



The West Point Society of Northern California

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Fellow Graduates and Friends –

It's my great pleasure to report to you what's been going on with the West Point Society of Northern CA since I last wrote to you in March 2021.

I started the last letter with COVID, so I'll do the same here, hopefully for the last time. COVID DID affect what we did, but this past year was one of recovery. We were able to start socializing again. We had the Army-Air Force and Army-Navy Football Game Viewing Parties with our rival sister academies. We were able to have the vaunted, John DePiazza '78-hosted, Family Picnic. All went well there. We were even fortunate to have the 15th Dean of the Academic Board BG Shane Reeves '96 as our Guest Speaker for our in-person Founders Day Event.

One thing we haven't gone back to yet, however...in-person Board of Director meetings. We are still having them via Zoom. While that method is a LOT more convenient timewise, we realize that nuance can be taken away, and the interaction isn't as personal. We are planning to get back to in-person meetings soon.

What has really fallen off that we'd like to get back to is YOUR ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUR SOCIETY!!! I always put a blurb in these letters asking for input on things you, our membership and constituency, would like to do that would compel you to engage, but our engagement still lags. A small fraction of all alumni in our boundaries are paid members. An even smaller portion of that group come to events and engage. We want to change that, so we're moving forward to turn that around.

Some of the things we've done so far: make changes and add to our board Garland "Charlie" Bonner '73 as VP of Engagement and Strategic Planning. As VP of Engagement and Strategic Planning, he's written our very ambitious Strategic Plan. We know that a good reason for the drop-off is the fact that many feel that engaging isn't a good use of time. Everyone's busy. A good portion of you have kids in their formative years and your neighborhood West Point Society doesn't rank when it comes to school and sports, and other activities that take a lot of your time and resources. Our new and improved Strategic Plan will get us doing things that we hope many of you will find value in (as in, "Hey! Look! My Society's doing some really cool, really good stuff!! I want to join them and get involved!"). We've moved former Secretary Lucie Kroettinger '91 to Vice President. Our goal there is to use her energy, consistent presence, and experience to help put our plan in motion. She is a GREAT second! We've also brought on Soo Lee Davis '93 to be our new Secretary. She brings TONS of energy, passion, and, as an experienced management consultant, has a number of tools in her belt to make us better. John DePiazza '78 continues as Treasurer, Larry Smith '62 (our Admissions Guru) is key to our LEADS (Leadership and Ethics and Diversity in STEM) Conference efforts. We have our first one planned for March of 2023. Pete Hall '63 and John Schoeppach '88 round out the rest of the Board and keep us moored and steady.

West Point Society of Northern California (WPSONC) Strategic Plan Update

On February 3, 2022, the WPSONC reviewed and approved the strategic plan for the Society to outline the goals and direction for the Society over the next 3-5 years.

The vision embraced by the Board is that “we become the ***most highly connected and engaged alumni body in the world*** and that we are highly valued by West Point graduates as well as future generations of potential military leaders in our region.”

In consideration of this vision, the Board recognized that there is much work to be done, however we are fully committed to bringing this vision into reality. It will take time to achieve, and we have identified metrics that will help to measure our progress.

The key elements of the vision are that we focus on becoming increasingly more connected and engaged as an organization. This will include connections and engagement with the AOG, other West Point Societies, our own membership, organizations affiliated with the military such as the VA, the VFW and the American Legion, and the communities in which we live.

We recognize that this is charting a different path than the Society has experienced in years past, however these actions will be essential to increasing our engagement and connectedness. We are confident that pursuing this path will help us to grow our membership, facilitate closer engagement and camaraderie among our members, expand our interactions with AOG and promote the West Point values of **Duty, Honor, Country** in our communities.

By pursuing and implementing this strategic plan, our Society will become the standard to which other Societies will seek to emulate.

I look forward to connecting with you. BEAT NAVY!

Charlie Bonner '73
VP, Engagement and Strategic Planning

Admissions Update

R-Day for the entering class of 2026 at West Point occurred on Monday, 27 June 2022. This date was the culmination of a year in the selection process of the most recent class to enter the academy. Although some of the New Cadets had ideas of entering West Point before their senior year in high school, most of those who entered did so after going through the selection process completely in their senior year.

Also, as has been happening in the past few years, very few, if any, Letters of Assurance (LOA) guaranteeing admission were issued to incoming cadets prior to the file closing date of 31 January 2022. Almost all of the class was selected after that file closing date.

This year the entering class of 2026 numbered approximately 1,200 New Cadets. These were selected from the 12,600 candidates who applied throughout the year. Of the initial candidates, more than half did not make it past the determination of whether they possessed the academic, leadership, and physical qualifications expected of cadets at our school, and were eliminated from admissions consideration early in the process.

There were a number of minority applicants who entered as part of this new class of 2026, including 144 African Americans, 143 Hispanic Americans, 163 Asian Americans, and 25 Native Americans. In addition, there were 16 international cadets admitted from Botswana, Indonesia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, North Macedonia, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand (2), and Tunisia. All the costs of educating these international cadets will be paid to the US Government by the host nations who sent them.

Beast Barracks for the New Cadets will end with a March Back from the vicinity of Camp Buckner on Monday 8 August 2022 to the central cadet area, followed by Reorganization Week, at which time the New Cadets will move to their permanent academy year cadet companies. Reorg week will end with the Acceptance Parade on Saturday 13 August 2022, at which point the New Cadets will be accepted into the Corps of Cadets, officially becoming "Plebes."

The first day of academics for the Corps of Cadets is Monday 15 August 2022. We wish them well in meeting the Dean, who is "The Best Friend of every cadet."

In a separate process, R-Day for the United States Military Academy Preparatory School (USMAPS) will be Monday 11 July 2022, at which time 144 USMAPS students will begin their year-long journey to hopefully become part of next year's USMA Class of 2027.

Larry Smith '62
West Point Admissions Representative



Celebrate 9-11 Patriot's Day with The West Point Society of Northern California and the Sacramento River Cats



The West Point Society of Northern California is excited to partner with the Sacramento River Cats to celebrate Patriot's Day on September 11, at Sutter Health Park in West Sacramento (accessed by I-5 or I-80). This event will include a special program to honor First Responders and all those that served in the Global War on Terror, conducted in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere. We know many of you served in some capacity – we encourage you to attend.

We reserved the entire Presidential Suite with indoor air-conditioned seating, tables and adjacent outdoor reserved seating. Tickets are \$40 per person – that's 50% lower than the regular Presidential Suite ticket price. We are limited to 40 attendees, so review your calendar and make plans to secure your seat. Let's "Grip Hands..."

Our primary focus is bringing together West Point grads who served during the Global War on Terror for this special event. We will make room for you as necessary. Please contact [Soo Lee Davis](mailto:sldavis70@gmail.com) (sldavis70@gmail.com), USMA Class of '93 and Secretary for our Society. Soo Lee is a two-time veteran of Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan and Pakistan). She is helping to organize this event for our Society and is eager to connect with you and schedule you for this first-time special event.

So come on out, socialize, have fun, and watch the River Cats beat the heck out of the Las Vegas Aviators at 1 pm, on Sunday, September 11, 2022, at Sutter Health Park.

NOTES: Carpooling members with 5 or more in their carpool are eligible for a free parking pass. Get organized and save gas. These free parking passes are limited. Contact [Soo Lee Davis](mailto:sldavis70@gmail.com) (sldavis70@gmail.com) to secure yours. Be prepared to identify which attendees are in your carpool.

Other Key Information:

- Mobile Ticketing – All tickets will be electronically transferred to you from the West Point Society of Northern California's POC. You will need a smart phone or computer and printer to access your tickets.
- Cashless – Sutter Health Park is cashless. You will not be able to purchase any concession, merchandise, parking, or anything at the ballpark with cash. You can, however, exchange cash for a gift card upon arrival.
- Clear Bag Policy – Upon arrival, all items must be placed in a clear bag. No bag larger than 12" x 6" x 12" will be permitted. Anything smaller than a 5" x 8" bag is permitted but will be checked prior to entry. All non-conforming items will not be permitted for entry.

GO ARMY! BEAT NAVY!

Soo Lee Davis '93
Secretary, WPSoNC

Pete Hall '63
Board Member, WPSoNC

Another thing we're doing to better engage and connect with you, so you can better engage and connect with OUR Society, is going back to mailings. We'll continue to send these via email like we did for the last one, but you will get this hard-copy once again as well. We're hoping that this will get more eyes on what our Society is doing. We've also planned a Board Retreat aimed at making us an even more focused, functional, and effective group.

You'll still need to watch your email, though. We've obtained a VIP Suite at Sutter Health Park for an upcoming River Cats game. There's info within this newsletter with more on that.

We have also revamped our By-Laws and will renew our focus on it. Part of that is getting back to holding Annual Meetings. We will have one just prior to the Army-Navy Football Game Viewing Party. Please plan on being there.

As I say in EVERY letter, we want to engage more of you. If you have an idea for an activity you'd like to see (or even help put on), give me a call, shoot me a text, send me a tweet, or put a PM up on the Facebook page. We're willing to have more and different events that will attract you to participate. I'm headed to the West Point Leaders Conference in mid-August. Please give me ideas as to what to bring up and discuss, and what you want to hear when I return. We'll put out another newsletter at that time.

Enclosed in this newsletter is the 2022 Membership Application. Members who pay their dues are considered Members in Good Standing. Please support your Society by moving from Constituent (grads in our geographic area) to Member (dues paid). As I stated earlier, our Strategic Plan is ambitious, and we will really need your support to get it done. Remember, we're a 501c(19) Veteran's Organization, so your contribution is tax-deductible.

Speaking of engagement, please engage us by following us on Twitter for the latest in what's going on. It's at <http://twitter.com/WPSNorthernCA>. Our Facebook Page, West Point Society of Northern California, is at <http://facebook.com/WPSNorthernCA>. Please 'Like' it and interact. Our Facebook Group, - West Pointers of Northern California is at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/wpsnorthernca/>. We also now have an Instagram account! That's at <http://instagram.com/wpsnorthernca>. Please join us!

If you know of a Grad who's not engaged or participating, grab him or her and bring him or her to an event!

Speaking of electronic communication, if you have not activated your Sallyport account, please do! This is where the WPAOG (and Society) communications are headed.

I really hope to see you soon!

BEAT NAVY!

Tony Gates '81
President
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