & Walk-Ins Available All-Day) Featuring Various Banks & Investors including: Scout Ventures Live Oak Bank Morgan Stanley Spring Rock Capital Hivers & Strivers Old National Bank</p> <p>Sponsored by Crate Pros</p>	<p>Studio 5 Room Sheraton Grand Downtown</p>
9:00am - 10:00am	<p>Tariffs, Trade, and the Future of American Manufacturing Featured Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dean Wegner, USMA '93, Founder & CEO, Authentically American Steve Cook, USNA '89, Managing Director, LFM Capital <p>Moderated by Joseph Kopser, USMA '93, President, Grayline Group</p> <p>Sponsored by Authentically American</p>	<p>Platinum Ballroom (2-4) Sheraton Grand Downtown</p>
10:00am - 10:45am	<p>Entrepreneurship Through Employee Acquisition: From Employee to Owner Featuring Phillip Simpson, USMA '05, CEO of SFM & Serva Security & David Frazier, USNA '96, CEO & Owner, Hardaway Construction Corp.</p> <p>Sponsored by Adams Keegan, the Official HR/Payroll/Benefits Partner of the West Point Entrepreneurs</p>	<p>Platinum Ballroom (2-4) Sheraton Grand Downtown</p>
15-MINUTE CHARGE-UP/MOVEMENT TO AM BREAKOUT SESSIONS		
11:00am - 11:45am	<p>At the CapTable: A Tactical Session on Capital Raising Featuring Patrick Henshaw, USMA '08, Managing Director, Render Capital & Brian Alvarez, USMA '09, CEO at CFO Worx Moderated by Curtis Cullen, USMA '09, Managing Principal, Convolo Capital</p>	<p>Platinum Ballroom (2-4) Sheraton Grand Downtown</p>

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DAY TWO: Tuesday, September 16, 2025		
Time	Event	Location
11:00am - 11:45am	<p>Acquire & Ascend: Financing Smart Growth through SBA & Strategic Acquisition Featuring Matthew McConnell, USMA '92, M&A Advisor, Viking Mergers & Acquisitions Hosted by Lane Rhodes, Vice President, SBA Lending, Live Oak Banking Company</p> <p>Sponsored by Live Oak Banking Company</p>	Broadway Room Sheraton Grand Downtown
	<p>HR, Payroll, & Benefits Landmines: How to Build A Scalable HR Operations Infrastructure Moderated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trevor Benitone, USAFA '95, Executive Vice President & Chief Revenue Officer • Tye Reedy, USMA '05, Director of Business Development, Adams Keegan, Inc. • Joe Ruzicka, USNA '96, Director of Business Development, Adams Keegan, Inc. <p>Sponsored by Adams Keegan, the Official HR/Payroll/Benefits Partner of the West Point Entrepreneurs</p>	Platinum Ballroom 1 Sheraton Grand Downtown
15-MINUTE MOVEMENT BREAK TO LUNCH & AFTERNOON KEYNOTE ADDRESS		
12:00pm - 12:45pm	<p>Entrepreneur Leadership Luncheon</p> <p>Keynote Speaker Sean Henry, CEO, Nashville Predators</p> <p>Sponsored by Live Oak Banking Company</p>	Platinum Ballroom (2-4) Sheraton Grand Downtown
12:45pm - 1:30pm	<p>Leadership & Innovation: A Fireside Chat Featuring Chip Mahan, CEO at Live Oak Banking Company, Lee Williams III, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors at Live Oak Banking Company, & Rashad McCloud, USNA '01, Investment Manager, Vanderbilt University Moderated by BG (R) Scott E. Brower, USMA '89, Director, Bass Military Scholars Program at Vanderbilt University</p>	
1:30pm - 2:15pm	<p>Startup Showcase Pitch Competition/Founder Spotlight Featuring Various West Point Entrepreneurs & Founders</p>	
2:15pm - 2:20pm	<p>The Way Ahead: West Point Entrepreneurs & Service Academies Global Entrepreneur Summit (SAGES) Brad Harrison, USMA '94, Founder & Managing Partner, Scout Ventures</p>	
10-MINUTE MOVEMENT TO PM BREAKOUT SESSIONS		

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DAY TWO: Tuesday, September 16, 2025		
Time	Event	Location
2:30pm - 3:15pm	<p align="center">Branding & Marketing</p> <p align="center"><u>Reggie Ordonez, Director of Programs, Warrior Rising & Founder, Forward Brands (Former COO of Bunker Labs)</u></p>	<p>Broadway Room Sheraton Grand Downtown</p>
	<p align="center">Advice & Counsel: How to Leverage Your Lawyer</p> <p align="center">Hosted by <u>Jeremy Scholtes, USMA '01, Principal, Miles & Stockbridge P.C.</u> & <u>Matthew May, USMA '92, IP Attorney/Principal Shareholder, Banner Witcoff</u></p> <p align="center">Sponsored by <u>Miles & Stockbridge P.C.</u></p>	<p>Platinum Ballroom 1 Sheraton Grand Downtown</p>
	<p align="center">The National Veteran Owned Business Association (NaVOBA) Workshop</p> <p align="center">Hosted by <u>Matthew Pavelek, President & CEO, The National Veteran Owned Business Association (NaVOBA)</u></p>	<p>Studio 5 Room Sheraton Grand Downtown</p>
	<p align="center">From Service to Impact: Building Veteran-Led Charitable Ventures</p> <p align="center">Featuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Dave Gowel, USMA '02, CEO & Board Director, RallyPoint</u> • <u>Ben Rodgers, USMA '96, Private Wealth Advisor, Morqan Stanley</u> • <u>Abe Bradshaw, USNA '97, Owner, Dream Baby Dream</u> <p align="center">Moderated by <u>Natalie Worthan, Founder & CEO, Veteran's Collaborative</u></p> <p align="center">Sponsored by <u>Veterans Collaborative</u></p>	<p>Platinum Ballroom (2-4) Sheraton Grand Downtown</p>
15-MINUTE MOVEMENT TO FINAL GENERAL SESSION		
3:30pm - 4:30pm	<p align="center">Reimagining Nashville through Entrepreneurship Panel</p> <p align="center">Featured Founders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Tim Slicker, USMA '98, Founder & President, Crate Pros</u> • <u>Aaron Dorn, Founder, Chairman, President & CEO, Studio Bank</u> • <u>Paul Whitten, Founder, Nashville Adventures</u> <p align="center">Hosted by <u>Sam Davidson, CEO, Nashville Entrepreneur Center</u></p>	<p>Platinum Ballroom (2-4) Sheraton Grand Downtown</p>
PM BREAK BEFORE SUMMIT CLOSING RECEPTION & DINNER DOWNTOWN		
5:30pm - 8:00pm	Summit Closing Reception & Networking Mixer	<p>AllianceBernstein Building (501 Commerce St, Nashville, TN 37203)</p>

West Point Entrepreneur Summit | 2025

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Monday, September 15

Nashville Entrepreneurial “Staff Ride” with a Private Lunch, Live Music, and Whiskey Tasting

(Optional at additional cost)

Guided by Nashville Adventures

Event logistics: You must respond to alumniconferences@wpaog.org with your RSVP as this event is optional at an additional cost of \$75 per person.

Please arrive at 9:45AM before outside of the Sheraton Grand Nashville Downtown so we can begin right at 10:00 AM. This is where the tour bus will pick up and drop off our guests.

The tour will be between 10:00AM and 12:00PM to include a mix of driving and short walks around Downtown Nashville. None of the walking portions will be strenuous—we’ll keep them light and flexible. If anyone has mobility concerns, we can always adjust on the fly to make sure everyone is comfortable.

We recommend comfortable walking shoes and weather-appropriate clothing since we’ll be outdoors at a few stops.

The lunch will include a 2-hour open bar, live music, and whiskey tasting between 12:00PM and 2:00PM

Climb aboard a luxury bus for a two-hour ride through Music City that’s part history lesson, part leadership lab, and part Nashville experience. This isn’t just a tour—it’s a staff ride built for West Point grads and leaders who know that the past has plenty to teach us about the present.

We’ll trace Nashville’s story from its days as an occupied city in the Civil War to the Battle of Nashville in 1864—one of the decisive Union victories of the war—and connect those lessons of resilience and strategy to the city’s entrepreneurial boom today. You’ll see the streets, hear the stories, hear the music, and get the kind of insight into leadership and risk-taking that feels familiar to anyone who’s studied the staff ride tradition.

We’ll wrap things up with a private lunch at Big Machine Distillery & Honky-Tonk on Broadway, complete with a catered spread, live music, and an open bar. Because if you’re going to study entrepreneurship in Nashville, you ought to end it the Nashville way.

The goal? For you to walk away with a deeper appreciation of this city—and a few lessons you can take back into your own business about leading, adapting, and building when the stakes are high.

Presentation Coaching & Storytelling Workshop

Coached by Matthew Pavelek, President & CEO, The National Veteran Owned Business Association (NaVOBA)

(Optional but highly recommended for all Startup Showcase presenters)

Great pitches and presentations focus on simplicity, engage your audience, and tell a compelling story. This coaching session will concentrate on the Five Pillars of Outstanding Pitches and Presentations. Participants will learn how to simplify their messaging, get and keep the audience’s attention, incorporate effective visual aids, and effectively address questions by telling a story with authenticity.



How AI Is Reshaping Startups

Featuring: Lindsey Chrismon, USMA '14, Co-Founder & CEO, Oply
Gabe Chrismon, USMA '14, Co-Founder, Oply

AI is changing how startups operate, but for most founders, it’s still unclear how to use it effectively, where it truly adds value, and what risks are on the horizon. In this session, Lindsey and Gabe Chrismon, West Point graduates and co-founders of Oply, will share how her team is using AI to solve complex problems in homeownership by transforming manual, reactive maintenance into proactive intelligence. They’ll walk through the tools their startup uses daily, the challenges of building with third-party models, and the AI policy trends every founder should be tracking. Attendees will leave with a practical understanding of how to approach AI integration, what to watch for in regulation, and how to stay ahead in a rapidly evolving landscape.



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Keynote Dinner

Keynote Address

Featuring Major General Brett G. Sylvia, Special Assistant at Headquarters, U.S. Army
Moderated by Brad Harrison, USMA '94, Founder & Managing Partner, Scout Ventures



Join Major General Brett Sylvia, West Point Class of 1994 and former Commander of the 101st Airborne Division, as he prepares for his promotion to Lieutenant General and the position of Joint Staff J5 (Strategy, Plans, and Policy). MG Sylvia will share his leadership experiences from five years in combat and leading the Army's recent transformation efforts. He will speak on the U.S. Army's efforts in innovation and culture change to respond to a rapidly changing technological environment.

Tuesday, September 16

Be All You Can Be

Presented by LTC Nicole Miner, USMA '05, Director of Marketing Execution, Army Enterprise Marketing Office (AEMO), U.S. Army

See how veterans are transforming American business by bringing their unique military mindset to the marketplace. Learn storytelling strategies that help bridge the gap between military and civilian cultures, making complex ideas accessible to diverse audiences. Explore how AEMO used smart data analysis to find and connect with specific customer groups, giving you practical tools to identify and reach your own ideal customers.



Morning Panel

Tariffs, Trade, and the Future of American Manufacturing

Featured Panelists:

Dean Wegner, USMA '93, Founder & CEO, Authentically American,
Steve Cook, USNA '89, Managing Director, LFM Capital
Moderated by Joseph Kopser, USMA '93, President, Grayline Group



Amid heightened national debate around tariffs, reshoring, and the importance of "Made in America," this panel will explore how U.S. manufacturers and investors are navigating shifting trade policies and market dynamics. The discussion will examine both the challenges and opportunities facing American industry, from supply chain resilience and capital investment to consumer demand for domestic production. Attendees will gain insights into how leaders across sectors are shaping the future of American manufacturing and what it means for entrepreneurs, workers, and the broader economy

Entrepreneurship Through Employee Acquisition: From Employee to Owner

Featuring Phillip Simpson, USMA '05, CEO of SFM & Serva Security &
David Frazier, USNA '96, CEO & Owner, Hardaway Construction Corp.

Join both Nashville natives and business owners, as their session explores the unique journey from employee to entrepreneur. They will share their practical steps, mindset shifts, and lessons learned that helped them transition from great employees to successful owners, building and leading companies. Attendees will gain actionable insights on leveraging the discipline, adaptability, and resilience learned in the military and as employees to create and grow their own ventures.



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Morning Breakout Sessions

At the CapTable: A Tactical Session on Capital Raising

Featuring Patrick Henshaw, USMA '08, Managing Director, Render Capital & Brian Alvarez, USMA '09, CEO at CFO Worx.

Moderated by Curtis Cullen, USMA '09, Managing Principal, Convolo Capital



Join us for a Founder's AAR-style discussion on raising capital. Hear from operators and executives who've raised money while building a business, as they share techniques and tactics of how they were successful.

Acquire & Ascend: Financing Smart Growth through SBA & Strategic Acquisition

Featuring Matthew McConnell, USMA '92, M&A Advisor, Viking Mergers & Acquisitions
Hosted by Lane Rhodes, Vice President, SBA Lending, Live Oak Banking Company



For aspiring and established entrepreneurs alike, growth doesn't always mean building from scratch. Sometimes, the smartest move is to acquire. This breakout session—tailored specifically for the West Point Entrepreneur—dives into the pathway of Entrepreneurship Through Acquisition (ETA) and how to scale your existing business through strategic purchases, all through the lens of a lender. We'll explore the fundamentals of preparing your business to be finance-ready, the importance of maintaining healthy financials and working capital, and how to leverage the SBA loan program to minimize equity requirements while maximizing opportunity. Whether you're launching your first venture or adding to your portfolio, this session will equip you with the lender-aligned insights to fuel your mission-forward growth.

HR/Payroll/Benefits Landmines: How to Build a Scalable HR Operations Infrastructure

Hosted by Trevor Benitone, USAFA '95, Executive Vice President & Chief Revenue Officer, Adams Keegan, Inc.,

Tye Reedy, USMA '05, Director of Business Development, Adams Keegan, Inc., & Joe Ruzicka, USNA '96, Director of Business Development, Adams Keegan, Inc.



During this interactive session, fellow service academy graduate speakers will provide a simple road map to build a scalable HR Operations infrastructure for entrepreneurs of any size/scope, and will answer audience questions during the session. Topics Covered: HR Administration, Benefits Administration, Payroll, Compliance, Workers Comp, Property and Casualty Insurance, and others Adams Keegan was co-founded by Jim Keegan (West Point, '55) and is a nationwide HR/ Payroll & Benefits firm.

Lunchtime Sessions

Luncheon Keynote Speaker

Featuring Sean Henry, CEO, Nashville Predators

Join our distinguished guest speaker Sean Henry as he shares the personal journey that led him to his current role as the CEO of the Nashville Predators NHL team, offering insight into the values and experiences that shaped his path. As a leader amongst leaders, his story will resonate deeply with our audience, reflecting the discipline, service, and vision that is imperative to any successful organization. Framed within our summit theme, Reimagining America Through Veteran Entrepreneurship, Sean will explore how he and the Predators are helping Nashville and local communities thrive by actively supporting veteran-owned businesses and veteran-led initiatives. His remarks will speak directly to founders and future business leaders, inspiring them to lead with purpose and passion. By sharing why he and the Predators are so committed to honoring and empowering those who serve and have served in our military, he will offer a powerful tribute to our alumni and a call to action to our group of aspiring veteran entrepreneurs.



Luncheon Fireside Chat

Leadership & Innovation

Featuring Chip Mahan, CEO at Live Oak Banking Company
Lee Williams III, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors at Live Oak Banking Company
Rashad McCloud, USNA '01, Investment Manager, Vanderbilt University

Moderated by BG (R) Scott E. Brower, USMA '89, Director, Bass Military Scholars Program at Vanderbilt University

Join us for a discussion on creating a learning organization that continues to innovate and evolve; Building institutions that last: Perspectives on scale, leadership, and values—from the lens of a founder and a long-term steward of capital.



Afternoon Breakout Sessions

Branding & Marketing

Reggie Ordonez, Director of Programs, Warrior Rising & Founder, Forward Brands
(Former COO of Bunker Labs)

Most entrepreneurs jump straight into logos, websites, and social media without ever doing the foundational work of brand strategy.

This session will unpack what brand strategy actually means and why it's essential to define it before you build your marketing, sales, or messaging. We'll cover the core components of brand strategy... your identity, audience, position, and message, and show how getting this right early saves time, money, and confusion later.

Whether you're launching a new venture or trying to reposition an existing one, this session will help you stop guessing and start building with clarity.

Takeaways:

- What brand strategy is (and isn't)
- The 4 core questions every brand must answer
- How strategy shapes marketing, sales, and perception



Advice & Counsel: How to Leverage Your Lawyer

Hosted by Jeremy Scholtes, USMA '01, Principal, Miles & Stockbridge P.C.
Matthew May, USMA '92, IP Attorney/Principal Shareholder, Banner Witcoff

Entrepreneurs face complex legal challenges from formation to fundraising, scaling, and exit, and the right legal guidance can make the difference between success and setback. In this interactive session, Jeremy and Matthew will share practical insights on how to work effectively with counsel, anticipate legal risks, and strategically use legal resources to accelerate business growth. They will be joined by Alex Bertelli, CEO and Founder of HavenLock and Army veteran, who will share real-world stories about navigating legal hurdles, protecting IP, and making critical decisions with counsel.

Attendees will walk away with actionable advice on intellectual property, contracts, fundraising, and governance, as well as a deeper understanding of how to maximize value from their legal partnerships. Whether you are launching your first venture or leading a growth-stage company, this session will help you reframe the lawyer-entrepreneur relationship as a powerful tool for long-term success..



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The National Veteran Owned Business Association (NaVOBA) Workshop

Hosted by by Matthew Pavelek, President & CEO, The National Veteran Owned Business Association (NaVOBA)



Most veteran-owned businesses who identify as a VOB are aware of and trying to compete for government contracts. While this can be very lucrative, it's dwarfed by the opportunity in Corporate America simply since there are so many more potential customers. Given the current state of uncertainty with government spending and contracts, there's never been a better time to inform and educate veterans how to insulate their businesses and employees from disruption and diversify their customers into private sector supply chains.

The opportunity in Corporate America is by far the greatest marketplace for veterans to compete. More than 900 FORTUNE 1000 companies include Veteran's Business Enterprises as preferred vendors in the supplier diversity programs. This session will educate veterans on how they can position their businesses for success in the private sector. It will dispel some myths about certification and government contracts and close the most significant knowledge gap facing veteran business owners.

From Service to Impact: Building Veteran-Led Charitable Ventures

Featuring: Dave Gowel, USMA '02, CEO & Board Director, RallyPoint, Ben Rodgers, USMA '96, Private Wealth Advisor, Morgan Stanley, Abe Bradshaw, USNA '97, Owner, Dream Baby Dream

Moderated by Natalie Worthan, Founder & CEO, Veteran's Collaborative

*This discussion will focus on scaling social ventures, while highlighting the importance of **mission-driven leadership**—particularly the role of **Veterans not just as founders, but as leaders across all levels**, including active participation and representation on Board.*



Afternoon Panel

Reimagining Nashville through Entrepreneurship Panel

Featured Founders:

Tim Slicker, USMA '98, Founder & President, Crate Pros
Aaron Dorn, Founder, Chairman, President & CEO, Studio Bank
Paul Whitten, Founder, Nashville Adventures

Hosted by Sam Davidson, CEO, Nashville Entrepreneur Center

Nashville's growth is well documented and many cities are trying to take a page from its playbook. And while healthcare dominates the headlines, many other industries are powering this city's rise and many of those businesses are leveraging veteran entrepreneurs to scale new heights. During this session, you'll hear from veterans who have created companies in Nashville's non-healthcare growth sectors (finance, tourism, logistics) and how they're using their background to compete on this exciting new playing field.



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Participants *as of 9/10/25*

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