

A LITTLE BACKGROUND ON THE NAVAL ACADEMY . . .

The United States Naval Academy (USNA) is a four year co-educational military service academy located in Annapolis, Maryland. USNA is the second oldest of the United States' five service academies (US Military Academy (West Point), U.S. Air Force Academy, U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and U.S. Merchant Marine Academy). The mission of USNA is to train and educate officers for commissioning primarily into the United States Navy and the United States Marine Corps.

Candidates for admission generally must both apply directly to the academy and receive a nomination, usually from a Member of Congress. Students are officers-in-training and are referred to as midshipmen. Tuition for midshipmen is fully funded by the Navy in exchange for an active duty service obligation upon graduation. Approximately 1,300 "plebes" (an abbreviation of the Ancient Roman word plebeian) enter the Academy each summer for the rigorous Plebe Summer, but only about 1,000 Midshipmen graduate. Graduates are usually commissioned as ensigns in the Navy or second lieutenants in the Marine Corps, but a small number can also be commissioned as officers in other US services, and the services of allied nations. The academic program grants a Bachelor of Science degree with a curriculum that grades midshipmen's performance upon a broad academic program, military leadership performance, and mandatory participation in competitive athletics.

In its most recent report, the 2012 edition of U.S. News & World Report ranked the US Naval Academy as the No. 1 Public Liberal Arts College in the nation, tied for first with the US Military Academy. It also holds the No. 5 spot with the US Air Force Academy for Best Undergraduate Engineering programs.^[3] In the same year, Forbes ranked the US Naval Academy as No. 17 overall in nation in its report "America's Top Colleges 2011"

Over 50 U.S. astronauts (including six who flew to the Moon) have graduated from the Naval Academy, more than from any other undergraduate institution in the United States. Over 990 noted scholars in a variety of academic fields are Academy graduates, including 46 Rhodes Scholars and 24 Marshall Scholars. Additional notable graduates include 1 President of the United States (Jimmy Carter), 2 Nobel Prize recipients (including the first American scientist to win a Nobel Prize), and 73 Medal of Honor recipients.